Analysis of Master Degree Returnee’ Employment Situation & Research on Improving Self-Efficiency

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Abstract. More and more students who got their Master degree abroad had been back to China recently, which led to a fiercely competitive and unhealthy environment of the employment situation. The purpose of this research is to analyze the root causes of this social phenomenon and give proposals on the methods to change this current situation. Career selection efficiency questionnaire was chosen to be answered by these 118 out of 120 Returnees with Master Degrees in this research. With the assistance of SPSS software, the difference on gender, personal experience, family background of the data were compared and analyzed by using t-value. In conclusion, the root cause of the Master Degree Returnee’ Employment situation was defined as the impact of “self-efficiency” The concept of “self-efficiency” involves society, enterprises, universities, family and self-recognition. As a result, measurements on improving “Career self-efficiency” were proposed through these five aspects.

Introduction

According to the database from Ministry of Education in China, approaching 523,700 students went abroad in 2015. Comparing with the number in 2014, there are 63900 more people which is a 13.9% increase. Meanwhile, people who got master degree and went back China as we called Returnees with master degree in this article (“returnees” in short) was around 409100 in 2015 which is 44300 higher than last year. The increase of this Returnee number is around 12.1%. From 1978 till 2015, the number of returnees has been accumulated as 404,210. 221,860 out of them chose to go back China after they graduated. Apparently, the pressure of finding a job exists through this group.

Analysis on “Career Self-Efficiency” of Returnees with Master Degree

“Career Self-Efficiency” Concept

“Career Self-efficiency” is proposed by Hackeet and Betz. According to years of research, career selection, career performance, career duration are significantly impacted by self-efficiency. self-efficiency is defined as someone’s confidence on its own ability through finding a job.\cite{1}

Research on “Career Self-Efficiency” of Master Degree Returnees

Research Target Person. There are 120 Master Degree Returnees who graduated in 2015 invited by this research. They are from University of Warwick, University of Edinburgh, University of Northumbria and University of Technology, Sydney.
of 120 questionnaires have been received. This group has been divided through five aspects:

Aspect 1: Male: 51 people which is 43.22% of all. Female: 67 people which is 56.78% of all.
Aspect 2: Bachelor degree of 211-project University: 43 people which is 36.44%, Bachelor degree of non 211-project university: 75 people which is 63.56% of all.
Aspect 3: people who has Part-time experience: 55 people which is 46.61% of all. people who has no Part-time experience :63 people which is 53.39% of all.

**Questionnaire Selection.** “University students’ career self-efficiency questionnaires” which is proposed by Yanhong Hu from Shanxi Normal University is selected as the questionnaire in this research. There are 23 questions in this questionnaire which is in 6 aspects including self-assessment, self-recognition, social support, career information collection and Academic Performance. Scores are defined as Likert five points.

However, considering that the concept of self-assessment and self-recognition are similar in some certain, the two had been combined in this questionnaire. As a result, there are four parts of this research involving self-assessment, social influence, information collecting, career development plan and education background. Despite of this, no change of the number of questions. [2]

**Tool of Data Analysis.** The result of this research is analyzed through the tool of SPSS software. SPSS enables to calculate the variance.

**Analysis of “Master Degree Returnees’ Career Self-Efficiency”**

A. General Descriptive Statistical Analysis

In the research, the results of descriptive statistical analysis are as below: self-assessment 3.70, social influence 2.97, information collection 3.09 and education background 3.69.

In conclusion: most of the master degree returnees are satisfied with their self-assessment and education background when they are finding the job since these two aspects got the highest scores during the research.[3] On contrary, they are not confident in the aspects of information collection, career development plan and social influence. Especially, they feel lack of understanding and support from their family, university and friends.

A. Gender Difference Analysis

In the Table1, it is obviously to find out the difference between male and female in the aspect of education background. The reason is that girls normally get better academic performance then boys during their study. However, in the aspects of self-assessment, social influence, information collection and career development plan, the score from boys are only slightly higher than the score from girls. [4]

B. Analysis on Bachelor degree background difference

The result in Table 2 reflects that students who received the bachelor degree in a 211 Project university had significantly higher score in the aspects of self-assessment and education background. The score of the rest aspects had no big difference than students who graduated from a non 211 project university as a bachelor. It is because that student in 211 Project University could get more useful knowledge and skills during their undergraduate study which improved their confidence on education background.

C. Analysis on the difference between with or without part-time working experience

It is apparently to find out in table 3 that returnees who had part time working experience got higher scores in the aspects of self-assessment, information collecting
and career development pattern. The results of the other two aspects are quite similar. The reason is that part-time experience improves one's ability. Meanwhile, it is a good opportunity to receive more information. It is easy to find out that people who had part-time working experience before will be clearer about their career path when they start to work.

