



CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE

FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Institute of Political Studies

Master thesis

2023

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Gender Inequality in China Today

Master thesis

Prague 2023

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Academic Year: 2022/2023

Bibliographic note

Zhaohui Deng. *Gender Inequality in China Today*. 68 p. Mater thesis. Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Studies.
Supervisor Prof. Janusz Salamon, Ph.D.

Abstract

Equality between men and women has been a basic state policy in the People's Republic of China since its inception and has advanced significantly during the early stages of socialism. On the contrary, there has been a historic reversal in gender awareness and a progressive widening of the gender gap, which is at odds with China's economic gains, as reform and opening up have advanced gradually and China has grown to be a significant player in the global economy. From the perspectives of discrimination against women in the workplace and the conflict between women taking care of their families, the latent inequalities in the field of education, and the issues women encounter in the marriage system in terms of dating, marriage, and divorce, this article will discuss the most notable manifestations of gender inequality in China and the causes of these phenomena. Specifically, Confucian patriarchal ideology, societal norms of gender roles under state collectivism, and the elimination of the social safety system due to marketization. The government's degree of implementation is muddled during the legal compliance process, and the actual outcome is at odds with the initial policy purpose.

Keywords

Gender inequality; feminism; patriarchy; collectivism; social roles

Range of thesis: 154401

Declaration of Authorship

1. The author hereby declares that he compiled this thesis independently, using only the listed resources and literature.
2. The author hereby declares that all the sources and literature used have been properly cited.
3. The author hereby declares that the thesis has not been used to obtain a different or the same degree.

Prague ...02/ 2023

Zhaohui Deng

Acknowledgments

I want to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Janusz Salamon, Ph.D. I frequently requested his assistance because I was having trouble coming up with a topic for my thesis. Each time, he answered quite positively and expressed great interest in how things were going. He guided me step-by-step in determining the path of my research, constructed the framework for my thesis, imparted a wealth of information, and provided me with numerous suggestions. His traits as a professor—diligent work ethic, tolerance for mistakes, enthusiasm, and responsibility—have inspired me greatly. I am pleased to have a supervisor who exhibit a wide variety of knowledge, interests, and selflessness.

Vilém Semerák, Ph.D., whose assistance I appreciate as well assisted me in organizing my thesis. On his recommendation, I researched Marxist feminist theories and feminist studies in Taiwan, which I subsequently included in my thesis.

Finally, I want to be thanks to my mother, who inspires me and whose experience made me realize that I was interested in gender studies.

Charles University was a truly memorable experience.

Institute of Political Studies
Master thesis proposal

Master Thesis Proposal

Institute of Political Studies, IEPS programme

Faculty of Social Sciences

Charles University in Prague

Date: 10.07.2022



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Proposed Topic:

Gender Inequality in China Today

Topic characteristics / Research Question(s):

The construction of gender roles is determined by the social environment. When a society is in a stage of transition, gender roles will also be transformed.

With the rapid development of China's economy and the increase of women's education and employment rate, Chinese women have shown different degrees of gender awareness in both the public and private domains, in contrast to the reality of increasing gender inequality in China.

This article will focus on three fundamental areas of women's existence in modern China, namely, employment and education in the public sphere, and childbirth and marriage in the private sphere, and explore the inequalities suffered by women as workers, citizens, wives and mothers in these three areas, as well as the complex economic and cultural reasons behind them, and the backlash against the dominant social consciousness exhorting women to return to the family as women's consciousness awakens.

In terms of employment, Chinese women are more likely to lose their jobs in the job market due to the general decline in employment opportunities caused by the economic downturn; women are paid much less than men in industries where a large number of employees are women; career women have narrower upward mobility than men in the workplace, and it is more difficult to re-enter the workforce; social discourse constructs affect women's employment choices and other inequality issues.

In terms of education, inequality is divided into explicit and implicit dimensions. The explicit dimension shows that women and men have equal access to education in terms of big data, but the implicit educational inequality still exists. First, China's unique urban-rural dichotomy is nested in the education system, and rural Chinese women still do not have equal access to education outside of urban areas; second, education about masculinity and femininity, and women are still conditioned to be civil, submissive, and feminine in school; and third, it is still women who make sacrifices for educational opportunities in families with many children. Finally, despite ostensibly equal access to education, the costs of pursuing higher education opportunities are higher for women, including but not limited to higher barriers to entry for women, the need for women to assume family roles earlier and so on.

In terms of maternity-marriage, the first thing we need to make clear is that after the latest version of the marriage law (2020) has been amended, it operates in essence as a law to secure marital property and to maintain marital stability, and when women are in a property disadvantaged position in the marriage relationship (e.g., housewives), they will receive little or no benefits or compensation in divorce decrees; likewise, when there is emotional breakdown or sexual violence, it is also difficult for women to protect their rights and interests during the implementation of the new marriage law. In terms of childbirth, singleton births turn into triplet births in a very short period of time, and the social maternity penalty for women's births is such that "for each additional child, a woman's hourly wage decreases by about 12 percent" (Motherhood Penalties and Living Arrangements in China, Jia Yu, 2018), and in the process of raising children, mothers are usually considered the party who should pay more, and it is not uncommon for fathers in marriages to fail in their duties.

These gender inequalities are becoming more and more prominent with the awakening of women's consciousness, for example, more and more women are unable to tolerate domestic violence and seek women's protection (in the past, women often chose to put up with it under the traditional idea that "family shame must not be disclosed"). Opposition to the return of women to traditional roles such as housewives is hotly debated online (e.g., the Communist Youth League issued a rebuke of extreme feminist rhetoric that generated a very wide debate). The famous Xuzhou trafficking case and the Tangshan beating case, which led to the discussion of "girls help girls", as well as the continuing low birth and marriage rates and the continuing high divorce rate, are all rebellions against the traditional role of women.

The problem of gender inequality in China has been around for a long time, hurting not only women but also men, and discrimination against one gender has caused a series of social problems that need to be studied in depth at all times.

Working hypotheses:

1. The surplus labor force created after the economic reform has frustrated both men and women in the job market, but women face more oppression from the male labor force, i.e., they are forced to give up their employment opportunities.
2. Women's equality in education at the explicit level does not change gender inequality in other areas, and inequality at the implicit level exacerbates the problem of inequality in other areas.
3. Confucian patriarchy creates intergenerational constraints on women, sacrificing some of their human rights and masking the costs of marriage and childbearing for women, which is one of the reasons why women now resist traditional notions of marriage and childbearing.

Methodology:

I will use a qualitative research approach in which some key data will be cited and described.

In my qualitative research, I will make full use of the literature to review past research on gender inequality in China and summarize the issues facing women today in the context of literature from economics, journalism, communication, law, and other related fields.

In addition, I will combine "The Emancipation of Women: A Study of Patriarchy and Capitalism" (Roberta Hamilton, 2012), "Confucianism and the Family" (Walter H. Slote, George A. De Vos, 1998), "Capitalism and Patriarchy - A Marxist Feminist Perspective" (Chizuko Ueno) " and other books, which explore the cultural aspects of the causes of gender inequality in China today.

Outline:

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research background

As China's modernization progresses, gender issues in China have been facing very serious challenges. According to the Global Gender Gap Index (2022), China is ranked 102 out of 156 countries, maintaining a downward trend for the 13th consecutive year. Of the four dimensions selected, including economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment, the highest scoring area, equal pay for equal work, shows that women's average salary in 2021 is only 77.1% of men's, down from 77.9% in 2020 (Boss Direct Recruitment Institute, 2022), and the proportion of women in management is only 16.8% of men's. The Health and Survival domain shows that the gender at birth is only 16.8% of males. The Health and Survival domain shows a sex ratio at birth of 0.89: 1.00 (female: male), which is relatively close to the sex ratio of 111.3 in the 7th Census of China. In the area of education, the literacy rate is 95.2% for women and 98.5% for men, leaving 37.75 million illiterate people in China in 2020, of which women account for nearly three-quarters of the total. Finally, in terms of political empowerment, women account for 24.9% of political representatives, the 76th highest in the world, compared to only 3.2% in ministerial and above positions, ranking 147th among all countries (World Economic Forum, 2021).

In terms of education, inequality is divided into explicit and implicit dimensions, with the explicit dimension being that women are given the same access to education as men in terms of big data, but implicit educational inequality still exists. Firstly, China's unique urban-rural dichotomy is nested in the education system, and women's educational opportunities remain unequal in rural China outside of the cities. Secondly, education is about male and female temperament, and women are still trained to be refined, submissive and feminine at school. Thirdly, in multi-child families, it is still women who are sacrificed for educational opportunities. Finally, although access to education is apparently equal, the cost of access to higher education is higher for women, including but not limited to higher barriers to entry for women, the need for women to take on family roles earlier, etc.

In terms of maternity and marriage, it is important to understand that the most recent amendments to the Marriage Law in 2020 function essentially as a law to protect

matrimonial property and promote marital stability. Women who are property disadvantaged in marriages, such as housewives, receive little to no benefit or compensation in a divorce ruling. Similarly to this, it can be challenging for women to defend their rights under the Marriage Law in 2020 where there has been sexual assault or an emotional collapse of the marriage. In terms of childbirth, singleton births turn into triplet births in a very short period, and the social maternity penalty for women giving birth exists, with "women's hourly wages decreasing by around 12% for each additional child" (Yu & Xie, 2018), while mothers are usually considered to be the one who should pay more in the process of raising children, the general absence of the father's role and the retreat of the state in the maternity protection mechanism puts more pressure on women.

There is multiple evidence that gender inequality in China is further accentuated, with Chinese women facing varying degrees of discrimination in areas such as political empowerment, the labor market, family and marriage, and educational opportunities, which is contrary to China's long-standing pursuit of gender equality. Admittedly, China is still at the stage of a developing country, but women, as an important part of the human resource and social composition, play a very important role in promoting economic development, and a continued gender imbalance will bring challenges not only in economic terms but also in terms of demographics and social systems.

This is inextricably linked to the fact that China's economy has gone through a period of rapid growth. China's society has made a modern leap in just 40 years, which has been accompanied by a regression in the socialist state welfare system and a weakening of the state ideology that once promoted gender equality (Ji et al., 2017), and a shift in the social narrative from supporting women's employment to encouraging women to return to the family, which has further exacerbated the double burden on women in both the public and private spheres. But after 37 years of the one-child policy, women have become more empowered to challenge gender norms that are detrimental to them (Fong, 2002), such as the increasing number of women who cannot tolerate domestic violence and seek women's protection. In the past, women often chose to put up with it under the traditional ideology of "family shame". The opposition to the return of women to traditional roles as housewives has been hotly debated on the internet. For example, the Communist Youth League's publication of statements denouncing extreme feminism has led to a very wide debate, the famous Xuzhou trafficking case and the Tangshan assault case have led to discussions about 'girls help girls', and the continuing

low birth and marriage rates and the continuing high divorce rate. These indicate a rebellion by women against traditional roles.

In response to these issues, the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests was amended in 2021 to include a specific definition of "discrimination against women" to eliminate gender discrimination in employment at the legal level. However, this Law only addresses gender discrimination in the labor market and does not take the family into account. It is therefore important to re-examine the current situation of gender imbalance, in particular the current problems and their underlying causes.

1.2 Research objectives

The current discussion of gender inequality in China is divided into positivist-based studies of relevant factors and interpretive-based studies of a particular group, such as Ye Liu's 2021 exploration of women's work-family conflict under the Two-Child Policy, which focuses mostly on housewives (Liu, 2021), but a comprehensive exploration of a larger group, including men, is still inadequate.

This study aims to analyze the impact of gender discrimination in China in recent years on the labour market, education, and fertility and family, especially among young people under the age of 35, an age group with some special characteristics: firstly, they have grown up under the one-child policy and are facing the implementation of the three-child policy and the reform of the marriage law. Secondly, they are newcomers in the workplace and their career paths are still on an upward trend, objectively giving them more advantages and opportunities than those over 40; finally, they are all facing the early years of their children and the burden of childcare is very heavy in families that already have children, so there may be some impact on family, work and marriage. These particularities make the gender issues they now face somewhat revealing, and also reflect more intuitively whether there is a regression in gender awareness in China. The research objectives of this paper are therefore as follows:

1. The surplus labor force created after the economic reform has frustrated both men and women in the job market, but women face more oppression from the male labor force, i.e., they are forced to give up their employment opportunities.

2. Women's equality in education at the explicit level does not change gender inequality in other areas, and inequality at the implicit level exacerbates the problem of inequality in other areas.

3. Confucian patriarchy creates intergenerational constraints on women, sacrificing some of their human rights and masking the costs of marriage and childbearing for women, which is one of the reasons why women now resist traditional notions of marriage and childbearing.

1.3 Research significance

1.3.1 Theoretical significance

Feminist studies are "white-centric" and third-world women's studies are mostly based on race and other perspectives, and there is a lack of discussion in Asia, a region with a strong Confucian influence and a unified cultural heritage that is difficult to get rid of in a short time. But in a region like China, where political control is strong, feminist development has emerged differently from the West, it is not entirely possible to explain the current situation of women in China in terms of the results of the existing third feminist movement, namely gender fluidity, because China is officially critical of homosexuality and transgenderism, there is very little research on the subject.

1.3.2 Practical significance

In the international discourse on gender inequality, the discussion from China does not seem to be enough to provide international scholars with new insights into gender issues in China, especially to add to the phenomenon of discrimination. However, the online debate on gender discrimination in China is very lively, and more and more women are publicizing their oppression at home and work, and the absence of social helpers, such as social organizations like Women's Associations, is radicalizing the debate. On the plus side, this change is a sign of women's awakening, but on the minus side, due to the lack of theoretical and scientific guidance, this barbaric expression can easily be suppressed in its entirety, and the lack of rational discussion can cause gender issues to be masked in class conflicts, thus making the public ignore the oppression of women that needs attention, That is the more than 30 million women who are statistically deprived of the opportunity to pursue their education and the sacrifices that appear in each family are highlighted only for women. They are underreported and distorted in the media.

