

## Reflection of the Development of Professional Graduates Education in China

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**Abstract:** The development of professional degree graduates education plays a crucial role in social economy development and the industrial restructuring, promotes academic degrees and graduates education growth and could further ameliorate China's professional degrees education system. Currently, the professional degree graduates education meet with some problems, such as low level of professional degrees education, the scale of development imbalances, lack of innovation in training mode, quality assurance and management system is incomplete, the policy formulated backwardness. As a higher education theory researcher, rational thinking of these problems would help to stimulate the long-term development of professional degree graduates education and to provide educational reference.

**Keywords:** professional degree; graduates education; training mode

### 1. Background

Professional Degree Setting Interim Procedure points out “professional degree with a professional background, set for training of specific vocational of high level applied talents.”<sup>3</sup> The training objectives is defined as the “to train has strong professional competence and professional accomplishment, creatively engaged in real work of high-level of the applied talents”.<sup>4</sup> This shows that the nature of professional degree graduates education is a special education for specific vocational of high level applied talents with practical and innovative abilities, however, because of the professional degree graduates education started late, development fast, there will always be many problems in the development process, these problems became the main bottleneck which constraints the healthy development of professional degree education. Therefore, as a researcher of the theory of higher education, it is necessary to positive thinking on these issues, to

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<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Education, (1996). Professional Degrees Setting Approval Interim Methods. [EB/OL]. 22nd of July. [http://www.moe.gov.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe\\_823/200410/3445.html](http://www.moe.gov.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/moe_823/200410/3445.html).

<sup>4</sup> [EB/OL]. [2013-03-17], <http://www.cdgd.edu.cn/xwyyjsjyxx/gjjl/>.

promote the development of professional degree education and to provide educational reference.

## **2. The Significance of the Development of the Professional Graduates**

A) The demands for specialized personnel of the socio-economic development and the industrial restructuring

Oriented the professional degree graduates education to the occupational and practicality, can take the initiative to adapt to the urgent needs of the socio-economic development of high-level applied talents. Because of social division increasingly sophisticated, vocational technical content and degree of specialization increasingly high, the higher education cultivate the research and teaching talents, and they are no longer able to meet the strong needs of high-level applied talents of the socio-economic diversification developments, our country not only needs the theoretical workers with a solid foundation of professional knowledge, but also needs high-level compound talents possess knowledge and skills.

Industrial restructuring is the leading force to promote China's economic growth, it should be market-oriented and business-led, a combination of production, study and research, on the basis of other structural adjustment to realize the industrial structure optimization and integration. Among of this, the capability of independent innovation is the central link in China's industrial structure adjustment, the talents structure adjustment and integration are the main factors to achieve self-innovation, and however, the personnel structure adjustment lies in the increase in the proportion of specialized personnel in the talents structure. Industrial structure from labor-intensive to material-intensive, and then to the technology-intensive, the requirements of the talents are no longer the traditional of knowledge and skills type, but requires the talents possess strong capability of practical and innovation. And also has a solid foundation of professional knowledge, the professional degree graduates education in China has been responsible for training for the community for the high-level applied talents with innovation capability and with a solid foundation of professional knowledge. Therefore, graduates education structure must be adapted to the demands for the applied talents of the developments of the industrial structure.

B) Degree and graduates education by their own reform and development

Academic degree has been dominated the main position in academic degrees and graduates education system, talents after graduation from the universities mostly go to the universities or the research departments continue to engage in scientific research, with the social continually forward, graduates from the research departments turned to the social real work departments, the refinement of the social

division and high standards let the high-level special talents with strong capability of practical and innovation became currently the urgent needs of the type of talents. Because of the traditional academic talents in the education process, lack capability of practice and innovation, leads to the graduates cannot find a job, further leads to the employing unit talents vacancies, a large number of graduates stranded in the society, the problems gradually emerged in professional degree Graduate Education. Therefore, degree and graduates education urgent need to reform. Besides, as the number of academic degree talents has been able to satisfy the market demands, China plans in 2015, the number of professional graduates and academic masters' control in the ratio of 1 to 1.

C) Further improve the professional degree education system

2010 China began to recruit full-time professional degree's students, open a new chapter of our professional degree graduates education, the same year, Ministry of Education issued a notice: On the Issuance of a Notice of Master of Finance and Other 19 Kinds of Master's Professional Degrees, via the finance master and other 19 kinds of master's professional degrees setting scheme. February 13th, 2011, the 28th meeting of the Academic Degrees Committee of The State Council consideration by the 39th professional degrees--audit master. The professional degree graduates education gradually became an important part of graduates' education in China. In the past, the students trained by the professional graduates' education always have a fixed whereabouts, so now it cannot meet the demands for the social development. Therefore, development of full-time professional degree education is particularly important at this time.

