

Research on the Influence of Three-child Policy on Chinese Women's Career

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ABSTRACT

On May 31, 2021, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held a meeting and discussed 'Optimizing the Family Planning Policy to Promote the Long-term Balanced Development of Population'. In order to optimize the family planning policy, a couple can have three children now, and supporting measures will be implemented synchronously. Based on the relevant issues of female employment caused by the three-child policy, this essay adopts the research method of case study to analyze the relationship between population policy and female employment and explore the influential factors of the Three-child policy on female employment. The enactment of the three-child policy will make women face some employment discrimination and employment equality issues. Finally, this paper proposes some suggestions to solve the employment gender discrimination caused by the three-child policy.

Keywords : *Three-child policy, female employment, gender discrimination, labor market*

1. INTRODUCTION

Population aging refers to the dynamic that the proportion of the elderly population increases while the number of young people decreases, which is caused by the decreasing fertility rate and the extending average life expectancy. China's population has been aging rapidly since 1950. In 2015, it rose to 12 percent of the population today and is expected to reach 30 percent by 2050.

At the beginning of 2019, the National Bureau of Statistics announced the fertility rate in China in recent years. According to the data, China's fertility rate continued to decline. In order to deal with the serious aging problem in China, on May 31, 2021, the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee held a meeting and put forward that the implementation of the policy which indicates a couple can have three children, commonly known as "three-child" policy. This policy will improve China's demographic structure and keep its human resources stable. However, there are some problems. In the current global job market, women have greater employment pressure than men. The announcement of the three-child policy is bound to cause most women to adjust their family planning, and company recruiters will be cautious about hiring women and evaluating the benefits and costs. In the market economy, enterprises always save as much cost as possible in order to seek maximum profit for the purpose.

Gender discrimination is a major problem that cannot be ignored in employment discrimination. In real life, especially in the work environment, gender discrimination has never gone away. It is much more difficult for women to find jobs than men around the world, and the jobs women engage in are often characterized by fragile external conditions and low-quality work content [10]. This reflects that there is a huge difference between male and female labor participation rates. The gender difference in the labor participation rate undoubtedly reflects the current labor market and society. This paper specifically studies what factors cause the employment inequality between men and women. In this paper, literature collection and analysis were used to study the trend of female employment development in the future, and suggestions for possible causes were proposed.

According to China's national regulations of 98 days of maternity leave, if women want to give birth to three children, they will waste 300 days of time, which greatly affects the career planning and promotion opportunities of female employees.

Based on the overall fertility policy in our country, in-depth implementation of the one-child policy in 1980 has made women shorten their time on production. Raising children is shorter and the reproductive cycle is greatly reduced. To some extent, this is conducive to effectively

promoting the career development of women in the future. At present, with the in-depth implementation of the comprehensive family planning policy, the employment of women of childbearing age is not only the carrier of reproductive rights but also a member of China's labor-capital market, which makes women of childbearing age will face more conflicts between childbearing, child care and formal employment in the future. The impact of childbirth on women's career development will also be more complicated. [9]

2. ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF CHILDBEARING ON FEMALE EMPLOYMENT

According to Schultz's "Human Capital Theory", women encounter discrimination in job-seeking because they are limited by family and childbirth. So they will choose jobs with less human capital input. The final result is that there will be an oversupply of the labor force in the occupations where female employees are concentrated, and the competition for jobs will be more intense. In the face of fierce job competition, enterprises often refuse to hire women or raise recruitment standards for women. For example, enterprises usually ask more difficult and obscure questions in the interview, and they tend to reject female job seekers on the grounds of high work intensity. Many employers even directly offer "male-only" or "male preference". In 2017, the labor force participation rate of China's total population was 67.99%, of which female labor force participation rate was about 60%, while the male labor force participation rate was 75.27%, and the female labor force accounted for 43.7% of the total labor force in China. China's female labor force accounts for 43.65% of the total labor force. [14]

2.1 The influence of reproductive behavior on female employment

In her research on women's careers, Professor Morrison describes the career development of women as "two peaks and one trough". The first peak is between newly employed and childlessness period, while the second peak is the time after a female has a child and has developed the ability to take care of herself and has enough passion and energy to work. The commonality of the two peak times is that there is no child care task and their own experiences and abilities are relatively strong. The trough is typically about eight years after the birth of a child. In this time, women struggle to balance work and family, affecting their career development as they have to take care of children at the same time.[6]

