

# Interview Analysis with MAXQDA: Influencing Factors of Higher Vocational Graduates' Turnover Intention

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i3/19327> DOI:10.6007/IJARPED/v12-i3/19327

*Published Online:* 11 September 2023

## Abstract

The high turnover rate of higher vocational graduates has had a negative impact on the graduates themselves, their families, employers and the whole society. An excessive turnover rate will cause a waste of enterprise resources and negatively affect college students' career development and human capital accumulation. The turnover rate of graduates in higher vocational colleges continues to rise, and the instability of the human resources team has created obstacles to the sustainable development of enterprises. There is a reasonably noticeable job "flash-off" phenomena, and the turnover rate for graduates of higher vocational colleges is much higher than that of graduates of other colleges and universities. Employee turnover has emerged as a challenging issue and the focus of human resource management as the new generation of employees' devotion to the company may be more aggressive. It also causes a lot of problems for management and organization. Turnover intention is a component that comes before real employee turnover. Turnover intention is easier to predict than turnover and is directly under the control of the individuals involved. The research based on the grounded theory, adopts the qualitative research method of semistructured interview to conduct in-depth interviews. MAXQDA 2022 software was used to analyze the interview data, and the influencing factors of turnover intention of higher vocational graduates were studied.

**Keywords:** Turnover Intention, Job Satisfaction, Grounded Theory, MAXQDA

## Introduction

The high turnover rate of higher vocational graduates has adversely affected universities, students, employers and society (Zhang, 2014). In recent years, China's vocational education has undergone a period of rapid development, and the country's annual graduation rate from higher vocational programs has also been rising steadily. In China, the number of individuals who graduated from college in 2018 was 7.53 million, of which 3.66 million were graduates from higher vocational schools (China Statistical Yearbook, 2018). College graduates have been a consistent source of human resources for China's economic construction and development, although the turnover rate of higher vocational graduates after employment is

very high. In 2018, the turnover rate of undergraduate graduates after half a year of employment was 23%, and the national level of turnover rate of college graduates after half a year was 33% (MCS Research Institute, 2018). The turnover rate of higher vocational graduates after half a year of employment reached 42%, which is higher than that of college graduates by half a year (MCS Research institute, 2018). Above the national average the postemployment rate is 10%. The high turnover rate of higher vocational graduates has brought more troubles to the human resource management of enterprises, and at the same time, it has also brought an unfavorable impact on the development of the personal career of higher vocational graduates (Zhang, 2014). We can avoid and solve the problem of high turnover rate of higher vocational graduates better after understanding the influencing factors of turnover intention of higher vocational graduates. In this study, semi-structured questionnaires were used to interview enterprise managers and employment managers in higher vocational colleges in Shandong, China. Trying to explore and analyze the factors affecting the turnover intention of higher vocational graduates from the perspective of enterprises and higher vocational colleges. This study is an in-depth expansion of turnover content theory in the perspective of Chinese research.

### Literature Review

“Voluntary employee turnover” is one of the most studied behaviors in management research (Griffeth et al., 2000; Hom & Kinicki, 2001). The many multivariate models and empirical tests within this research stream have greatly enhanced knowledge about quitting. Turnover process models focus on how individuals arrive at their final decisions to quit, while turnover content models focus on why individuals quit organizations.

Galia Cohen, et al (2016) pointed out that turnover studies have traditionally looked at the intent of turnover rather than actual turnover. These studies hypothesized that turnover intentions can also be a good proxy for and predict employees' actual turnover behavior. According to Maertz and Campion (2004), the bulk of employee turnover models may be classified into two types: turnover process models and turnover content models.

Turnover process models concentrate on the sequence of actions that employees take during the turnover process, such as developing unhappiness, considering turnover, finding new jobs, and eventually quitting their current positions. Employees, for example, may develop unhappiness, consider leaving, look for new work, and eventually quit from their current jobs. Turnover content models, on the other hand, focus on the factors that cause employees to leave their positions. These models consider notions such as the individual, the organization, and the job itself, as well as other opportunities (Hom et al., 2012). Finally, certain turnover intention models account for both the turnover process and the turnover content in their estimates. The primary conceptual underpinning of the literature on employee turnover studies is satisfaction and alternatives (Hulin et al., 1985).

