

# Opportunities and Challenges for Graduates of Colleges and Universities in Shenzhen City in the Context of the Construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area

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## ABSTRACT

This paper makes an in-depth discussion on the employment of college graduates from Shenzhen, analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of college graduates from Shenzhen in the Greater Bay Area of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao from the aspects of policy background, market demand, location and so on, and provides practical suggestions based on the results for this group who are deeply confused. First, the improvement of foreign language proficiency contributes to increased opportunities for graduates to work in a multinational company. At the same time, attention should be paid to the importance of minority languages in international cooperation and exchange. Second, given the lower-than-average CIER index of occupations as finance, taxation and occupations, and the fierce job competition, it is easier to take up a job with skills of a professional technician. Third, job hunting should not be limited to state-owned enterprises or large well-known enterprises. There are also a large number of excellent positions in small, medium and micro enterprises. Fourth, the "trend" of government policy should be firmly grasped to strive for favorable resources for college graduates. Fifth, new industries such as virtual economy and high-end equipment manufacturing should be included in job intention to become the pioneer or first-comer in relevant industries.

*Keywords: Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, current demonstration area, Shenzhen, college graduates, employment*

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a clarion calling for the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the "Outline of Planning" provides a clear direction for all aspects of the construction. In terms of spatial layout, it is clearly pointed out that the four major central cities of Hong Kong, Macao, Guangzhou and Shenzhen should be regarded as the core engines of regional development, continue to give play to their comparative advantages to make them better and stronger, and enhance their role in driving the development of surrounding regions. The "Opinions" issued by the central government in 2019 also highlighted the importance of Shenzhen to the Greater Bay Area and the whole country. With such a positive signal, college graduates in Shenzhen will have great opportunities for the development. Of course, challenges and opportunities always go hand in hand. How should contemporary college students in Shenzhen seize the current opportunities? What contribution can the

college students make to the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area? This article will make the analysis and study from the regional mission, policy interpretation, situation and other aspects.

## II. THE HISTORICAL MISSIONS OF GUANGDONG-HONG KONG-MACAO GREATER BAY AREA

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is composed of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhuhai, Foshan, Huizhou, Dongguan, Zhongshan, Jiangmen, Zhaoqing in the Pearl River Delta region of Guangdong Province and the two special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macao. The total area of the Bay Area is about 56,000 square kilometers. As of the end of 2018, the resident population has exceeded 70 million people. Its core advantages are becoming increasingly prominent. For example, there is a system of "store front and factory back", with a geographical advantage

of vast hinterland; the Bay Area has a sound system, a high degree of innovation, and industrial advantages with outstanding headquarter effects; and it also has institutional advantages of a multiple pattern of "one country, two systems, three customs zones, and four core cities" [1]. It is precisely because of its many strong advantages that the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has been able to go global and benchmark the three world-class bay areas currently recognized in the world: the New York Bay Area, the San Francisco Bay Area and the Tokyo Bay Area, making it an ideal place for contemporary college graduates [2]. To better engage in the construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and realize its own value, it is necessary to understand the current development direction, strategic goals and historical mission of the Bay Area.

*A. Working with Guangdong Province to build a new regional development pattern of "one core, one belt and one area"*

Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area needs to work with Guangdong Province to build a new regional development pattern of "one core, one belt and one area". The Fourth Plenary Session of the 12th Guangdong Provincial Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) innovatively put forward a new pattern of regional development of "one core, one belt and one area", aiming to promote coordinated development within the region by relying on system and mechanism innovation, and transforming the current situation of "queuing to dinner" into a new pattern of "having dinner with round table", among which the so-called "one core" is the Pearl River Delta region. On the other hand, it is pointed out in the "Outline of Planning", the development gap within Greater Bay Area is still large, the synergy and inclusiveness need to be strengthened, and there are homogenized competition and resource mismatch in some regions and fields [2]. As the "first echelon" of economic development of Guangdong Province, the Pearl River Delta is the core area of Guangdong Province. Its main function is to coordinate the development of peripheral cities, form a chain of beads, and form a coastal economic belt leading the development of Guangdong Province. It can be said that the new pattern of "one core, one belt and one area" coincides with the construction of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in promoting the overall coordination process and deepening regional integration of the Pearl River Delta. The Pearl River Delta should grasp the dual identity of "one core" and being an important part of Greater Bay Area, improve the internal coordination mechanism, and strengthen the accommodation between different systems. It is foreseeable that the internal coordination and integrated development of the Pearl River Delta region will

become the key points for the realization of the two strategies. The Pearl River Delta region will become the core area and main engine for the development of Guangdong Province, reducing the gap between eastern Guangdong, western Guangdong and northern Guangdong, and the Pearl River Delta region, and making the overall economic level of Guangdong Province higher. Also, the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area will directly benefit and accelerate development.

