

Gender Employment: Occupational Gender Segregation and Income Gap

Tiantian Song^{1,*} Shuhua Xu²

¹² *School of Political Science and Law, University of Jinan, Shandong Province, China, 250022*

* *Corresponding author. Email: 15264177296@163.com*

ABSTRACT

Gender equality in employment is considered to be an important driving force of social and economic development, and also an important symbol of social civilization. To achieve gender equality in employment is a topic that the academic circles have been keen to study and discuss. However, due to the influence of occupational characteristics and concepts, gender employment inequality has always existed. Based on the trend and characteristics of occupational gender segregation and income gap, this study outlines the development of occupational gender segregation and its impact on income gap since the founding of the People's Republic of China, and explores the issue of gender employment heterogeneity. Based on this, we can understand the gender employment balance in the labor market and promote the balanced and sustainable development of the labor market.

Keywords: *Employment heterogeneity, Gender segregation, The income gap*

1. THE INTRODUCTION

During the 13th Five-Year Plan period, China's economic development has achieved high-quality development. During the five-year implementation of the 14th Five-Year Plan, new breakthroughs will be sought based on the new development pattern. China's industrial structure is becoming more and more intelligent and digital, and changes in the economic structure may affect the employment situation in the labor market. For a long time, men and women have been in different positions in the labor market and have different opportunity mechanisms, so they are prone to gender segregation. It is a research consensus among scholars that occupational gender segregation affects the income gap.

The research literature on occupational gender segregation involves many perspectives, and the research on related issues is also very profound. From a macro point of view, some scholars pointed out that our country there are serious occupational gender segregation in the Labour market, women face significant barriers to entering male fields^[1], also some scholars pointed out that gender segregation is in part because profession itself has a certain gender preference, even in itself no gender preference and low proportion of women of occupation, gender segregation levels are greatly reduced^[2]. From a micro perspective, some scholars criticize women's occupational gender segregation from the perspective of

analyzing the labor practices of female truck driver^{s[3]}. In addition, some scholars explain from the theory of "glass ladder" and practical research that men have a greater advantage in occupations with a high proportion of women, but they also face great pressure due to external environment and institutional factors^[4]. The analysis results of scholars on the level of gender segregation are different, but the common result of the research is the existence of gender segregation phenomenon, and the existence of gender segregation phenomenon will inevitably affect the income gap.

Although the phenomenon and problem of occupational gender segregation have been concerned by the academic community, what is the extent of occupational gender segregation? Is there any change in its influence on the income gap? What are the theoretical and policy implications of these changes? In view of this, this paper makes a comprehensive review of the evolution and empirical research of occupational gender segregation and income gap, in order to provide a reference for the study of occupational gender segregation in China and promote the development and balance of the labor market.

2. THE CONCEPT AND CAUSES OF OCCUPATIONAL GENDER SEGREGATION AND INCOME GAP

2.1. Meaning of Occupational Gender Segregation and Income Gap

Gender segregation means that the population of a certain gender is relatively concentrated in a certain field, forming a state of relative segregation between men and women. As for gender segregation in the labor market, it is generally referred to as occupational gender segregation. Rose proposed that occupational gender segregation mainly refers to the phenomenon that men and women are concentrated in different positions or different industries in the labor market, resulting in the imbalance of gender ratio in a certain occupation or industry^[5]. The decrease of gender segregation means that the employment distribution of men and women in the labor market is more balanced; On the contrary, the increasing phenomenon of occupational gender segregation means that the gender employment inequality in the labor market is increasing.

When scholars study occupational gender segregation, they generally divide it into two dimensions: horizontal segregation and vertical segregation. Horizontal segregation means that the proportion of men and women in different occupations differs greatly from that in the total labor population, which represents the degree of occupational gender segregation. Vertical segregation means that in the same occupation, men or women are in a higher level or level, mainly refers to the inequality in the distribution of occupational grades^[2]. Income gap mainly refers to the difference in labor income between men and women in the labor market. The income gap in this paper mainly refers to the income difference between men and women caused by occupational gender segregation.

