

## Measuring the Employment Structure Effect and Growth Potential of Digital Consumption

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This study focuses on the emerging modes and distinctive characteristics of digital consumption development. It elucidates the creation effect, substitution effect, scale effect, and structural effect of digital consumption on employment. By constructing an input-output model of the digital economy for employment expansion, this study systematically measures the employment effects of both digital and non-digital consumption in 2020. Furthermore, it quantifies the employment effects of changes in digital consumption during the 14th Five-Year Plan period by designing three distinct development pathways, aligned with economic development goals and the expansion trajectory of digital consumption.

The contributions of this study are primarily reflected in the following three aspects: First, it conducts an in-depth analysis of digital consumption patterns and characteristics, proposing a conceptual and statistical framework for digital consumption that aligns with both economic definitions and statistical measurement standards. Building on this foundation, the study integrates digital technology, digital consumption, and employment into a unified research framework, clarifying the theoretical mechanisms through which digital consumption drives employment. This approach addresses and expands upon the limitations of existing research on digital consumption. Second, against the dual backdrop of expanding domestic demand and promoting high-quality full employment, the study employs an input-output model of the digital economy with employment expansion to systematically quantify the number of jobs driven by digital and non-digital consumption. It provides a comparative analysis of the employment effects of these two types of consumption, focusing on aspects such as the structure of digital consumption, the educational levels of the employed, and age demographics. Third, the study explores trends in digital consumption changes and shifts in industry employment levels, simulating and characterizing the structural changes in employment triggered by digital consumption. It also investigates effective pathways for digital consumption-driven employment.

The findings of this study reveal that the employment creation effect of digital consumption significantly outweighs its substitution effect. Although the employment dividend of digital consumption has not yet been fully realized, its rapid development has created extensive opportunities for employment and entrepreneurship in the labor market. The scale effect of digital consumption is particularly pronounced in categories such as food and clothing, while developmental and experiential consumption exhibit substantial potential for employment growth. Additionally, digital consumption demonstrates a structural effect on employment, with varying impacts on workers of different educational levels. Notably, its positive influence on employment among the elderly population is significant and should not be overlooked. Sustaining the continued expansion of digital consumption is identified as the optimal pathway to achieving high-quality full employment.