

MASTER'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies

Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

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| Thesis title: | A Study of The Chinese Government's Approach in Preventing Female Employment Discrimination in The Context of The Comprehensive Three-Child Policy |
| Student's name: | Zhaoming Huang |
| Referee's name: | Mirna Jusić |

| Criteria | Definition | Maximum | Points |
|-----------------------|---|------------|--------|
| Major Criteria | | | |
| | Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality) | 50 | 45 |
| | Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses) | 15 | 12 |
| | Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question) | 15 | 13 |
| <i>Total</i> | | 80 | 70 |
| Minor Criteria | | | |
| | Sources, literature | 10 | 10 |
| | Presentation (language, style, cohesion) | 5 | 4 |
| | Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures) | 5 | 3 |
| <i>Total</i> | | 20 | 17 |
| TOTAL | | 100 | 87 |

Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score: 2%

[NB:] If the plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score is above 15%, the reviewer has to include his/her assessment of the originality of the reviewed thesis in his/her review.

Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria (min. 1800 characters including spaces when recommending a passing grade, min. 2500 characters including spaces when recommending a failing grade):

Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality): The author has written a comprehensive thesis that studies the problem of women's employment discrimination in light of the recent three-child policy in China, providing an overview of the problem and looking at challenges in the implementation of relevant policies that may represent an obstacle the government's response to discrimination of women in the workplace. To that end, he applies relevant theories from economics and public policy studies, which contributes to the quality of the analysis. He provides a comprehensive overview of the existing research on the subject to date, and, by relying on relevant data, makes a convincing case that women's discrimination in the labor market is indeed an issue

in China when it comes to childbirth. He also succeeds in identifying various challenges in the current policy and institutional landscape when it comes to preventing such discrimination. Another contribution of the thesis is the author's inclusion of recommendations on how the government can prevent women's employment discrimination under the three-child policy.

Nevertheless, a more systematic and nuanced application and discussion of the two theories that the author has chosen, in relation to the research findings in Chapter 4 would have contributed to a more thorough analysis.

Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses): The author's thesis aims to study "the existing data to understand the current situation of women's employment under this policy" in light of the three-child policy, as well as to "summarize the problems existing in the policy implementation process and analyze the reasons" (pp.3-4). By drawing on best practice experiences from US, Sweden and other countries when it comes to anti-discrimination, he moreover, aims to provide recommendations on how to address these challenges.

The author has conducted research in line with such aims in a systematic way. In his analysis, the author relies on available data that points to women's employment discrimination in light of the three-child policy; and identifies the challenges when it comes to addressing and preventing women's employment discrimination in China. He provides very comprehensive recommendations on how the situation with regards to women's discrimination in the labor market could be addressed.

One point here is that the research aims could have been more directly formulated in the introduction. The aims are currently formulated rather indirectly, and together with the main findings of the research.

Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question): In relation to women's employment discrimination, the author relies on the competitive market discrimination theory by Becker (1957). He also relies on Smith's (1973) policy implementation process model theory in relation to the Chinese government's handling of discrimination against women in the labor market. Both are appropriate given the research aims.

Nevertheless, the theoretical framework section could have included a more direct explanation of how these theories will be applied in the author's work and how he intends to operationalize individual concepts.

The methodology appears appropriate given the research aims. The author conducts a literature analysis and applies the comparative analysis method, relying on existing data on women's employment status in China and the relevant literature on the impact of the implementation of the policies of interest in relation to women's employment. He explains which types of data and information he has analyzed and gathered. In terms of comparative analysis, he looks at data from the 2012 and 2017 China General Social Survey. Moreover, he relies on "relevant representative countries' policies on promoting equal employment of women and getting rid of employment difficulties" (p.15), mentioning the US and Sweden.

Nevertheless, the author should have explained why these two countries have been specifically chosen; moreover, the actual analysis includes more countries, which should also have been mentioned in this section. In terms of the comparison of data from the two

surveys, the author could have maybe explained in some more detail why relying on data from 2017 is still suitable considering the adoption of a new, three-child policy in 2021.

On a general note, it would have been good to elaborate on the limitations of the methodological approach chosen.

Sources, literature: In terms of sources and literature used, the author has worked with a wide variety of sources and the thesis contains a comprehensive literature review.

Presentation (language, style, cohesion): In terms of its presentation, this is a well-written academic work. Some grammar issues are apparent throughout the text, such as instances of sentence fragments.

Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures): Regarding the manuscript form, the work is clearly structured, and the argumentation is logical and coherent. The literature review may have benefited from shorter paragraphs (especially pages 9-11). The analytical part (Chapter 4), in its first sections, contains a significant amount of data in text, and could have included a presentation of the data analyzed and discussed in the form of graphs or figures.

Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): B

Suggested questions for the defence are:

Could you elaborate on your claim in the conclusion that, in China, “childbirth has become the most important reason for hindering women’s equal employment,” (p.56) reflecting upon the findings of your research?

You mention several obstacles when it comes to how the Chinese government has addressed women’s employment discrimination, and you provide comprehensive recommendations on how to remove such obstacles. Reflecting upon your research, which of these obstacles may be the most difficult to address, and why?

I recommend the thesis for final defence.

Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

| TOTAL POINTS | GRADE | Quality standard |
|--------------|----------|---|
| 91 – 100 | A | = outstanding (high honor) |
| 81 – 90 | B | = superior (honor) |
| 71 – 80 | C | = good |
| 61 – 70 | D | = satisfactory |
| 51 – 60 | E | = low pass at a margin of failure |
| 0 – 50 | F | = failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence. |