

Analysis and Reflection on the Phenomenon of the Boom of Chinese University Students Taking Master's Degree in the Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a huge impact on China's economic development, and the expansion of graduate students in China's universities is an inevitable trend in the development of higher education. Under this background, we need to seriously analyze and consider the reasons for the phenomenon of the boom of college students taking master's degree in China and what social problems are reflected by this phenomenon, and put forward our own views and opinions on the reasons for the phenomenon of the boom of college students taking master's degree in China and the social problems reflected by it in order to achieve the goal of smooth employment of college students in the existing social environment.

Keywords: COVID-19 Pandemic Outbreak; Higher Education; Graduate Students; Employment

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a serious threat to the life and health safety of people all over the world, and also deeply affected the healthy development of world politics, economy and culture, bringing a negative energy to the peace and stability of the world that cannot be ignored. As an important economic entity and the largest developing country in the world, the employment of graduates from China's colleges and universities has been hit by the double impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn. China has implemented the policy of university expansion and encouraged the development of postgraduate education, which is an inevitable trend in the development of higher education in China. The number of college graduates is increasing year by year, and the society has a limited ability to absorb graduates, coupled with the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, enterprises adopt a conservative business strategy, resulting in a series of social problems such as the devaluation of education, higher recruitment conditions and increased employment pressure. The state coordinates all parties to actively take countermeasures to enable college graduates to be employed smoothly and as early as possible, so as to minimize the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic downturn on the employment of college graduates in China.

2. Reasons for the emergence of the phenomenon of the boom of Chinese university students taking master's degree

2.1 National policy support to ease the pressure of employment.

The number of college graduates has increased year after year, and the employment situation of college graduates in China is not optimistic. As shown in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2, the number of college graduates reached 8.21 million in 2018, and the number of people who took the master's graduate examination was 2.38 million; the number of college graduates reached 8.34 million in 2019, and the number of people who took the master's graduate examination was 2.9 million; the number of college graduates reached 8.74 million in 2020, and the number of people who took the master's graduate admission

examination was 3.41 million; 2021 In 2020, the number of college graduates will reach 8.74 million and the number of students taking the master's degree entrance examination will be 3.41 million; in 2021, the number of college graduates will reach 9.09 million and the number of students taking the master's degree entrance examination will be 3.77 million. The state has adopted a series of policies to promote employment and reduce unemployment, such as encouraging self-employment and flexible employment, granting vocational skills subsidies, and providing vocational skills training. The expansion of master's degree students in colleges and universities and the provision of corresponding scholarship policy support are also important measures to relieve employment pressure.