Moreover, the study of gender inequality in China is not all academic, rather it is rooted in the ongoing critique of capitalism in China, especially the capitalism that has developed to some extent with the fast-growing market economy of the 40 years of reform and opening up, which has widened social inequality and hindered the development of gender equality that China has tried to advocate in its pursuit of modernization (Qi et al., 2016), so research based on women's perspectives is particularly important.

1.4 Research methodology

The methodology of social research is primarily concerned with the logic of the social research process and the philosophical foundations of the research. Among the two basic methodological approaches, namely positivist and interpretive methodologies, there are both positivist and interpretivist approaches to the topic of gender inequality. Positivism is based on quantitative research that combines one or more theories to formulate hypotheses and test them through extensive data analysis, while interpretivism uses qualitative research methods that extend some theories or use them to test new variations. Specific methods involved in the interpretive research approach include personal interviews, content analysis, and observer methods.

This thesis focuses on the literature analysis method and personal interview method in qualitative research. The literature analysis method mainly refers to collecting, identifying, organizing, and analyzing the literature, which plays an important role for the researcher in supporting further analysis and discussion. This study collected the last three years of research on gender discrimination in China, which provided a basis for developing key theories and perspectives related to the research questions, and with the help of the literature analysis method, the guiding questions of the interviews were more relevant.

The personal interview method is a research method in which the researcher collects information about the psychological characteristics or behavioral data of the other person through verbal conversation with the research subject. The interview method can collect more intuitive information from the interviewees. For example, some neglected and already accustomed gender inequalities, women's perceptions of the value of the current gender environment, etc. For these issues, the personal interview

method provides more insight into the research topic than the data collection of quantitative research.

The semi-structured personal interview method used in this study is mostly open-ended in that the interviewer does not restrict the interviewee during the interview process (Ravitch & Carl, 2019), and the interviewee is free to express their thoughts, which ensures that the interviewer can gather a great deal of information beyond what is expected. Compared to quantitative statistics, this method is more likely to expose new changes in gender inequality in the present and changes in the perception of sexism among female groups, as well as issues that cannot be identified in quantitative analysis.

A total of 20 interviewees were selected based on the following points: firstly, they all came from urban and rural areas in second and third-tier cities in China, secondly, they all had more than two years of work experience and finally, half of the interviewees had to be male. The interviewees will be asked questions from these areas: workplace, education, marriage, and family, and the questions must be guided and adjustable depending on the content of the interviewer's answers. In addition, all interviews will be recorded in audio form for subsequent research.

The choice of non-first-tier cities was based on the fact that second-tier and third-tier cities account for about one-third of China's population, and the combination of urban and rural upbringing helped to explore respondents' feelings about gender discrimination between tradition and modernity; having a family and a job ensured that respondents had some awareness of gender issues in both the public and private spheres; and the fact that respondents had to be male was a consideration that men and women may have different understandings of gender issues helps me to have a more comprehensive view of what causes the divide between men and women. In addition, some of the latest data released by the Chinese government has been briefly processed to give a more accurate picture of the issue at a macro level.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Latest Research Developments

2.1.1 Gender discrimination in the labour market

From the beginning of China's accelerated market reforms, the gender essentialism attached to the free market has gradually returned, linking the previously deeply patriarchal tradition to the demands of the free market (Ji et al., 2017), dismantling the original socialist welfare system provided mainly by the workplace, so that the public and private spheres in China began to be separated.

In the public sphere, while China has gained higher investment in human capital with economic development, rapid economic growth has not reduced discrimination against women entrenched in cultural and social norms (Wang & Klugman, 2019), the developing economy and conservative cultural attitudes have eroded earlier gains in gender equality, leaving occupational gender segregation, declining female labor force participation, promotion difficulties, and gender wage gaps remain poorly addressed. The composition of China's market economy is divided into government departments, state-owned enterprises, private enterprises, and foreign-owned enterprises, with gender income inequality being the smallest in government/public institutions, followed by public enterprises, and the worst in private enterprises. Occupational segregation, on the other hand, increases with marketization (He & Wu, 2016).

There is some evidence of this in Shisong Qing's research on gender role attitudes in the workplace. Because of the existence of entrenched gender role attitudes that make occupational segregation difficult to break down, women's wages are generally lower than those of men (Qing, 2020). In Fang Lee Cooke's study of women's opportunities in government positions, it was shown that there are significant differences between men and women in the promotion process (Cooke, 2010). However, in recent years, some departments have given women a certain number of places in government recruitment announcements, but this does not indicate that gender issues have been alleviated, rather this special attention to women is an indication that gender issues are of great concern, and the effect of these measures while providing opportunities for women's employment on a small scale, is indicative of unequal opportunities in the wider discussion.

In the private sphere, as social welfare is partly contracted out to households, exploring the impact of the domestic sphere, including domestic work, elder care, and childcare, on female employment has become the most frequently studied issue in the work on gender. Typical quantitative studies such as Xiao Tan et al., exploration of whether cohabitation between husband and wife and parents affects the social division of labour, and thus the labour market, conclude that only children are able to receive more domestic support when their parents are young, but that when their parents are old, the issue of old age, along with the gender division of labour, can place great pressure on women and thus affect their performance in paid work (Tan et al., 2021). A similar theme is the effect of intergenerational cohabitation on young couples in terms of time allocation studied by Muzhi Zhou, who reached similar conclusions to Xiao Tan, with the difference that couples who do not live with their parents allocate more time to household chores, but this is much less than the time spent caring for their parents (Zhou et al., 2021). However, in contrast to Lan Liu et al., study on the impact of parental care on female labour supply, which concluded that "caring for in-laws affects female employment more than caring for parents" (Liu et al., 2010), it seems that existing research still does not make a distinction between cohabiting elders in order to explore whether this phenomenon exists objectively.

On the other hand, the discussion of working women is more focused on how to balance the values represented by working women when it comes to family and career; Ye Liu, in a study on whether working women's perceptions of their values have changed under the two-child policy, argues that it is very difficult for women to balance family and work and that women can easily lose their sense of value again as they swing back and forth (Liu, 2021). Tianhan Gui focuses her research on the social evaluation of working women, particularly the group of 'leftover women' (Gui, 2020), arguing that it is very difficult for women to achieve the ideal status of both family and work. The difference is that the 'leftover women' group is less stressed in the workplace than men, partly due to the lower ceiling for women in the workplace, and partly as a result of cultural conditioning.

2.1.2 Gender discrimination in education

Weidong Wang et al., in his study to verify the existence of patriarchy in China through individual education, concluded that "the gender education gap decreases over

time and increases with the number of siblings", and predicted that "The longer the multiple-child policy is in place, the greater the educational inequality in underdeveloped regions (Wang et al., 2020). Yuying Wang focuses specifically on the education of rural women, arguing that women's access to education is much better now than it was in 1949, and that the inequities in women's education are more a result of public policy and uneven development in China, but she also suggests that there is a need to discuss educational values, such as why women who actively drop out of school see education as less valuable than work (Wang, 2021). Deeply influenced by Confucianism, Chinese textbooks are implicitly biased against women, lack of equal discussion in the classroom, and emphasis on face-saving signals such as exam results, this ultimately makes women less competitive in the workplace and makes promotion difficult (Fang, 2021). In addition to grassroots education, higher education is considered to be more implicitly discriminatory, with Yuxuan Liu outlining the current situation of women in higher education as unequal access to education, restricted choice of majors, unfair distribution of educational resources, this implicit discrimination is one of the reasons for the difference in income between women and men with the same level of education (Liu, 2021).

On issues surrounding the education of male and female temperament, Anita Koo has done research on the gender consciousness of young people in China and argues that sexual essentialism is widespread in China (Koo et al., 2020). Both Ahmed Alduais' and Kingsley M. Schroeder's studies illustrate the impact of the school environment on male and female temperament, with Ahmed Alduais pointing out that the majority of those involved in education are female, which in itself creates a certain gender marker (Alduais et al., 2021), and the latter's study psychologically demonstrates the pressure children experience when they believe they do not conform to gender temperament (Schroeder & Liben, 2020). The fact is that education all over the world is influenced by the construction of gender temperament, and these children face conflicts in their socialisation process when their self-perceptions do not match the socially defined temperament traits, which can further affect their work and family life.

2.1.3 Gender discrimination in the field of childbirth and marriage

With the introduction of the three-child policy, more and more scholars are discussing whether women enjoy reproductive autonomy. Xiaorong Gu's findings

around women's age-based fertility anxieties suggest that women's fertility is often determined by family responsibilities and traditional 'filial piety' rather than women's autonomous choice, as prioritising career development over fertility invites social sanctions (Gu, 2021). Jia Yu and Yu Xie show how the social environment is unfriendly to female fertility in terms of the 'punishment of motherhood' in the public domain for women who have more than one child (Yu & Xie, 2018), which is certainly linked to the disintegration of the welfare social system. This is certainly related to the breakdown of the welfare system.

The female matchmaking market is also widely patriarchal in structure. Once unmarried women step into the matchmaking market, they are tantamount to entering a male-dominated community where participants follow mate selection criteria by a male-centered community, where women's social value is reduced to reproductive value and housekeeping potential, and social contributions beyond that are consciously ignored (Gui, 2017). For a married woman, there are also additional pressures for a woman to face when she wants to end her marriage. The Chinese marriage system is incomplete in four ways: incomplete protection in existing laws, differences between men's and women's capacity to litigate, patriarchal culture in and out of court, and institutional constraints that play a crucial role in producing gendered outcomes (He, 2021), and because the core of Marriage Law tends to protect the more powerful party, it is difficult for women to protect themselves during the divorce process interests during divorce.

2.2 Related theory

2.2.1 Gender theory

Gender emphasises that gender distinctions are sociocultural and not directly related to biological differences. Gender is a cultural attribute that refers to a set of socially and culturally influenced masculinity or femininity, gender norms and gender roles (Shen, 2019). Gender focuses on cultural norms of gender as a complex political mechanism that produces a set of effects between bodies, behaviours and social relations (Foucault, 2005). Judith Lorber emphasises that gender as a social construct does not automatically produce genitalia or biological differences between men and women such as genes and chromosomes; it is carefully constructed through processes of

teaching, learning, imitation and reinforcement (Lorber & Farrell, 1995). The Chinese scholar Zhao Dongyu defines the concept of gender roles as: "In China, over the course of a long social history, a series of behavioral attitudes, motivations, norms of etiquette and behaviour, as well as social expectations and aspirations, have gradually developed around the differences between men and women in terms of their biological sex. This means that the differences and distinctions between the sex roles of men and women cannot be excluded from biology, but cannot be said to be determined by biology. Biological sex determines human gender, but not gender roles." (Zhao, 2007)

Within gender theory, there are two opposing positions. The first is gender essentialism, which is physiological determinism and can be applied to theories of all differences and inequalities between groups. Gender essentialism holds that the first, second and third sex characteristics of humans determine the differences between the sexes and thus their social status (Wei, 2022). Men dominate women because men are biologically structured to act as rulers more easily, and the dominance men gain comes at the expense of emotions, family life, security, etc. While women are protected because of their lack of aggression and their need to bear and raise offspring a patriarchal social order is a natural and rational order of domination. Guided by such theories, several scholars have devoted themselves to studying the brain structure of men and women to illustrate the scientific basis of gender differences, such as the fact that men and women have language functions in different parts of the brain, which affect fluency, the ability to make associations and the style of communication (Li, 2012). Modern gender essentialism has gone to an extreme, emphasizing women's proximity to their natural nature and arguing that women are more intuitive and creative than men. In other words, it is a reversal of the traditional essentialist theory of male supremacy and a move towards a theory of female supremacy.

The second is gender constructivism, which emphasizes that there is no distinction between homosexuality, heterosexuality, or bisexuality like the person, but that it is the sociocultural factors that repress some feelings and express others. That is, gender is not an essence specific to a person, but a construct with dynamic mechanisms, full of strategic actions between social actors.

2.2.2 Evolution of patriarchy in China

Patriarchy is a traditional hierarchy where power is distributed on the basis of sex and age (MacKinnon, 1989). Patriarchy is often seen as a system of power and authority, narrowly defined as 'father's rule', the power of the older male in a ruling group of older men, which provides reciprocal benefits to subordinate women and youth living in the society of the system (Kramarae & Spender, 2001). In patriarchal societies, men form the core of society and the main social, political and economic institutions revolve around them; women are the ones who raise the children. In modern society, patriarchy is also used to refer generally to all unequal gender systems, a system based on the ideology of male superiority over women, an order of gender relations that protects the primacy of men. As an institution, women participate in this domination as men do, and men are subject to it as women are. Age and gender differences underpin power inequalities, and the integration of the public and private spheres is the structural condition for the existence of patriarchy (Waters, 1989). The logic of patriarchal domination lies in the fact that participants constantly join in the construction of the system of domination, consciously or unconsciously contributing to its perpetuation.

Heidi Hartmann's definition of patriarchy represents the basic socialist feminist definition of patriarchy: patriarchy is constituted by a set of social relations between men, the material basis of which is the historical control of women's labour by men. This set of social relations, while inherently socially stratified, creates and develops the interdependence and solidarity needed for men to co-rule women. Although patriarchy is stratified, with men from different classes, races or religious groups having different positions in the patriarchal system, they are united under the common relationships they enjoy as a result of the women who control them. In order to maintain their domination, they are interdependent on each other (Hartmann, 1979).

