

# *Analysis of the Current Situation and Countermeasures of Undergraduate Postgraduate Examination in Private Universities*

**Ze zhi Yuan**

*School of Logistics, Wuhan Technology and Business University, Wuhan, 430065, China  
zoenebula@163.com*

**Keywords:** Private University, Undergraduate Graduates, Taking the Postgraduate Entrance Examination

**Abstract:** The enrollment rate for postgraduate entrance examinations serves as a pivotal metric for assessing the overall educational standards and talent cultivation efficacy of a university. It is a fundamental avenue for fortifying the quality of undergraduate education, augmenting the institution's societal impact and appeal, and a critical strategy for elevating students' comprehensive qualities, competitiveness, and prospects for high-level employment. This paper delves into the motivations, current status, and influencing factors of undergraduate students from private universities who undertake postgraduate entrance examinations. The article scrutinizes the escalating trend in the number of candidates for postgraduate studies, identifying issues such as the lack of targeted preparation, the propensity for cross-disciplinary applications, and inadequate readiness among students from private institutions. To enhance the success rate in these examinations, the paper proposes strategies including precise goal setting, professional alignment, diligence, and perseverance. The objective is to offer guidance for the administration of postgraduate entrance examinations in private universities.

## **1. Introduction**

In 2020, there were 8.74 million graduates from ordinary colleges and universities nationwide. The total number of graduates from ordinary colleges and universities in 2021 reached 9.09 million, and in 2022, the national graduate population hit 10.76 million. The continuous increase in the number of college graduates has made the employment situation more complex and severe. With the rapid growth of the number of undergraduate graduates, the pressure on the employment market has surged. Many undergraduate graduates choose to delay employment and join the expanding ranks of postgraduate entrance examination candidates [1]. As a result, participating in the postgraduate entrance examination has become an important part and task of talent cultivation in colleges and universities. In recent years, the scale of postgraduate entrance examination candidates among graduates from private colleges and universities has continued to expand, with the number of candidates and the examination participation rate steadily increasing. Based on the postgraduate entrance examination data from some private colleges and universities in Wuhan, this article

analyzes the important factors that affect the enrollment rate of the postgraduate entrance examination and proposes specific countermeasures to further improve the enrollment rate. It aims to provide reference and insights for related research.

## 2. Analysis of the Current Situation of Postgraduate Entrance Examination

### 2.1 The Number of People Taking the Postgraduate Entrance Examination in China Has Significantly Increased

The current situation of postgraduate entrance examination is showing a trend of continuous popularity and intensified competition. With the yearly increase in the number of graduates from ordinary colleges and universities nationwide, the employment situation has become increasingly severe. Consequently, a growing number of undergraduate students choose to pursue further education and enhance their academic qualifications and competitiveness through the postgraduate entrance examination [2].

Against this backdrop, the postgraduate entrance examination has become a major focus in China's higher education. According to relevant data, the number of postgraduate entrance examination applicants in China has continued to grow over the past five years. In 2019, the number of applicants for postgraduate programs reached a high of 2.9 million, representing a 21.85% increase compared to 2018. In 2020, the number of applicants exceeded the 3.41 million mark, and in 2021, it continued to rise, reaching 3.77 million. In 2022, the number of applicants surpassed 4.5 million, and in 2023, the number of applicants for China's postgraduate entrance examination reached 4.74 million, setting a new record high.

Table 1 presents statistical data from China Education Online, which provides a glimpse into the basic development trends of postgraduate entrance examination among graduates. It demonstrates the high growth potential and long-term sustainability of the number of postgraduate entrance examination applicants. The postgraduate entrance examination has become a social phenomenon that has triggered a series of chain reactions, deserving deep attention and research from a wide range of experts and scholars.

