Gender Inequality in China’s Labor Market

Zhong WU\textsuperscript{1,a} and Ying-yue HU\textsuperscript{1,b,*}

\textsuperscript{1,2}Physical Education School, Wuhan Business University, Wuhan, Hubei, China

\textsuperscript{a}7849800@qq.com, \textsuperscript{b}337584093@qq.com

*Corresponding author

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Abstract. Gender inequality is the problem of all the countries in the world, it is also widespread in China, especially particularly prominent in the labor market. Due to the influence of patriarchal ideology, women are particularly discriminated against in employment and the workplace. This discrimination is not only in the recruitment process and other aspects of employment, but also in occupational gender segregation, unequal wages, benefits and promotion. This paper makes specific analysis and recommendations of the issue of gender inequality in the labor market.

1. Background

Inequalities in the labor market are those workers have the same ability, education, training and experience and ultimately exhibit the same labor productivity, injustice suffered in employment, career choices, promotion, wage and training due to some personal characteristics caused by non-economic. Thereby it can be concluded that gender inequalities in the labor market would mean that unfair treatment to workers because of gender [1].

Gender inequality in the course of employment and workplace was particularly prominent, especially the unequal treatment of male to female. This gender inequality not only applying severe pressure to women in employment and career development, but also undermine the principle of social justice. It makes the flow of the whole society talent not smooth, imbalance allocation of labor resources and the waste of human resources.

In China, although the constitution clearly stipulates that: women have the equal right with men in political, economic, cultural, social and family life. The state protects the rights and interests of women, the implementation of equal pay, training and promoting women. However, due to traditional patriarchal ideology, the status of women in society is not high, and women are particularly unequal in employment and workplace [2]. This inequality is not only reflected in educational investment, but also in employment and employment, occupational gender segregation, unequal wages between men and women, and other aspects of treatment and promotion.

2. Current Situation in China

2.1 Gender differences in human capital investment

Clearly, gender inequality in human capital investment is not uncommon. Human Capital Investment in China showed significant differences in terms of gender inequality, women are discriminated in the position. It’s mainly in the following two ways:

Female education level is lower than men. In modern society, women’s life was shrouded in a strong patriarchal environment, inequality is everywhere. Alone concerned women’s education level, women will be in a “differentiated” status. Compared with men, less access to education, less years of schooling, low level of education are the problems that women generally faced.

Continue education investment of working women is less than men. Many women, especially in disadvantaged areas, because of the economic base, stereotypes and other factors, the basic right to education can not be guaranteed. Even the female accepted education, access to the labor market,
and employed in the enterprise, human capital investment is still considerably less than men in its jobs. Equally inevitable in a position to be discrimination [3].

Working women receive training, continuing education opportunities far less than men. Companies’ human capital investments have significant male bias. Even female employees participated in the training. The training time is still shorter than male employees.

2.2 Gender inequality in recruitment

Gender inequality is mainly against women. College student respondents, 43.27 percent of the students met the requirements of the employer clearly male, 6.16% female gender requirements.

On average about every quarter of women is the employer refused to hire by the employer because their gender. At the same time, there has been a high rate of rejection phenomenon educated women. The phenomenon of women performed significantly better than the men but refuse to employ is particularly serious in joint ventures, foreign-funded enterprises and administrative bodies. Average every five respondents have one expressed a reluctance to hire childless women [4].

2.3 Occupational gender segregation

In China, the proportion of women employees in the industry to education, health care, research and industry and sales, advertising, marketing industry, catering, entertainment and service industries, manufacturing the most concentrated, accounting for 76.4% of the total number of women in the industry; Government departments and legal, auditing, accounting industry, other industries, only have 11.8% and 2.3%, 11.2% respectively. More than a third of women believe that female workers in high-paying job or management is significantly less than normal phenomenon, 33.9 percent of women said there are fewer opportunities of female workers than male workers get promoted.

2.4 Differences treatment between men and women in the workplace

By differences survey found in the treatment of men and women in the workplace, that female workers compared with male workers, 66.2% of female workers believe that female workers harder to get to buy the company financing housing than male workers. The workers did not get to buy the company financing housing, women also account for over 61.0%. From the perspective of training opportunities, 15.7% of respondents said female workers get training opportunities less than male workers. For the career advancement opportunities, 33.9 percent of respondents said the opportunity get promoted of male workers more than women workers.

To sum up, our employment gender inequality show the following trends: legalization, hidden, discrimination of high education. This situation not only dampen the enthusiasm of women’s work, resulting in human resources are not economic, but also declined the girls’ enthusiasm, affecting the normal conduct of higher education. It is not conducive to make gender cultural modernization [5].

3. Causes and Labor Market Conditions

3.1 Labor market conditions

Although China’s economy rapid development in recent years, this development mainly relying on China’s huge population base in direct production. China’s socio-economic structure is being changed a purely mechanical production activities into a system among the various chain. At the same time, China’s workers are in the process of a transition from the workforce to human resources, but this change is a long process. In this process, China is still a populous country, rather than a human resources country. The main difference between these two is the most populous country has the main advantage of the physical labor, and human resources country is mainly use mental labor. Overall, China’s labor market requests for physical laborers more than intelligence requirements. In the Chinese traditional concept, women’s physical strength far less than men, which means that under the same circumstances, companies will be more willing to hire men.
3.2 Social and historical reasons

Traditional gender stereotypes are often predisposed to establish “women worse than men,” the notion in people’s minds. Whether we can fully and correctly evaluate male and female, it relates to our ability to stand upright in the evaluation of male and female, that is, taking a position as objective as possible. Some macho considered women were worse than men, but its even sadder is that some women accepted this concept themselves.