Table 1. Gender Difference Analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.72±0.65</td>
<td>0.492</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3.69±0.64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social influence</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2.99±0.74</td>
<td>0.554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>2.96±0.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Collection</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.12±0.82</td>
<td>0.789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3.07±0.81</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Development</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.13±0.68</td>
<td>0.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3.08±0.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Background</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.62±0.77</td>
<td>-1.826*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3.74±0.76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: t value means significance level. * means significance level less than 0.05, ** means significance level less than 0.01, *** means significance level less than 0.001

Table 2. Analysis on Bachelor degree background difference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>If 211 project university of their bachelor degree</th>
<th>quantity</th>
<th>score</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.78±0.81</td>
<td>2.087*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.64±0.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social influence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.98±0.76</td>
<td>0.452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.95±0.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Collection</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.10±0.73</td>
<td>0.439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.07±0.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Development</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.11±0.69</td>
<td>0.488</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.08±0.66</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Background</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.75±0.76</td>
<td>2.292*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>3.60±0.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: t value means significance level. * means significance level less than 0.05, ** means significance level less than 0.01, *** means significance level less than 0.001

Table 3. Analysis on the difference between with or without part-time working experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Whether it has part-time experience</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>score</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.77±0.76</td>
<td>1.962*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.64±0.79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social influence</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.00±0.76</td>
<td>0.616</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>2.96±0.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Collection</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.17±0.69</td>
<td>2.247*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.02±0.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Development</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.19±0.72</td>
<td>2.645*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.02±0.74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Background</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>3.67±0.77</td>
<td>-0.439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>3.70±0.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: t value means significance level. * means significance level less than 0.05, ** means significance level less than 0.01, *** means significance level less than 0.001
Analysis of Causes for Master Degree Returnee Current Employment Situation

According to the research on “career self efficiency” of Master Degree Returnees and the current situation of labor market, the causes of the returnees’ employment situation are analyzed through five aspects. They are society, enterprises, university, family and ego.

Social Impact

The Expansion of Postgraduate Enrollment. Nowadays, to be a postgraduate will be easier than ever due to the expansion of postgraduate enrollment. It has apparently impacted the competence of Returnees when they attending a interview.

Limitation of Location. There is a relatively more fiercely competition atmosphere of the job market in developed cities. Nearly no vacancy in these cities. However, almost all of the people who has the master degree as the educational background no matter they graduated from abroad or inside China prefer staying in a developed city. As a result, talents squeezed in these area which seriously limited their career path.

Adjustment of Industry. The structure of industry in China is undergoing a tremendous transformation. Students whose majors are machinery, civil and construction or transportation will have more chances to receive an offer relating to their majors. However, it is not the case for most of returnees since they are graduated as the major of the third industry such as finance, management, logistics and so on.

Enterprises Impact

Ability becomes more important than the educational background during recruitment. The rank of the university, if going abroad or not have become unnecessary right now.

University Impact

Firstly, it is Lack of the development of working skills. The duration of oversea postgraduate study is shorter than it is in China. Even some of the Returnees only spent one year getting the master degree. During this period, they could only focus on learning, writing essays or passing exams. It seriously impacted the development of their working skills.

Secondly is lack of recruitment information. Because of the location limitation, some of the oversea students had to give us the interview in the end. Moreover, since the different arrangements of the semesters and graduation exams, most of the returnees missed the best chance to attend the campus recruitment.

Family Environment Impact

To support a child going abroad is not a small investment for a family. It sounds reasonable that parents from these families will have higher expectation than others. This mindset will impact their children while finding a job. More requirements on the future job will decrease the opportunity of receiving an offer. [5]

Ego Impact

The First one is lack of self-concept. Some of the returnees have the blindly and arrogant mindsets that they are better than those postgraduates from Chinese University. Excess self-confidence may lead to the ignorance of some useful advice. As a result, they missed the chances to improve themselves.

The second is lack of recruitment information. The first and foremost difficulty a returnee met is that their graduation periods are not consistent with postgraduates in China. In China, campus recruitment normally are organized during March till May.
Returnees may miss the best chance to attend, they even could not obtain these information.

The third is Unreasonable Expectation. Vast majority returnees are full of ambition when they start finding a job. They are the hope of the whole family. Nevertheless, the reality is not always as what it is expected. Decent job with good salary and vintage environment means fiercely competition. In conclusion, the high expectation limits the development of the returnees.