There are two representative views in the exploration of the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy the dual-systems theory and the unified-systems theory, both of which are also often used to explain the social change in China before and after the reform and opening up. The dual-systems theory is represented by Eisenstein, Mitchell, Juliet and Hartmann. The dual-system theory sees capitalism and patriarchy as two independently operating but mutually adaptive and interacting social systems that together create the subordination of women. However, there are also differences within the dual-systems theory, Eisenstein argues that patriarchy and capitalism are very

closely related to each other and that they are symbiotic, almost integrated (Eisenstein, 1999). Mitchell Juliet and Hartmann, on the other hand, see patriarchy and capitalism as two relatively separate spheres, except that the former favors patriarchy as operating at the ideological level, while the latter's analysis of patriarchy is more material, and she sees patriarchy as operating more at the material level. Unified-systems theory attempts to analyze capitalist patriarchy with the idea that capitalism cannot be separated from patriarchy any more than the mind can be separated from the body. Young's unified-systems theory stresses the need to replace Marx's class analysis with a feminist division of labour by gender. With regard to the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy, Young argues that capitalism does not simply exploit or accommodate gender registration, but that from the outset it is based on a gender hierarchy in which men are primary and women are secondary (Young, 1981). These theories have also been widely used in the Chinese critique of capitalism.

Since the founding of the country, the People's Republic of China has followed the Marxist concept of gender equality, uniting women as part of a widely oppressed group. However, after the market reforms, the idea of gender equality was reversed and there was a revival of traditional Chinese Confucianism. In terms of cultural shaping, Chinese patriarchy is highly bound up with Confucianism, which emphasizes filial piety, ancestor worship, and the continuity of the family based on male lineage. Filial piety refers to the 'attitude towards people', obedience, devotion, and care for parents and elderly family members, and is the basis for individual moral behavior and social harmony' (Tu, 2022), which requires women to be submissive to the family. Confucianism provided important value in maintaining social stability, but the resulting gender bias has carried through into modern society. In the realist school of Confucianism, it has become an advocate of a socio-political order that mimics the idealized patriarchal home family system, emphasizing centralized rule where each individual has fixed rights and duties, rules of etiquette, responsibilities, and humanistic ethics based on position, and promoting this social harmony based on a hierarchical order (Wang, 2013). Therefore, the concept of 'femininity' in Chinese society implies a set of kinship roles and a ritually appropriate division of labor within a hierarchical kinship system. Until the founding of the People's Republic of China, women were strict 'inside' and 'outside', and it was considered unorthodox for women to participate in the extensive public sphere for which men were responsible.

On the other hand, some scholars have tried to bridge the contradiction between Confucian concepts and gender equality, suggesting that there is merit in using Confucian advocacy in dealing with public and private interests and that Confucianism is more in line with the requirements of building an egalitarian and mutually supportive society. Confucian feminism promotes the basic Confucian scheme of complementarity and reciprocity in human relations, in which inequality based on ability or moral authority is the starting point between details, rather than unconditional absolute equality. The shift from the private to the public good is predicated on the stability and harmony of the family and therefore requires an emphasis on human morality. However, Confucian inequalities in family relations need to be addressed, and the companionship between husband and wife should be a cooperative and win-win model with friendship as the bond (Rosenlee, 2006).

3. Gender inequalities in the labour market

The labour market is closely linked to the country's economic level. In this section, I use some recent data to describe the salient gender discrimination issues that have emerged in China's labour market in recent years, as a way of showing the disparity between women's labour remuneration and their social contribution, and the cost of childbirth for Chinese women.

3.1 The current situation of women in the labour market

3.1.1 Fewer employment opportunities for women

In recent years, China has been one of the countries with a low unemployment rate. However, with the deepening of social reforms in recent years and the impact of the new epidemic, the outflow of labor-intensive enterprises, and the weakening of export commodities, China is also facing a rise in unemployment. According to the Statistics for the Second Quarter of 2022 in April, China's unemployment rate was statistically 6.1% and the unemployment rate for people aged 16-24 was 18.2% (Zhang, 2022), in addition to the nearly 200 million people in flexible employment. With a larger unemployed population, the employment environment for women seems to have

worsened. By the way, flexible employment includes part-time employment, temporary employment, dispatched labor, part-time labor, self-employed labor, network platform shared labor, etc. A large number of people in flexible employment also means that this population does not have a stable income, which has had a significant impact on social security and people's standard of living in the era of the epidemic. (See list of appendices. Figure 1: Unemployment Rate in China, 2014-2022. Figure 2: Labour Force Participation Rate in China, 2010-2019.)

This is partly due to the impact of the epidemic and policies on the tertiary sector, which brings together a large number of female workers, such as tourism and media. In the education sector, for example, the implementation of the 'Double Reduction' Policy in China since 2019 has led to a strict crackdown on online education and private teaching, resulting in massive layoffs in the education sector, where women account for more than 60% of the workforce, while the market as a whole is in a tight employment phase under the new epidemic, thus preventing unemployed women from moving to other sectors and creating flexi-employed persons. On the other hand, the primary industry has been hit hard by the epidemic. The primary sector is home to over 20 million people, of whom women account for nearly 50%, and most of them are rural women with low education and low income. The employment environment for women is therefore extremely precarious. (See list of appendices. Figure 3: Distribution of Male and Female Employment by Industry in China.)

The interviewees Gen (a marketing manager in a production company) and Liu (who had five years' experience in the construction industry) had the following views on why the employment situation for women in the primary and secondary industries is so bad. Gen reports: " Our work requires long periods of travel and based on that we would give preference to a male, a female employee is not as physically strong as a male and she has a family to look after. The factory side has recruited a lot of female staff as administrative staff with foreign sales, but now we are not doing as well as in previous years and need to optimize our staff. "

Liu says: "Women are largely invisible in the construction industry, with the occasional finance person or two. Most of our work is on construction sites, where conditions are average in all respects, women can't take the hardship and it's not convenient. The sites are usually very far from the city and you can only go home once every few weeks once work starts. If there were more women on site, the company would need to improve the dormitory environment and take into account her other

special needs, which would inevitably be another expense. Also, the construction industry has a serious alcohol culture that is very unfriendly to women, so they are reluctant to come."

3.1.2 Lower salaries than men

In the labor market, women's pay levels show two typical characteristics: firstly, within the same industry, women are paid less than men; secondly, women are clustered in industries that do not pay well. In 2020, the average salary of women employed in urban areas was RMB 6,847, down 2.1% year-on-year and 75.9% of the average salary of men. Three characteristics directly contribute to women's lower average pay than men, in descending order of weight: position at 73.4%, work experience at 54.7%, and industry at 18.3% (Boss Direct Recruitment Institute, 2022).

Career choice is the biggest factor that directly determines the salary divide between men and women. Career choice is both a subjective and a passive factor. In the over 70% female-dominated, HR, finance, administration, and healthcare fields, the male salary advantage even exceeds the overall average salary advantage, mainly due to the high penetration of men in middle and senior management positions. In the life services, media, and design occupational fields, where the gender distribution is relatively even, the salary advantage for men is relatively small. In the representative Internet, IT industry, the average salary advantage for men in technical and product positions is 16.5% and 16.8% respectively, only half of the overall salary advantage. The gender salary differential is even greater for those with higher education and changes more as the number of years of experience increases. At 15 years of experience, the gender salary gap for highly educated people is 50.5%, again due to men's control of senior management positions, with the "glass ceiling" effect having a particularly pronounced impact on highly educated women. (See list of appendices. Figure 4: Trends in the Gender Pay Gap with Years of Work for Different Education Groups, 2019-2020.)

This is in contrast to the rising educational attainment of women. As early as the 1980s, women's enrolment in tertiary education began to gradually close the gap with men, but the increasingly long educational timeframe has not brought women the same career gains as men. In 2020, the coefficient of return to education for women in the Chinese workplace was 0.061, while for men it was 2.5 percentage points higher than

for women. This implies that the progress in female human capital in post-reform China does not seem to have translated into a reduction in the gender earnings gap in the labour market within the framework of market transformation (Ji et al., 2017), and that occupational segregation and occupational feminisation account for much of the gender earnings gap in China (He & Wu, 2017).

After the reform and opening up in 1978, China completed the transition from state socialism to market capitalism, but the too-rapid transition and the receding socialist welfare policies caused the as-yet imperfect sense of gender equality to begin to regress, stimulated by the market economy, gender essentialism and traditional patriarchal values were revived (Zuo, 2016). Women are expected to fulfil their family obligations and choose jobs that are better suited to them (He & W, 2017). During the corporate recruitment process, employers may prefer to hire men for certain positions because they estimated women to be less committed to their work and less committed to their careers when they get married and give birth, leading to differences in the occupational distribution between men and women at work. Studies in industrialized countries have revealed that gender earnings gaps vary with the availability of employment in public sectors, paid parental leave, childcare facilities, as well as the tax system that encourages or discourages women's work (Lippe & Dijk, 2002), while the withdrawal of socialist welfare systems from the state would place women in a more disadvantaged position and increase gender earnings inequality, thus confirming that the state remains important in addressing women's exacerbated socio-economic situation with men in the labor market.

This may be due not only to historical cultural inertia but also to the fact that the cornerstone of China's original rule was predominantly male. 2008 was the first time China stipulated that the proportion of female members of the People's Congress should not be less than 22% (Wu & Zhaang, 2007), and in 2019 the proportion reached 24.94%. However, in the global gender gap report, the political status of women in China is not commensurate with their ability to contribute economically, with a declining trend in political status that has been worsening in recent years. (See list of appendices. Figure 5: Trends in Gender Differences in China.)

3.1.3 Difficulties for women to be promoted

According to the Global Gender Gap Report in 2022, China scored the highest in terms of women's economic participation, exceeding the 70% milestone. However, there are still significant gaps in workforce participation rates and the number of senior positions held by women. Only 11.4% of senior positions on partners or boards of directors in Chinese companies are held by women, while only 16.7% of managers are women (World Economic Forum, 2022). And in interviews, several female managers felt that their promotion in the workplace was unsuccessful, especially after having children. Yun was an investment manager and when asked about this, she said: "The investment industry was at its hottest in the market from 2013-2015, when there were many positions and a lot of work pressure, and that's when I got on the career fast track. But then, as I got married and had children, I couldn't cope with the intense work pressure and frequent travel as I did before, and my family made me have to make compromises, so I moved to a management position that was more administrative. As far as my career plans are concerned, I can only maintain the status quo or move to a pro bono management position, which means even less income. Because of the downturn in the market for investment projects, almost all the investment companies are not making money and there are just too few positions released for me. If I don't jump ship I won't get promoted again, but the risk of jumping ship is too great in the current situation."

Another HR manager, Wen, has a different view on recruitment: "The company I work for (a foreign-owned agricultural bank) has tended to recruit women with children in the last few years. Because women with children are under more pressure in life than single, unmarried women, they are more likely to compromise in the workplace and are less likely to jump ship, making them more stable. However, if you want to move up in our company, then the most you can do is move up to middle management, because the top people are posted from abroad and are predominantly male. There are more women at the middle level, partly because there are more women applicants."

These two interviewees' comments reflect the gender awareness of recruiters and the difficulties young mothers face when choosing a career. The recruiter's conclusion that women with children are more stable is still based on a stereotypical gender consciousness that seems to have been internalized in the logic of the HR market and is based on "which social role gives the least capital for the most gain". Women at the

grassroots level may be easy to select, but once they wish to become senior managers, factors such as gender and marital status, which are not related to their ability to work, still largely affect their advancement in the workplace and act as a "glass ceiling" for women's career development.

3.2 Women trapped in the family

3.2.1 The fading role of the state in childcare benefits

In the collectivist economy, state-owned enterprises would provide childcare guarantees for their employees, providing women with inexpensive and convenient places to raise their children. In the transition to a market economy, this public service was also commercialised, with the state cutting subsidies and increasing the proportion paid by individual families (Zuo, 2016), but the market-oriented education system and the competition between the notion of educational climbing and education created great fear for parents and thus increased the financial burden on families. Meanwhile between the 1980s and the 2010s, public opinion began to shift towards encouraging women to return to the family, and there was a clear sense of sexism in these discourses, which saw women as vulnerable workers, with one prominent male sociologist and legislator openly demanding that women should go home, citing sexist ideologies that saw women as biologically and socially inferior and disadvantaged workers (Song, 2011). This gender discrimination appeals to the logic of the free market and professionalizes female reproduction and domesticity.

In a model examining women's optimal human capital investment behaviour over the life cycle, it was shown that after the loss of the life-time job system in the labour market, marital status and the number of children are direct factors affecting women's wages, especially with two and more children, and that the timing of the first birth also affects women's earnings in the labour market. If a woman's base wage is higher, then the more likely she is to delay childbearing, the more time she will have to accumulate human capital (Neumark, 2004).

However, as China accelerates into an era of low fertility and aging, the opening up of the multiple-child policy has made it impossible for more and more families to take on too many reproductive responsibilities, so a family needs more people involved in caregiving, usually unpaid care provided by grandmothers. When grandmothers are

unable to provide and the household economy does not support paid domestic work, women are forced to return to the home for a long time, largely depriving them of the possibility of being paid in the labor market, the value of domestic work is in turn highly dependent on their husbands (Ji & Wu, 2018). Sometimes the social resources and status of the husband determine the social value of the wife, which can affect women's subjective well-being and their marital power in the private home. For children, parents' work in the labor market and their gendered socialization in the private home can shape boys' and girls' domestic patterns, leading to the reproduction of gender patterns.

3.2.2 motherhood penalty

Due to the absence of a social welfare system, Chinese mothers face widespread maternity penalties in two ways: firstly, in the area of housework and child-rearing, a problem compounded by intergenerational issues in the family, especially when mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationships are involved. In multigenerational families, the existence of maternity penalties depends on whether a couple lives with the husband's or wife's parents. According to a quantitative study, the motherhood wage penalty for women living with their husband's parents was 28.9%, compared to 14.5% for women living in nuclear families. However, women living with their parents did not suffer from severe wage penalties (Yu & Xie, 2018). Women living in nuclear families often bear the primary responsibility for their childcare, and this additional burden of family childcare may reduce work productivity compared to non-mothers, resulting in a motherhood penalty.