With the main preconditions identified, Mobley (1977) refined the direct link between job satisfaction and eventual voluntary turnover and the process of turnover decision generation. The models of the turnover process focus on the activities that a person engages in while going through the process of leaving their present job, such as becoming dissatisfied with their work, entertaining thoughts of quitting, searching for new employment, and ultimately leaving their current position. According to Holtom (2008), the turnover content models concentrate their attention on the aspects of employees' jobs, organizations, and personal lives that play a role in their decision to leave their jobs in favor of other opportunities.

The turnover process theory is being researched by academics at the same time that the turnover content theory is being developed. As part of the research on the turnover process theory, academics are also looking into the reasons why employees make the decision to leave their jobs (the influencing factors of quitting). As a result, the reasons for employee turnover in the turnover process theory will be discussed as part of the process of sorting out the creation of the turnover content model (Holtom et al., 2008).

### **Research and Methodology**

According to Aladwan et al. (2013), turnover intention is a predictor of actual employee turnover. Another advantage of employing turnover intention rather than actual turnover rate is that intention is easier to foresee than turnover and can be controlled by individuals (Shore and Martin, 1989). How do enterprises and colleges that train higher vocational graduates view the turnover of higher vocational graduates and what factors have an impact on the turnover intention of higher vocational graduates? Based on the grounded theory, this study adopts the qualitative research method of semi-structured interview to conduct indepth interviews with 7 interviewees (5 enterprise managers and 2 persons in charge of higher vocational colleges). From their interviews on employment and turnover of higher vocational graduates, a large amount of relevant information about the turnover of higher vocational graduates has been accumulated. Then this study makes an in-depth qualitative analysis on the influencing factors of higher vocational graduates' turnover.

The qualitative research part of this study was carried out in the first and second weeks of December 2020. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to conduct interviews with 5 business managers and 2 heads of higher vocational colleges. Due to the epidemic situation in China, the main form of interviews was online interviews, and face-to-face interviews were conducted with two heads of higher vocational colleges.

Grounded theory can help researchers deeply understand and explain the meaning and pattern behind the phenomenon, so as to provide theoretical support and guidance for practice, and promote the theoretical development and practical application of social science. Scholars usually use Nvivo, MAXQDA, Atlas.ti and other software to analyze and study the data obtained from qualitative research. Different software has advantages and disadvantages, comprehensive comparison, MAXQDA software because of its friendly interface, is a better choice to deal with qualitative data in management, education, psychology and other fields. Saito and Okano (2016) used MAXQDA software to conduct a qualitative analysis and research on the turnover problem of young employees. Therefore, MAXQDA 2022 was used in this study to conduct qualitative research and analysis of data from one-on-one interviews.

### **Data Analysis and Findings**

In this study, qualitative research and analysis software MAXQDA2022 was used to analyze the interview data by hierarchical coding method based on grounded theory.

This study follows the three-level coding procedure of grounded theory (Staus & Corbin, 1990). First, the initial entry of interviewees' interview data is open coding. Then, combined with the axial coding, the paper summarizes, relates and analyzes the influencing factors and countermeasures of graduates' turnover intention. Finally, through selective coding analysis, the paper systematically analyzes and classifies these influencing factors, forms the core theme of the study, and builds the model of influencing factors of graduates' turnover intention.

**Open Coding**

Open Coding is a common method of data analysis, often used in qualitative research. Its purpose is to transform large amounts of data, such as interviews, observations, documents, etc., into meaningful themes and concepts. These themes and concepts can be used to better understand the data and extract new insights and knowledge from it.

When doing open coding, code the data very carefully, do not miss any important information; The more detailed the code, the better, until it reaches saturation. (Stasuss, 1987).

