

Tackling Slow Employment of Short Videos Addicted College Students: A Practical Exploration of the LOVES Working Methods

Mingyi Li*

School of Accountancy, Central University of Finance and Economics, Beijing 100081, China

**Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.*

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Abstract: This paper systematically applies the LOVES working methods (Listen-Observe-Value-Express-Suggest) and combines relevant psychological theories to construct a three-dimensional support network for families, schools, and society. It implements a three-stage precise intervention of interest transformation, cognitive reconstruction, and action empowerment to provide a reference for solving the “slow employment” dilemma of college students addicted to short videos.

Keywords: LOVES working methods; Short video addiction; Slow employment

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1. Introduction

Employment of college students is the foundation of the people’s livelihood and an important stabilizer for social stability. The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China states: “Strengthen the employment priority policy, improve the employment promotion mechanism, and promote high-quality and full employment.”

With the increase in the employment pressure of college graduates, a new employment form is quietly spreading - “slow employment”. “Slow employment” refers to the social phenomenon where college students do not immediately start working or further their studies after graduation, but choose to stay at home or travel ^[1]. This phenomenon is a complex result of the joint influence of economic structural adjustment, changes in educational policies, shifts in social values, and family decision-making patterns. It is both a coping strategy for the young generation to face real pressures and uncertainties, and also reflects their re-examination of career development paths, the meaning of life, and personal values ^[2]. A report released by Zhilian Zhaopin

in 2024 indicates that approximately 20% of graduates choose “slow employment”. Among them, there is a group of students who do not “slowly employ” due to low academic qualifications, mismatched majors, or affluent family finances, but are instead deeply trapped in the virtual world constructed by short videos and unable to extricate themselves, resulting in distorted career cognition in the real society, paralyzed job motivation, and a desire not to employ. We call this “slow employment” type of addiction to short videos.

According to the 57th “Statistical Report on the Development of the Internet in China” released by the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC), as of December 2025, the number of mobile internet users in China reached 1.121 billion, with a mobile internet usage rate of 99.6%, among which there were 1.074 billion short video users, accounting for 95.4% ^[3]. Among them, the college student group is the core active user. Many third-year and fourth-year students spend a lot of time that should have been used for internships and job hunting on “watching videos” and the fantasy of becoming a “social media influencer”.

The “slow employment” phenomenon reflects both the cautious observation of college students in the complex employment environment and the structural contradictions in the employment market, the tension between traditional employment concepts and new forms of employment, and the lack of career planning ability and social adaptability of some students ^[4]. How to use scientific methods to enter students’ hearts and stimulate their job motivation has become a mandatory question for college counselors.

As a counselor, the author focuses on a typical undergraduate graduate named Xiao Wang (pseudonym), who was addicted to short videos and “slowly employed”. Through the systematic application of the LOVES working methods summarized by the author over many years and combined with relevant psychological theories, a three-dimensional support network for families, schools, and society was constructed. The intervention was carried out in three stages: interest transformation, cognitive reconstruction, and action empowerment. After nearly three months of continuous assistance, the student finally successfully emerged from the virtual predicament and achieved high-quality employment. This case is not only a successful case but also summarizes a promotable employment assistance model, providing a reference for solving the “slow employment” dilemma of college students in the new era.

2. Case overview

2.1. Portrait of the subject

Xiao Wang (pseudonym), male, 22 years old, a 2026 graduating undergraduate student majoring in financial management at a certain university, with a moderately prosperous family economic status; both parents are employees of public institutions; the family relationship is generally harmonious, but the communication style between the parents and the child is relatively traditional. The student performed well in the first three years of university, but in the fourth year, due to addiction to online short videos, he fell into the “slow employment” predicament.

2.2. Presentation of the problem and evolution process

2.2.1. From freshman to junior years: Good performance

When Xiao Wang entered the university as a freshman, he had good grades and a cheerful personality. During his sophomore year, he systematically self-studied courses related to new media operation and acquired certain skills in short video production and copywriting. During the summer vacation of his junior year, with excellent academic performance and internship experience, he entered a well-known Internet company for

an internship and received an oral offer from the department head. At that time, Xiao Wang's career planning was to seek employment directly after graduation.