Table 1: 2018-2022 year statistics on the number of candidates and admission ratio for the postgraduate entrance examination

Year	Number of applicants	growth rate(%)	Enrollment	Acceptance Rate
2022	4.57million	21.22%	1.05 million	22.99%
2021	3.77 million	10.56%	0.99million	26.27%
2020	3.41 million	17.59%	0.81 million	23.79%
2019	2.90 million	21.80%	0.76million	26.29%
2018	2.38 million	18.40%	0.72million	30.34%

### 2.2 The Current Situation of Postgraduate Entrance Examination in Private Universities in Wuhan

China's private higher education emerged around 2000 and has become a crucial component of the country's higher education system after more than two decades of development. In 2021, the number of graduates from ordinary colleges and universities in China reached 9.09 million, with 1.6962 million graduates from private institutions. The number of graduates from private universities has grown in tandem with the overall increase in graduates from ordinary colleges and universities.

By the end of 2022, Wuhan City had 31 private colleges and universities, including 23 private undergraduate institutions and 8 private vocational colleges. According to incomplete statistics, in 2022, there were over 60,000 undergraduate graduates from private colleges and universities in Wuhan. Among these graduates, there were two distinct phenomena observed. While vocational college graduates tended to enter the workforce directly, undergraduate graduates exhibited a bifurcation. Some chose to pursue employment, while others opted to prepare for the postgraduate entrance examination.

Table 2 presents a statistical overview of the number of undergraduate graduates from certain private undergraduate institutions in Wuhan participating in the postgraduate entrance examination from 2021 to 2022.

Table 2: 2021-2022 year statistics on the number of undergraduate graduates from some private universities in Wuhan taking the postgraduate entrance examination

School	Number of candidates		Enrollment		Acceptance Rate(%)	
	2021	2022	2021	2022	2021	2022
College of Post and Telecommunication of WIT	1250	1300	188	195	14%	15%
Wuhan Huaxia Institute of Technology	1000	1100	120	130	12%	13%
Wuhan Technology and Business University	685	738	105	99	15%	13%
Wuhan University of Bioengineering	280	250	8	10	3%	4%

Table 2 reveals that the number of undergraduate graduates from private colleges and universities in Wuhan pursuing postgraduate entrance exams has maintained a growth trend. However, there are significant differences in the number of students participating from various institutions. A few private universities have over a thousand graduates participating in the exams, such as Wuhan University of Engineering, Post and Telecommunication and Wuhan Huaxia University of Technology. Meanwhile, a larger number of private colleges and universities have graduate participation ranging from 200 to 900 students.

The data also indicates that the acceptance rate for postgraduate entrance exams has maintained an overall upward trend, with rates exceeding 10% and peaking at 15%. According to authoritative data released by the Ministry of Education, the number of ordinary college graduates in China is expected to continue to grow, with the number of graduates exceeding 10 million in 2022. Simultaneously, the number of students participating in postgraduate entrance exams has also been increasing. It is foreseeable that, amidst the severe employment situation, private college and university graduates will also face a surge in the popularity of postgraduate entrance exams.

### 3. An Analysis of the Psychological Motivation of Postgraduate Entrance Examination

Motivation is a psychological process that serves as the foundation for human behavior. According to psychology, motivation is the internal force that initiates, sustains, and facilitates individual actions. The motivation for postgraduate entrance exams can be categorized into two aspects: achievement motivation and self-actualization motivation. Achievement motivation refers to an individual's subjective desire to strive actively to achieve success and reach set goals [3].

Through investigation and analysis of data on postgraduate entrance exam participation among undergraduate graduates from private colleges and universities in Wuhan, we have summarized

several types of motivations for graduate students to pursue postgraduate studies.

### **3.1 Failure in the College Entrance Examination**

In private colleges and universities, students who decide to pursue postgraduate studies typically possess a solid cultural foundation. Many of them encountered setbacks during the college entrance examination due to various reasons, yet they chose not to repeat the year and instead enrolled in private institutions. Deep within these students' hearts, there remains an unyielding spirit. They firmly believe that a single failure in the college entrance examination does not determine their fate. With the motto "My fate is in my own hands, not in the heavens," they uphold an optimistic attitude towards life and a positive spirit of striving forward. Leveraging their solid cultural foundation and unwavering determination to overcome failure, they have sounded the clarion call for their postgraduate entrance exam campaign [4].

