

Exploring the Employment Status and Countermeasures of Professional Master's Degree Graduates

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Abstract: Influenced by the COVID-19, China has another large-scale expansion of postgraduate enrollment after the SARS in 2003 and the global financial crisis in 2009, and the expansion quota tends to be allocated to professional master's degree graduates. This paper is based on the data of the 2022 Employment Quality Survey of a teacher training college to understand the employment status of professional master's degree graduates in terms of the type of employment, salary, overall job satisfaction, and evaluation of employment quality. It is found that the employment of professional master's degree graduates has the problems of single employment destination and employment unit, poor match between education and job, lack of personal career planning, and inadequate employment service work of colleges and universities. From this analysis, it is known that the main reasons leading to the employment difficulties of graduates are the rigidity of employment concepts, the lack of employment ability, the slowdown of the development of the market economy, and the lack of order in the employment market. Finally, from the four levels of students, colleges and universities, enterprises and the government, corresponding countermeasures to promote the employment of professional master's degree graduates are put forward.

Keywords: professional master's degree graduates; employment status; causes; countermeasures

1. Introduction

Master's degree holders have always been regarded as the elite class of society, and compared with undergraduates, they are considered by the public to be an advantageous group in terms of employment. In reality, this is not the case, and master's degree students face various difficulties in employment. In order to stabilize the economy and promote employment during the special period, China has repeatedly implemented the policy of postgraduate expansion, and the scale of postgraduate enrollment has continued to rise. The sudden outbreak of the COVID-19 at the end of 2019, affected by the prevention and control of epidemics, economic downward pressure and other factors, the Ministry of Education issued a postgraduate expansion of 189,000 people's plan in February 2020, of which the enrollment of professional master's degree places accounted for 60.83%, and enrollment increased by 27.04%. [1] The 2022 professional master's degree graduates are the first graduates of the expanded enrollment affected by the epidemic, and exploring their employment status helps us to understand the real employment quality of professional master's degree graduates after the expansion of the enrollment, provides reference suggestions for undergraduates whether to upgrade their academic qualifications, and facilitates colleges and universities to improve the cultivation mode of professional master's degree, and can also help the government to adjust the policy of expanding the enrollment.

2. Employment status of professional master's degree graduates

This survey takes the 2022 professional master's degree graduates of a teacher training college as the survey object, and uses the Tencent questionnaire survey tool to understand the employment information related to professional master's degree graduates. The questionnaire survey recovered 589 valid data, 440 female students, accounting for 74.70%, and 149 male students, accounting for 25.30%. Among them, 255 graduates of professional master's degree in education, accounting for 43.29%, and 334 graduates of professional master's degree in non-education, accounting for 56.71%.

2.1. From the point of view of the type of employment

In terms of the type of employment, the type of employment of professional master's degree graduates is mainly "teaching at all levels of schools", 62.31% of graduates chose "teaching at all levels of schools", 36.50% chose "general employment", and 1.19% chose "personal self-employment". 62.31% of the graduates chose "teaching in schools of all levels", 36.50% chose "general employment", and 1.19% chose "individual entrepreneurship".

Specifically, graduates who were employed as "teachers at all levels of schools" were mainly "established teachers", accounting for 66.49%; "teachers on medium- and long-term contracts", "college counselors", and "teachers on long-term contracts", accounting for 1.19%; and "teachers on medium- and long-term contracts", accounting for 1.19%. The number of graduates employed as "college counselors", "short-term substitute teachers", and "personnel agent teachers" is relatively small, accounting for 16.08%, 7.36%, and 5.45% respectively, 4.63%. The employment of graduates in "general employment" is mainly concentrated in "private enterprise employment", "flexible employment", "institutional employment", "employment in state-owned enterprises" and "employment in party and government organizations", accounting for 21.86%, 19.07%, 18.14%, 17.67% and 10.70% respectively; while "Freelancing" and "Employment abroad" were fewer, accounting for 9.30% and 0.47% respectively.

2.2. From a payroll perspective

The questionnaire sets the salary of graduates into six levels: 2001-3000 RMB, 3001-4000 RMB, 4001-5000 RMB, 5001-6000 RMB, 6001-7000 RMB, 7001 RMB and above. The statistical results show that the number of graduates employed in "teaching at all levels" with a salary of RMB 5001-6000 is the largest, accounting for 23.71%; the number of graduates employed in "general employment" with a salary of RMB 7001 and above is the largest, accounting for 30.70%. 30.70%.