In the open coding phase, this study imported 7 materials obtained from interviews into MAXQDA software. The use of MAXQDA2022 software makes it easy to analyze multiple texts at the same time, and it makes content analysis systematic. Through repeated reading of the interview materials, careful deliberation and sentence by sentence compilation, a total of 122 initial concepts were obtained.

**Axial Coding**

This section presents the data extracted from the interview outline questions and answers to provide context for the research. These problems were solved during the face-to-face interview. To explore the primary questions, use secondary questions and incorporate them into the interview (Creswel,1998). In the process of this study, the researcher expects to analyze the collected data, which will help to understand the interviewees' views on the factors affecting the turnover of higher vocational graduates, as well as countermeasures and suggestions to avoid the high turnover rate of higher vocational graduates, and provide effective answers for the theme of this study.

**Theme 1: Employment stability of higher vocational graduates**

In response to the questions based on the theme 1, EN-1 believes that "the percentage of people who change their jobs within six months or one year, as far as I know, is quite high, it should reach 50%." EN-1 thinks that higher vocational graduates have just entered a new enterprise, and he does not know much about this enterprise, and he does not know much about other enterprises, and he is always thinking about whether there is a better one. "As far as I know, the probability of changing units within a year is still relatively high." "But in general, if he goes to the second and third units, he is generally more stable, because he has compared this, he knows it, and he has given himself this position in society." "In my company, the highest turnover rate is 30 to 50 percent within a year." EN-2 notes that "vocational graduates generally leave their jobs after the completion of their internship, and 30-40% leave their jobs between six months and one year." The answer of EN-3: "Compared with the same industry, our employees are relatively stable. If we look at the data, the retention rate of our employees recruited on campus last year is 75% after one year of graduation." EN-4 mentioned that "the turnover cycle of vocational graduates, half a year turnover rate is relatively higher, more than half a year basically tends to decline, more than a year is even lower." EN-5 mentioned that "the turnover rate of vocational college graduates will be relatively high during the internship, and the turnover rate will be low after the full-time job, and the three to five months of work is a small peak period of turnover."

ED-1's answer is that students who have deep cooperation with the college are relatively stable in their jobs. The most stable is modern apprenticeships. Then there is the craftsman class, the craftsman class is similar to the order training form, but better than the ordinary order training class. "On the question of changing jobs, as far as I know, students who change

jobs more often change two or three jobs a year.” ED-2 believes that the forms of student employment are different, some students actually choose to study after graduation, some students join the army, some students find jobs on their own, and some students participate in work through the introduction of the school, so the situation of students is different, some students change their jobs more frequently after employment, because their ability is not very strong. Moreover, the requirements of this enterprise are difficult to meet, so when students encounter some difficulties in employment, or have some conflicts with the employer, they will choose to give up the original job, especially after graduation, the job is not very stable within 1-2 years, and will be changed more frequently. Some students have a higher starting point. After choosing some good platforms, such as some large state-owned enterprises or some large listed companies, he is generally relatively stable after choosing such units.

“Most of the graduates I have come into contact with will change their jobs 1-2 times within 1-2 years after graduation, most students have this situation, and some students change their jobs more frequently, maybe even 3-4 months or even 2-3 months he will change his job once.” At the beginning of employment, students have high expectations for the society, but after employment, they find that the gap is relatively large. With the idea of having a try, he will change several jobs, and he also wants to choose a more suitable career through this change of jobs, which is the idea of some students. There are also some students, because the work ability is not good, the enterprise is not willing to continue to use, so he is forced to change jobs, there are some strong employability, the choice of employers is relatively stable ah, pay better some jobs, he will be in 1-2 years, very hard to perform, become a relatively stable long-term career choice in the enterprise.

