

Research on the Current Situation and Countermeasures of Female Employment in China

-- Based on the Analysis of Industrial Enterprise Database

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Abstract

The problem of employment inequality between men and women has existed for a long time, and the reasons for this result are very complex. With the proposal of the three child policy, women's employment difficulties and gender differences in employment have been widely concerned again. This paper uses the data of China's industrial census database in 2004 to analyze women's employment difficulties and gender differences in employment. The results show that the gender gap in employment is related to the region and the type of industry, and some policy suggestions are put forward to promote women's employment.

Keywords

Female employment; Regional differences; Industry type.

1. Introduction

On May 31, 2021, the political conference of the CPC Central Committee held a meeting, which pointed out to further optimize the fertility policy and implement the policy of one couple can have three children and supporting measures. Previously, Zhu Lieyu, deputy to the National People's Congress and director of Guangdong Guoding law firm, proposed to implement the three child policy at the national "two sessions" for four consecutive years. In addition to education, vacation, insurance, taxation, housing and other supporting measures for the three child policy, another one is very important for women, that is, to protect their legitimate rights and interests in employment. The data shows that nearly one third of women change their jobs or become freelancers after giving birth; 45.61%, 30.99% and 25.73% of the respondents were transferred from important jobs, reduced wages and dismissed due to marriage, pregnancy, childbirth and breast-feeding, respectively. It can be seen that the career path of women is more difficult than that of men.

According to the statistics of the international labor organization, it is not true, or in the past, that many media quoted "China's women's labor participation rate ranks first in the world at 73%". In 2020, the figure has dropped to 59.8%. From 1990 to 2019, China's female labor participation rate dropped by 12.6% (Figure 1), and the gap between male and female labor participation rate rose to 14.8% (Figure 2). China and India are the only countries in the table where the gap between male and female labor participation rate widened. Therefore, the employment gender gap in China's labor market is still very large. Until now, the gender gap in employment also affects the gender gap in employment income.

Based on the previous literature, this study aims to explore the factors that may affect the gender gap in China's labor market. China's industrial census data in 2004 will be used in this study. Firstly, this paper reviews the existing literature on gender inequality in China's labor market, then describes the classification of samples, and makes descriptive statistical analysis

and linear regression on the data. Finally, based on the discussion of the results, this paper puts forward corresponding policy suggestions.