2.3. From the perspective of overall job satisfaction

The overall satisfaction of professional master's degree graduates with their jobs (including very satisfied, basically satisfied, slightly satisfied) is 94.85%, the mean value of satisfaction is 3.90 (between slightly satisfied and basically satisfied), and the standard deviation is small, 0.82, which indicates that graduates are relatively satisfied with their current jobs, but the satisfaction level still needs to be improved, and only 0.69% of the graduates said they were very dissatisfied with their jobs. Satisfaction. The questionnaire adopts a five-point Likert scale, and divides the overall satisfaction of professional master's degree graduates with their jobs into five levels: "very satisfied, basically satisfied, somewhat satisfied, very dissatisfied, very dissatisfied", and assigns the values of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 points respectively. The specific data are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Scale of Overall Job Satisfaction of Professional Master's Degree Graduates

5	4	3	2	1	AVG	ME	SD
22.34%	51.37%	21.13%	4.47%	0.69%	3.90	4	0.82

2.4. From the point of view of the evaluation of the quality of employment

The questionnaire explores the evaluation of professional master's degree graduates on their own employment quality from six levels, namely, "the degree of integration into the workplace at the first time of employment, the degree of conformity with the career expectations, the opportunity for future development and promotion, the degree of compatibility with the majors studied, the degree of satisfaction with salary and benefits after the transition to the next level, and the probability of working in the current organization for more than two years". The questionnaire adopts a five-point Likert scale to classify the evaluation of employment quality of professional master's degree graduates into five levels, namely "very low, low, average, high and very high", and assigns values to the options according to different evaluation results, which are 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

Data analysis shows that the mean values are all greater than 3.5, the standard deviations are relatively small, and the medians are all 4, which indicates that graduates of professional master's degree hold relatively high evaluations of their own employment quality. Among them, the mean values of "workplace integration degree of first-time employment and degree of matching with majors" are 3.81 and 3.82 respectively, indicating that graduates are more satisfied with the results of the employment quality in these two dimensions; the mean value of "satisfaction with salary and benefits after transferring

to a new job" is the smallest, and the median value is 4, indicating that graduates have relatively high evaluation of their employment quality. The mean value of "satisfaction with salary and benefits after transfer" is the smallest, 3.56, which reflects that graduates are dissatisfied with the salary and benefits. As shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Analysis of professional master's degree graduates' evaluation of their employment quality

	AVG	ME	SD
Workplace integration in first-time employment	3.81	4	0.91
Degree of conformity with career expectations	3.62	4	1.03
Opportunities for future growth and advancement	3.60	4	0.97
Degree of compatibility with the field of study	3.82	4	1.11
Satisfaction with salary and benefits upon conversion	3.56	4	0.98
Likelihood of working in the current organization for more than 2 years	3.65	4	1.21

3. Problems in the employment of professional master's degree graduates

3.1. Employment destinations and employers are relatively homogenous

The majority of professional master's degree graduates are employed to teach in schools at all levels, and the choice of employment units tends to favor state-owned enterprises, party and government agencies and other institutions. The survey results show that more than 60% of the graduates choose to get a stable teaching establishment, while nearly 50% of the graduates who choose general employment choose state-owned enterprises, organs and institutions, and so on. At the same time, through interviewing some graduates who are waiting for employment, we understand that due to the influence of the epidemic in recent years, some graduates' employment concepts have changed a lot, shifting from pursuing jobs with high economic income to pursuing stable and comfortable jobs.

3.2. Poor matching of academic qualifications to jobs

When asked what level of education can be qualified for the current job, 42.10% of the graduates think that a bachelor's degree can be qualified for the current job, and even 5% of the graduates think that a specialist or high school degree can be qualified for the current job, which shows that the graduates think that the current job cannot maximize the utility of their education, and indirectly reflects the phenomenon of depreciation of educational qualifications in the labor market.