The second is that married women and mothers face significant disadvantages in terms of the income gap. For each additional child, a woman's hourly wage can be reduced by approximately 7% (Yu & Xie, 2018). Motherhood penalties tend to be worse when women live with their husband's parents and disappear when women live with their own parents. Mothers in the market sector suffer the most compared to single women and married women, as the state sector tends to provide more social services and implement gender equality policies (Shen, 2020; Yu & Hara, 2021).

The maternal punishment of women in China must be understood in the context of the shift from a socialist to a market economy. The restructuring of state-owned

enterprises and the withdrawal of state provision of social services has shifted the common burden of reproductive work back onto women's shoulders, with a significant impact on labor market outcomes for urban women (Cook & Dong, 2011). In addition, childcare reforms have led to a sharp decline in publicly funded childcare programs, which has hurt women and children, particularly low-income families (Du & Dong, 2013). With the state no longer supporting social reproduction and care, the boundaries between the public and private spheres are increasingly being drawn; women are disproportionately responsible for household chores. The domestic status of Chinese women has thus become key to understanding the tensions between their labor market outcomes and domestic responsibilities.

4. Gender inequality in education

The issue of gender equality in Chinese education has two dimensions: firstly, equality in the education system, i.e. whether women have sufficient space in the education system to obtain teaching posts. Secondly, equality in the education process, i.e. whether men and women have equal access to education and educational content. Both of these dimensions include overt inequalities and hidden inequalities. Explicit inequalities are situations where men and women are significantly outnumbered by the other in any of the listed areas of education, whether they are students or educational staff. Implicit inequality refers to situations where men or women dominate leadership positions. Public policy has a greater role in this model, but specific policies are also based on cultural and social capital (Alduais & Gökmen, 2021).

After the reform of China's financial system in 1985, the financial burden of basic education has increasingly been borne by local governments. However, local governments, due to their lack of financial resources or lack of motivation to invest in basic education, a large part of the cost of education eventually passed on to families. On the other hand, the one-child policy, which has been in place for three decades, has forced parents to invest in their daughters as well, benefiting a large number of women (Lee, 2012). In terms of female educational attainment, the proportion of educated women in China will be 0.936 in 2022 (Global Gender Gap Report 2022). This is the lowest level in the last five years. However, official Chinese data show that women's access and attainment in education has increased significantly in terms of enrolment and

higher education, so this chapter examines whether China has achieved gender equality in education and what the issues are that affect gender equality in education.

4.1 Overview of education of men and women

4.1.1 Comparison of education levels of men and women

At all educational levels in China, there has been a recent trend towards an increase in the proportion of women, and the gender gap has essentially been closed at the nine-year compulsory education level, or below junior high school. Although still predominantly male overall, the proportion has been decreasing, indicating that women are becoming more aware of the need to improve their education levels. However, as the age of the survey increases, the proportion of uneducated females also increases, while the proportion of males in higher education increases with age, and the population as a whole shows a situation where the lower levels of education are dominated by females, while the higher levels are dominated by males. (See list of appendices. Table 1: The Ratio of Male to Female Education at All Ages in China.)

In addition, in terms of access to education, females account for a larger proportion of benchmark qualifications than males in all regions of China, but male enrolment is greater than that of females overall, indicating that males have more access to education than females at all levels of education, as illustrated by the figures presented for female enrolment and female benchmark qualifications. In terms of the regional distribution of male and female enrolment rates, the regions with higher male enrolment rates tend to be provinces with relatively lower economic levels and higher male birth rates. In addition, the average enrolment rates across China's regions show that there is still a significant imbalance in the spatial distribution of educational resources, with enrolment rates in economically developed regions being four times higher than those in less developed regions. The Beijing and Shanghai Rim regions are overall higher than the economically disadvantaged regions in the northwest and southwest. (See list of appendices. Table 2: The Ratio of Male to Female Enrolment Rate by Region in China. Table 3: Gender Preference of Birth Population under China's Three-child Policy: Regional Differences.)

4.1.2 Temperament education for male and female

Firstly, the largest number of young children's books currently published in China have 75% female characters and 25% male characters, with a significantly higher proportion of females than males, and are mainly found in the family sphere. The younger the age of the children's books, the higher the proportion of females. The predominance of mothers and the absence of fathers in young children's family life is a reflection of the traditional gender perspective of 'women as the primary caregiver and men as the primary caregiver'. In the two sets of textbooks most used in primary schools around the world - the People's Education Press edition and the Beijing Normal University Press - only 20.4% of the former's books contain images of women. Although the number of females in primary school social studies textbooks is generally balanced with that of males, there is a clear gender gap in the number of named persons with separate identities, with 95% of males and only 5% of females. The activities of boys and girls related to mathematics learning, which are the main part of the illustrations in the textbook, show a distinctly male dominance and female subordination (Shi, 2002).

Secondly, there is also a gender culture conflict in teaching activities in terms of teachers' perceptions, patterns of teacher-student classroom interaction, and interaction between male and female students within the classroom. During the interviews, Jia and Zhe reported experiences of being punished for not conforming to gender roles in the education process. Jia says: "As a child, I was particularly fond of girls' dresses and my mother taught me that I had to behave like a boy and not like dolls and pretty dresses. But when I grew up I found I didn't fit in with the boys at school, I liked being around girls and my teacher had a special talk with my parents about this, they thought I tended to fall in love early, but the truth is I just wanted to make friends."

Zhe says: "I grew up very physically fit and particularly enjoyed playing basketball, but from the time I started primary school, my PE teachers would always separate the male and female activity areas, giving girls toys like shuttlecocks and leather straps and males basketball, football, and table tennis. They thought that girls should be quieter and that ball games would cause girls to get hurt. If I wanted to play basketball with the males, the female students would see me as a deviant and in turn, think I was pleasing the males."

These facts point to a relatively homogenous model of gender social construction in China, which still constructs young children as qualified males and females according to their biological differences. This simplistic constructive logic still derives from the Confucian tradition of 'Yin-Yang' thinking, where masculinity and femininity are opposed but complementary, the combination of 'Yin' and 'Yang' is what completes the picture, so discipline is necessary and individual traits are not important in the group, it is the group's expectations that are more worthy of being met. This kind of discipline is not so much about training women as it is about training a competent family caregiver. In the Chinese world, a woman is a 'woman' only because she is also a daughter, a wife, and a mother. There are no specific characteristics or qualities of 'woman' per se (Rosenlee, 2006). Under this discipline, the woman becomes part of the discipline of other women, and those of the same sex who do not conform to the 'norm' are ostracised until they are willing to become part of the group's traits. On the other hand, in terms of the construction of gender, the construction of a gender group trait requires the construction of three levels of influence: the association between the gender group and a given attribute, the association between the gender group and the self, and the association between the self and a given attribute (Schroeder & Liben, 2020). When the self conflicts with gender group traits, more serious psychological problems can occur as the child grows into the socialization stage, with implications for his or her social role.

In response to this question, interviewee Jia shared his experience, he says: "I am gay, but I hid so well that my family, classmates, and teachers didn't know, and dated people of a specific orientation in a specific place. When I was still at university I had two girlfriends but I was not happy with them, at that time I was not aware that I was gay and I could not get my heart set on women, they were like my sisters. I went to see a therapist for that and it wasn't until two years after graduating from university that I completely reconciled with myself, and that took me almost ten years."

The construction of gender is oppressive for both men and women, and the mechanism of social oppression lies in the ever-increasing antagonism between the sexes (Bourdieu, 2001). In China, homosexuality is officially suppressed, and almost all homosexual novels, films and television series are blocked and shelved, because the dominant family concept supported by the government is that of the heterosexual family, self-reliant China strengthened by a growing population and traditional values (Murphy, 2022). This makes sense for ensuring social stability, even through conservative cultural

strategies. The Chinese Ministry of Education's response to the 'Proposal on Preventing the Feminization of Male Adolescents' (Yang, 2021) highlights the top-down construction of gender role ethos through the regulation of the body (both male and female), which appeals to a male-oriented aesthetic and the cultural climate and power structures built around it.

4.2 The hidden gender problem

4.2.1 Intergenerational transmission of educational inequalities

China has a huge social structure of separation between urban and rural areas, with urban areas gathering more social resources and wealth, while rural areas are relatively poor in resources. From a macro perspective, urban residents enjoy richer educational resources in three main ways: firstly, urban areas are more attractive to teachers and have richer educational resources due to their higher level of economic development, better welfare benefits, and hardware facilities; rural areas have fewer educational resources than urban areas due to their level of economic development and transport conditions. Secondly, the family planning policy in urban areas is more thoroughly implemented and the fertility rate is lower, with more one-child families, while rural families have a higher fertility rate and a larger number of children, making the already relatively scarce educational resources in rural areas even more stretched. Thirdly, urban residents have higher incomes and can afford the cost of education, and the economic advantages of urban families translate into advantages for their children in accessing education, while rural residents have lower incomes and are at a disadvantage in accessing education compared to urban residents.

Socio-economic differences between urban and rural areas will lead to urban-rural differences in patriarchal culture or traditional gender role perceptions as well. In urban areas, where the level of industrialization and modernization is higher, residents have a relatively high level of education, are more open to cultural attitudes, and are more influenced by foreign cultures, so the patriarchal attitudes of urban residents are weaker. In rural areas, on the other hand, the economic and cultural level is relatively low, the average level of education of the inhabitants is lower, the clan concept is stronger, and many rural areas are remote and less influenced by foreign cultures. Although patriarchal cultural attitudes in rural areas have tended to diminish to

some extent since the reform and opening up, they still have a strong influence in many rural areas and among peasant groups.

For example, in Beijing and Xizang the Average enrollment rate, The ratio of male to female enrollment rate, and the Baseline ratio of male to female education in Beijing are 21.75%, 1.2523 and 0.8611 respectively, indicating that the overall education level in Beijing is higher and males are relatively more likely to enroll in school under the condition that females are better educated. In terms of overall education, Xizang lags far behind Beijing, with males being far more likely than females to enroll in school given the small difference in basic education levels between males and females, making it the province with the highest male enrolment rate in the country. This indirectly suggests that in economically disadvantaged areas there is a preference for males in terms of intergenerational resources for education. In combination with the age breakdown of education, there is a long and significant concentration of females in Uneducated, Preschool education, and Primary School, females education appears to be "bottom persistent"; Males are concentrated at Junior High School and above, where "ceiling persistence" occurs.

For this reason, although the gender gap in educational attainment and access to education in China gradually decreases with age grouping, gender inequality still exists in the Chinese education system, and even the difference in intergenerational mobility in education between men and women is gradually worsening. The reasons behind this may be the following.

Firstly, when public expenditure on education is transferred to the local treasury, the crowding out of children from poor families, especially females, by household expenditure caused by continuous learning increases, resulting in children from wealthy families being more likely to benefit from national policies such as the nine-year compulsory education, and these families can divert their investment that should have been invested in basic education to remedial classes, special classes, and another extracurricular coaching, effectively widening the gap between children from families of different classes in terms of primary This widens the gap between the primary education levels of children from different classes, which in turn affects the enrolment rate in higher education. The education level of children from rural families in China mostly stops at junior high school, and the enrolment rate of women in senior high school is lower than that of men.

Second, the influence of the Chinese culture of son preference and gender discrimination in the labour market on parents' allocation of family resources has resulted in a strong son preference for educational inputs, including various types of financial support or other incentives, for both men and women. Thirdly, the urban-rural gap in higher education opportunities has widened, especially with the expansion of university enrolment, and inequality in higher education opportunities between urban and rural areas has increased by 33.6% (Guo, 2008). The fact that rural children have to work relatively harder to obtain the same educational opportunities somehow induces women, whose parents already have low expectations of them, to work earlier to earn money to supplement their families (Huo, 2021).

4.2.2 Equality of educational opportunities in multi-child families

The implementation of the single-child policy has led to greater access to education for women (Lee, 2012), but there is still unequal access to education in some multiple-child families. According to Weidong Wang et al.'s quantitative study, sons receive more education than daughters in multiple-child families, and there is a relatively significant gendered difference in education between rural and urban residents, with the gender education gap narrowing over time and widening with the number of siblings (Wang et al., 2020).

During the interviews, it became clear that the problem was not only one of 'son preference', but also cases of conscious control of their daughters' educational opportunities for old age purposes, influenced by patriarchal thinking. For example, interviewees Shi says: "My housemate at university came from a rural area and she was 22 years old at the time. She was not eligible for university admission, but she was a poor student and therefore received special attention. My housemate had an older brother and a younger brother, and her family required that she had to wait until both her brother and younger brother had gone to university if the family had any money left before it was her turn to go to university. But she was the best child in the family and neither her brother nor her brother did as well as she did in the entrance exams, yet she waited from the age of 18 until she was 22 to get that opportunity. In addition, she went back to the countryside after graduating from university because she needed to take care of her parents."

The interview with Zhang illustrates the inescapable influence of gender in families adopting girls under the pressure of old age. Zhang says: "Now that the three-child policy is in place, my relatives have adopted a girl from someone they know well. They originally wanted to have one but were worried about having another son, so they chose to adopt. Their son is already 20 years old and the family has paid a lot to save up for a house for their son. They are now adopting a girl in the hope that their daughter will grow up just enough to provide for their old age and also help their middle-aged son to live a less stressful life. In this case, they also don't want to raise their daughter to be a highly educated intellectual woman, as that would become disobedient."

Even in modern society, the mentality of the son as the main workforce has not ceased. Furthermore, it costs more money to raise a son than a daughter, because sons need to marry, and with current house prices only a very small number of young men can achieve independence in buying a house, most still depend on their families for support (AsiaNews, 2022). Raising a son no longer prevents the problem of old age support, and raising a daughter becomes another solution, because daughters are so expected to be the caregivers of the family, and is nurtured as such.