*B. Balancing the development of the Northern, Central and Southern of China, and supporting the construction of "the Belt and Road"*

The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area needs to fully support the strategic construction of "the Belt and Road". Since 2014, China has established multiple strategies such as the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei coordinated development strategy, the Yangtze River Delta economic belt strategy, and "the Belt and Road" strategy, which have pointed the direction for the development of China's major regions [3]. There is no a clear national strategic approach for the southern region. The implementation of "Agreement on Deepening Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Cooperation to Promote the Construction of the Greater Bay Area" just fills in the gaps in China's strategic map and balances the development of the Northern, Central and Southern of China. At the same time, with the help of the vibrant platform of the Greater Bay Area, China can fully expand its operations in the South China Sea. The South China Sea is the largest sea area of China. The region is rich in marine resources, and fisheries and marine mining are booming. As the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is under construction, it will certainly be able to handle the relationship with the South China Sea, and deepen the cooperation with countries along the "Belt and Road" in the areas of infrastructure connectivity, economy and trade, finance, ecological protection and cultural exchanges, so as to create an important support area for the construction of the "Belt and Road" [4].

*C. Testing the strong vitality of "one country, two systems" and shouldering the heavy responsibility of opening to the outside world*

The construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area is the best opportunity to test the vitality of "one country, two systems". At the end of 2019, General Secretary Xi Jinping inspected Macao, and attended the 20th anniversary of Macao returning to the motherland and the inaugural ceremony of the fifth government of the Macao Special Administrative Region. Unconsciously, Macao has passed its twentieth year since returning to the motherland, and the basic national policy of "one country, two systems" is the best solution to solve the problems left over by history

and maintain the long-term prosperity and stability of Hong Kong and Macao [5]. The Central Government has issued the "Outline of Planning", which clearly states that practice connotation of "one country, two systems" should be enriched, and the exchanges and cooperation among the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao should be further strengthened, so as to provide more opportunities for the economic and social development of Hong Kong and Macao and for compatriots from Hong Kong and Macao to develop in the Mainland. Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao have different social systems and different legal systems and belong to different customs areas. Therefore, it is necessary to reexamine the strong vitality of "one country, two systems" under the socialist system with Chinese characteristics in the new era, and continue to implement the policy of "the people of Hong Kong governing Hong Kong, the people of Macao governing Macao". Considering the legal characteristics and conflicts of urban agglomeration in Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, how to coordinate the cross-regional planning and promote the economic cooperation and legal cooperation among the three regions is an important issue. At the same time, Greater Bay Area should also make good use of the great advantages of the "two systems" to promote the coordinated development of regional economy, inject new energy into the development of Hong Kong and Macao, build a first-class bay area full of vitality and international competitiveness, become the "South Gate" of China's opening up, and better integrate into the global market system.

### **III. THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF SHENZHEN BEING AN ADVANCED DEMONSTRATION AREA**

Not long ago, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued "Opinions on supporting Shenzhen to build a demonstration area of socialism with Chinese characteristics". The "Opinions" reflect the correct understanding of the central leadership of Chinese and international situation. Shenzhen should also actively respond to the opportunities make innovation under the socialist system with Chinese characteristics in the new era, and strive to build a city model of "great modern socialist country" [8].

#### *A. Accelerating to build Shenzhen into a city of innovation and science and technology*

Shenzhen should continue to make inroads in the high-tech industry to build a veritable capital of innovation and a city of science and technology. The "Opinions" pointed out that it will take Shenzhen as the main position to build a comprehensive national science center to strengthen the innovative advantages of industry-university-research cooperation. This means that Shenzhen will lead the "Guangzhou-Shenzhen-