3.3. Lack of individual career planning

The expansion of master's degree has created opportunities for more students to improve their academic qualifications. Students with clear career planning have gone through academic upgrading to maximize the match between their personal qualifications and the labor market, while some of the students' lack of personal career planning has led to low relevance of employment positions to their majors of study. According to the statistical results, 30% of the graduates' professional practice and employment units do not belong to the same industry, but are related; 11% of the graduates' professional practice is not related to the employment units at all; 35% of the graduates' employment positions are not consistent with the majors they have studied, but are related; and 9% of the graduates' employment positions are not related at all to the majors they have studied.

3.4. Inadequate employment services in colleges and universities

School Employment Service Center is an important platform for graduates' high quality employment, and the employment information provided by the school directly affects the employment quality of graduates. In the survey of which information channel on campus is the most helpful to job hunting, 39.53% of the graduates in flexible employment think that "notification and recommendation from colleges" is the most helpful, followed by "large and medium-sized campus job fairs", accounting for 26.98%. The channel through which graduates got their first offer was "professional recruitment websites", accounting for 30.70%, followed by "social recruitment", accounting for 24.19%, "large and medium-sized campus recruitment fairs, special campus recruitment seminars, school employment seminars", accounting for 26.98%, and "college notification and recommendation", accounting for

26.98%. The number of on-campus employment information channels such as "large and medium-sized campus job fairs, special campus recruitment seminars and school employment information websites" is relatively small, accounting for 10.70%, 7.44% and 6.98% respectively. The above survey information shows that the employment service of colleges and universities is not in place, and there are problems such as lack of employment information and fewer enterprises in campus job fairs.

4. Analysis of the main reasons for the employment difficulties of professional master's degree graduates

4.1. Stereotyped concepts of employment

The concept of employment affects the career planning of college graduates and directly influences their employment choices. Under the background of Chinese society and culture, most people are fond of the work in the system, especially under the influence of the epidemic, more and more people choose the stable work in the system. 2021 National Survey on Employment Situation of College Graduates shows that 14% of graduates are in the state of "to be employed" at the time of graduation, and "to be employed" graduates are more in pursuit of stable work. Graduates who are "awaiting employment" are more in pursuit of stable jobs and favor jobs within the system. Therefore, they choose to invest more time and money to join the wave of "graduate school fever" and "editorial fever", which leads to the phenomenon of low motivation in job-seeking, relatively few job-seeking, and the phenomenon of not getting a job, and limiting themselves to jobs within the system. Among professional master's degree graduates, in addition to those who teach in schools at all levels, nearly 50 per cent of graduates choose to work in State-owned enterprises, party and government organizations and other institutions.

4.2. Inadequate employability

In the labor market academic qualifications can help enterprises screen talents, but the most important factor affecting the employment results of professional master's degree graduates is the level of human capital of graduates. On the one hand, the training mode of postgraduates during the school period focuses on the improvement of academic and scientific research ability, and they have fewer chances to do internship in enterprises and institutions, and they stay more on theoretical learning and lack of practical working ability; professional master's degree has more opportunities for practice compared with academic master's degree, but the effect of practice is not satisfactory, and there are such problems as irrational arrangement of internship units, irrelevant content of practice to the majors studied, and formalization of internships. On the other hand, due to the students' career planning and the fact that they are not familiar with their majors, the practice effect is not satisfactory. On the other hand, due to the unclear career planning and employment goals of students, they only fulfill the academic requirements during the school period and neglect to improve their comprehensive quality and social practice ability, and their employment ability cannot match with the needs of recruiting units. Graduates' competitiveness is not outstanding in the job-seeking process due to their lack of employability, and the results of job-seeking are unsatisfactory, which in turn leads to the graduates' low motivation to take the initiative in job-seeking.

4.3. Slowdown in the development of the market economy

As a result of the impact of the epidemic, global economic development has been hit, and the development of large, medium and small enterprises has slowed down and tended to seek stability, leading to a decrease in the demand for talents, and some enterprises have even chosen to lay off employees to overcome the current difficulties. China's higher education has gradually entered the era of massification, colleges and universities for the labor force to deliver the number of graduates increasing year by year, college graduates difficult to find employment has been a hot topic of discussion. Especially affected by the epidemic and the devaluation of academic qualifications in recent years, graduate students are facing a more severe employment environment. The labor market provides limited jobs that meet the employment expectations of graduate students, so the phenomenon of multiple competitors for a single job abounds, and popular institutional jobs even have thousands of people competing for the same position. Only when the market economy fully recovers can enterprises be re-energized to provide more employment opportunities, which will in turn promote and reduce employment pressure.