2.2.2. In the first semester of senior year: The emergence of addiction

After entering the final year of study, with the increase in employment pressure and concerns about the complex workplace environment, Xiao Wang began to develop an avoidance mentality. He accidentally registered for a short video account and posted several videos about the daily life of college students' internships. Unexpectedly, he received good traffic and fan interaction. The instant feedback brought him a sense of satisfaction, which quickly made him addicted. He began to devote a lot of energy to the account operation and gradually reduced the time spent studying in the library and attending job fairs, thus missing the golden period of autumn recruitment.

2.2.3. In the second semester of senior year: Comprehensive outburst

During the spring recruitment period, Xiao Wang had completely fallen into the reversed black-and-white online life: sleeping during the day and staying up at night to make short videos or do live streaming. He not only missed many large-scale job fairs organized by the school but even refused an offer from an Internet company for a finance position after receiving the recruitment notice, citing the reasons of not wanting to work in an office and pursuing freedom. The author repeatedly contacted Xiao Wang by phone and WeChat, but he either ignored or gave evasive responses; when the author visited his dormitory, it was found that his bed was messy, he was listless, his eyes were distant, and he showed strong resistance to the topic of employment, with a clear tendency to avoid employment.

2.3. Essence of the case

This case is essentially a "slow employment" problem caused by students' addiction to short videos. On the surface, Xiao Wang regarded making short videos and doing live streaming as an ideal lifestyle, while seeing working as a cage. He did not want to seek employment, but his deep psychological logic was to use the immediate satisfaction in the virtual world to escape the delayed satisfaction and employment pressure in the real world.

3. Theoretical basis and solution ideas

Facing Xiao Wang's situation, the author found that traditional preaching had little effect. It was necessary to apply relevant theories from psychology and education comprehensively, use scientific methods, and coordinate multiple parties to break through the employment predicament.

3.1. Theoretical basis

The humanistic psychology theory emphasizes empathy and unconditional positive regard. In this case, the counselor must accept Xiao Wang's love for short videos as an equal friend, rather than simply criticizing and educating. Only when both the teacher and the student establish a deep trust relationship can effective value guidance be carried out.

The self-determination theory holds that humans have three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and belonging. Xiao Wang's addiction to short videos was essentially because he gained a

strong sense of competence and satisfaction in the virtual world. The intervention strategy of the counselor should not deprive him of these needs but should help him re-establish the connection of needs in reality.

Cognitive behavioral therapy holds that Xiao Wang needs to use external forces to correct cognitive biases, such as thinking that it's either black or white, either being a happy short video influencer or going to work like being imprisoned. It is necessary to help him identify and eliminate these unreasonable concepts and establish rational career cognition through cognitive restructuring.

3.2. Solution ideas

Based on the above theories, the author applied the LOVES working methods and constructed a three-party linkage mechanism to implement three-stage transformation and precise intervention.

4. Problem-solving process

4.1. LOVES working methods

In the specific work, the author adopted the LOVES working methods (Listen-Observe-Value-Express-Suggest) to conduct heart-to-heart talks.

4.1.1. L (Listen): patient listening

- (1) Objective: To make students feel understood and eliminate antagonistic emotions.
- (2) Operation Record: On the first meeting, the author did not conduct an office interview as usual, but walked into Wang's dormitory. At the beginning, without mentioning sensitive topics such as employment or offers, the author opened the phone and showed Wang his short video works, saying: "Wang, I have watched your recent 'Guide to Avoiding Pitfalls in Big Factory Internship', it's done very well, the copywriting is also very sharp, it really impressed me. My daughter in junior high school also likes to watch it." Hearing this, Wang's originally vigilant nerves relaxed. He sheepishly scratched his head: "Teacher, you also watch this?" The author then sat beside him: "Yes, I am very interested in the field of short videos. I think you have a lot of talent in this area. Can you talk to me about how you came up with the idea of making short videos?"
- (3) In-depth Analysis: This conversation lasted for two hours. The author was almost entirely listening throughout. Through listening, it was learned that his intention for making short videos was to record life. Later, he discovered that traffic was a good thing and could be monetized, and began fantasizing about becoming famous overnight. Through quiet listening, the author made him feel: The teacher is not here to "grab me back to work"; the teacher understands me. This laid the foundation for subsequent intervention.

4.1.2. O(Observe): careful observation

- (1) Objective: Capture non-verbal information and environmental cues, and assess their true state and degree of addiction.
- (2) Observation Record: Physiological state: Grimacing face, dark circles under the eyes, fingers sliding on the phone screen from time to time, checking the phone on average 3-5 times per minute, showing obvious addiction characteristics.
- (a) Psychological state: When talking about the number of followers and traffic earnings, eyes shine and

emotions are high; when talking about school, classmates and plans, eyes wander, tone is low, and even avoidance movements occur.