These students are not only motivated by their personal desires for success but also by a desire to prove themselves and overcome past challenges. They see postgraduate studies as an opportunity to further enhance their academic abilities, expand their horizons, and ultimately achieve their personal and professional goals.

### **3.2 Running a Private School without Good Reputation**

Although private colleges and universities constitute an important component of China's higher education system, they primarily serve as a supplementary and compensatory role. Being funded by social capital without the support of state finances, private higher education institutions often face inherent funding shortages. With a relatively short history of development, these institutions initially allocated significant resources towards campus construction, resulting in insufficient attention to educational quality. Consequently, graduates from these institutions have received low recognition in society, which has negatively impacted the reputation of private colleges and universities.

Furthermore, the pursuit of profit by social capital and the public welfare nature of education create significant contradictions and conflicts within private institutions. Full-cost education has increased the financial burden on students and their families, particularly those from ordinary backgrounds. This has led to widespread dissatisfaction among parents towards private colleges and universities.

### **3.3 Employment Needs, Enhancing Educational Qualifications**

Both public and private universities face the challenge of employment for their graduates after four years of study. Graduates from public universities, especially those from top-tier institutions such as 985 and 211 universities, are often highly sought after, with several employment options to choose from. However, the situation for graduates from private universities is quite different. Although it's not necessarily the case that graduation equals unemployment, finding a good job can be extremely difficult. Unless the graduate comes from a well-connected or affluent family, the situation can be particularly challenging [5].

The pressure to find employment is a significant factor driving many private university graduates to choose to pursue postgraduate studies. Successfully gaining a place in a postgraduate program transforms a student's status from a private university graduate to a public university graduate, which is a highly desired outcome for many. After three years of postgraduate study and graduating with a master's degree, the graduate's prospects for finding employment are often vastly improved.

The transition from private university graduate to postgraduate student at a public institution not

only enhances the graduate's credentials but also provides them with an opportunity to further develop their skills and knowledge. This, in turn, can significantly increase their chances of finding a well-paying and fulfilling job. Therefore, for many private university graduates, pursuing postgraduate studies is a strategic decision aimed at overcoming employment challenges and enhancing their future prospects.

### **3.4 Continuing Education and Dedicating Oneself to Scientific Research**

Among private universities, there are many students who possess lofty aspirations and ideals. Those who aspire to pursue scientific research view postgraduate entrance exams as a crucial first hurdle they must overcome. With strong convictions, these students have clear goals, determined attitudes, and a precise direction.

Currently, the employment standards of research institutions and universities in China generally set the minimum threshold for recruitment at a doctoral degree. Master's degree graduates are often not considered. For those who are intent on pursuing scientific research, postgraduate studies are merely a stepping stone. Only by obtaining a doctoral degree will they have the opportunity to enter research institutions or universities.

Therefore, for these aspiring students from private universities, the journey towards scientific research is both challenging and rewarding. With perseverance and dedication, they strive to overcome each obstacle, be it the postgraduate entrance exams or the pursuit of a doctoral degree, in order to fulfill their dreams of contributing to the field of scientific research.

## **4. Analysis of the Problems That Affect the Success of Postgraduate Entrance Examination Admission**

### **4.1 Set your Sights High and Apply to Popular Universities and Majors**

The sources of faculty in private universities are diverse, often lacking sufficient experience in educational management and a comprehensive understanding of the entire higher education system. This results in limited guidance for students seeking to pursue postgraduate studies, leading to a degree of blindness and randomness among students when preparing for the exams.

On the other hand, public universities enjoy various national policies supporting postgraduate education, such as direct entry into master's programs and exemption from entrance exams for recommended students. Additionally, their students have access to more comprehensive information regarding various aspects of the postgraduate entrance process, including the number of available seats, specific programs, and supervising faculty members. This allows them to target their applications more effectively.

Nationally, private universities have largely not established postgraduate education programs, meaning they lack practical experience in guiding students through the postgraduate entrance process. Consequently, their students often lack the necessary guidance and training, leading to blind and haphazard applications. Many students, disregarding their own abilities and the specifics of their institutions and majors, aim for prestigious universities or popular programs, often ending in disappointment.