2.2. The Causes of Occupational Gender Segregation

The balanced development of labor market is an important symbol of sustainable economic development, and it is also the goal that China has been trying to pursue. However, the problem of gender difference has always existed, and scholars also put forward different opinions on the causes of occupational gender segregation. From a theoretical perspective, scholars start with the following theories: human capital theory, labor market segmentation theory, social network theory and patriarchy theory.

The theory of human capital holds that a person's "human capital" (education level, skills and qualifications, work experience, etc.) determines his ability and income^{[6][7]}. Because women invest less in

human capital than men, the lower investment affects the acquisition of work and work income; Secondly, women have more family responsibilities, family factors influence their choice of labor market, on this basis, they will reduce their "loss" and choose a suitable workplace. But because education is the area where the gender gap has reversed, some scholars believe that human capital has been weak in explaining this^[8].

The labor market segmentation theory holds that the "naming rules" of the labor market affect the choice of female labor force to work. This theory divides the labor market into primary labor market and secondary labor market. Men have more advantages than women in the labor market, and men and women are faced with different opportunity mechanisms, which results in the limitation of female labor force in the secondary labor market, and it is difficult to enter the primary labor market^[9]. However, some scholars have also proved that the competitive mechanism in the labor market has influenced the gender bias and thus promoted gender employment and income equality^[10].

Social network theory and patriarchy theory are based on cultural factors. Social network theory holds that individual actors are embedded in social networks, and these social networks will affect the information they obtain, the social norms they follow, and their loyalty and responsibility to someone or organization. Therefore, according to this theory, women tend to make friends of the same sex, and their social network is dominated by women, and the information they obtain is also homogenous, while the social network of men is dominated by men, and the information they exchange is also homogenous, thus resulting in occupational gender segregation in the labor market^[15].

3. THE TREND AND CHARACTERISTICS OF OCCUPATIONAL GENDER SEGREGATION

As for occupational gender segregation, there are various ways to measure occupational gender segregation in the academic circle. In the field of economics, correlation models are used for measurement; in the field of sociology, Duncan index or descriptive statistics are used for measurement; and a few scholars use decomposition models to explore the degree of occupational gender segregation. Is occupational personality segregation increasing or decreasing? What are the characteristics of occupational gender segregation?

3.1. Is Occupational Gender Segregation Weakening?

In view of the development trend of occupational gender segregation, the academic circles have different results, but most scholars believe that the trend of occupational gender segregation is gradually weakening.

Some scholars believe that the types of occupations segregated by sex are increasing, especially those segregated by women. Such as Cai He, xiao-ping wu hang-sheng zheng hosted by professor major subject "deng xiaoping theory of development and present situation, our country social structure change during the period of system transformation and the development trend of part of the questionnaire data, describe the gender segregation in deepen, men and women in the professional degree of segregation in expanding^[11]; Some scholars think that gender segregation in reduced, such as Wu Yu xiao, xiao-gang wu using 1982, 1990, 2000 population census micro data, points out that the distribution of professional sex is a "isolation" trend, proportion of female workers focus on the "professional" neutral and rising, the proportion of male workers focus on the "professional male" in gradually decline^[12]. The research results of Li Chunling are consistent with those of Wu Yuxiao and Wu Xiaogang, that is, they believe that the level of gender segregation was on the rise in the 1980s, while the level of occupational gender segregation was on the decline after the 1990s, that is, the higher the degree of marketization, the higher the level of occupational gender segregation^[13].

3.2. What Are the Characteristics of Occupational Gender Segregation?

The study on the characteristics of occupational gender segregation is mainly divided into the study on the degree of segregation between units within and outside the system, and the study on the degree of segregation between coastal provinces and inland provinces. The results show that the degree of occupational gender segregation in the outside system is greater than that in the inside system, and the degree of occupational gender segregation in the coastal provinces is greater than that in the inland provinces.