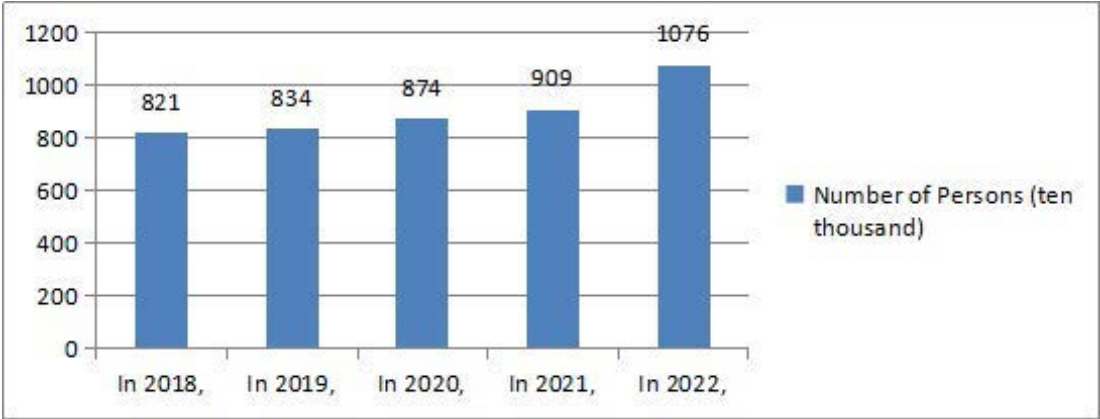


Figure 1: Trend of the number of college graduates in China from 2018 to 2022

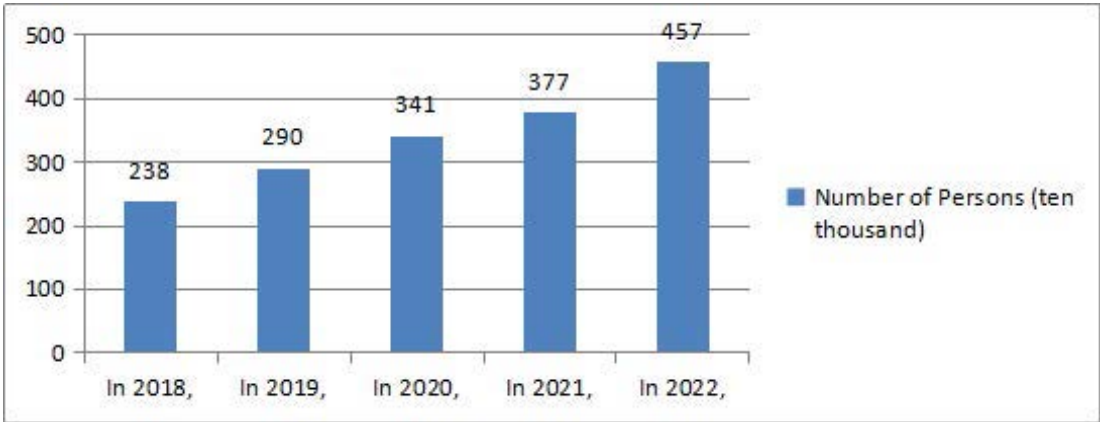


Figure 2: Trend of the number of applicants for the postgraduate entrance Examination of Chinese universities from 2018 to 2022

2.2 The shrinking of corporate jobs and higher recruitment conditions have led to increased employment pressure.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic is the normal production and operation of enterprises in China has been affected to a certain extent, especially in the tertiary industry of tourism and services. The production of companies is at a semi-stagnant state and they have to reduce the number of company personnel and reduce staff recruitment. In the company's view, education is the best expression of knowledge and ability. This is because education represents the amount of knowledge learned and the proficiency or lack of proficiency in the skills acquired. There are not many schools with postgraduate training qualifications in China, which means that postgraduate education has better quality and educational

conditions, so this is the reason why most companies require a master's degree as a basic educational requirement for recruitment.

2.3 To meet their own development needs and achieve personal development.

The ancient and philosophical Chinese proverb "People go higher, water flows lower" is still applicable in today's society. The most fundamental purpose of education is to establish moral education and promote human development. Pursuing master's degree is a good way to achieve this goal of education and training. The knowledge learned by postgraduate students is more difficult than the knowledge learned by undergraduates, and by reading postgraduate students, we can enrich the knowledge we have learned, develop our vision, enrich our life experience and accumulate energy for personal development. When individuals go to work in the future, they can release the social function of education and realize their social value by participating in social work.

2.4 Fulfillment of parental expectations and change of family status.

On the one hand, this is reflected in the way that families can change their current living conditions by studying and learning. The basic situation of education in China is that "poor countries run big education". China is the largest developing country, and the development of education is unbalanced, the gap between urban education and rural education is too big. Students in urban and rural areas have abundant teaching resources, while students in rural areas have poor learning conditions and fewer teaching resources. Most of the parents of rural students are farmers, who live by farming, and they do not want their children to live a poor life in the future, and they encourage their children to study more and go out of the countryside to work and live in the city. If their children study well, their parents will have a special face in front of other friends and relatives, and they will be able to hold up their heads. The influence of this concept of parents is not negligible, and this psychological concept of parents really affects our lives.

2.5 The individual job seeker wants to postpone employment.

Delayed employment is mainly reflected in two aspects. The first aspect is the problem of less employment opportunities because the individual job seekers do not have the professional knowledge and skills required by the position. Today, with so much pressure on employment, job seekers realize that the pressure of employment is increasing, but they do not have the corresponding professional knowledge and skills to find and complete the job well, so they want to give themselves a chance to learn again by reading a master's degree, so that they can realize their personal self-worth and social value. The second aspect is that students have the opportunity and ability to be employed, but do not go to employment, and carry out the so-called postgraduate preparation, this part of the students think that work is too hard, rather than rely on their parents to earn money to support themselves, this "gnawing" phenomenon is also common.

