

Problems and Countermeasures of Graduates Employment

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Abstract

Graduates employment is a kind of role transformation from “students” to “social practitioners”, and the smooth degree of the role conversion directly affects whether the graduate cultivation value can be perfectly embodied. In this paper, the authors focus on analyzing the difficulties and reasons of graduates’ employment from their employment situation in recent years, and put forward some specific countermeasures.

Key words: Graduates employment; Difficulties and problems; Countermeasures

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In recent years, the grim employment situation among graduates has become a focus in all aspects. Graduates find it so difficult to get jobs, and they bear great pressure with the fear of being inferior to undergraduates. All these problems have become a real portrayal of graduate’s employment. The number of students who attended postgraduate examinations came to the first million since 2005, and then graduates employment rate continuously declined. From 2009 to 2011, the same situation continued. There has been cases that the employment rate of graduates was lower than that of undergraduates. Obviously, solving the graduate employment problem is imminent.

1. THE BASIC SITUATION AND PROBLEM ANALYSIS OF GRADUATES EMPLOYMENT IN RECENT YEARS

1.1 The Supply of Graduates Far Exceeds the Demand

Year	Number of graduates	Growth rate	Number of employment	Growth rate	Employment rate
2011	429994	12%	323786	1.6%	75.3%
2010	383600	3.3%	318388	5.8%	83.1%
2009	371273	7.6%	300731	3.8%	81.2%

Data Sources: a. National institutions of higher education information consultation and employment guidance center. (2011, October); b. National Bureau of Statistics of People’s Republic of China. (2012, September 26).

The graduates enrollment expansion policy began since 2000 in China, and the scale is amplifying at a speed of 20% to 30% per year. The graduates at school exceeded a million in 2005. Such enrollment expansion is rare all over the world. To some extent, in the context of this policy, a vast of high quality talents is prepared for the socialist modernization construction of our country. At the same time, the potential troubles for graduate’s employment in the future are left behind. Graduates employment situation in our country is quite good before 2005. However, some issues began to appear since 2007. The demand for graduates exceed the social need is gradually exposed to the public.

Compared the number of graduates with the individuals actually finding jobs, the graduates employment proportion is decreasing year by year. The same situation continues when comparing the graduates’ growth rate with the employment growth rate. Except that graduates employment situation have some degree of ease in 2010, growth proportion of graduates far exceeds growth proportion of employment during the rest of

years. Thus, from the normal market supply and demand, graduates employment supply is significantly greater than demand.

1.2 Serious Gender Discrimination in the Process of Graduates' Employment

Gender discrimination in the process of graduates' employment is getting worse and worse. According to some statistics, the male graduates' employment rate is 83.9% and the female graduates' employment rate is 78.3% in 2009. In 2010, the percentages are 86.1% and 80.2% respectively (National institutions of higher education information consultation and employment guidance center, 2011). As can be seen from the statistics, male graduates' employment rate is 6% higher than that of female on average, and there is a rising trend year by year. Of course, there are some objective reasons accounting for this. According to the calculation of normal school age, graduation age should be 25 to 27, when male graduates could be rapidly into the working state. However, it may be a very awkward phase for female graduates. They not only need to work, but also need to get married and have children, leading to the conflict between employers and employee. On this issue, the authors interviewed a female graduate, Liu Shuang, who ever studied in a '211 Project University' in the west. She talked about her own experience. 'I began to resume interview since last September,' says Liu Shuang. 'Except some interviews in universities and colleges, I have been repeatedly asked a series of questions, including how old I am, whether I have a boyfriend, whether to consider marriage in 3 years. If I failed to make them satisfied with the answers, the admission probability would be very low.' In normal situation, women generally take 2 years to return to normal working orders after getting married and having children, making employers very knotty. It would be very difficult to accept that a woman employee would occupy 2 years before working normally. A human resources manager of a real estate company once said, 'Any employer must calculate the cost of human resources when recruiting employees. We will hire a new employee who is able to match the expected benefits with the pay. If the pay vastly exceeded the expected benefits in the next few years, him/she will be the last one we would want to bring in. Because profit is always the first thing to be considered by enterprise.' So employers usually take in more males in recruitment selection phase. In addition, along with the 'Separate Two-child Policy' releasing (when one (or two) of a couple is singleton, the couple own the right to delivery one more baby), women's child-bearing age further advances. All these aggravate the outbreak of employment problem. How to fix the issue is a matter of great urgency.

1.3 There Are Some Unwholesome Tendencies in Employment

For a long time, social relationships play an important role in Chinese society. Thus, some unwholesome tendencies come into being, destroying the normal society order. Transaction of government official positions existed in ancient times, while bribery and corruption are obvious nowadays. This phenomenon has been in existence for long although they are in reduction tendency. To some extent, it also affect the employment issues. For instance, one leader tampered with test scores to make their own children pass the recruitment exams. Adding many exclusive requests to the recruitment demands for a special purpose. These illegal operations were once reported in the news. From the other side, they reflect employment difficulty in nowadays society. This is a "competition of family background era", as the Internet calls it jokingly. Children with good family background will have a higher start and they will be ten years ahead of others, for example, and to make arduous efforts than normal individuals. We cannot agree or deny any viewpoint completely. It is a social status, as well as social problem; we should make joint efforts to overcome it.