In China, full-time and part-time professional degree graduates are still the majority in the professional graduates. According to the statistics shows that in China's 31 provinces and cities, up to 371 universities cultivate non-full-time professional graduates. By contrast, the number of implementation of the full-time professional degree graduates education is far not reach this number, the number is still far from the market demands. Be value and develop the full-time professional degree education, it plays an important role in enrich and improve our professional degrees education system, improve the quality of training of the professional graduates education, training for the community for diverse, compound and applied talents.

### **3. Professional Graduates Education in China Now**

A) In our country the professional degree education development situation

Setting of the professional degree is an important content in the China's degree regime system reforming, it enrich and improve the system of graduates education in China ,change the past status of a single type of academic degree system,

training for the community for diverse, compound and applied talents, to promote the social progress.”1990, the 9th meeting of the Academic Degrees Committee of The State Council consideration by About a Few Points on the Setting and Trial Basis the Master Degree of Business Administration, first of its kind of the China's professional degree graduates education” (Baoying, 2010).<sup>1</sup> Today, it has initially formed a professional degree graduate's education system with Chinese characteristics. According to relevant data shows that in China the postgraduate professional degree authorized points about 2679, authorized unit about 509, doctoral professional degrees authorized points about 83, authorized unit about 66, has the professional degrees granting authority institutions about 476, the professional degree graduates education totally enrollment of 85 million students.

The professional degree graduates education has formed master's degree as the main body, and bachelors, masters and doctoral three postgraduates professional degree system, it has initially formed a professional degree graduates education system with Chinese characteristics, training for the community for a large number of the diverse, compound and applied talents. In the past, the professional degree graduates education are carried out the form of non-academic education, March 2009, the Ministry of Education issued a paper of A Number of Opinions on the Training Work in the Full-Time Professional Degree's Students (Teaching and Research [2009]1, decided to expand the range of the full-time professional degree's students, as a basis to give priority to recruit fresh graduates. 2010, Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council Adopted by the examination and approval a degree in Master of professional category, all students can be incorporated into the national postgraduate entrance arrangements. China's postgraduate enrollment patterns has undergone a significant change, the development of the professional degree graduates education has a great historical significance, the full-time professional degree graduates education is becoming an important part of the professional degree graduate s education. Besides, the training patterns of professional degree graduates education in addition to the full-time way, school-enterprise cooperation training pattern gradually become an important professional degree graduates 'education training pattern.

#### B) The development problems of the professional degree graduates education

Firstly, proportion structure and regional development unbalanced. Professional degree graduates education is the main front of train high-level application-oriented talents. In recent years, “professional degree graduates education characteristic gradually revealed, a steady increase of kinds, proportion expanding, regimes for continuous improvement” (Guoyu, 2005, p. 31) , however, the professional degree graduates mainly to non-full-time students, half full-time or commission of training methods as the main mode. Besides, because of the regional economic

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.chinadegrees.cn/xwyyjsjyxx/gjjl/zjft/267383.shtml>.

development is unbalanced, leads to graduates in our country is showing the distribution of the western little and eastern more. In the eastern region, degree authorization also showed the same trends, professional degree graduate- s education experimental unit mostly distributed in the eastern regions, the central and western regions are far less than the number of eastern regions. Generally speaking, the professional degree graduates education is mostly concentrated in the central regions and eastern areas, Northwest Territories professional degree graduates education develop slowly. Therefore, China should increase policy support and coordination of efforts, to ensure that the development of the professional graduates' education able to proportioned and coordinated.

Secondly, the professional graduates training mode lack innovation. Professional degree graduates training mode still follow the traditional culture mode, which to cultivate research and teaching students, whether the teachers is equipped or curriculum and instruction settings arrangements, the choice of teaching methods and others aspects are all "wearing new shoes take the old road", could not escape the shadows of traditional academic postgraduate training mode, under the vocational and professional interaction is difficult to reflect the professional practice, under the occupational and the professional interaction, it is difficult to reflect the professional and practical, students' self-awareness missing seriously, educational thought, specifications of education, teaching content, teaching methods are all could not reflect the professional characteristics.

Thirdly, further improve the professional degree graduates education, quality assurance and management systems. Improve the professional degree education quality assurance, and management systems are the key point of maintaining the professional degree graduates education sustained and healthy development. In our country, the professional graduate education quality assurance and management system has had many problems, their institutional mechanisms are not perfect, policies and regulations are incomplete. "Quality is the lifeline of the graduates' education. The quality of full-time professional degree graduates education should be application-oriented and the professional potential as the value orientation, adapt to social development, enhance the professional levels, and increase the employability and competitiveness". (Hu, 2012, p. 68)

Fourthly, the professional graduates' education lack social recognition. Since 1990, the pace of professional degree graduates education developed very fast. And the past, people thought the professional degree graduates education as the stepping-stone to success and could improve their career advancement. So it lack social competitiveness, low gold contents is the general view of the professional degree. Therefore, to change the traditional prejudice of the professional graduates' education is the key point of to adapt to the talents structure adjustment of the society economic development, in the future, the type of talents in our country will be the professional degree and academic degree rails parallel situation.

