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Changes in Trend of School-to-Work Transition in China from Early 2010s and Late 2010s Focusing on Gender, Hukou Status, and Parents' Education Level

Yuanjing Zhu

Columbia University, United States

Abstract

This study investigates how the effects of gender, hukou status, and parental education on school-to-work transitions in China have shifted over the course of the 2010s, a period marked by rapid socio-economic transformation. Utilizing data from the Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS), this study constructed two cross-sectional cohorts of recent graduates—those surveyed between 2010–2013 and 2017–2021—by filtering for individuals with educational attainment between vocational high school and postgraduate level who were actively seeking employment. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of employment status following graduation, derived from CGSS questions on job-seeking and current employment. Key independent variables include binary-coded gender, hukou status at age 14 (urban vs. rural), and parental education, operationalized as a dummy indicating whether at least one parent had attained high school education or above. Separate logistic regression models were estimated for each cohort to examine changes in the predictive power of these variables over time. Preliminary findings indicate that the importance of hukou status has increased in the late 2010s, with urban-origin graduates showing a statistically higher likelihood of securing employment, while the effects of gender and parental education remain statistically insignificant across both cohorts. These results suggest that while educational expansion and labor market shifts have altered the landscape of opportunity, institutional barriers rooted in the urban–rural divide persist as significant determinants of employment outcomes. The study contributes to ongoing discussions on stratification, mobility, and institutional inequality in post-reform China.

Keywords: employment inequality; logistic regression; social mobility; structural barriers; survey analysis