Hong Kong-Macao" technology innovation corridor and play a key role in the innovative and technological construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area [9]. Shenzhen should speed up research and development in 5G communications, artificial intelligence, cyberspace and technology, blockchain technology, and foreign exchange management research. At the same time, it should attach importance to the cultivation and introduction of scientific and technological talents, further deepen the cooperation between Shenzhen and Hong Kong, and promote the rational flow of innovation factors and the opening and sharing of scientific and technological resources. Efforts will be made to explore new cooperation mechanisms for the "Guangzhou-Shenzhen-Hong Kong-Macao" science and technology innovation corridor. And it is necessary to actively promote the seamless docking and reasonable flow of innovation elements between regions, and explore new paths for science and technology cooperation among the Mainland, Hong Kong and Macao. At present, Shenzhen has made great peripheral radiation effect, has the ability to welcome a new wave of openness, and is forming an industrial structure of "two-wheel drive" with advanced manufacturing and modern service industries. During the period of constructing the Greater Bay Area, the high-end equipment manufacturing industry and advanced manufacturing industry of Shenzhen will become new growth areas.

#### *B. Realizing the innovation of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics in the new era and deepening reform*

As a leading demonstration area of socialism with Chinese characteristics, Shenzhen must shoulder the heavy responsibility of reform and opening up, explore and build an advanced institutional system, comprehensively improve the level of rule of law, implement the core values of socialism, and become a leader in raising the banner, gathering the people, educating new people, promoting culture and displaying images in the new era. The "Opinions" propose to support Shenzhen to carry out regional comprehensive reform experiments of state-owned enterprises, build a high-standard and high-quality free trade pilot zone, undertake various major international transactions, deepen foreign exchange management reforms, and conduct innovative applications, such as research on digital currencies. According to Shenzhen Special Economic Zone Daily, as of the end of June 2019, 71 qualified pilot enterprises in Qianhai, Shenzhen had handled the foreign exchange income payment facilitation business of capital account. The foreign exchange income payment of capital account had changed from "review first, payment later" to "payment first, spot check later", and the payment amount is equivalent to 1.49 billion US dollars.

Shenzhen has been on the road to reform and opening up for a long time. The overwhelming changes that have taken place in Shenzhen over the years have proved the correctness of the reform and opening up. With the deepening of reform, Shenzhen will encounter many challenges in the exploration of institutional innovation. Anyone involved in adjusting existing laws should submit relevant bills to the National People's Congress and the Standing Committee in accordance with legal procedures and implement them after authorization or decision to ensure that Shenzhen's reform is carried out under the legal framework.

#### **IV. OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLEGE GRADUATES IN SHENZHEN**

From the "Outline" to "Opinions", due to the reasons of the times and international relations, Shenzhen has become one of rapidly developing cities in China. From a small fishing village on the South China Sea to a two-way market-oriented special economic zone of "introduction" and "going out", to the leading demonstration area that now has a regional GDP of 24.221 billion yuan, earthshaking is a good way to describe the changes in Shenzhen over the decades [10] [11].

As General Secretary Xi Jinping said, from ancient times to the present, talents have been the foundation of a rich country and a great plan for the prosperity of the state [12]. National policies are good for the development of Shenzhen and promote the rapid development of economy for a considerable period of time. But in the long run, talent is the main driving force for regional development. As is known to all, Guangzhou, as a long-established provincial capital, has very rich educational resources and a large number of universities. It is a popular area for corporate recruitment [13]. But in the eyes of ordinary people, the young Shenzhen performs like a little dwarfed in terms of educational resources. However, after years of development, this form has undergone some changes. According to the 2018 National Economic and Social Development Statistical Bulletin, there are currently 13 regular colleges and universities in Shenzhen, with one newly increased; and there are 103,800 students, an increase of 7.4%. Throughout the year, 27,100 college students were enrolled in the city; there were 86,200 students at school, and 23,100 graduates. 125,000 adults were enrolled in colleges; there 27 thousand students at school, and 75 thousand graduates. 6500 ordinary students were enrolled in ordinary colleges; there were 17,600 graduate students and 49,900 graduates. It can be seen that the number of college graduates in Shenzhen is relatively large. Since these graduates are in Shenzhen and have a huge geographical advantage, they should strive to seize the precious opportunity of "first coming" and actively

participate in the construction of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