2.2 The influence of birth number on female employment

The long-term research results of most scholars show that the increase in the number of children significantly

reduces the labor force participation rate of women with lower individual labor income levels, lower skill levels and higher spouse income. As women continue to have more children, in towns and villages alike, the supply of women's labor falls. Childbirth indirectly affects the total labor income of women in China by affecting the labor participation rate and labor duration of workers of childbearing age. Some scholars have found that every child a woman reproduces will directly cause her wage level to drop by about 7%, and this long-term negative impact will become larger with the increase of the number of children she has. [9]

2.3. The influence of reproductive sex preference on Female employment

According to Liu Wenrong's research, as women grow up under the influence of nurture concerning their gender roles, they are more likely to invest their feelings, energy and time in their children and take more responsibility for their children's daily life. When a woman has three children, she will subconsciously attach more importance to her family and children, which will divert some of her energy from work to take care of children.

David Ricardo's "theory of comparative advantage" holds that there are biological differences in the roles of men and women, and that women are better off as "caregivers" and men as "breadwinners" in the family. In traditional Chinese marriage, the man takes care of the family and the woman takes care of the family, which means women bear more family responsibilities. Society and family still expect women to be "good wives and good mothers". Women are still the main force of housework and child-raising, but in modern society, women are increasingly stepping into the public sphere. After the implementation of the universal two-child policy, female employees who choose to have a second child are relatively older. With the growth of age, they recover slowly after childbirth, and their physical energy is much lower than before.[2]

2.4. The influence of birth policy on female employment

According to China's national regulations of 98 days of maternity leave, if women want to give birth to three children, they will waste 300 days of time, which greatly affects the career planning and promotion opportunities of female employees. Based on the overall fertility policy in our country, in-depth implementation of the one-child policy in 1980 has made women shorten their time on production. Raising children is shorter and the reproductive cycle is greatly reduced. To some extent, this is conducive to effectively promoting the career development of women in the future. At present, with the in-depth implementation of the comprehensive family

planning policy, the employment of women of childbearing age is not only the carrier of reproductive rights but also a member of China's labor-capital market, which makes women of childbearing age will face more conflicts between childbearing, child care and formal employment in the future. The impact of childbirth on women's career development will also be more complicated. [9]

3. SUPPORTING SUGGESTIONS FOR BIRTH POLICY

3.1. The optimization of male paternity leave system

The employment inequality between men and women comes down to the economic and non-economic costs of maternity leave. However, men do not delay as much time as women, so eliminating the inequality in the length of vacation, the cost of employing men and women will tend to be the same, and the employment discrimination of women will be relatively reduced. Therefore, the state needs to make relevant provisions. Male employees whose wives take maternity leave for childbirth can enjoy the welfare policy of "paternity leave", and the time of "paternity leave" can be appropriately shortened compared with maternity leave, so as to reduce the impact on the employer's work. As a result, the cost for employers to hire male and female workers will be significantly reduced, which is expected to lead to greater equality between men and women in employment. [3]

3.2. Implement and optimize relevant laws and regulations of enterprises and countries

Enterprises should strictly implement the "labor law" "population and family planning law" and "female worker labor protection special provisions" the provisions of the relevant laws and regulations, the optimization policy as an important social responsibility and management system into their daily operation and management strategy of creating conditions for the country's population development strategy to contribute more. We will strengthen the protection of labor rights and interests of couples who have given birth, and provide more favorable working treatment to female employees who have given birth to multiple children. [5] According to Zhu Ningning, a journalist of Fa Daily, "The society should share the responsibility of bearing children and socialize the cost of bearing children. The state and society provide families with high-quality childcare and child-care services, and maternity leave benefits are covered by maternity insurance premiums, not by the employer." Maternity leave policy adjustment and maternity insurance fund has not kept pace with the pace of reform. As mentioned above, the situation of "the country has a holiday, and the enterprise pays the bill" inevitably exacerbates the current situation of female

employment difficulties. The country can disperse the pressure of the enterprise indirectly to the whole society by adjusting tax revenue or increasing the input of subsidy to the birth insurance fund, or adjusting the policy as soon as possible to increase the subject of birth insurance. [3]

3.3. Supporting suggestions at the social level

The starting point is community mutual aid, social groups and social atmosphere. One is the social atmosphere, to popularize the concept of equality between men and women, abandon the idea of "son preference". Zhao Jinlei, Huang Liming, Dai Heyang and others have made it clear that they want to create a social atmosphere of gender equality, reflecting the status of women and opposing gender discrimination. [4] The second aspect is social groups. Yang Juhua believes that we can try the "Love together" day-care model for the elderly to enrich the connotation of day-care institutions, so as to solve the problem of unattended infants and the elderly at the same time. Schork believes that improving the social and public welfare of nursery and kindergarten services can reduce the gender burden of female workers due to childbirth, thus improving their labor productivity and alleviating employment discrimination. The third one is community interaction. Meng Xianhong believes that social work such as casework, group work and community work should be started to solve the employment problem of women under the background of the second child. [11] Gao Yuan believes that it is necessary to make full use of community resources to allow volunteers and community elders to help residents with childcare, after-school care and pick-up and drop-off children. This will give full play to the role of community resources. [12]