In the collation of interviewees' interview information, we constructed a creative coding structure of “employment stability of higher vocational graduates” to better explain the interviews under the background of this topic (As seen in Figure 1) . As for the turnover situation of higher vocational graduates, most respondents think that the turnover rate of six months to one year is the highest, and some interviewees also mention that the turnover rate is high after the internship period, and the turnover rate of 1-2 years is always at a high level. The higher vocational graduates who can find stable employment in enterprises mainly come from two factors: “nature of enterprise” and “enterprise treatment”. The "nature of enterprise" factor involves three kinds of enterprises: large enterprise, listed company and school-enterprise cooperative enterprise. Among them, school-enterprise cooperative enterprise includes modern apprenticeship business, artisan class enterprise and order cultivation Among the three kinds of school-enterprise cooperation enterprises, the employment of higher vocational graduates is relatively stable. The "enterprise treatment" factor involves four aspects: good welfare system, good incentive policy, employee happiness index is high and employee care.

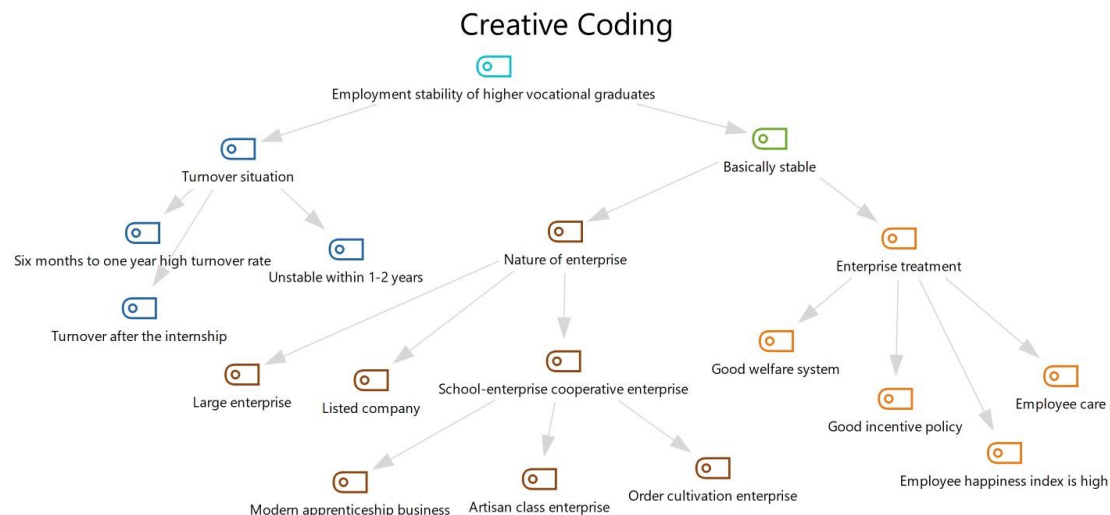


Figure 1: “Employment stability of higher vocational graduates” Creative Coding Structure Source from MAXQDA2022 software analysis

### Theme 2: Reasons for the turnover of higher vocational graduates

In response to the questions around the theme 2, EN-1 believes that higher vocational college graduates are not clear about their positioning, their expectations of the society may be too high, and their expectations of the society and their positioning are biased, so they will face this problem. EN-2 replied, "First, I feel bored with grass-roots work and want to challenge other industries; second, my parents have work arrangements, and my home address is far away, and I leave my job due to geographical relations." Third, they want to challenge for higher salaries." EN-3: I believe that the reasons for higher vocational graduates to leave their jobs are diversified: to take the entrance examination for higher education to further their studies and improve themselves. There are some differences between the personal career development plan and the position provided by the company, and I just want to take this job as a transition. EN-4 replied, "40 percent are not adapted to work, 40 percent may want to further their studies, and the remaining 20 percent are arranged to work at home." EN-5 believes that the primary reason for higher vocational graduates to leave is geographical reasons. Some graduates just want to work in a place close to home. Of course, there are other reasons such as difficult interpersonal relationship, unsatisfactory income and high work pressure.