##### *A. Some professional posts are in great demand, and the demands of private enterprises are huge*

The clarion calling for the development and improvement of the current demonstration area has been sounded, and the action to continue to build the Greater Bay Area is in full swing. Most of the professional posts in Shenzhen and even the whole Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area have a huge demand for professional talents. In November 2019, the 2019 award ceremony for China's best employer and International Management Forum of China Human Capital hosted by Zhaopin was held in Guangzhou. At the conference, Zhaopin released the "report on industrial development and talent flow of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area in 2019" (hereinafter referred to as the report). According to the report, from the perspective of talent supply and demand in the whole Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, Internet / e-commerce and real estate / construction / building materials / engineering are the two industries with the highest demand for recruitment in the third quarter of 2019. The number of people in need of recruitment accounts for 12.77% and 11.46% of all industries respectively, ranking the top two, with strong demand for industrial talents. In the third quarter of 2019, the industry with the highest recruitment demand in Foshan, Jiangmen, Zhaoqing, Zhuhai and other cities in the west of Greater Bay Area is real estate industry; the industries with the highest recruitment demand in Huizhou, Dongguan and Zhongshan are electronic technology industry, semiconductor industry and integrated circuit industry; and the industries with the highest recruitment demand in Shenzhen and Guangzhou are Internet industry and electronic commerce industry.

At present, most of the positions with a large talent gap are concentrated in technical occupations, which require applicants to have excellent professional skills. In sharp contrast, the positions of finance, audit, tax and administration, logistics, secretary account for 1.69% and 2.67% respectively, and the CIER index is as low as 0.16 and 0.26, showing that the financial and administrative personnel are seriously saturated. However, there are still few talents applying for skilled workers. With the previous generation of skilled workers leaving their jobs, the concept of young skilled workers is also changing. They pay more attention to the working environment, quality and experience, and have a certain conflict with the flow line production of the previous workshop. College graduates have just finished the study in the "ivory tower", which is suitable for transforming knowledge into substantive results and polishing their professional skills in the work. On the other hand, from the perspective of talent

supply and demand of all kinds of enterprises, private enterprises have the highest demand for talent in the third quarter of 2019, accounting for 57.74% of all types of enterprises, far higher than that of other types of enterprises. At present, state-owned enterprises and foreign enterprises are still the priority for college graduates. However, with the gradual development of local private enterprises and the improvement of welfare conditions, graduates also take into consideration when taking up an occupation.

#### *B. Favorable government policies and supporting policies for self-employment*

As a young and dynamic city, Shenzhen has always attached great importance to innovation and entrepreneurship. Since the establishment of the current demonstration zone, Shenzhen has taken the responsibility of promoting regional innovation drive, and the supporting policies in innovation and entrepreneurship have been strengthened again [14]. Recently, the department of human resources and social security of Guangdong Province issued "policies and measures on supporting Shenzhen to build a leading demonstration zone of socialism with Chinese characteristics to promote the priority development of human resources and social security" (hereinafter referred to as "20 items of policies and measures"), which proposed 20 items of new policies and measures from five aspects, including employment and entrepreneurship, personnel and talents, so as to support Shenzhen to implement the policy of employment priority. Efforts should be made to establish a sound promotion system of entrepreneurship to promote employment, promote the interactive development of industrial economy and human resources, and improve the employment support system for key groups. In 2020, the number of subsidy objects will be expanded, and the subsidy standards for students in colleges and universities, vocational schools and technical institutes in Shenzhen, as well as graduates within five years, returned overseas graduates within five years will be lifted from the household registration restrictions, and the subsidy standards for start-ups will be improved. For the relevant personnel, this is a rare opportunity. It is necessary to seize the opportunity to work hard in a good time of youth and strive for the success of entrepreneurship.

#### *C. Being adjacent to Hong Kong and Macao, and strengthening the trend of diversified cooperation*

Shenzhen has a superior location advantage. It is not only geographically adjacent to Hong Kong, but also separated from Macau by a bridge. Multiple cooperation should be the employment tendency of college graduates in Shenzhen. College graduates in Shenzhen should also make full use of the advantages of the "one country, two systems" system to seek

opportunities in Hong Kong and Macao Special Administrative Region. Hong Kong is one of the core cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and one of the five international financial centers in the world. As an important window for exchanges and cooperation between China and Portuguese-spoken countries, Macao also has rich tourism resources, which reflects its importance [15]. Hong Kong's attraction to college graduates mainly lies in its highly integrated resources and mature platform, which provides a sustainable and healthy development environment for the youth of Greater Bay Area [16]. Macao has the Recruitment Program of Global Experts, which can provide no more than 300000 yuan of interest free loans for young entrepreneurs in Macao, and encourage more aspiring young people to participate in the construction of Greater Bay Area. In the future, the flow of talents in Greater Bay Area will be more and smoother, and the trend of diversified cooperation will be more and more obvious. For example, college graduates who master new technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data analysis and blockchain can jointly discuss current hot projects such as digital currency and foreign exchange management, and carry out joint research and innovation in major leading fields and key areas of industrial development by utilizing the superior scientific research resources of Hong Kong.