1.4 The Contradiction Between Employment Expectation And Reality

It is very vital for graduates to get jobs satisfy both individuals and families after putting into a lot of energy, manpower and financial resources. Before 2005, the whole society was so eager for graduates. They were in short supply, thus their self-orientation were getting higher. Since the graduate enrollment expansion, a vast of graduates stepped into society. Affected by China's social development speed, such a large number of graduates could not be contained immediately. An oversupply situation suddenly appeared. Meanwhile, virtual high ego orientation made it more difficult to lower their employment standards in a short time. As time goes by, more graduates are faced with graduating. Coupled with those without jobs before, graduates employment problem begin to highlight. The major universities and colleges set about settling this problem when they perceive it. Those who graduated after 2010 had a more ease mindset. While, there still exists a kind of general employment standard, that is, their income and social status must be higher than undergraduates during the same period. This has been a certain degree of reflection in some science majors integrated with the society. However, for those major in liberal arts, they cannot exploit the academic advantages to the full in the process of employment because of theoretical teaching design and disjointed cultivating mode. They fail to occupy the initiatives when competing for jobs with undergraduates.

2. MAJOR CAUSES ACCOUNT FOR GRADUATES EMPLOYMENT ISSUE

2.1 Graduates Enrollment Expansion Policy and Employment Policy Have Not Been Well Coordinated With Each Other

Graduates enrollment expansion began from 1999 and our graduates' education experienced a boom since then. The graduates scale is increasing at an annual rate of 26.9%. The national planned recruitment scale is 0.26 million in 2003 and it has exceeded 0.58 million by this year, which is two times that of ten years' scale. Meanwhile, the number of candidates is increasing at an annual rate of 8%. By the end of 2012, the nationwide total undergraduates are 6.5 million and there are 1.655 million people sign up for the graduate exam. Along with the graduates expand enrollment policy being promoted heavily, it alleviate undergraduates employment problem. Inversely, it greatly intensifies the graduates employment stress. While, social demands for graduates are not growing obviously and plenty of graduates tend to leave school in a concentrated period, making getting jobs more difficult than before.

While graduates enrollment expansion policy has been put into practice, corresponding measures are in absence. At present, the employment policy directly related to graduates has not yet emerge. The employment issue would become more serious if graduates could not get more support from public policy. It is rather unwise blindly expand graduates enrollment to relieve undergraduates employment stress, particularly when graduates employment problem is getting worse. It do not fundamentally solve the undergraduates employment problem ,but just put off their work time. This practice directly leads to graduates employment rate is lower than that of undergraduates.

2.2 Compared With Undergraduates, Graduates Are Lack of Competitiveness in Employment Outlook and Ability Training

First of all, many tutors overemphasize that there exists essential differences between undergraduates and graduates. The tutors request graduates to distinguish themselves from undergraduates in academics as well as mind. When it comes to the role transformation, it seems to be right to stick to this demand. While, from another point of view, graduates may enhance their self-positioning blindly if the tutors fail to correctly guide students to complete the role conversion smoothly. This problem is very obvious in the process of employment and graduates consider themselves superior than undergraduates.

Secondly, in the graduation season, schools will organize quite a few employment lectures and training for undergraduates. And there are a large number of experts and scholars doing research on how to solve undergraduates' employment issue all over the country.

When it comes to graduates, there are few graduates' employment training seminars and psychological counseling on helping the students to adjust their psychology during the whole graduation season. Simply considering the teaching effect, undergraduates cannot compete with graduates on knowledge abundance. But after a long professional teaching training, regarding accomplishing the same teaching task, undergraduates far exceed graduates who indulge in theoretical studying. Graduates who attach more importance to theory and ignore practical operation are lack of competitiveness compared with undergraduates in employment process, further aggravating employment difficulty.

2.3 Graduates Curriculum Setting and Cultivation Methods Cannot Adapt to Social Needs

Since graduates enrollment expansion, a vast of graduates flood into universities and colleges. But schools are not completely ready for the expansion situation.

2.3.1 Cultivation Methods Are Lack of Scientificity. Putting Too Much Focus on Enrollment Rather Than Management

Owing to graduates' enrollment expansion, a vast of graduates swarm into universities and colleges, making each tutor guide a dozen students. In contrast, growth in the number of tutors couldn't keep up with the enrollment growth. So the tutors just are able to be responsible for courses situation but cannot get hold of graduates studying state. Therefore, there exists discrepancy between tutors expectation and the students' real situation. Finally, graduation problem and employment problem comets to appear.