Around this topic, the answers of respondents in higher vocational colleges are as follows: ED-1: students themselves do not obey the school management, have career plans in the first year, go to work because of small problems touched a lot, immediately quit, too tired, overtime, and the conflict between workers and friends is not handled well. For students who change two to three or more jobs within one to two years after graduation, the main reasons include students who do not obey the centralized management of the school, do not go to the unit arranged by the school, or resign after entering the school because of some minor problems such as overtime work, and the conflict between workers and friends can not be adjusted. The reason for the high employment rate of vocational colleges is that students have strong practical ability. In the talent exchange market, students can not hire undergraduates with 3000 yuan. Many higher vocational students are hired, mainly because students have technical skills and practical ability compared with undergraduates. The high turnover rate is mainly due to students' planning ability to be improved, and another point is that students do not obey the centralized management of the school. ED-2: There are several



reasons for graduates to change jobs within six months to one year after employment. The first is that the student is not satisfied with the job content, salary and future prospects of the company, so he wants to pursue a better job or a better career. The second situation is that some students, their own ability can not meet the requirements of the enterprise, after half a year or more of investigation, through the work arrangement, the enterprise will abandon the student and continue to sign the contract, which is the second situation. For students who change two or three or more jobs within one to two years of graduation, I think the reasons are actually very similar to the previous question. Part of the reason is that the company does not want to continue to sign employment contracts with students, so students are forced to change jobs. Part of the reason is that students do not like the job. I don't like the job content or the salary and benefits, which can't meet the requirements of students. "The main reason for the high turnover rate of higher vocational graduates is that there are several points, the first is that the ability of students themselves does not meet the requirements of the enterprise, the second is that some students lack patience, that is, after finding that the enterprise does not meet their requirements, the treatment can not meet, will directly choose more attempts, I think this is the main reason."

In the collation of interviewees' interview information, we constructed a "Reason for turnover" Creative Coding Structure. As shown in Figure 2, the reasons for higher vocational graduates' turnover come from two aspects: work factors and personal factors. Work factors involve revenue did not meet expectations, high work pressure and big difference from expectations. Personal factors are divided into four aspects: ability factors, attitude factors, family factors, and development factors.

Ability factors involve interpersonal and communication skills, professional skill, career planning ability. Attitude factors involve work adaptation stage, do not understand the industry and enterprises, career transition, disobedient management, challenge for high salary and position, be bored with grass-roots work. Family factors involves location: wanting to be close to home, family members arrange other jobs. Development factors involve self-positioning is not clear, personal promotion: higher education.

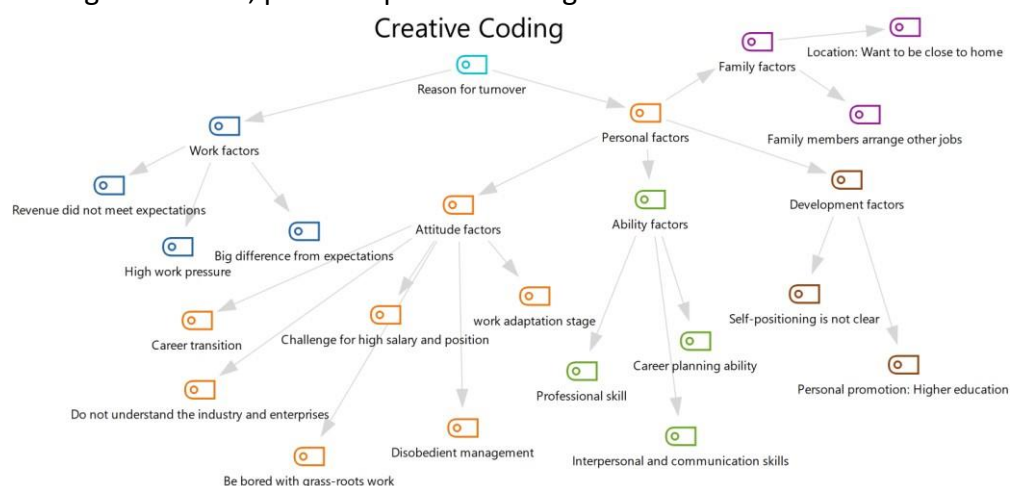


Figure 2: "Reason for turnover" Creative Coding Structure

Source from MAXQDA2022 software analysis

### Theme 3: Job Satisfaction of Higher Vocational Graduates

In response to the questions based on the theme 3, EN-1 mentioned that "First of all, employees' clothing, food, housing and transportation issues, my company is responsible for arranging accommodation, dormitory management standards, so that they can develop a