### **V. CHALLENGES FACED BY COLLEGE GRADUATES IN SHENZHEN**

College graduates in Shenzhen have great geographical advantages, but also face many challenges. The construction of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has formed a huge attraction for the talents. Its radiation range is far larger than that of Guangdong Province, and even there are many talents all over the country who are looking forward to, and plan to go to the Great Bay area to dig the first bucket of gold in life [17]. This situation makes the competition in Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area gradually intensified, and many positions have put forward higher-level requirements for employers.

#### *A. Intensified employment competition in Guangzhou and Shenzhen*

Greater Bay Area has many advantages in national policy support, economic and industrial development, employment and talent attraction, raising people's expectations for its future development. The superior innovative employment environment of Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao has attracted a large number of college graduates and people from all walks of life to seek development opportunities. Especially after the release of "Outline of Planning", it has shown a strong net inflow trend of talents. According to the relevant

data of Zhaopin, by the third quarter of 2019, the CIER index of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area fell to 0.87 from 1.06 in the same period last year. The situation of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area changed from "short supply" to "more supply than demand".

Making a general survey of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the CIER index of Guangzhou and Shenzhen is lower than 1, which is 0.64 and 0.99 respectively. The recruitment demand in Shenzhen is mainly concentrated in insurance, hotel / catering, electronic technology / semiconductor / integrated circuit, Internet / e-commerce and other industries. The year-on-year decrease of recruitment demand in these industries in the third quarter of 2019 is 63.08%, 80.73%, 33.15% and 7.73% respectively.

#### *B. Improvement of requirements for talent quality and foreign language level*

The "oversupply" of middle and low-end talents highlights the demand and desire for high-end talents of all industries in Greater Bay Area. This suggests that college graduates should improve their personal quality, and cultivate the ability of group cooperation and communication, so as to adapt to the increasingly close cross-border cooperation and team work in the future. With the development of time, the requirements for foreign language level in the future workplace will be gradually improved [18]. The mastery of English, French, Spanish, Japanese and other minority languages can strengthen the cooperation and exchange among talents from different countries and break the inherent barriers between countries. At the same time, it is necessary to emphasize the importance of cross-cultural communication for workplace cooperation. Communication with people from different cultural backgrounds requires not only corresponding language knowledge, but also corresponding cultural awareness. When people from different cultural regions communicate with each other, the quality of cooperation will be improved if they can consider the characteristics of the cultural environment.

#### *C. Innovating collaboration environment and improving market collaboration conditions*

Coordinated development has always been an important topic in the construction of Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The basic state policy of "one country, two systems" has maintained the sustainable prosperity and development of Hong Kong and Macao, but it has also caused great differences in economy, system and welfare between Hong Kong and Macao and the mainland. The working income level of Hong Kong and Macao talents in the mainland is significantly lower than that in Hong Kong and Macao, and there is a relative disadvantage in tax revenue,

which makes the enthusiasm of Hong Kong and Macao talents to work in the inland cities of Greater Bay Area not strong, and the motivation is insufficient [19]. Also, the entry-exit efficiency is not high; there are many restrictions on the clearance of scientific research materials, cross-border passage of vehicles, capital circulation, etc.; and the efficiency of logistics clearance needs to be improved, which have also restricted the regional collaborative development, and posed a certain obstacle to the cross-border exchanges and related scientific research among college graduates in Shenzhen.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

Opportunities and challenges coexist in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, which bears the yearning and expectation of college graduates for a better life, but also is full of fierce competition. Many college graduates of Shenzhen have spent a period of university years in Shenzhen. It can be said that they are quite familiar with Shenzhen and even the whole Greater Bay Area. They understand that if they want to stay in the Greater Bay Area and continue to develop, they need to work hard to improve their knowledge level and professional quality, become the best in the field, and have excellent practical skills. As a college graduate in the new era, it is necessary to maintain the correct outlook on life, the world and values, correct the position, firm the belief, and make unremitting efforts to realize the Chinese dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and the two centenary goals. The tide of the times is rolling forward. The release of "Outline of Planning" and "Opinions" does give college graduates of Shenzhen a great opportunity. As innovative talents in the new era, they should seize the opportunity, stand in Shenzhen, and even the whole Greater Bay Area, contribute their youth and realize the value of life.

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