- (b) Environmental cues: The dormitory has dim light, curtains are closed, the table is piled with takeout boxes, the ground is piled with snack bags, the computer screen is stuck on the video editing software interface, which clearly reflects the disorder of his life order.
- (3) Intervention Strategy: Based on the observation, the author judged that Wang was at a moderate level of internet addiction and also had a slight tendency of social avoidance. Simple conversation was not enough; behavioral correction must be carried out.

4.1.3. V(Value): respect evaluation

- (1) Objective: Affirm his abilities, while citing data, to break cognitive biases.
- (2) In-depth Interview: The author: “Wang, I have carefully analyzed your works. Your content planning ability and editing skills are definitely in the top 20% among your peers. This shows that you are very creative and have strong execution ability, which is a very valuable professional quality.” The author: “However, the teacher wants to calculate a figure with you. Look, currently you have 50,000 followers, which is great. But according to industry data statistics, the proportion of full-time short video bloggers with a monthly income of over 10,000 yuan is less than 5%, and the traffic fluctuates greatly. If you stop posting for a month, will the fans still be there? This uncertainty can resist the risks of renting a house, supporting a family, and dealing with unexpected diseases in the future, can it?” The author: “In contrast, the offer you gave up, a monthly salary of 11,000 yuan, complete five social insurances and one housing fund, big company endorsement, and can accumulate industry connections. Isn’t this a more stable and more growth-oriented career choice?”
- (3) Breaking Cognitive Bias: The author then took out a blank sheet of paper and drew a risk-return assessment table for career choices, allowing him to rate full-time bloggers and big company jobs himself from four dimensions: income stability, growth ceiling, anti-risk ability, and social recognition. When he had to give a lower score to full-time bloggers in income stability and anti-risk ability, his inherent “making short videos is better than working” cognition began to loosen.

4.1.4. E(Express): expression

- (1) Objective: Guide him to express his fear of the workplace and provide emotional counseling.
- (2) Deep exploration: After analyzing the V stage, Xiao Wang felt a bit down. The author seized the opportunity to ask, “You had an internship in a large company before and did well. So why are you so reluctant to go to work now? Is there something particularly worrying you?” Xiao Wang was silent for a long time and finally revealed his thoughts: “Teacher, I’m afraid... I’m afraid I won’t do well, I’m afraid of handling complex interpersonal relationships, I’m afraid of the oppressive feeling of the nine-to-five schedule, but when I watch short videos or create short videos, I feel that I am free, no one is in charge of me.”
- (3) Psychological counseling: The author responded, “This kind of workplace fear among new employees is very normal. But you also had an internship in that large company before, and the environment was familiar to you. It wasn’t as terrifying as you imagined. Moreover, the current workplace situation is also changing, and the position you are doing in operation precisely requires you, who have creativity and understand short videos, as a talent. Your hobbies and work can be integrated rather than opposed.”

4.1.5. S (Suggest): action suggestions

(1) Objective: Develop a specific action plan to convert cognition into action.

(2) Sign the S Action Plan

First Week: Adjusting Sleep Schedule

Objective: Restore the normal biological clock.

Action: Go to bed before 12: 00 PM every night and wake up at 8: 00 AM. Parents should assist in monitoring and take photos for check-ins.

Reward and Punishment: If you achieve it for a week, you will be rewarded with a bag of favorite snacks; if not, you will be obligated to clean the dormitory for three days.

From the second week onwards: Swap time

Objective: Reduce the time spent on short video entertainment and increase the time for job hunting.

Action: Do not spend more than 2 hours on short videos each day; spend at least 3 hours each day on job hunting.

Action: Make 1 short video related to the job intention every week.

From the third week onwards: Job hunting breakthrough

Objective: Rebuild job hunting confidence.

Action: Target positions that can combine their short video skills or professional knowledge with those that match their interests, such as new media operation and financial management, and make precise applications.

Action: Participate in the college mock interview workshop, focusing on practicing how to transfer short video experience to work.

4.2. Tripartite linkage mechanism

During the communication with Xiao Wang, the author gradually realized that relying solely on the counselor's efforts was not enough. A multi-dimensional support network including parents, schools, and society must be constructed.