Another example of an interview had the opposite view. Jun says: "I have a biological brother who is seven years younger than me. I was born in a rural area but my family was relatively well-off and my parents were very open-minded, so I didn't feel a tendency for my parents to love their son more. I used to tutor my brother's homework after I went to university and he is now at a good university. My family expects me more to do what I like, and of course, it's best if I can earn money."

At the micro level, family diversity seems to make the classic, male-gender-dominated family power structure less rigid than in the past, and the family status of female members increases with age, income, or education. The different circumstances of Jun's and Shi's housemates reflect the different influence of patriarchal power in different areas of the economy, with Jun's family being closer to a post-patriarchal structure and her education and income being the highest in the family, which gives her more options in the family. Shi's housemates, on the other hand, are still trapped in the shadow of traditional patriarchy, a family structure centered on the family elders who have strong control over their children and wives.

Based on the increasing preference for 'sons' in China after the three-child policy, the revival of traditional thinking and the increasingly conservative gender and family

attitudes that encourage women to return to the family, there is still no optimism that the future will reduce hidden discrimination against women in education. (See a list of appendices, Table 3: Gender Preference of Birth Population under China's Three-child Policy. The maximum gender preference for the third child is 165.85, and from the first to the third child, the gender preference is still overwhelmingly male.)

4.2.3 Invisible discrimination in higher education

Gender inequality is more specific to cultural capital, and it is true that China does not prevent women from pursuing or studying a particular field at the explicit level in terms of enrolment rates. However, society itself plays an important role in reinforcing the vast hidden gender inequalities (Alduais et al., 2021). Discrimination in higher education manifests itself in two main ways: the unequal access of men and women to higher education and the cultural influence of men and women in their choice of profession.

Firstly, the proportion of women is much greater than men in specialist, undergraduate, and master's education between the ages of 15-40, but the proportion of men is much greater at the doctoral level and increases as the doctoral age range get older. (See a list of appendices. Table 1: The Ratio of Male to Female Education at All Ages in China.) This suggests that not only gender but also age is an issue in the process of further education for both men and women in China. In response, interviewee Shi shared her experience of applying for a Masters as well as a Ph.D. She says: "My major is Environmental Engineering and when I applied for my Master I came 1st in my major and 4th in my written exams. In the interviews I have participated in, most of the interviewees are still mostly women and it is also obvious during the interview process that women are more qualified in the discipline than men, only a very few men will stand out very much, and the rest of the men have just met the requirements of the school to interview. But because we are an engineering discipline with a lot of field research assignments, tutors will indicate in interviews that they would prefer to recruit men. But our major is still more female than male at the moment, and that's because women are so much better than men."

Wu, who majored in anthropology, also shared her experience: "When I applied to graduate school, there were 14 students, including me, who made it to the interview stage, and of the worst students, only one male was accepted. My supervisor later said

that because there were too many females in the program, more males needed to be recruited to balance things out. Also, the supervisors were concerned about students getting married and having children while they were still studying; they would find it very delaying to their research progress, whereas males would not have this worry. That's one of the reasons they tend to recruit more males, but there are just too many females applying to our program and the men are relatively less talented."

One male, Liu, took the opposite view in the interview: "I applied for postgraduate studies after working, and there were more women in the interview, but I think we all go on to study on merit, and my supervisor also said something about preferring to recruit more men, but my understanding was that he wanted more men to do the hard work, women can't be too tired, it's a biological difference between men and women, and it's a way to take care of women."

When it comes to differences regarding whether age contributes to admission outcomes, almost all interviewees agreed on the influence of age on the admissions attitudes of tutors. The difference is that women are more restricted; if a woman is too old when applying for a master's or doctoral study, she will be eliminated almost immediately. Men are less restricted and look more at the coherence of their study experience. Shi says: "When I applied for Ph.D. studies, my supervisor asked me to fill in information about my height, weight, age, and family situation, and after I had enrolled I heard that another thirty-year-old sister had applied for Ph.D. studies and was rejected."

Liu says: "Because I studied a science subject and had previously pursued a career related to my supervisor's research project, I was not subjected to the harshness of age when I applied for postgraduate study."

Secondly, statistics on the distribution of male to female university students by discipline in China in 2020 show that the proportion of male students in science, engineering, medicine and agriculture is significantly higher than that of female students. Among them, engineering, agriculture and medicine account for the largest proportion, at 63.89%, 63.64% and 58.06% respectively. Art, history, economics, literature, law, philosophy and education are all disciplines in which there are more women than men. Of these, literature, art and history accounted for the most women, with 87.82%, 75.4% and 73% respectively (Wutongguo, 2020). The divergence in choice of major is not just a matter of subjective choice between men and women, but also a significant difference in objective admissions requirements. Zhe shared her experience: "When I graduated

from high school, I went to apply for the police academy, which was divided into two grades based on gender, with women scoring more than 100 points higher than men, and I passed the school's test, but I eventually gave up my dream of becoming a police officer because my family felt that finance might be a better prospect than police."

It is clear from these interviews that the disciplinary construction of knowledge and the examination system are systematically excluding girls, perhaps about China's long history of talent selection. In ancient China, the ultimate aim of examinations was to achieve the ideals of 'self-cultivation, family harmony, governance, and world peace', a very masculine requirement, as only men were allowed to participate in state affairs and women are expected to adhere to the female moral character by social rules. In addition, for the centralized bureaucracy, one of the functions of education was to allow students to identify with their gender identity and maintain social stability and cultural continuity. While examinations allowed for upward and downward social class mobility, the examinations themselves favored men and those who had access to resources to help them take them (Fang, 2021), and women had to pay a greater price if they wanted to intervene.

5. Gender inequality in marriage

Stephanie Coontz argues that for thousands of years the economic, political, and social functions of marriage have overwhelmed the individual needs and wishes of its members, especially women and children (Coontz, 2005). As other economic and political institutions began to replace much of the role that marriage had once played, the private relationship between individuals was given greater importance and free will become the social norm for choosing a partner. In China, marriage is the link most closely associated with political society, and it is tied to the most important productivity of society - population size. Therefore, it is important to consider the current social needs when exploring gender inequality in marriage. China is a centralized, authoritarian and collectivist state, where marriage is seen as a contract of family formation and the maintenance of stable marital relations is an important institution for maintaining the family and stabilizing social security. When marriage and fertility rates continue to decline, the demographically induced attitudes towards marriage and fertility change as well. What we need to explore, therefore, is whether the allocation of resources in the Chinese marriage market is divorced from the essence of human

family-building, which resembles a property distribution mechanism and operates in practice to the disadvantage of women in many ways.

5.1 Patriarchal thinking in the matchmaking market

5.1.1 The formation of the matchmaking corner

Matchmaking Corner has been a social phenomenon in China for over twenty years. The concept of "the parents' order and the matchmaker's word" and "a marriage arranged with proper regard to position, fortune, and community of circumstances" has been used throughout the formation and development of matchmaking activities. In the early feudal society, the hierarchy of superiority and inferiority was highlighted by patriarchal power, and the further development of patriarchal power was monarchical power, while the political ideology of "the family and the state are one" and the stable thinking of the extended family by blood and marriage blurred the boundary between the public and private spheres (Feng, 2013), who enjoyed dominance over female members. Under this clannish social structure, the honor and disgrace of the individual were bound up with the honor and disgrace of the family, and the individual was connected to society through the family, and the personality and value of the individual were often stifled in the family cover-up. Furthermore, in Confucian culture, one of how parents show their love is by taking an interest in their children's marriages and adopting an arranged form of marriage for their children's happiness, while also maintaining the status of the family.

In modern society, arranged marriages have been replaced by free love, and the dominant view of marriage emphasizes the unity of love, sex, and procreation (Ueno, 2022). Modern people believe that the process of meeting, knowing, and loving each other is necessary for the two sexes to reach the altar of marriage and that only love united by love is a good marriage, while modern industrial forms of production have gradually dismantled the pattern of bloodline domination between families (Engels, 2003), and the single-family as the main social productivity has gradually changed the traditional Chinese living environment of four generations in one house. There seems to have been a decline in traditional familism, and adult children's ties to their parents have weakened considerably. However, the cultural discipline remains, and the culture of filial piety prevents parents from divorcing themselves from the concerns of their

children. With the retirement of parents, the teahouse culture and square dancing, which are social spaces for the elderly, have begun to flourish, and with the declining marriage rate of the younger generation and the rising age of first marriage, the birth of the matchmaking corner. The first matchmaking corners in China were formed in 2005 in a teahouse on Huaihai Road in Shanghai and then moved to People's Square, where they have become a regular venue and are now growing in urban areas of China. In the early days, participants in matchmaking corners were organized by old people who were morning walkers in parks and square dancers, who were deeply influenced by traditional culture, were usually retired and had children in their 20s and 30s, and were busy at work. The importance of having a legitimate child that could be passed down through the family was also a concern (Pettier, 2020). Because of family planning at the time and the rejection of illegitimate children under marriage laws, illegitimate children born out of wedlock would have been severely criticized by public opinion.

Teng, who has been complying with her parents' requests to go on a blind date for the past year, shares her thoughts: "My parents love to set me up on matchmaking and I have dated over 20 men this year, but these are not my wishes. They have arranged everything for me, but the truth is that they just want me to have children sooner, and they want to help me raise my child as soon as possible while they still have the energy to do so. I've only been working for three years and would like to wait a bit longer."

5.1.2 The embodiment of patriarchal power in the matchmaking

The sex ratio between men and women in China in 2021 is 104.88 (China Women's Daily, 2022), the non-marital population after 1980 is 136: 100 and the average for those born after 2000 is 116.51 (China Demographic Yearbook, 2020). Despite the large gender gap in China and the fact that there are far more unmarried men than women, there is still a predominance of male demand in the choice of a spouse, with women gaining no advantage in choosing a spouse, there is still a predominance of male demand in mate selection is still dominated by male demand, and women do not gain an advantage in choosing a spouse. The main reasons for this phenomenon are the following: firstly, women's fear of childbirth due to the dangers of having children at an advanced age, which have long been overplayed in the media, has led to a consensus that women choose their spouses for a shorter period than men;

secondly, women are more anxious about owning property than men and marriage is deliberately portrayed as a way of acquiring property and securing a quality of life; thirdly, the state's will for social harmony and stability. Women were brought up with the idea that having a family was an obligation (Fincher, 2014) and that women's bodies were merely objects of state population control, tools to achieve urgent demographic goals (Karl, 2010).

For women, the risk of becoming a 'leftover' makes young men and women and their parents aware that choosing a partner is a long-cycle and not always satisfying act, which can incite intentions to marry early and to go beyond the norms of monogamy, a possibility further fuelled by the media and the construct of the 'utilitarian woman' in popular discourse. Anxious parents can continually channel this pressure, further reinforcing marriage as a norm among young people (Eklund, 2018). And the act of matching in matchmaking corners has become one of the areas that objectify women the most. Interviewees, especially women, invariably expressed the mismatch of values they were subjected to in the mate selection process, with matchmaking corners more like places where women's reproductive value is put at a price. Teng says: "My dates don't care about what I do for a living, including the other person's parents, they are more concerned about whether I have enough time to take care of my family with my job and whether I can raise children with my educational background than whether my job is valuable to society. They usually make requests when we first meet that he wants to have children, these requests are made without consideration for my feelings."

The needs of men and women in marriage differ significantly, with women expecting more of an equal and like-minded relationship, they want to be able to work with their partner to help each other out, while men express the desire for their spouses to take care of themselves and share more of the household chores and to have and raise children. In addition, declining employment rates in China and a sudden increase in work pressure due to the economic downturn may force some young people to re-embrace arranged marriages (Liu & Mu, 2022). In response, Zhen and Teng interviewees made their attitudes clear. Zhen says: "I'm fine with matchmaking, my parents do introduce me to girls quicker than if I took the initiative to meet them on my own, plus they promise to help me with the kids. Although I prefer to live on my own, it is also my duty to fulfil my parents' wishes."

Teng says: "I look forward to a partnership, but from the matchmaking process, it seems a bit difficult to achieve. Because either way, I feel anything disrespected as a person. I am first and foremost myself before being a woman."

The Matchmaking Corner was born based on direct parental intervention in the marriages of their children, reflecting more on the needs of the parents in the family structure, and the families established under this model have the primary goal of satisfying parental needs. The will of both parents is reflected in all aspects of the couple's life. This conflict is particularly evident when either spouse does not live according to traditional rules. Gen says: "My wife and I met on matchmaking and both parents are employees of a state-owned company. I prefer to live with two people, but my mother-in-law is always worried, so she often comes to my house to add food & clean, but my wife and I rarely eat at home because of our work and the food ends up being put to rot and then thrown away. Also, we didn't want to have children too early, but both our parents wanted us to finish having children as soon as possible."

5.2 Bride price and fertility

5.2.1 Tradition and modernity in bride price

The system of the bride price was first introduced in the Western Zhou period, when the Zhou Rites, the moral code of the time, eventually evolved into the Six Rites. The bride price, as a part of the conscription, signified the formal establishment of the marriage relationship. The bride price also symbolized family responsibilities, with the woman having to assume responsibility for ancestor worship and fertility in both families. In addition, the bride price served as a form of compensation for the emotional as well as labor loss of the family that raised the girl when she joined the man's family (Meng et al., 1992). After the founding of the People's Republic of China, the bride price officially appeared as an institution in the 2003 Judicial Interpretation of the Chinese Supreme Court, in the form of a debt in civil law and protected by law (Jin, 2019).

The bride price in modern society is mainly used as the personal property of the woman or the joint property of the small family after marriage, mostly for the common life of the man and woman. There is currently a great deal of controversy over the bride price, with nearly 30 cases of bride price disputes reported in the media in 2022. At the

heart of the controversy is the definition of modern marriage, with one view being that the acceptance of the bride price by the woman during the marriage process means that the marriage relationship is established. And this means that the bride price has the nature of a sale of marriage. According to another view, the bride price is a gift of friendship between the parties to a marriage contract to prove the establishment of the marriage, provided that the marriage is to be established in the future (Shi, 2000).

