

Gender discrimination and female labour participation in the Chinese labour market

ZHANG ZHIYUAN
BB20170932
supervised by Beatrice Lim



Mao Zedong's famous quote "Chinese women can hold up half of the sky" symbolizes China's commitment to gender equality. However, due to many factors, there are still gender discrimination in the labor market and many problems caused by gender discrimination.

Gender discrimination in the labor market

Gender discrimination in the labor market has been a persistent problem such as different wages for male and female workers, and single-sex hiring for jobs. From the interview stage to the potential promotion of existing employees, gender discrimination in the workplace is widespread in China. According to a 2020 Catalyst report, 19 percent of civil service job postings cited a preference for male candidates, while other listings noted that female candidates should already have children. This is because employers consider that female workers without children are required to pay more money and benefits to comply with the rights granted by law to female workers during childbirth. This is why employers prefer female workers who already have children.

Wage inequality due to gender discrimination.

There is also a wage gap due to gender discrimination in the labor market, and while the wage gap is currently improving, according to Catalyst, women in China will earn 84 percent of what men earn for similar jobs in 2019, an improvement from 2016, when women earned only 77 percent of what men earned. Some of the wage gap comes from the barriers women face in certain sectors. And a recent survey by Boss Zhipin, an online recruitment firm in China, found that in 2019, Chinese women earned about one-fifth less on average than their male colleagues.

Why female workers are vulnerable to discrimination

In the case of female laborers in China, as state support for childcare decreases, women are forced to spend more time caring for their children, which limits their ability to participate fully in the workforce. As a result, the disproportionate burden of childcare on Chinese female workers has exacerbated practices that discriminate against them at work. In particular, gender-based hiring and bias is now increasing despite laws prohibiting job discrimination.



Gender inequality in leadership positions

Although the percentage of female leaders in China is higher than the world average, it is growing very slowly and the percentage in 2017 has decreased compared to the percentage in 2010.

In terms of female labor participation.

The female labor force participation rate has declined significantly, with the female labor share declining from 73% in 1990 to 60% in 2019. Also the decline among young women (15-25 years old) is related to higher education. And most women are more likely to be in low-paying jobs.

How to improve these problems

The first step to address this issue is to introduce appropriate laws and regulations and to strengthen the regulation of companies and labor markets to reduce gender discrimination. In addition, childcare facilities should be increased to address job discrimination against women workers due to children and to give them more time to work. At the same time, we should also introduce preferential policies to promote female labor participation, such as preferential education for children, better pay and benefits such as health insurance, etc., to promote female labor participation and reduce gender discrimination in the labor market and the many problems of wage inequality caused by gender discrimination, so as to improve the labor market environment.

Reference

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