4.4. Lack of order in the job market

Employment is a two-way selection process between graduates and employers, but the lack of information between the two sides puts graduates at a relative disadvantage. Due to insufficient market supervision, some employers in the labor market publish false employment information, illegal recruitment, and graduates find that they are not what they expected after joining the company, which seriously undermines graduates' confidence and motivation in employment, and also creates a corresponding negative impact on other formal enterprises. In order to create a favorable employment environment, the government should increase its efforts to monitor the market, carefully examine the legitimacy of employers' qualifications, and crack down on illegal employers, while at the same time creating a national platform for employers and graduates to exchange information and promote the sharing of employment information, which will in turn facilitate the implementation of employment issues for graduates and the absorption of outstanding talent by employers.

5. Countermeasures to improve the employment quality of professional master's degree graduates

5.1. Students: Improvement of the overall employability of individuals

The factors affecting the quality of students' employment are complex and varied, but most importantly, they are affected by the comprehensive employment ability of individual students. First of all, in addition to mastering professional theoretical knowledge in school, students also need to actively participate in professional practice and develop the ability to combine theoretical knowledge with practical activities. Secondly, students need to have a clear career planning, career planning-oriented, more purposeful learning, and thus enhance employability. Finally, students should also establish a flexible concept of employment, not limited to the "test" road, today's economic diversification of society for individuals to realize their career aspirations, personal value, social value provides a broad world. [2]

5.2. Universities: improving employment services

Colleges and universities should pay equal attention to providing perfect employment services and improving students' knowledge. The requirements of the labor market are constantly changing, and colleges and universities should take the market as the guide, adjust the graduate training program in time, and deliver high-quality talents for the market. The career center of colleges and universities is an employment channel for students to effectively understand the market demand, and the career center of colleges and universities should screen more high-quality enterprises to hold special job fairs on campus. [3] The survey found that some students still lack clear career planning, colleges and universities should strengthen employment guidance and career education, to avoid the formalization of employment guidance classes.

5.3. Enterprises: expanding the field of school-enterprise cooperation

Colleges and universities are, to a certain extent, the talent "reservoir" of enterprises, enterprises should expand the field of school-enterprise cooperation, participate in the process of cultivating talents in colleges and universities, and contribute to the delivery of outstanding talents for the community. For example, enterprises can create internship opportunities for college students, such as the establishment of internships for different positions, to help college students in the work practice to improve employability. Or they can cooperate with university career centers to provide career planning and vocational training services for college students. Enterprises involved in the process of cultivation of colleges and universities are also screening and delivering excellent talents for enterprises.

5.4. Government: development of diversified preferential employment policies

The process of completing employment for professional master's degree graduates involves four main bodies: individual graduates, colleges and universities, enterprises and the government, and the government concerned can utilize some macro measures to promote employment. For example, the government can give professional master's degree graduates flexible employment channels and preferential policies to encourage graduates to start their own businesses; lead colleges and universities to carry out educational reforms, help colleges and universities to timely adjust the postgraduate training program, and combine the training program with the market demand; and formulate a diverse range of

policies to increase the support for enterprises in times of economic downturn, so as to inject vitality into the enterprises, and then to provide more employment opportunities for graduates. [4]

6. Conclusion

Since the 21st century, China has blossomed in various fields such as economy, society, science and technology, education, etc., and the cause of higher education in China has entered the era of massification, and is still facing many challenges in the development of human resources. [5] Postgraduate education in colleges and universities shoulders the major mission of cultivating high-level talents and innovative talents for the society, and the human resource demand under the high-quality development has posed challenges to postgraduate education in colleges and universities. Colleges and universities need to actively carry out employment guidance while accomplishing the teaching objectives, help graduate students to clarify career planning, increase cooperation with the government and enterprises, provide employment services for graduate students in all aspects, and input high-quality innovative talents for the society. As the main body of employment, professional master's degree graduates should be well prepared for employment. Firstly, professional master's degree graduates should study and master professional knowledge in school to improve their personal employability. Secondly, professional master's degree graduates should carry out career planning as early as possible and clarify the direction of employment. Finally, professional master's degree graduates should make reasonable use of the employment policies provided by the state to find a satisfactory job in the broad labor market.

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