Both of these notions ignore the guarantee of marriage for the institution of procreation, as Xiaotong Fei points out: "Everywhere we see men and women uniting with each other as a couple, giving birth to children and bringing them up together. This set of activities I will call the institution of procreation. The significance of marriage, according to my statement above, is in the establishment of bi-lineage nurturing (Fei, 1995)." Childbearing is a female-led right and not an obligation, women can decide for themselves whether or not to exercise this right. In the case of women, especially in countries where gender discrimination in the workplace is a major problem the physical and professional consequences of childbearing, and until the government establishes a system of compensation for women for childbearing, the man is required to take on additional responsibilities such as caring for the family during the woman's childbearing. When the state and public policies consider the family as the basic unit of production, each family is exposed to social resource constraints as well as limitations, which make the family a community of interests, while gender differences and gender interests are overshadowed by family interests. In this case, the bride price is the cost of childbearing to the woman. The Chinese government has few social protection measures for women during childbirth, so the bride price is more like a risk fund for women. So that even if the marriage breaks down during pregnancy and the man does not fulfill his responsibilities, the woman can still provide for the child.

However, current judgments in disputes arising from the bride price have focused on three areas: solicitation of property through the marriage relationship, sale of marriages, and gifts in general. This reflects the fact that there is not yet a unified consensus on the issue of the dowry, particularly on whether it is a gift relationship. The giving and returning of the bride price has led to many criminal cases in which the victims are mostly women, and in September 2022 Henan Province proposed a zero bride price (Legal Daily, 2022). In addition, the Internet Index shows that the second most relevant question about the bride price is "What the wife is used for", which shows that men's perception of the bride price is still at a customary stage, rather than a legally

binding contractual norm and that this superficial perception has led to a lack of respect for women about the bride price, and even to use violence because of this difference.

This also reflects the vast difference in gender perceptions between Chinese men and women. In a time of growing female consciousness, society's view of marriage continues to assume that women need to sacrifice more for marriage, while men believe that there should be no bride price for free-love marriages, selectively ignoring the sacrifices of women in marriage as a default virtue for wives, while treating independent women as a form of moral abduction, believing that women should not accept bride price if they are independent. But the truth is that the values of romantic love do not match men's actual marital needs, and patriarchal values of husbands towards their wives can no longer prosper when the bond of love becomes the dominant ideal and preferred practice of a culture (Jankowiak & Li, 2017).

5.2.2 Vietnamese brides

In the 1990s, as diplomacy between China and Vietnam normalized with the gradual opening up and reform, the flow of cross-border marriages grew. As early as 2015 there were over 100,000 Vietnamese brides in China, and media coverage of Vietnamese brides has shifted from negative news to a more positive attitude, such as a very popular article in 2014 entitled "Chinese man goes to Vietnam for a month, surprised Vietnamese Women Can't Marry" (Xi, 2014) and 2022 named "Young men going overseas to marry their wives" (Zhang, 2022). The former is a critique of Vietnamese brides, while the latter is a celebration of them. Coincidentally, the perspective of both is how marrying a Vietnamese bride is good for men. The former argues that the reason why Vietnamese women cannot marry is that they will stick their husbands' money to their mothers' families and will flee back to Vietnam if they do not have it, while the latter details how he has found Vietnamese wives to be the best value for money after many comparisons.

It is the desire of many ordinary Chinese men to seek transnational marriages in less developed countries. Compared to the high cost of marriage at home, some countries that do not have clear requirements for pre-marital property in terms of social customs have become new options for men with limited realistic conditions. In transnational marriage agencies, women from Southeast Asian countries are highly recommended for men's needs in choosing a spouse (Zhang, 2022).

In another book entitled *How Men and Women Attract Each Other* (Li, 2016), the author even claims that Vietnamese brides threaten the "privilege" of Chinese women because they are more docile and give men great pleasure like the women in the harem of the feudal dynasty, and preaches that the best Chinese men are taken away by Vietnamese women.

The rise in the number of Vietnamese brides and the shift in attitudes towards them is indicative of the growing problem of marriage squeeze that China faces. China is facing a significant gender imbalance, with a disproportionate number of low-income single men creating a social security risk, and traditional matchmaking methods have clearer entry barriers, for example, the regulations on personal assets, education, physical appearance, etc., making marriage in China a less cost-effective proposition for low-income men than for Vietnamese brides. However, the migration of Vietnamese brides, whether active or passive, is still fundamentally in conflict with the legal criteria of freedom of marriage and constitutes a de facto sale of weddings. There are still many Vietnamese women who choose to wed Chinese men without registering their unions, resulting in a de facto more feudal relationship. It is difficult to argue with the freedom of Vietnamese women's willingness to marry while taking full advantage of gender and the country's economic advantages (Huang, 2020).

In addition, at a macro level, the power gap between countries leads to marriage migration from less powerful countries to more powerful ones; the gender power imbalance between men and women leads to many problems in such transnational marriages. For the more powerful countries, the unpaid domestic work and childbirth provided by 'foreign brides', represented by the 'Vietnamese bride', is an additional source of cheap labor and stabilizes the mechanism for reproducing cheap labor at home. At a time when the superior position of men in richer countries is threatened by the growing power of women, international capital flows provide a gateway for them to turn to poorer regions in search of a continuation of patriarchal control (Li, 2006).

5.3 The difficult divorce process

In 2021, 2.1 million divorces were registered in China (Stevenson, 2022) and 1.9 million divorces were filed in court (Supreme People's Court, 2022), with the most common reasons for ending marriages being personality incompatibility and domestic violence. Domestic violence was the most common reason for ending a marriage.

However, all of the couples who filed for divorce invariably went through a long and painful divorce process, especially the women. Why do divorce decisions in China differ so much from the legal principle of freedom and equality in marriage? What are the consequences of this discrepancy for women? These are the main questions that will be addressed in this section.

5.3.1 Long divorce periods

The long divorce period in China is reflected in two ways: first, the procedural process is complex. The vast majority of couples resort to litigious divorce to resolve their problems, but judges often dismiss divorce petitions in the first instance based on political requirements and other considerations, while mediation will be conducted in the hope of reaching the goal of surviving the marriage (He, 2013). When the court dismisses a petition for divorce in the first instance, the procedure requires a new petition after a statutory waiting period of six months. The second is the introduction of cooling-off periods. In 2021, China introduced divorce cooling-off periods specifically to restrict divorce applications, which were created for 'impulsive divorce' couples, but which are required to be observed by all couples, whether divorced by agreement or litigiousness. For couples who would otherwise be able to resolve their divorce peacefully, the cooling-off period poses a major problem, as one party is likely to change his or her mind as time draws on, and eventually have to take the long road to a litigious divorce. In this regard, interviewee Yun shared her experience of having negotiated a divorce with her husband. She says: "My husband and I had a long argument about a year ago, we had started negotiating a divorce. But the lawyer told me that if it went to divorce proceedings we would have to wait a month before we could file and that it would take us one to three years if the division of property was unclear and needed to be litigated because if the second litigation was unsuccessful we would need to live apart for two years to file for a third. Then we both decided it was too time-consuming and dismissed the idea."

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the building of family values has become an important task in building a moderately prosperous society across the board, advocating family integrity and thus social harmony, all taking precedence over the freedom to divorce (He, 2021). Thus, the setting of divorce cooling-off periods did save the divorce rate, with a total of 2.839 million couples filing

for divorce in 2021, down 34.6% from 4.339 million in 2020, as the divorce rate continued to rise, but it also affected the marriage rate, with 7.643 million marriages in 2021 in China, the lowest in history since 1986.

5.3.2 High tolerance for domestic violence

The definition of domestic violence in existing laws is unclear, and there are difficulties in identifying it in practice. Law of the People's Republic of China Against Domestic Violence defines domestic violence as physical and mental abuse between family members by beating, tying up, mutilating, restricting personal freedom, as well as regular verbal abuse and intimidation (Xinhua News Agency, 2015), but there are no further detailed regulations on the manner and degree of injury. Therefore, judges have a very wide latitude in determining domestic violence. The judge's attitude is often influenced by the abuser, and if the abuser has serious violent, and socially dangerous tendencies, the judge will often refuse to divorce for the sake of social stability and his or her safety.

"If one party brings up the existence of domestic violence, this does not increase the chances of obtaining a divorce, but instead only decreases them, a consideration based on the very requirement of policing (Ethan Michelson, 2019)." With this in mind, there may be greater social gains to be made by submitting to the abusive party, while at the same time, because the process of deciding a divorce is cumbersome and time-consuming, women who are victims of domestic violence will experience greater violence after filing for divorce once, making it difficult to continue the divorce process, thus creating a large number of refugees from marital violence (Chen et al., 2018).

Although China has introduced regulations such as personal safety protection orders against domestic violence, only 10,917 people were protected from 2016-2021 (He, 2022), which is insignificant compared to the huge number of victims of domestic violence. The limitations placed on judges by political and institutional forces are largely responsible for this phenomenon (He, 2021). Chinese judges belong to the public system and have to consider not only the political implications of the case when deciding divorce but also their heavy workloads and the threat of the abuser (Michelson, 2019).

In addition, compensation for domestic violence is difficult to achieve. The Civil Code of the People's Republic of China provides that in cases of bigamy, cohabitation

with another person, domestic violence, abuse, and abandonment of family members, the party not at fault is entitled to claim compensation (Xinhua News Agency, 2020). However, the number of cases in which compensation was awarded in actual judgments is sparse. According to the Report of Beijing Judicial Big Data Analysis Report on Cases Involving Domestic Violence, of the 320 domestic violence cases in Beijing in 2021, only three people were eventually awarded full compensation, and another 72 cases were either not recognized by the court as compensation or had the amount of compensation reduced. If the victim wants to get a divorce as soon as possible, then it is safest not to provoke the abuser into confrontation, but this means a big loss in terms of money.

5.3.3 Unclear boundaries for granting divorce

According to the Civil Code of the People's Republic of China in 2021, the court's decision to grant a divorce depends on three main aspects, namely the existence of domestic violence, the breakdown of mutual affection, and prolonged separation. Of these, the most important factor leading to successful divorce proceedings is proof of a breakdown of mutual affection, but this has been quantified in practice by the courts as a rule on the number of times a divorce is filed, with the first application for divorce being defaulted to a disallowance, and the probability of the judge granting a divorce increasing as more proceedings are filed. This crude method of defining emotional breakdown is due, firstly, to the relatively high work pressure on Chinese judges. In China, judges must decide on a case every day on average. Secondly, to the requirement of maintaining social stability, and to the fact that the decision exceeds even the requirement of knowing the true situation of the marriage of the parties, and if one of the parties is an emotionally violent person. If one of the parties is a violent person, the judge may not grant a divorce for reasons of security (He, 2021).

5.3.4 Inadequate protection for vulnerable parties

Custody is awarded first to the man, and only to the woman if the man is adamant that he does not want it, and if the man wants custody, the woman will need to cede more benefits to win it. In this regard, Qin shares her case study on a successful custody battle. She says: "My ex-husband, who was the party at fault in the marriage,

had an affair with a third party while he was married. I separated from him two years after my first divorce petition was dismissed. During this time the children were in my care. On further appeal, I used this as a reason to argue that custody of the children should go to me. He disagreed at the time and we tangled for a long time over the division of property. In the end, it was only when I got evidence that he had tried to transfer his property that I barely gained an advantage and kept the house. However, I still had to pay him a sum of money and made a huge concession on child support. He hasn't paid maintenance for a year since my divorce."

Qin is one of the lucky ones, due in large part to the fact that she earns the same amount as her ex-husband and has a stable job, while many women are at a definite disadvantage in divorce, not only because they do not receive their fair share of compensation, but also they are maliciously deprived of their children. The Purple Ribbon Charity, established in 2019, is dedicated to helping mothers who have been robbed of their children by their husbands during the divorce process and are ultimately left with no money. Here is the experience of a typical Purple Ribbon mother.

"Li Li found her home emptied after giving birth to her child and her husband and child were nowhere to be found. She found her husband at his workplace and he used the child to blackmail Li Li into divorcing her. Li did not agree and a month later the child was returned to her husband's home in the countryside and she never saw him again." (Chen, 2022)

The experience of the "purple ribbon mothers" reflects the lack of legal protection for women during and after divorce. When women's rights are violated, once they are considered a family matter, the folkloric notion that "it is difficult for a judge to settle a family matter" and "each one sweeps his snow" will play a huge role, especially where legal boundaries are blurred. This is especially true where legal boundaries are blurred. In addition, "purple ribbon mothers" are more likely to be economically disadvantaged, as they are mainly domestic workers in the traditional division of labor in the household, and as these women often do not earn as much as men, there is currently no equal welfare protection for this situation, thus exacerbating the trend towards feminized poverty.

Regarding property rights, the 1993 Opinions of the Supreme People's Court of China on Handling Property Division in Divorce Cases stipulates that "in hearing disputes over the common property in divorce cases, the following principles should be followed: gender equality; protection of the rights and interests of husband and wife;

care for the innocent; and conducive to production and livelihood". The largest share of property among Chinese residents is property. Women's sources of property are first, relying on parental resources and owning property in the form of inheritance, etc., secondly, accumulating property through personal efforts, and thirdly, owning property jointly with their husbands through marriage. In the event of a divorce, the woman is at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to fighting for joint property. The judge will make a bid for the joint property, i.e. the highest bidder will be awarded the property, and half of the bid will be given to the other party in cash. The reality is that women tend to earn less financially than men because they have to do more household work, making it difficult to win over men in a competitive bidding model. On the other hand, a woman's pre-marital property may be sold and converted into the joint property with her husband because of the increased costs of raising children. In rural areas, the exploitation of women's property is exacerbated by the fact that traditional attitudes assume that men have the right to inherit property, and village councils often register property in the names of male family members only. When a woman divorces, her husband's property ends up without any compensation for the woman because it is not part of the common property (Fincher, 2014).