Finally, the relevant policies and regulations building are lagging behind. The professional degree setting policies has developed nearly two decades, it has made remarkable achievements, and however, recognition of its achievements at the same time, we also found that there are some problems. In the first place, the important position of the professional degrees education has not been clearly. Issued in Degree Regulations of the People's Republic of China, It does not have a professional degree s definition and expression, in accordance with the academic standards to know the degree system. Issued Professional Degrees Setting Approval Interim Methods (the fowling be called for short for Methods) in 1996, it did not give the essential attribute details of the professional degree defined, and the Methods is temporarily, not stress out the professional degrees characteristics of occupational, practical and innovational. The Management of the professional degree's students adopt a unified form, ignored its own inherent characteristics. In the next place, the training mode of the professional degree graduates in accordance with the traditional mode, on the surface, it is in accordance with the practical guiding ideology, actually, operational aspects always not execute. Again, professional degree and vocational qualification systems convergence is not closely seriously hampered the development of China's professional graduate education. Traditionally, degree and academic degree of double management standards and double management and the importance of the academic certificate, leads to people ignore the degree is just a key indicators of a person 's skills and level, the degree just to prove the education time and the education process.

#### **4. Long-Termed Strategies of Professional Graduates**

##### **A) To Change the traditional bias on the professional graduates education**

The professional degree graduates education is the product of China's socio-economic development. In order to adapt to the demands for the diversification of the applied talents, higher education must make an adaptable revision. In just a few decades of development history, whether it is the teaching ideas or the training mode or the graduation standards, they are far from the characteristics of the vocational and professional, further leads to people have a huge negative impression on low quality of the professional degree graduates education and weak competitiveness of the graduates employment market. People understand the masters always stay in the university teachers and the institutions researchers, lack of awareness of the professional degree graduates, people had a misunderstanding, thought that just only low quality students would choose to learn the professional graduates education, the professional degree graduates is the defective products of the academic degrees graduate, because the students cannot read the academic degree graduates education, they select to read the professional degree graduates education. Therefore, we have to use a different vision and yardstick to look at the

professional degree graduates education, only the two complement one another and mutual development, could balance China's professional graduates' education system.

B) Actively learn the advanced experiences of foreign countries

The professional degree educations of foreign countries development earlier, to understand and grasp the development law of foreign countries of graduate education and the latest international trend, promote China's professional graduates education scientific development. Stones from other hills may serve to polish jade. The development advanced experience of foreign countries of professional degrees graduate education is an important reference system of the development of China's professional degrees education. On the basis of China's professional degree education begun to take shape, actively learn the advanced experience of foreign countries, get rid of the dregs, absorb the essence, and promote China's professional degrees graduate education sustained and healthy development.

C) To combine the professional graduates education with the industrial structure adjustment and development

Economic development give birth to the industrial sector structure upgrade and optimization, further promote China's colleges and universities to cultivate more high-tech talents, adapt to the needs of the economic fast growth. Higher education as the social subsystem, actively promote the development of all the social political, economy, scientific and technological industry. One of the basic functions of the higher education is serve the community, mainly through training talents to embody its function. The professional degree graduates education has been charged with the important tasks of training the high-level application-oriented talents for the community, as a new thing, actively adapt to the industrial restructuring diverse needs of the high-level applied talents is the key to sustained and healthy development of the professional degree graduates education. Besides, the branches of learning and subjects of professional graduates' education related to agricultural, industrial, medication and commerce, because of lack science talents; this seriously hampered the development of the professional degree graduates education.

D) Enhance the connection of the professional graduates' education and the vocational qualification system

Establishment of the vocational qualification system "selection and cultivation a large number of the market economy need professional talents, and to improve the professional qualities of employees, professional and ethical standards and capability of market competition".<sup>1</sup> The professional degree graduates education is a kind of specific education with vocational attribution, the final purpose of

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<sup>1</sup> [http://news.xinhuanet.com/zhengfu/2002-10/21/content\\_602840.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/zhengfu/2002-10/21/content_602840.htm).

education is to cultivate high-level applied talents, have innovation and practice features, able to adapt to the social development urgent needs of the diverse talents and services in the community. The professional degrees graduate education and the vocational qualification system has many similar points, such as they both possess vocational attribution characteristic, generated in the same context of China's socio-economic development and the market economy demands for the skilled and innovative talents. The final goals are all for service the businesses and promote the economic development services. Enhance the connection of the professional degree graduates education and the vocational qualification system, give full play to the combination features of the universities and colleges, education training institutions and enterprises, cultivate more excellent high-end professional talents for our society.

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