3.4. Suggestions on a personal level

To improve the level of personal quality and to master the basic knowledge of rights protection, first of all, it is the personal respect, namely the working ability, such as problem-solving ability, action capability, working experience and improvising ability. Employment training should be popularized. Gan Li, Jia Nan and Zhang Jie believed that efforts should be made to improve women's comprehensive strength so as to participate in the fierce employment competition [4]. The second point is to strengthen the sense of independence, legal awareness and establish a new concept of employment. To eliminate the problem of female employment discrimination, we must change the lack of independent consciousness of some female groups. We will raise the educational level of women and encourage more women to receive an education. Legal literacy is also essential to the success of women's rights. [7]

4. ANALYSIS OF OPPORTUNITIES BROUGHT BY THE THREE-CHILD POLICY

4.1. Real estate industry

Under the three-child policy, the birth rate will increase, and the increase of population will increase the demand for large-family houses. Increasing in the family members will directly guide people's expectations of real estate investment. In the short term, the demand for improving housing at the market end may be further strengthened. On the premise that the main theme of real estate regulation remains unchanged, it is not ruled out that there will be relevant favorable policies for multi-child families, such as the loan interest rate and the preferential down-payment ratio of replacement houses. The enterprise side will face the problem of product design renewal. Three or four houses will be more popular. How to make a larger practical area in the same space will become a new challenge for real estate enterprises. In the long run, the growth rate of urban population may vary with the city's energy level, housing price performance, consumption level and the degree of infrastructure improvement. As a result, the differentiation of the urban regulation policies and the introduction of "two centralized land supply" policies will lead to changes in urban investment opportunities and an important window period for real estate enterprises to study and judge urban investment opportunities. [13]

4.2. Maternal and infant industry

Maternal and infant industries include maternal and infant products, infant clothing, children's toys, and baby food. Previously, the domestic family: buying children's products are mainly through maternal and child stores, shopping malls, and online shopping. The statistics show that they accounted for the proportion of 43%, 24% and 15% respectively, and with the development of overseas online shopping, importing infant diapers and assisting food products are becoming the focus of the maternal and infant electric. Surveys show that the average annual consumption of the new generation of mother and child groups is 5000-18000 yuan. As the post-90s and post-95s gradually become expectant parents with strong consumption power and Internet genes, 52% of maternal and infant families spend more than 5000 yuan a month, and 63.78% of them spend more than 1000 yuan online. Therefore, the industry is more optimistic about the market prospect of the maternal, infant and child industry. The competition of various categories of maternal and child industry, in the big wave of the release of three children, is bound to be born industry leader, usher in glory. [8]

4.3. The health care industry

When a baby gets sick, most parents will use their own experience or send the baby directly to the hospital. However, the most convenient and time-saving method is the medical and health consultation APP on the mobile phone. These include online consultations with doctors, sharing and exchanging experiences on disease problems, and making appointments in advance. Therefore, when the three-child policy is open and the number of newborns increases, it is bound to drive the growth of maternal and infant medical equipment and medical services.

4.4. Business vehicles, hotel family suite demand growth

After the three-child policy, the demand for travel tools for three-child families will also change to a great extent. Now, three-child families include not only parents but also grandparents, babysitters and so on. To meet basic mobility and luggage storage needs, regular cars and small SUVs can no longer meet the demand of three-child families. Netizens who even have a second child said that it would be difficult for a family to go out without a seven-seater car, let alone a family with three children. So the tourism industry and travel equipment will also be affected by the increase of three-child families to the direction of good development.

5. CONCLUSION

To sum up, it can be seen that with the release of the three-child policy, women will face employment discrimination and employment inequality. In order to safeguard women's rights and interests, reducing employment discrimination as much as possible requires many factors: the perfection of national laws, the correct and objective measurement of women's working ability and advantages by companies and enterprises, the improvement of traditional social consciousness, the reasonable division of labor in the family, and the improvement of women's self-requirements. Only from these five aspects can employment discrimination caused by gender differences be reduced as much as possible. But based on the above data, this paper lacks instantaneity and practicality. Because the three-child policy has issued for short time, there is a little information about it and research can be carried out based on the two-child policy to a large extent.

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