good workplace habits; The other one carries on the vocational ideological education through the business school of the enterprise, so that the graduates have a correct and clear orientation; The company provides good insurance measures to make him feel safe and create a good working environment, and his sense of identity will be high. Job satisfaction of higher vocational graduates is not only a good salary, but also to give them full respect in the workplace. They particularly value a relaxed environment in the workplace, good entertainment after work, and they are more focused on having fun at work." EN-2: It is mentioned that the achievement of job satisfaction of higher vocational graduates comes from two aspects: work and life. "If there will be a team leader, coach, supervisor and other help at work, daily work and psychological counseling, reduce employee pressure and build a relaxed and pleasant working atmosphere; There are various benefits of the company, such as holiday benefits, birthday benefits, regular medical check-ups, interns are exempt from accommodation fees for six months, there are meals every day, and there are various entertainment activities, e-sports competitions, etc." Higher vocational graduates pay more attention to the working environment, the ease of work, leisure and entertainment after work, etc., and their ideological guidance and the relief of work pressure are also aspects that need attention. EN-3 company has developed a relatively scientific salary structure, all employees are using the basic salary plus commission, the promotion system is more open and transparent, the working atmosphere of the company is more harmonious, there will be a regular group building every month, there is a job reward, for all employees, and then develop a more suitable for their own practical career development plan. " Higher vocational graduates, in particular, like to have more free working hours and prefer positive incentives, such as participating in team-building activities." EN-4 enterprises have 1 to 1 a master to help higher vocational graduates to do skills and psychological construction, so as to solve the problem of psychological gap, in addition to the attention of higher vocational graduates, there are training, basic skills, management skills and other aspects of training, to help them do career planning, give a good salary. "Some higher vocational graduates, his sense of purpose is lower, maybe because their family environment and a series of things affect him, he came here may not be how much money, may be not to stay at home, so his job satisfaction, I am really difficult to judge." EN-5 believes that enterprises will improve employee satisfaction from two aspects. "First, we will provide employees with opportunities and platforms for growth and success, arrange work that meets their own expectations, and improve their satisfaction with the work itself. Second, we will enhance the recognition of the leadership for the work done by employees, so that all employees' compensation is proportional to their labor." Higher vocational graduates are more self-aware, more concerned about whether the work he is engaged in is free enough, can give full play to his personality, have a stronger desire to show, more concerned about whether the working environment is more comfortable, whether the company management is flat, they pay more attention to efficiency.

In response to the question on this topic, the respondents from higher vocational colleges gave the following answers: ED-1 mentioned that "our department does questionnaires on satisfaction every year. As far as the survey results of students are concerned, one is salary, which is relatively stable if the salary is high, and the other is the size and nature of the enterprise." For example, Goer around us, its turnover rate is higher than that of state-owned enterprises, and the students employed in state-owned enterprises are relatively stable, while the students employed in private enterprises are not stable. Now the more stable enterprises are Weichai, FAW-Volkswagen, CRRC and so on." ED-2 said, "As far as I know



about the current students, the most important thing for the current students is their job satisfaction when they are employed. The first thing they value most is salary, and the students are generally inclined to some jobs with relatively high salaries. The second is a working environment in enterprises. They like to engage in mental work and the working environment is comfortable. Thirdly, students attach more importance to their future career prospects. There are some jobs in which the salary is higher than other jobs at the beginning, and some jobs have not very good career development prospects. The fourth thing students consider is this cost of living, some jobs in some cities the cost of living is relatively high, students work after a variety of living consumption is relatively high, it is difficult to have some savings, life pressure is relatively large, mainly students consider these four aspects."

