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Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore the various factors involved in pursuing a master's degree for university graduates in South Korea. After reviewing theoretical frameworks, including human and social capital theories, an analytical model was constructed to examine the different academic and economic factors involved in pursuing a master's degree, considering different institutional backgrounds. The data used were collected from the Graduates Occupational Mobility Survey conducted by the Korean Employment Information Service. We obtained the data from 11,960 respondents who graduated from university in 2013. Descriptive statistics and logistics regression were used in the analysis. The results show that gender, age and family socioeconomic status affected students' decision to pursue a master's degree. In addition, academic background factors, such as discipline, satisfaction with undergraduate study and intrinsic motivation for the choice of major, had positive effects on enrolment in master's degrees. However, active participation in the job search process during undergraduate study had negative effects on the decision. Students in research

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universities in major cities were more likely to pursue a master's degree than those in teaching-oriented universities in local provinces. This study has implications for the motivations, demands and career paths of postgraduate students taking master's degrees. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)