4.2.1. Family collaboration: Parents change from supervisors to supporters

- (1) Change communication mode: Stop nagging and criticizing, and actively care about their children's physical and emotional conditions.
- (2) Provide emotional support: More affirm their talents in short videos, less talk about employment pressure.
- (3) Support behavioral supervision: Assist in implementing schedule adjustment plans to foster a relaxed family atmosphere.

4.2.2. Class linkage: Utilize peer power

- (1) Form a job hunting mutual assistance group: Arrange classmates with cheerful personalities and who have already found jobs to pair up with Xiao Wang.
- (2) Information sharing: The group leader shares industry information, job information, and job motivation stories in the group every day.
- (3) Advancing Together: The author and members of the support group accompanied Xiao Wang to attend offline job fairs and visit companies, gradually helping him regain his social interaction skills through

guidance from teachers and peers.

4.2.3. Social support: Precise matching of social resources

- (1) Improve resume: Invite experts in human resources to improve the resume, highlighting his text writing ability and short video production ability.
- (2) Recommend positions: Screen positions that require both professional knowledge and new media operation skills, and make precise recommendations.

4.3. Three-stage precise intervention

4.3.1. First stage: Interest transformation

Do not suppress Xiao Wang's interest in short videos, but guide him to recognize that short video skills are a universal skill in the new era and can be an added advantage for job hunting, striving to transform his hobby into employment competitiveness.

4.3.2. Phase 2: Cognitive reconstruction

By leveraging career planning tools and industry big data, we can dispel romantic misconceptions about the influencer profession and eliminate negative perceptions of workplace work, helping individuals regain a realistic understanding of their professional reality.

4.3.3. The third stage: Action empowerment

To address the issue of out-of-control time management, we will develop a step-by-step plan and break down the relatively long-term plans into multiple quantifiable short-term goals^[5]. Through continuous experiences of small successes, we will rebuild their self-efficacy and gradually restore their ability to perceive the real world.

5. Dynamic tracking and feedback

5.1. Weekly report system

A special group for employment assistance for Xiao Wang was established, consisting of counselors, members of the mutual assistance group, and parents. Xiao Wang would report the completion status of the week in the group every Sunday evening.

5.2. Flexible adjustment

During the implementation process, Xiao Wang experienced two relapses. The author did not criticize him but instead analyzed the reasons with him and then adjusted the goals for the next week, keeping him in a state where he could achieve success with effort.

5.3. Positive feedback

Whenever Xiao Wang completed a small goal, the author would immediately encourage the group. Through continuous positive feedback, it not only ensured that the educational measures achieved the expected results but also enhanced the mutual trust between teachers and students and accumulated a practical basis for subsequent educational guidance^[5].

6. Effects and insights

After nearly three months of continuous intervention by family, school, and society, Xiao Wang underwent a transformational change at the time of graduation. More counselors also adopted the author's working methodology.

6.1. Individual level

Xiao Wang finally successfully entered a well-known enterprise in an insurance asset management operation position. After joining the company, he applied the experience and creativity accumulated in the field of short videos to his work, and the leaders praised several activities he planned. In his spare time, he also updated short videos, but that was as a hobby to record life rather than an escape from reality. He told the author, "Teacher, now I understand that true freedom is not escaping from work, but obtaining a sense of value and achievement through work."

6.2. Mechanism level

The employment assistance model formed by the author in this case, mainly based on the LOVES working methods, with the support of the three parties and the three-stage transformation, was adopted by the author's college and incorporated into the counselor training system.

6.3. Experience insights

The art of education lies in transformation rather than confrontation. When facing the imperfections of students, counselors should be good at exploring the positive factors behind them, using scientific methods and selfless love to guide them onto the right track, which is successful education.

Data is a powerful tool to eliminate illusions and confusion. When guiding students, counselors should be good at using industry reports, salary data, and career development path maps, etc., to help students build a rational coordinate system.

Action is a good medicine to cure anxiety and fear. All fears stem from thinking too much but doing too little. By formulating small, executable action plans, students can rebuild confidence through continuous action-feedback-adjustment, which is the fundamental way to overcome the psychological barrier of "slow employment".

7. Conclusion

Education is a warm practice. As the German philosopher Jaspers said, "True education is to awaken another soul with one soul." Facing new problems of college students in the new era, as the life mentor and healthy life confidant of students, counselors can only truly enter the students' hearts and help them cross the gap between virtual and reality and find their own starry sea by being full of love and using scientific working methods (such as the LOVES working methods), only then can they truly help them overcome the psychological obstacles of "slow employment".

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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