Based on the collation of interviewees' interview information, we constructed the "job satisfaction of higher vocational graduates" creative coding structure, as shown in Figure 3. The achievement of higher vocational college graduates' job satisfaction comes from workplace respect, career development, workplace welfare, workplace salary, workplace atmosphere and workplace care coaching, workplace environment seven aspects. Workplace respect includes four factors: clear positioning, give play to one's individuality, professional identity, and workplace security. Career development includes career development prospect and chance of success. Workplace welfare includes three factors: recreational activity, living welfare and holiday benefits. Workplace salary includes three factors: positive excitation, base salary plus commission and basic living needs. The Workplace atmosphere consists of liberty, be delighted and recreation. Workplace care coaching includes three factors: supervisor assistance training, work psychological counseling and skill instruction. The Workplace environment includes three factors: enterprise size, flat organization, and job content.

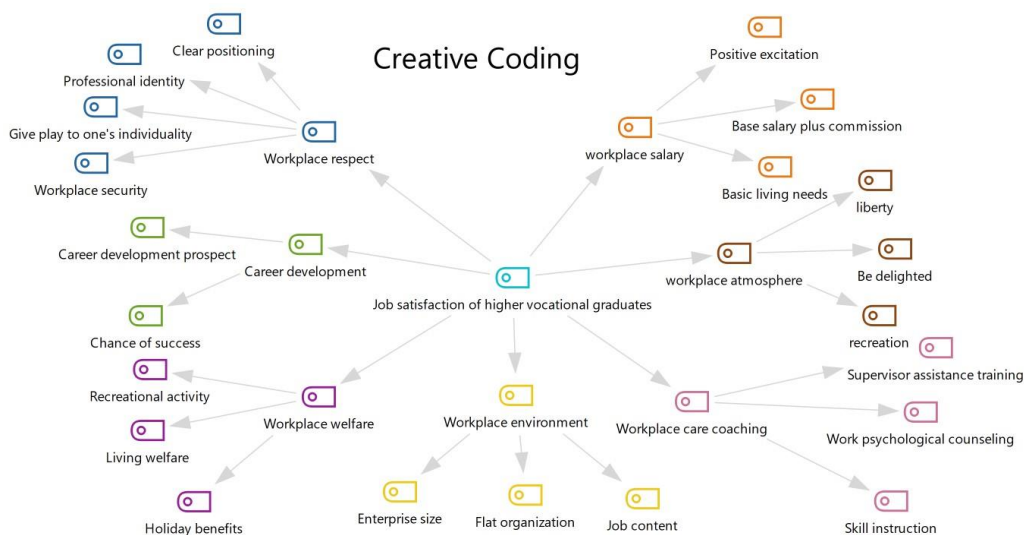


Figure 3 : "Job satisfaction of higher vocational graduates" Creative Coding Structure Source from MAXQDA2022 software analysis

**Selective Coding**

This study builds a model based on selective coding, and finally summarizes the influencing factors of higher vocational graduates' turnover into three levels and 15 dimensions, as shown in Figure 4. The influencing factors of graduates' turnover include three aspects: employability, job satisfaction and professional attitude. Employability includes professional skills, communication ability, workplace adaptability, informatization capability and

problemsolving skills has five dimensions. Job satisfaction includes career development, workplace welfare, workplace respect, workplace care coaching, and workplace salary, workplace atmosphere six dimensions. Professional attitude includes four dimensions: workplace negativity, career transition, workplace adaptation and workplace challenge.