For a long time gender-based differences, social formation has become a rigid distinction between the sexes, that means the gender characteristics of men stronger than women, men are rational and female are sensibility. Under this dichotomy conscious influence and guidance, social embodies a gender division of labor model everywhere, in this mode, the male has his own life, work, way of thinking, and women always abide by them their part. This is the cause of women are subordinate to the root of men’s consciousness in all aspects of life. Thus, the traditional gender expectations deeply impact on women’s career orientation and future direction and also ultimately affect the quality and level of employment.

At present, China is changing from an incomplete market economy to a full market economy society. The development of socio-economic structure is imperfect. Among them, the primary and secondary industries accounted for the proportion of the national economy were 10.17 percent and 46.87 percent. The proportion of the tertiary industry was 42.96%, the gap vary greatly compared with the United States and other developed countries 76% of the tertiary industry. Because of women’s own unique talent, the tertiary industry in the tourism, catering, and services demand for women than the major, it is major employment base for female. China’s economic structure has small proportion of tertiary industry status, so it limited the field of female employment, thereby affecting the employment of women.

4. Business Costs and Expected Return

4.1 Business costs

First of all, because of the characteristics and social roles of women, women will face with the marriage, production and lactation, and other issues. This requires the employer to pay the direct and indirect costs. Bear the cost of job vacancies, which is the most direct reason for the employer’s refusal to recruit female students. Fertility makes women workers out of the labor market in a given period, which is an interrupt working life. When a female employee to re-enter the labor market, they need to restore and adjustment a period of time. Since the conversion job lead to a higher training costs and increased the cost of business.

The average life expectancy of Chinese women is 74 years old, men is at the age of 71. While women’s retirement age is 55 years old, and men is 60. So that women have short working life and make fewer benefits to the enterprise at the same time, but enterprises need to pay for the costs of the welfare of women is much higher than men.

Based on physiological characteristics of women, their working conditions requirements are higher, such as: job mobility is not too large, not suitable for long-distance travel, not withstand high physical strength. For personal safety issues, companies need to take more care and attention. In contrast, male are adaptability, working conditions requirements are lower then women. At this time man is a relatively cheap labor costs. For savings cost preferences reason employers more willing to hire men.

4.2 Expected return

Due to the continuation of the traditional gender division of labor, women bear part of the housework. “Mother” is not the modern women’s full-time job, but it remains as an important responsibility. Limited energy dispersed in the labor market and housework, it will inevitably affect its labor productivity.
The development potential of female workers are less than men, the expected value that provided to enterprise is limited. At the same time, the data show that, in the enterprise, the proportion of women in management positions is far less than men.

4.3 Personal reasons

On the one hand, women have an advantage in the text, art, language and understanding, and they select some weaker positions to adapt to the professional. Therefore, companies need to increase investment on them. On the other hand, due to the physiological condition of women, there are numbers of jobs that women can not do. Even though female may exists the ability to engage.

Traditional gender division of roles makes that society has a certain bias to women, although women might accept a higher education, it can not completely get rid of this long-established values. Many girls give themselves a lower position, and forming a self-gender discrimination.

5. Recommends

5.1 Improve laws and regulations

This stage is prone period of gender discrimination in the labor market, so first of all we should formulate relevant laws and regulations to protect the rights of workers. In the case of the conditions are ripe, we can consider to further improve China’s existing laws and regulations. At present, the problem is that there is no special place to deal with. We should establish an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to build their legal status and responsibilities, empower its ruling discriminatory behavior of the employer.

5.2 Standardize employment standards

The law should specify employees to select employees based on the ability to work and the nature of the work, and employer can not developed employment standards arbitrary. If someone constitutes employment discrimination, he needs to bear the responsibility. With the judging criteria, the identification of discrimination will naturally be clear.

5.3 Adjust the industrial structure

According to the experience of Western countries, the development of the tertiary industry is extremely beneficial to solve the employment problem of women. Women are more suitable for the tertiary industry on their own physical condition. However, at present, the proportion of these three industries unbalanced, so that women’s employment subject to certain restrictions. Therefore, to development the industry that can help to expand the female employment. In the adjustment of industrial structure, actively develop commercial, tourism, finance, information industry, including the tertiary industry, to broaden the channels of employment of women, to provide more suitable jobs for women, and improve the number and level of women’s employment.

5.4 Enterprise

Women encountered gender discrimination in the work environment, in part, from the public the employer. Change this unequal situation, employers should be allowed to undertake certain obligations to promote equality, in order to lead the whole society to eliminate gender discrimination. In addition, prohibit employers have any “gender” message in the recruitment process, to protect women job seekers get a fair chance.

5.5 Individual workers

Establish a good professional image, women in the course of employment, not only to keep a clear mind, but also has enough resolute attitude and overcome the inferiority complex. In addition, women should enhance their ability to be competent at their work, and create value for the enterprise. What is more, women should enhance their legal awareness and learn to protect themselves though the law.
References