Fourthly may be lack of the ability to plan the future. The analysis of working policy and employment situation is necessary for the candidates to get a job finally. However, this is not the case for some of the returnees due to the limitation of location and difference of social topics overseas. Lack of the objective analysis of the job markets relating to their own majors and the development of them indicated the failure of their job application.

Last but not the least is Lack of ability on problem-solving. The current situation of job application may make them feel frustrated, depressed and pessimistic. If they lack the problem solving ability, they could never take actions according to the reality.

**Measurements on Improving Career Self-Efficiency of Returnees**

According to the research result and analysis above, measurements on improving “Career self-efficiency” have been proposed through society, enterprises, university, family and ego.

**Support from Society**

Building a market-oriented online service platform is the most important issue to be done. A market-oriented and unified online recruitment service platform should be integrated by the government in order to accelerate the development of informatization. Recruitment information should be published through this platform according to the needs of master degree returnees. Apart from it, mutual communication is available between returnees and enterprises through this platform.

The Support from Media is also necessary. With the assistance of the media’s positive effects, prejudice should be get rid of from people’s mindset. Only if they received more understandings and respects could they be under a healthy and sound environment during recruiting.

**Innovation from Enterprises**

Innovation should always be keep in mind when managing a company. If enterprises dare to recruit returnees, they will get in touch with more advanced and unique theory and thoughts. Providing them a wonderful development plan will enable the enterprise manage their teams in long-term. This will for sure benefits the company in some time.

**Instruction from University**

Returnees should take advantage of the information from universities where they got the bachelor degree. Employment guidance department of the universities where they got the bachelor degree should provide employment information to this kind of person through online service platform. On the other hand, the employment guidance department has the responsibility to recommend the suitable profiles to enterprises. This department should play the role as a hub passing the employment information. Returnees should take advantage of the part-time information from universities where they got the master degree. Besides the points above, students who went abroad
during postgraduate study should take advantages of the employment platform in its own uni. As a result, they should attend some training on working skills or find the part-time job during that period. Generally speaking, Improving the ability of communication will enable them integrating into the society in the future.

**Understanding from the Family**

Since the big investment of the family if their children going abroad, higher expectation on the employment of their children sounds reasonable. However, the reality is not always the case. The impacts of social environment, current situation of employment and self ability will make it opposite than what it is expected. The patience and understandings from the parents are necessary at the moment.

**Improvement of the Own Ability**

**Objectively Self-Recognition.** Firstly, a clear career target is necessary. Target is the most important indicator when applying a job. It is necessary to make sure what they want to do and what they want to be in the future before they attending recruitment interview.

Secondly, a objectively self-recognition is compulsory. It is vital to have an objective self-recognition. A SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat) analysis will enable returnees feeling clear about the situation and better integrating the resources around them. [6]

Thirdly, the attitude should be cherishing the opportunity all the time. Returnees should cherish the opportunity. The arrogant attitude is forbidden. Only with the attitude of modest will make them become better.

**Set A Reasonable Target.** A reasonable job target should be set by the returnees according to its own objective characteristics after facing the cruel reality of employment situation in China. Once the target being settled down, any suitable job opportunities should be seized firmly. In conclusion, the returnees should clear about the target and development pattern so as to find the appropriate positions.

**Plan Effective Career Pattern.** Combing the short-term and long-term target will enable the returnees better plan their career pattern. The only way to reach the terminal target is to achieve each short-term target. Everything should be adapted to the change. As a result, the target should be changed according to the reality.

**Improve Their Own Skills.** They should accumulate more practical experiences. During the vacation, the oversea postgraduates should get the chance to get a part-time job or participate into a social welfare practice in order to accumulate their practical experience. Moreover, they could learn more about the society and obtain some working skills.

They should adapt them quickly into the society. Some of the Returnees feel unfamiliar with their motherland after spending several years abroad. Negative emotions such as depression, frustration, disturbance may exit on them. At this moment, they should try them best adapting to the changes. They could have more communication with their relatives and friends.[7]

They should improve the innovation ability. The overseas experience makes them get in touch with the most advanced technology and theories. As a result, they should improve themselves and thinking things in a global view. Only if the unique and innovative idea could make they have the core and irreplaceable competitiveness.
Conclusion
Clearing the target and finding the most suitable position should be significant to a returnee with Master degree. The support from the whole society, the innovation of the enterprises, the understanding from the family and the improvement of their own abilities are all necessary in order to improve their career Self-efficiency. The improvement of Career Self-efficiency indicates the improvement of their core competitiveness, and it improves the chance to receive a job offer as well.

References