### **4.2 Cross Disciplinary Application for Graduate Studies**

Private universities often lack a strong academic atmosphere, the sense of competition and pressure that can drive students to excel. As a result, preparing for postgraduate entrance exams is often the concern of only a minority of motivated students. While the information society has made

it easier to search for exam-related information online, accessing critical and timely updates can still be challenging. Most valuable information is often shared through social channels among classmates and friends.

Due to the lack of effective communication among private university students, many miss out on crucial application information. This can lead to hasty and arbitrary choices when applying for postgraduate programs, with students selecting majors based solely on their personal interests rather than considering the alignment with their undergraduate studies. Cross-major applications, where students pursue a postgraduate program unrelated to their undergraduate degree, are common in this context. However, most supervising professors prefer candidates who have a consistent or closely related undergraduate major, as they are more likely to have a solid foundation in the subject and be able to produce meaningful research. Cross-major applicants, starting from scratch in their postgraduate studies, often lack this foundation, making them less attractive to potential supervisors.

#### **4.3 Insufficient Preparation and A Lack of Sufficient Attention both Psychologically and in Terms of Action**

Psychologically, a lack of sufficient attention often manifests as a shortage of motivation and a sense of purpose. Candidates may view the postgraduate entrance examination as merely one option in life, rather than a task that requires full commitment, thus finding it difficult to maintain consistent enthusiasm and motivation for studying. This mindset can easily lead to laxity during the preparation process, making it difficult for candidates to focus on their studies and, consequently, affecting their preparation effectiveness.

In terms of action, insufficient preparation is mainly reflected in a lack of systematicness and planning. Candidates may fail to develop detailed preparation plans, or even if they do, they may not strictly adhere to them. They may overlook the review of basic knowledge, fail to engage in systematic practice of question types or mock exams, and even be caught up in handling other matters right before the exam, without adequate preparation. This lack of planning and execution can make it difficult for candidates to demonstrate their true abilities during the exam.

### **5. Strategies to Improve the Success Rate of Postgraduate Entrance Examination for Students**

#### **5.1 Precise Positioning and Targeted Efforts**

Precise positioning and targeted efforts are crucial strategies in the process of preparing for postgraduate entrance exams. They mean that during the preparation, candidates need to have a clear understanding of their goals and directions, and take targeted measures to improve the efficiency and success rate of their preparation.

Specifically, precise positioning requires candidates to have a clear understanding of themselves, including their academic level, interests, and future career plans. Based on these understandings, candidates can screen out suitable target universities and majors, avoiding blind applications or following trends.

Meanwhile, targeted efforts emphasize having a clear plan and steps during the preparation process. Candidates need to formulate practical preparation plans based on their actual situation and the requirements of the target universities, and strictly follow the plans. During the preparation, candidates should focus on the core knowledge points and difficulties of the exam subjects, systematically review and conduct special training to overcome difficulties one by one and improve their problem-solving abilities.

In addition, precise positioning and targeted efforts also require candidates to focus on



psychological adjustment and emotion management during the preparation process. Preparing for postgraduate entrance exams is a long and arduous task, and candidates need to maintain a positive mindset and good emotional state to cope with the challenges and pressures in the preparation process.

Finally, precise positioning and targeted efforts are equally important during the postgraduate entrance exam interview. Candidates need to prepare in advance according to the requirements and formats of the interview, including self-introduction, professional knowledge demonstration, and answers to interview questions. Through thorough preparation and confident performance, candidates can stand out in the interview and increase their chances of being admitted.

## **5.2 Professional Alignment and Undergraduate-Graduate Correlation**

When it comes to choosing a postgraduate program, it is crucial to ensure that the major aligns with your undergraduate studies and that there is a strong correlation between your bachelor's and master's degrees. This ensures a smooth transition and maximum utilization of your prior knowledge and skills. A matching major between your undergraduate and postgraduate studies ensures continuity in your academic journey. It allows you to build upon the foundation you established during your bachelor's program, deepening your understanding and expertise in a particular field. This not only makes the learning process more efficient but also increases the likelihood of success in your postgraduate studies.