Thus, although Chinese marriage law advocates freedom of marriage and the equal status of husband and wife, in practice the excessive room for discretion has allowed the inertia of patriarchy to reinforce economic inequality rather than help the weaker party in the marriage. Recalling the various inequalities in divorce decisions, it is the attitude of judges that plays a key role, but the overall gender structure of Chinese judges is predominantly male, "In 2013, the proportion of female people's jurors was 34.2%, and the proportions of female judges and procurators were 28.8% and 29.3% (Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, 2015)". In addition to the low participation of women in the courtroom, it is not clear that Chinese judges are aware that the judgments they make at each step of the process ultimately lead to the conclusion that gender inequality increases, and that they may not realize that gender in marriage will be an issue when they adjudicate, following procedures but with a result that is contrary to the equal freedom advocated by the law.

Conclusion

In just 40 years, China building on the strengths of its huge population and achieving a remarkable rate of economic growth through market reforms has become the world's second-largest economy. However, gender relations have had a historical setback; they were supposed to become more enlightened and equal with economic prosperity. In China, a collectivist nation, the family serves as the cornerstone of social progress as the primary productive unit of the entire society. Parts of the social welfare system that had been quickly marketed to relieve financial stress, like community kindergartens in state-owned businesses during the collective economy, which largely freed women from the heavy burden of raising children so they could better engage in their work, were implemented in order to achieve rapid economic growth and promote market dynamism. However, as a result of market reforms, the government reduced public spending on the welfare system and decentralized it to local governments, which increased the proportion of individual family payments and placed a significant financial strain on families for childcare and elder care.

On the other hand, China's admission into the global market and its growing economic dynamism resulted in a resurrection of capitalist patriarchy, which was blended with conventional Chinese Confucian patriarchal ideology to produce new rules of social roles which emphasized that each person should have set rights and obligations based on his or her position and encouraged social harmony based on a hierarchical order. The Marxist feminist notion of gender equality that was promoted at the time of the People's Republic of China's founding was progressively supplanted by this norm. As a result, the dominant narrative in China has shifted from encouraging women to participate in the labor force to inspiring women to return to the family. This narrative has become increasingly prevalent in the last decade as China is about to face an aging population, economic growth is beginning to slow and the three-child policy is opening up. However, the 37-year-long single-child policy, which has allowed most women greater access to education, is one of the opportunities for increased female discourse in the present. This has cut across a regressive gender consciousness, with women facing unequal encounters in the labor market and education in the public sphere, childbirth, and marriage in the private sphere.

In the labor market, women bear more risk of unemployment than men due to the slowdown in economic growth and the impact of the epidemic. Because of the

restructuring of education policies and the traditional exclusion of women from primary and secondary industries, most women with low education and low incomes have become flexible workers who are unable to change between primary and secondary industries as quickly as men and are much less resilient to risk. Women with a stable income in the labor market, this segment has a higher level of education, but also face difficulties in moving up in the workplace and are paid at a lower level than men. This is inextricably linked to the shaping of social roles, where there seems to be a social consensus that women pay more for their families, which affects the assessment of women's value in the labor market. Also, married women face a more severe penalty for motherhood, with women taking on a disproportionate share of household chores, even with intergenerational effects.

The single-child policy has greatly improved the education of women under the age of 35 compared to previous generations and has virtually erased the gender gap in enrolment in compulsory education. However, access to education is unequal across all levels of schooling, with males having higher access than girls due to regional, spatial, and gender disparities. Education is disproportionately slanted in favor of men, especially in higher education. In addition, after the implementation of the three-child policy, women in multi-child households are more likely than males to be denied the chance to pursue higher education degrees when the family's economic status drops, a topic that still needs further study. The promotion of traditional culture reinforces gender stereotypes, which makes gender mobility a significant barrier, especially for sexual minorities. When it comes to educational content, textbooks, curriculum, and teachers' perceptions create a complete environment for the regulation of social roles.

Women have more difficulty finding partners, getting married, and getting divorced, especially after the marriage legislation was revised. Due to the ancient Confucian view of family, there is always an unbreakable blood connection between parents and children in matchmaking. Parents often show their concern by interfering in their children's marriages, and also by their obsession with the blood inheritance, hoping that their children will get married and have children earlier. This is different from the lifestyle of young people, but the increasing financial pressure may force young people to re-embrace arranged marriages. Although China suffers from a serious gender imbalance, the matchmaking market is still based on male demands and there is a significant divergence between male and female needs for marriage. When it comes to preparing for marriage, the bride price becomes the second divergence between men

and women. The fundamental reason is that there is no new consensus on the issue of bride price, the traditional concept of bride price conflicts with modern free love, and women need it more as a risk fund for childbirth and marriage due to the lack of social security for childbirth. Men are more inclined to demand from their wives adherence to patriarchal values while retaining the notion that "true love is priceless" that comes with romantic love and rejecting the bride price. Some low-educated, low-income men seek transnational marriages for this purpose, and Vietnamese brides as a new option, creating a deviation from freedom of marriage, which is essentially the flow and continuation of patriarchy in the international context.

The latest amendments to the Marriage Law are one of the key measures to maintain family stability as a means of reducing divorce rates and promoting fertility rates. As a result, once a woman wants to divorce, she will confront a long divorce period in practice with an overall bias towards the division of interests in favor of men. If there is domestic violence, it will be more difficult for a woman to achieve a divorce, and she will not receive the appropriate compensation afterward. Victims of domestic violence often have to make huge concessions in the division of property to achieve a divorce. In addition, women face the malicious removal of their children during the divorce process to obtain custody, which leaves a significant number of women without both the property they are entitled and their children at the breakdown of the marriage.

At present, it still takes a lot of time to achieve gender equality in China. Gender inequality is often easily masked in issues such as class conflict and uneven regional development, leaving women as the invisible bearers. This paper summarises some of the most prominent aspects of gender issues in China, falling short in terms of the depth of each issue, each of which deserves further study in the future.

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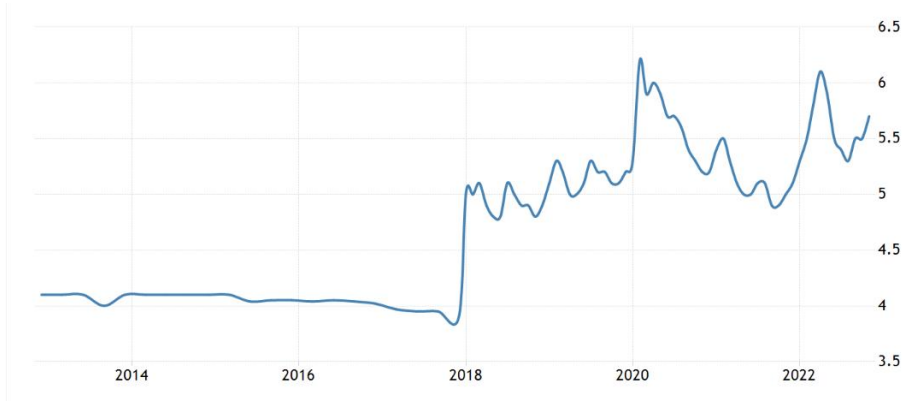
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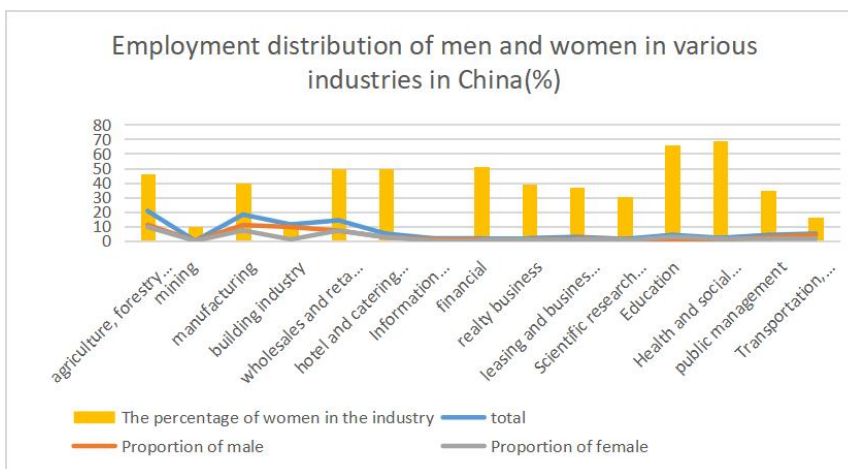
Source: Trading economics. com

Figure 2: Labour Force Participation Rate in China, 2010-2019



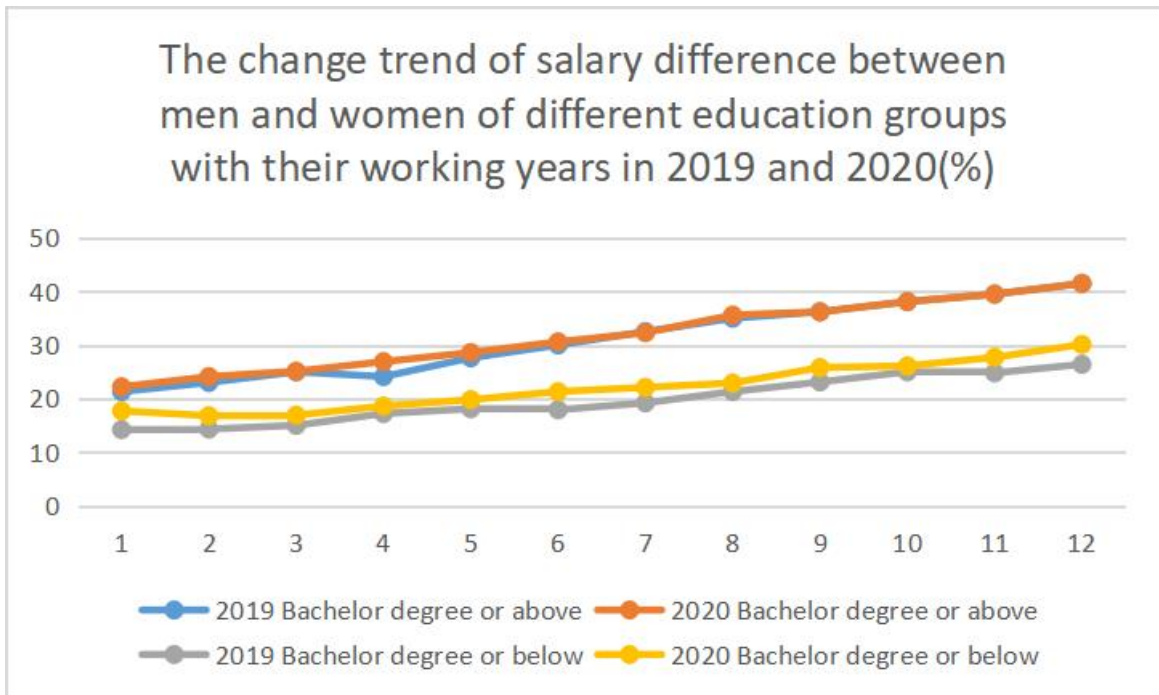
Source: China Labor Population Statistics Report; World Bank

Figure 3: Distribution of Male and Female Employment by Industry in China



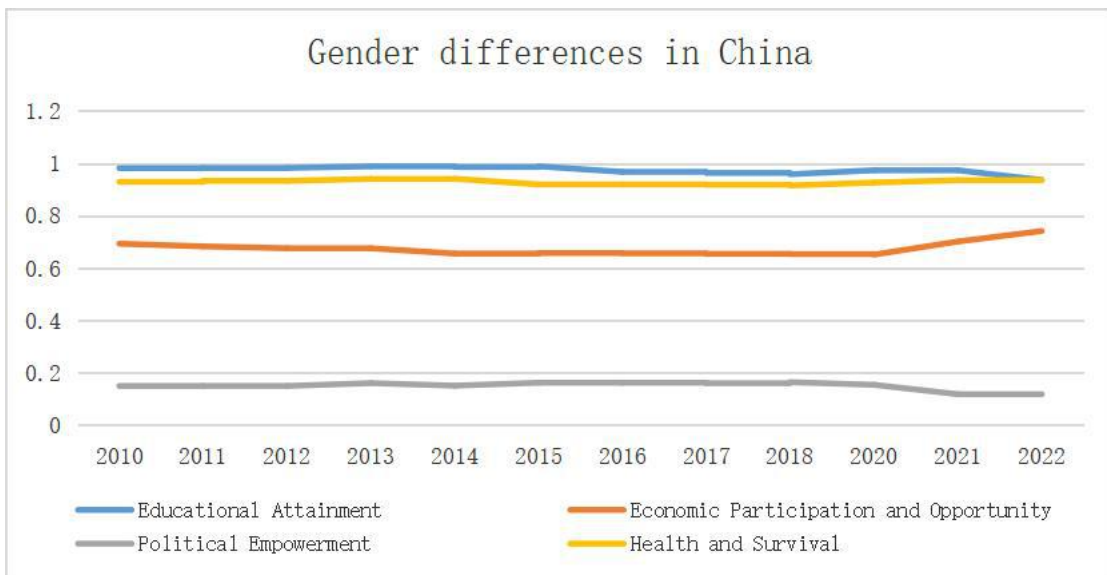
Source: China Census Data 2020

Figure 4: Trends in the Gender Pay Gap with Years of Work for Different Education Groups, 2019-2020



Source: Boss Direct Employment Research Institute

Figure 5: Trends in Gender Differences in China



Source: global gender gap report (2010 - 2022)

Figure 6: Questionnaire

Basic question :

1. What is your sex?
2. What is your age?
3. What is your education?
4. What is your occupation or industry?
5. What is your hometown?
6. Are you an only child?
7. Have you ever had a matchmaking experience? If so, can you tell us about it?
8. Do you have your own family now? If so, do you live with your parents?