The workers outside the system are greatly affected by the market mechanism, while the workers inside the system are greatly affected by the distribution mechanism. Under the influence of the market mechanism, employers outside the system have stronger selectivity and autonomy, so the degree of occupational gender segregation in the outside system workplace may be greater. There is less incentive within the system to exclude women, so there may be less gender segregation. Research results support this explanation by showing that occupational gender segregation exists both inside and outside the system^[12], but the degree of inequality is more significant outside the system^[11].

Compared with inland provinces, the coastal provinces have a higher degree of marketization, while inland provinces have a lower degree of marketization due to the influence of economic opening degree. According to the speculation that marketization affects the degree of occupational gender segregation, and

according to the existing literature research, it is shown that the degree of occupational gender segregation inequality in coastal provinces is greater than that in inland provinces^[11].

4. CONSEQUENCES OF OCCUPATIONAL GENDER SEGREGATION: INCOME GAP

The phenomenon of occupational gender segregation not only affects the overall development of individuals, but also affects the balance of the labor market. In the long run, it even affects the development of the whole economy. However, this paper mainly reviews the impact of occupational gender segregation on the income gap. There are several perspectives to study the impact of occupational gender segregation on income gap: from the perspective of labor market and labor supply side.

Explain it in terms of the labor market. Under the policy, the phenomenon of unequal pay for equal work has been reduced, but "equal pay" still needs "equal work". In the labor market, the undervaluation of women by the market is one of the reasons why women are facing employment difficulties. Women are too concentrated at the bottom of the "pyramid" of positions. According to statistics, about 41% of the gender pay gap is due to gender occupation segregation, and women are less likely to reach high-paying positions than men^[13]. Other studies pointed out that women are more likely to be excluded in the field of formal employment, and the resulting non-regularization of female labor is also one of the reasons for occupational gender segregation. Under this vicious circle, women's low income and gender income gap will further widen^[14]. However, some scholars argue that occupational gender segregation has a significant negative impact on the gender income in the labor market within the system, but has no impact on the gender income gap in the labor market outside the system^[12]. This analysis is based on the perspective of marketization, and it is believed that competitive factors promote income equality to some extent.

Analysis from the perspective of labor supply side. On the one hand, identity norms influence gender earnings by influencing the choice of occupations and industries. The identity that women should put family first and men put career first encourages men and women to choose different jobs, which leads to the gender pay gap. Studies have pointed out that such identity norms have a negative impact on women's wage income and a positive impact on men's wage income. The price effect of gender identity norms accounts for about 30.3% of the total price effect^[8]. On the other hand, family responsibilities, family economic status and education level affect women's employment decisions. The influences of the above factors on women encourage women workers to choose suitable jobs or choose not to work, thus affecting the change of labor market structure^[7].

5. CONCLUSION

Gender employment heterogeneity has long been the focus of academic research. Many empirical studies have discussed the phenomenon of occupational gender segregation. Occupational gender segregation directly affects the income gap. In the labor market, women still account for the majority in administrative, customer service, office clerk and other occupations, and efforts are still needed to "de-genderize" women's career development. The proportion of men in technical, manufacturing and other occupations is still high. Researchers generally use human capital theory, labor market segmentation, patriarchy theory and social network theory to explain the reasons.

The policy implication of the correlation between occupational gender segregation and income gap is obvious, that is, to reduce the degree of occupational gender segregation and promote the employment balance in the labor market is an important and necessary measure to promote gender income equality. In the rapid economic development, even with the research on the degree of occupational gender segregation in gradually decreased, but the occupational gender segregation phenomenon in the Chinese Labour market still exists, should from the two aspects of system and culture all understand China occupational gender segregation, from the angle of the correct implementation of policy, promote employment equality and balance the Labour market structure.

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