Moreover, a strong correlation between your bachelor's and master's degrees enhances your career prospects. Employers often prefer candidates who have a consistent academic background, as it indicates a level of commitment and focus. Having a matching major also makes you a more competitive candidate in the job market, as you possess specialized knowledge and skills that are relevant to the industry. To ensure a good match between your undergraduate and postgraduate studies, you should carefully research the available programs and their requirements. Look for programs that offer courses that are aligned with your interests and career goals. Additionally, consider seeking advice from academic mentors or industry experts who can provide insights into the best program options for you.

In conclusion, choosing a postgraduate program that aligns with your undergraduate studies and has a strong correlation between your bachelor's and master's degrees is crucial for your academic and career success. It ensures a smooth transition, maximizes the utilization of your prior knowledge and skills, and enhances your employability.

## **5.3 Work Hard and Persevere**

The common saying goes, "A penny of hard work brings a penny of reward." Laziness is a common trait among many, and it is reflected in the behavior of some postgraduate exam candidates. After completing the application process, they purchase study materials and enroll in preparatory classes. However, their efforts often remain superficial, lacking the depth and dedication required to truly review and consolidate the knowledge necessary for the exam. This results in a waste of both time and money.

As the saying goes, "Skill comes from diligent practice, neglect leads to mediocrity; Achievement results from careful consideration, carelessness leads to ruin." Postgraduate entrance exams are akin to a crucible, a process of rebirth through fire. It requires arduous struggle and tortuous trials. Only by making a firm decision, studying diligently, and persevering consistently, can one hope to see the dawn of success.

Therefore, it is crucial for candidates to approach their studies with focus and dedication. Mere superficial efforts will not suffice. True success lies in the depth and thoroughness of one's

preparation, and only through consistent and diligent work can one hope to achieve their desired outcomes.

## 6. Conclusion

Enhancing the postgraduate enrollment rate among students from private universities is a crucial path to improving the quality of teaching and learning in these institutions. It can further drive the development of academic programs and foster professional growth. In recent years, private universities have placed significant emphasis on postgraduate entrance exams and have achieved noteworthy results. The number of students participating in these exams has increased year by year, and the enrollment rate has continued to rise, leading to consistent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. For the universities, conducting postgraduate education initiatives, disseminating exam preparation experiences, optimizing the learning environment, and providing material support and incentives to students are essential strategies to promote postgraduate entrance exam efforts. These measures create a conducive atmosphere for students to excel in their preparations. For individual students, success in postgraduate entrance exams hinges on several key factors. Firstly, they need to accurately assess their strengths and weaknesses, set clear and realistic goals, and work diligently to achieve them. Secondly, leveraging social resources and collecting useful information is crucial for gaining a competitive edge. Thirdly, maintaining good physical and mental health is essential for sustained and effective learning. Finally, developing a comprehensive and well-planned study schedule is integral to ensuring success.

By combining these institutional and individual efforts, private universities can significantly enhance the postgraduate enrollment rate of their students, thereby contributing to the overall improvement of teaching quality and professional development.

## References

- [1] Li Min, Xiong Xicheng *A Study on the Psychological Problems of College Graduates in Postgraduate Entrance Examination: Taking Henan University of Engineering as an Example* [J]. *Modern Education*, 2018(16).
- [2] Fan Jiajia, Niu Lina, et al. *A study on the influencing factors of employment and postgraduate entrance examination behavior choices among undergraduate graduates* [J]. *Gansu Science and Technology*, 2018, 11.
- [3] Zhou Liangyao *Exploring Effective Ways to Improve the Graduate Entrance Examination Rate of Applied Undergraduate Colleges and Universities in the Context of Higher Education Popularization* [J]. *Science and Technology Perspective*, 2020, 3.
- [4] Duan Haiming *Analysis and Countermeasures for Undergraduate Entrance Examinations in Local Applied Undergraduate Universities: A Case Study of A College* [J]. *Journal of Xichang University (Natural Science Edition)*, 2020, 3.
- [5] Zhu Guixian. *Reflections on How Applied Undergraduate Colleges Improve Graduate Entrance Examination Rates* [J]. *Modern Education Journal*, 2017, 8.