Part 1: Questions about Labor market

1. Is there any gender discrimination in the workplace for you or around you? What is it about?
2. What is the ratio of male to female employees in your company?
3. Are there more men or women in management in your company?
4. Do you have more employment opportunities for men than women when looking for a position? Approximately in what areas?
5. Do you have trouble with promotions at work?

Part 2: Questions about education.

1. From your own experience, have you been discriminated against in terms of access to education?
2. If you believe that access to education is equal, in what ways? If not, in what ways?
3. Do several children in the family have equal access to education? (If born in a multiple-birth family.)
4. Do you think that textbooks and the school environment have a role to play in the formation of male and female temperament? Is there a deliberate cultivation of male and female temperament in your experience? If so, what are the specific things that have happened?
5. Do you think that your education level matches your job opportunities and salary?

Part 3: Questions about fertility and marriage.

1. What difficulties have you encountered in the process of marriage?
2. In your family, who is mainly responsible for household chores and family income?
3. What is your ideal marriage like? What is your current marriage like?
4. Do you think childbirth has affected your career development? If so, how does it affect your career?

(Note: Besides the basic questions, other questions will be selected during the interview based on the information provided by the interviewees.)

Table 1: The Ratio of Male to Female Education at All Ages in China

The Ratio of Male to Female Education at All Ages in China									
A g e	Uned ucate d	Pre-schoo l education	Primar y School	Junior High School	High Scho ol	Col leg e	Under gradua te	Master 's degree	Phd stude nt
15	1.3188	0.9845	1.0713	1.0966	0.9276	1.0059	0.8073		
16	1.3107	0.8781	1.1239	1.1434	0.9661	0.9946	0.7902		
17	1.1351	0.9709	1.0981	1.2366	0.9796	0.9137	0.669	1.2395	
1	1.199	0.9719	1.0802	1.3434	1.067	0.8	0.7377	1.1178	

8	4				7	976			
1	1.161 9	0.9659	1.1484	1.4148	1.208 7	0.9 148	0.782	1.1796	1.663 3
2	1.105 0	1.1313	1.1134	1.4214	1.250 4	0.9 360	0.7919	0.8538	1.202 4
2	1.106 1	1.0351	1.1059	1.3476	1.268 3	0.9 193	0.7935	0.6411	0.919 8
2	1.068 2	0.9829	1.0594	1.2696	1.254 6	0.8 963	0.7889	0.7102	1.018 2
2	0.978 3	0.9015	1.0358	1.2156	1.248 2	0.8 907	0.7917	0.6952	1.088 7
2	0.932 4	0.8648	1.0191	1.1808	1.237 0	0.8 948	0.7779	0.7216	1.114 9
2	0.916 5	0.9308	0.9891	1.1537	1.212 7	0.9 019	0.7841	0.7273	1.095 9
2	0.886 6	0.9209	0.9795	1.1305	1.195 2	0.9 186	0.7854	0.7121	1.079 3
2	0.918 7	0.9132	0.9689	1.1032	1.166 6	0.9 315	0.8018	0.6942	1.112 4
2	0.853 8	0.7355	0.9408	1.0807	1.150 9	0.9 343	0.8270	0.7021	1.190 2
2	0.824 9	0.7206	0.9349	1.0558	1.131 9	0.9 440	0.8479	0.7379	1.237 2
3	0.795 0	0.9269	0.9071	1.0437	1.114 9	0.9 505	0.8725	0.7400	1.250 4
3	0.785 1	0.9349	0.9014	1.0295	1.120 3	0.9 530	0.8906	0.7799	1.259 1
3	0.737 2	0.7528	0.8736	1.0202	1.116 3	0.9 662	0.9108	0.8008	1.338 3
3	0.754 3	0.7359	0.8604	1.0139	1.109 1	0.9 705	0.9289	0.8372	1.383 3
3	0.725 4	0.9635	0.8372	1.0048	1.108 5	0.9 849	0.9538	0.8792	1.440 6
3	0.654 5	0.7719	0.8124	1.0011	1.102 1	1.0 017	0.9806	0.9114	1.457 5
3	0.610 6	0.8352	0.7981	1.0007	1.096 3	1.0 065	0.9988	0.9586	1.400 7
3	0.630 7	0.8986	0.7893	1.0112	1.092 9	0.9 873	0.9952	0.9778	1.35
3	0.606 8	0.8003	0.7764	1.0165	1.080 8	0.9 899	0.9985	1.0142	1.400 2
3	0.585 9	0.7360	0.7630	1.0158	1.090 5	0.9 871	1.0197	1.0675	1.424 3
4	0.525 0	0.7398	0.7419	1.0201	1.102 1	0.9 978	1.0338	1.1405	1.471 5
4	0.529 1	0.7390	0.7553	1.0187	1.101 4	1.0 128	1.0452	1.2120	1.431 2
4	0.491 2	0.5515	0.7297	1.0261	1.111 1	1.0 405	1.0682	1.3038	1.487 2

4 3	0.504 2	0.7111	0.7351	1.0311	1.114 2	1.0 519	1.0887	1.3642	1.532 9
4 4	0.451 1	0.5620	0.7198	1.0321	1.129 1	1.0 990	1.1569	1.4717	1.649 7
4 5	0.418 9	0.6143	0.7141	1.0399	1.141 0	1.1 239	1.2121	1.6320	1.645 2
4 6	0.422 5	0.5629	0.7119	1.0412	1.163 4	1.1 606	1.2717	1.6780	1.711 5
4 7	0.403 8	0.5526	0.7034	1.0538	1.173 9	1.1 652	1.291	1.6530	1.806 4
4 8	0.388 8	0.5345	0.6893	1.0637	1.201 1	1.1 992	1.3536	1.7394	1.887 4
4 9	0.386 6	0.5410	0.6914	1.0769	1.218 9	1.2 084	1.3346	1.8438	1.873 8
5 0	0.362 8	0.4473	0.6907	1.0922	1.232 9	1.2 373	1.4114	1.9226	2.225 7
5 1	0.354 1	0.4919	0.7105	1.1081	1.236 1	1.2 713	1.4718	2.0058	2.576 2
5 2	0.337 9	0.4737	0.7034	1.1251	1.257 7	1.3 087	1.5594	2.0999	2.209
5 3	0.334 4	0.4652	0.7009	1.1427	1.289 4	1.3 768	1.6971	2.3010	2.820 5
5 4	0.308 6	0.4486	0.7010	1.1481	1.279 1	1.3 921	1.765	2.5583	3.518 4
5 5	0.305 7	0.4551	0.6882	1.1395	1.268 3	1.4 456	1.9142	2.7359	3.626 7
5 6	0.288 4	0.4278	0.6724	1.1408	1.254 4	1.4 867	2.0247	2.891	3.521
5 7	0.263 1	0.3830	0.6599	1.1542	1.221 2	1.4 804	2.0352	3.2914	4.214 9
5 8	0.233 9	0.3627	0.6347	1.2065	1.204 6	1.5 902	2.1707	3.2899	4.619 9
5 9	0.245 9	0.3745	0.6399	1.2301	1.273 2	1.6 257	2.161	3.3369	5.165 9
6 0	0.263 1	0.3932	0.6719	1.2313	1.262 2	1.6 261	2.116	3.7324	5.490 2
6 1	0.272 2	0.4197	0.7006	1.2808	1.282 7	1.6 781	2.0793	3.5623	4.861
6 2	0.279 3	0.3941	0.7251	1.3253	1.308 0	1.6 882	2.0584	3.5087	4.777 3
6 3	0.271 8	0.3990	0.7349	1.3789	1.353 2	1.6 953	2.1085	3.5364	4.179 6
6 4	0.274 8	0.3759	0.7485	1.4002	1.422 6	1.7 918	2.1021	3.5058	5.355 7
6 5 +	0.313 1	0.4711	0.9156	1.6283	1.742 5	2.1 191	2.3887	3.6914	4.192 8

Source: 2020 China Census

(Note: The darker the red the greater the proportion of females; the darker the green the greater the proportion of males.)

Table 2: The Ratio of Male to Female Enrolment Rate by Region in China

District	Average enrollment rate(%)	The ratio of male to female enrollment rate	Baseline ratio of male to female education
throughout the country	11.57	1.2254	0.9185
Beijing	21.75	1.2523	0.8611
Shanghai	17.58	1.2379	0.8878
Shanxi	13.22	1.1696	0.9315
Hubei	13.03	1.2234	1.0013
Tianjin	12.47	1.1256	0.8744
Jiangsu	11.71	1.2918	0.9866
Zhejiang	11.03	1.31	0.8644
Jilin	10.92	1.0722	0.8964
Sichuan	10.89	1.2792	0.9416
Shandong	10.8	1.1289	0.9744
Heilongjiang	10.75	1.1915	0.8804
Guangdong	10.65	1.2805	0.9118
Hunan	10.42	1.2765	0.9155
Chongqing	10.34	1.2736	0.9011
Anhui	10.19	1.3243	1.0958
Liaoning	9.83	1.1342	0.9268
Fujian	9.66	1.2503	0.9513
Henan	9.34	1.2141	0.8951
Gansu	9.26	1.2163	0.9728
Shanxi	9.06	1.0386	0.8271
Jiangxi	8.48	1.3332	1.0318
Yunnan	8.41	1.1772	0.8121
Hainan	8.36	1.1595	0.9226
Hebei	8.1	1.1139	0.8514
Neimenggu	7.61	1.0086	0.846
Guangxi	7.61	1.3217	0.8182
Ningxia	7.44	1.0706	0.8728
Qinghai	6.98	1.1695	0.8937
Guizhou	6.75	1.2290	0.9055
Xinjiang	6.47	1.1178	0.8227
Xizang	5.35	1.4742	0.9276

Source: 2020 China Census

(Note: The Baseline of male to female education is mainly primary school.)

**Table 3: Gender Preference of Birth Population under China's Three-child Policy:
Regional Differences**

District	Sex ratio	First child	Second child	Third child
Jiangxi	122.73	119.8	113.38	158.22
Hainan	120.55	114.29	118.49	144.09
Fujian	120.1	111.53	118.4	164.49
Guangdong	117.52	118.39	111.74	130.97
Hunan	116.91	121.07	108.41	140.74
Guangxi	115.97	116.77	110.46	125.25
Hubei	115.28	115.02	109.98	177.42
Anhui	114.54	111.96	108.92	165.85
Guizhou	113.59	113.21	109.9	123.69
Shandong	112.52	112.21	107.96	138.89
Sichuan	111.45	116.33	105.21	115.35
Zhejiang	110.82	110.1	108.27	143.1
Jiangsu	110.73	112.1	105.59	146.55
Qinghai	110.63	116.45	106.22	103.55
Beijing	110.06	116.63	107.2	119.85
Henan	110.04	116.37	101.24	123.66
Shanghai	109.12	107.84	108.82	152.78
Hebei	108.6	109.42	102.34	132.77
Shanxi	108.51	111.78	102.04	145.09
Gansu	108.41	111.89	103.7	115.29
Tianjin	108.36	111.21	101.3	148.94
Chongqing	107.51	111.92	102.43	111.57
Yunnan	107.25	109.96	103.27	111.2
Liaoning	107.15	110.39	98.63	152.3
Xinjiang	105.89	108.53	103.57	112.57
Ningxia	105.67	104.59	100.29	120.42
Neimenggu	105.6	105.84	104.05	127.53
Heilongjiang	105.51	110.9	93.58	123.47
Jilin	104.06	105.64	100.31	123.48
Shanxi	102.94	106.8	96.82	128.28
Xizang	101.14	112.62	104.21	94.77

Source: 2020 China Census

(Note: The darker the Sex ratio, the greater the male preference.)

Table 4: Information about Interviewees

Information of Interviewees								
number	name	sex	location	age	Have siblings or not	marital status	education	profession
1	Shi	female	Xinjiang	26	yes(an older sister)	Unmarried and Haven't children	Master's degree	Ph.D student
2	Wu	female	Neimenggu	26	no	Unmarried and Haven't children	Master's degree	Public welfare
3	Teng	female	Guangxi	27	no	Unmarried and haven't children	Master's degree	Human resource
4	Zhe	female	Hubei	27	no	Unmarried and haven't children	Master's degree	financial
5	Han	female	Xinjiang	27	no	Married and Haven't children	Master's degree	Teacher
6	Jun	female	Gansu	28	yes(a younger brother)	Unmarried and haven't children	Undergraduate	financial
7	Wen	female	Shanxi	30	no	Married and children	Undergraduate	Human resource
8	Qin	female	Shandong	32	no	Divorced with children	Undergraduate	Manager
9	Meng	female	Sichuan	34	yes(an older sister)	Divorced with children	Undergraduate	Manager
10	Yun	female	Zhejiang	34	no	Married and children	Master's degree	Manager
11	Zhen	male	Shandong	26	no	Unmarried and haven't children	Undergraduate	financial
12	Nan	male	Hunan	26	no	Unmarried and haven't children	Master's degree	salesman
13	Jia	male	Shandong	27	no	Married and Haven't children	Undergraduate	financial
14	Yang	male	Xinjiang	27	yes(an older sister)	Unmarried and haven't children	Associate's degree	Public instiution
15	Xi	male	Zhejiang	27	no	Married and Haven't children	Master's degree	financial
16	Zhang	male	Shanxi	28	yes(a younger sisiter)	Married and Haven't children	Undergraduate	Public instiution
17	Gen	male	Shanxi	31	yes(an older sister)	Married and children	Master's degree	Manager
18	Liu	male	Xinjiang	32	yes(an older sister)	Unmarried and haven't children	Master's degree	architect
19	Hu	male	Shanxi	33	no	Married and Haven't children	Master's degree	Manager
20	Sai	male	Zhejiang	34	no	Divorced with children	Undergraduate	Manager