2.3.2 Part Of Graduates Professional Course Structure Settings Are Divorced From Social Demands

Part of course structure settings are excessively theoretical, making them are not related to social demands. For example, arts graduates focus on realistic art content in undergraduates period. However, they turn to text research during graduates period. In fact, the social demands for arts graduates who are good at text research are very small, except some universities and colleges. So this kind graduates have problems in getting jobs.

3. THE COUNTERMEASURES ON PROMOTING GRADUATES EMPLOYMENT

3.1 Further Improving and Promoting Graduates Employment Policies and Measures as Well as Widening Graduates Employment Channels

Utilizing national macro-regulation and control means to accelerate the implementation of current policies and regulations in graduates job market. They should aim to

protect the legitimate rights and interests of employers and graduates. Some supporting policies should be put forward. On employment policies, our government should integrate national grassroots employment policies, including 'Three and One relief Project', 'Graduates Volunteer in Western Region Service Program', 'Little Village Official and Rural Special Post Teacher' and so on. In order to attract more graduates devote themselves to the grassroots construction, the authorities should give some preferential treatments to those students who participate in various projects (National institutions of higher education information consultation and employment guidance center, 2011.). Setting up and improving the information channels about employment supply and demand is very necessary for the sake of communication barrier-free. Employers and graduates have access to acquiring each other's information in a more convenient way. The universities and colleges should further improve graduates employment information network to provide facilities for the employers. As a result, the employers are able to deliver their demand information to universities and colleges graduates' employment information network according to their own needs in time. Accordingly, a number of graduates are informed of relevant demand information in the shortest time. Strengthening the cooperation between government and universities and taking use of local resources effectively are necessary. Integrating national employment information and combing large and small, scheduled and occasional graduates employment job fairs are also attached great importance. These actions will make employers and graduates communicate well and know each other better, finally achieving a win-win situation.

3.2 Reforming and Improving the Graduates Cultivation System and Mechanism to Better Adapt to the Social Development Needs

Under the condition that finding jobs are getting harder and employers are putting forward harsher requests, reforming and improving the graduates cultivation system and mechanism is imperative. It will make many excellent graduates adapt to all kinds of social demands in time and make more contribution to our society. In the process of cultivating graduates, stereotyped homogenization tendency should be avoided. It is wise to base on school situation and highlight cultivating characteristic, especially disciplines should have their own traits. Also, graduates cultivation mechanism should get due attention, adapting to social constant demands. For example, focusing on training those tiptop and innovative graduates with research capacity and those normal and educational graduates with teaching ability and so on. According to the classification of different disciplines, bringing up graduates with different abilities and making the graduate cultivation model more targeted. Thus, graduates will have a better understanding of their career planning and

employment channels, making themselves follow up the real needs of social development.

3.3 Strengthening the Graduate Employment Education and Converting the Graduate Employment Notion

The universities and colleges should be in accordance with the document "The CPC Central Committee, the State Council concerning further strengthening and improving graduates ideological and political education opinions", and consciously follow the spiritual requirements. They have obligation to carry out effective ideological and political education work, and guide graduates to establish correct world outlook and outlook on life along with value. Hence, graduates could own correct employment notion, combing their individual ambitions with the needs of the state and society closely. It is not advisable to blindly follow the trend and other people. So some measures should be taken, including launching employment guidance lectures and collecting and analyzing job information in terms of their own condition. As a consequence, graduates get a cognition of their own abilities. With the further deepening of reform and opening up, some medium-sized cities with good foundation has entered a virtuous cycle stage in economic development and industrial structure. They can contain more graduates and provide a sound environment for talents to achieve their value. So, it is not sensible for graduates to limit their job posts in some given regions or cities. Meanwhile, schools should invite some alumni and social celebrities who have graduated to come back to launch speeches and share their work experience and personal perception with graduates. Thus, a good orientation of graduate employment development will come into being.

3.4 Putting More Attention to Graduates Employment Situation and Guiding Graduates to Get Proper Jobs in a Scientific Method

Undoubtedly, the graduates employment situation is getting harder and harder. The state authorities should take the responsibility to support graduates both in policies and research field, especially the latter. For now, the whole society pay more attention to undergraduates employment situation, while, books specifically for graduates employment are almost impossible to be found, which means that the graduates employment situation is not getting due concern. So it is very adverse for graduates' employment research. The state should organize enough experts and scholars to do some specific study on reasonable distribution of graduates employment and employment guidance. And providing strong theoretical basis for rational graduates' employment policies and employment guidance. Also, providing scientific basis for how to guide graduates to get proper jobs in universities and colleges. There are some other tasks for experts

and scholars. Namely, it is their duty to make accurate judgments for the graduates' employment situation in next few years, basing on current social situation. The aim is to make more undergraduates are informed of the present graduates employment situation before deciding to take the graduates enrollment exam. Thus, they could make better planning for their own life goals. Also, it is beneficial to solve the problem that the current graduates group is too large fundamentally.

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