Of course, the reason for getting a master's degree varies from person to person. There are many reasons, in the face of so many reasons, we can only start from our own actual situation and have a clear understanding and analysis of ourselves, so that we can learn what we want to learn, make up for what we lack, and do what we want to do.

3. Ways and means to regulate and guide the phenomenon of Chinese university students taking master's degree

3.1 Strengthen the government's macro-control to promote employment while guiding the healthy development of higher education.

In the socialist market economy, if the market is left completely to allocate resources, it will certainly lead to market disorder. Promoting employment and guiding the healthy development of colleges and universities are also inseparable from government macro-control. The government has introduced a series of measures to promote employment and protect people's livelihood in order to promote employment. The education administration department should actively guide the universities to make postgraduate enrollment plans according to the professional employment situation and market demand, find the positioning and characteristics of the universities, follow the objective development law of postgraduate education, highlight the discipline construction, make the small bigger, make the characteristics stronger, and realize the education goal of "recruiting, cultivating and sending". The goal of cultivation is to achieve the goal of "recruiting, cultivating and sending".

3.2 Enterprises operate legally and actively assume social responsibility.

The Labor Law of the People's Republic of China clearly stipulates that workers enjoy equal rights to employment and choice of occupation, and that no employment discrimination shall be practiced against workers, but in the real employment recruitment process, employment discrimination still exists, such as gender discrimination, age discrimination, ethnic discrimination, discrimination for having been infected with the New Coronavirus, etc. Of course, it also includes education discrimination. In the recruitment process, enterprises especially value the cultural capital that the candidates themselves possess, i.e. academic qualifications, which, in the eyes of recruiters, represent to a certain extent the knowledge and ability of the candidates. Enterprises should comply with laws and regulations, refrain from employment discrimination, and strive to provide more equal employment opportunities for researchers.

3.3 Students should establish a correct concept of career choice, employment and development.

High school graduates just go from school to society, when looking for a job, they do not have the corresponding work experience, and will appear to think they have the education and knowledge, and are not willing to start from the grassroots phenomenon of low vision. Near the time of graduation, graduates will be faced with various employment options such as taking civil service exams, master's degree exams for further studies or working for companies. Students may have employment anxiety and difficulty in choosing a job when they graduate. Schools should do a good job in guiding graduates in their career. Through career planning study courses, one-on-one employment support by tutors, and employment follow-up for graduates, students should have a correct understanding of their own personality and strengths, and have a clear positioning and thinking about themselves. Students should establish the concept of "employment first, then choose a career" and the concept of career development that as long as they work hard, they can make achievements.

3.4 Change the traditional family education style and education philosophy.

Traditional Chinese homeschooling styles and educational philosophy are heavily influenced by Confucianism. The traditional Chinese education style is mainly authoritarian type, where parents demand students to do what they want. In the matter of getting a master's degree, 34.3% of the respondents in this study went to graduate school in order to fulfill their parents' expectations and satisfy their parents' demands. As children grow and develop, they mature psychologically, have their own views and opinions on things, and form their own worldview, outlook on life and values. The only way for parents to guide and educate their children properly is to listen to their children's real opinions and ideas based on their actual situation.

4. Conclusion

The emergence of the phenomenon of Chinese college students taking master's degree is closely related to the government's policy of expanding the number of college graduate students, individuals to achieve self-development, to meet parents' expectations for their children, and enterprises to improve the recruitment requirements, but the main reason is that

the number of college graduates is increasing year by year and the employment pressure is increasing, coupled with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which makes the employment of college graduates more difficult. The expansion of graduate students in colleges and universities has slowed down the pressure of graduates to a certain extent, but in order to solve this problem, it is not enough to rely on the government's unilateral management and regulation, but requires the efforts of individuals, families, enterprises, society and colleges and universities. Under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, only when the employment problem of college graduates is effectively solved can the phenomenon of the boom of Chinese college students taking master's degree be fundamentally resolved.

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