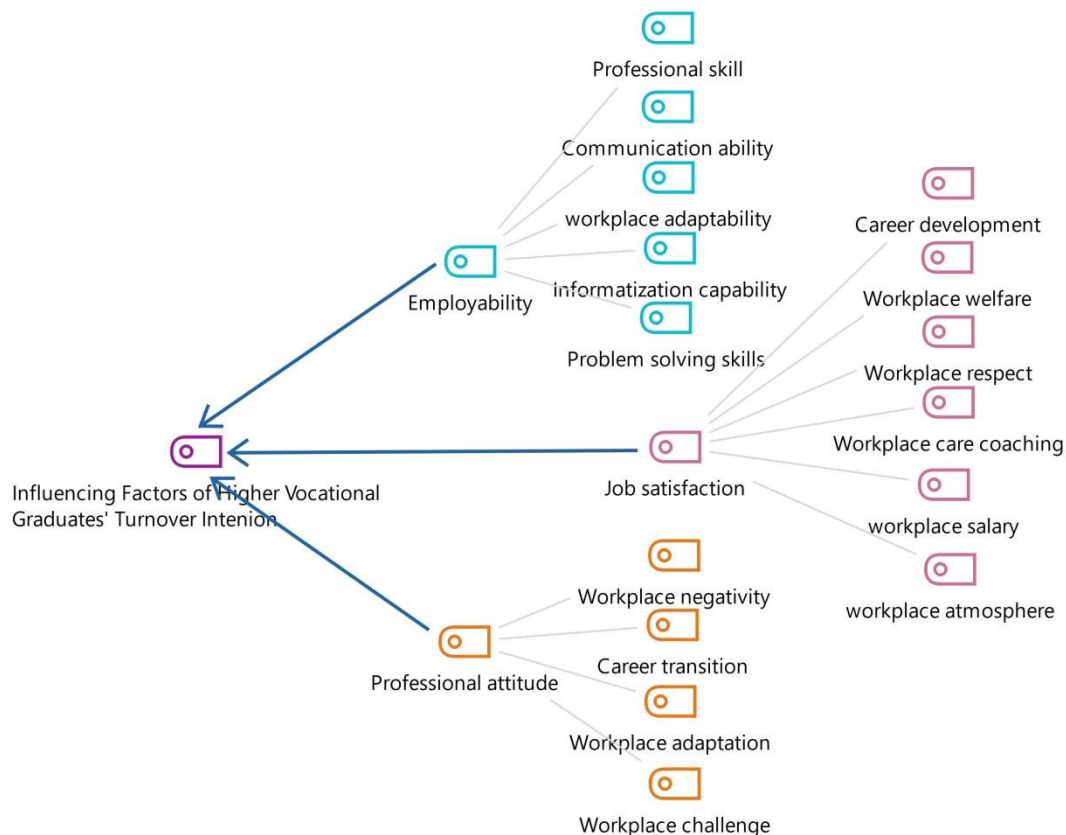


Figure 4: "Influencing Factors of Higher Vocational Graduates' Turnover" Qualitative Research Theory Construction Source from MAXQDA2022 software analysis

## Conclusions

In this study, 5 senior managers of enterprises and 2 managers of higher vocational colleges were interviewed. MAXQDA2022 software was used to conduct qualitative analysis of the interview information, and the results of this study were obtained based on the three-level coding program of grounded theory. Job satisfaction, employability and professional attitude affect the turnover intention of higher vocational graduates. Job satisfaction includes career development, workplace welfare, workplace respect, workplace care coaching, and workplace salary, workplace atmosphere six dimensions. Employability includes professional skills, communication ability, workplace adaptability, informatization capability and problemsolving skills five dimensions. professional attitude including includes workplace negativity, career transition, workplace adaptation and workplace challenge four dimensions. Job satisfaction is the primary antecedent in the majority of existing research on turnover intention (Steers and Mowday 1981; Tan and Akhtar 1995; Currivan 1999). The majority of the variance in turnover intention appears to be explained by job satisfaction, particularly for voluntary turnover (Carsten and Spector 1987; Lucas and Ingram 1990; Judge 1993; Trevor 2001). According to research, employability is positively related to turnover intention within organizations (Chan & Dar, 2014), especially when there is a perceived career possibility (Lu et al., 2016). Professional attitude affects employees' turnover intention (Lachman et al., 1986; Liou, K.T., 1998; Shukla et al., 2013; Bufquin et al., 2018).

This study explores the factors that affect the turnover intention of higher vocational graduates from the perspective of enterprises and higher vocational colleges. In the next stage, the model formed by this research can be verified through quantitative research, and interviews can also be conducted with higher vocational graduates to further explore and study the factors that affect the turnover intention of higher vocational graduates.

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