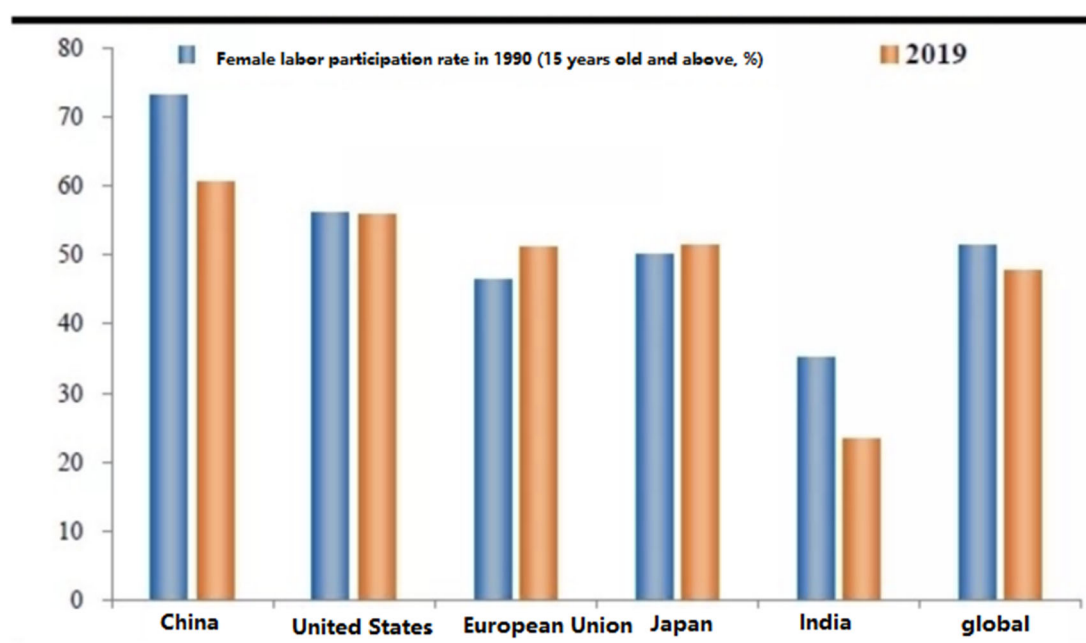


Figure 1. Labor participation rate of women in different countries, 1990-2019

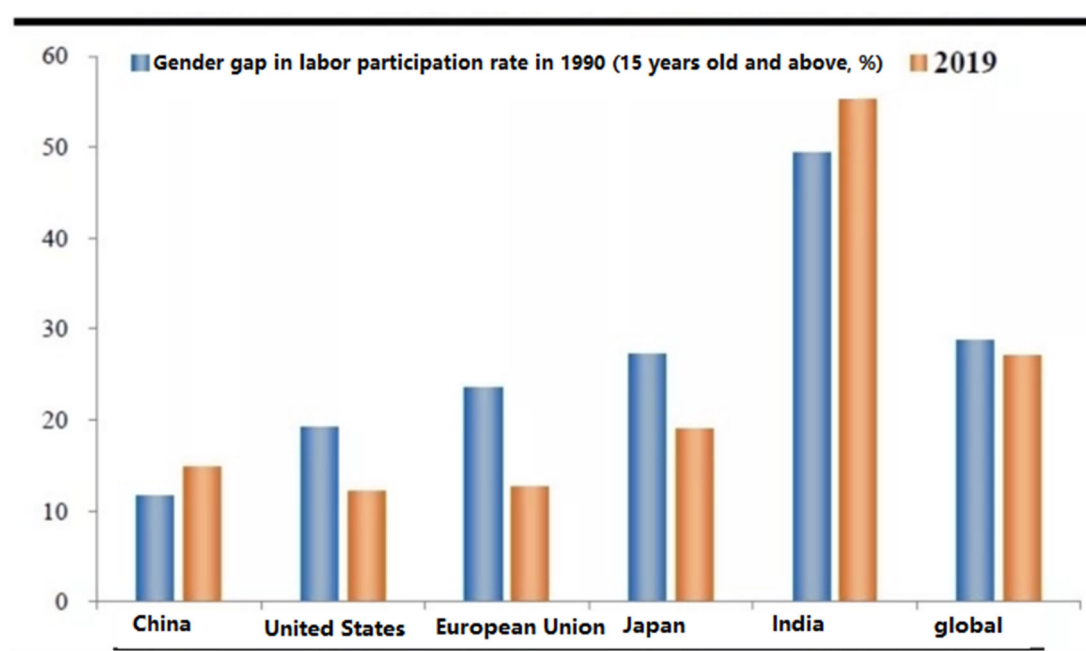


Figure 2. Gender gap of labor participation rate in different countries, 1990-2019

2. Data Descriptive Statistics

The data used in this paper is the data of China's industrial census in 2004, which includes the types, regions and employment information of China's industrial enterprises in 2004, including 263057 samples of enterprises [2, 3].

(1) There were 263057 observations. Among the employed population, 14991 were male, accounting for 57.02%; The number of women was 113066, accounting for 42.98%. Therefore, in 2004, the employment rate of men was 14.04% higher than that of women,

(2) The proportion of female employees in different industries in the eastern region remains high, while the other two regions have their own advantages. Among different industries, the proportion of female employees in labor-intensive industries is the highest, followed by resource intensive industries and technology intensive industries. In addition, the employment of women in the eastern, central and western regions are mainly in labor-intensive industries, while the employment situation of women in technology intensive industries is not ideal.

3. Model Construction

3.1. Model Selection

Because the independent variables and dependent variables are continuous variables, in order to obtain better estimation results, we use linear regression method to empirically study the impact of industry type and region on female labor demand.

Set up the following economic model:

$$Y = \beta_1 + \beta_2 \text{level_rate} + \beta_3 \text{education_rate} + \beta_4 \text{tech} + \beta_5 \text{capital} + \beta_6 \text{labor} + \beta_7 \text{resource} + \beta_8 \text{West} + \beta_9 \text{Middle} + \beta_{10} \text{East} + \mu$$

3.2. Variable Explanation

It refers to the skill level and the proportion of the number of employees at intermediate level or above in the total number of employees. In developing countries, industrial enterprises, especially the manufacturing industry, generally employ female labor force to engage in some simple production work. The proportion of female employees in enterprises with low skill level will be relatively large, and the proportion of female employees in enterprises with high technical level will be relatively small.

3.3. Model Estimation Results

Table 1. Model estimation results

sex_rate	Coef.	Std. Err.	t	P> t	[95%Conf.	Interval]
level_rate	.085938	.0186581	-4.61	0.000	-.1225073	-.0493687
education_rate	-.2140684	.0168255	-12.72	0.000	-.2470458	-.1810909
tech	.1597272	.0120211	-13.29	0.000	-.1832883	-.136166
capital	.0376397	.0108255	-3.48	0.001	-.0588573	-.016422
labor	.0576892	.0102833	-5.61	0.000	-.0778442	-.0375343
resource	.1142338	.0113173	10.09	0.000	.0920521	.1364154
West	.0450278	.009538	-4.72	0.000	-.063722	-.0263336
Middle	.0493159	.0122848	-4.01	0.000	-.0733939	-.025238
East	.0147732	.0107023	1.38	0.167	-.006203	.0357494
cons	.4980018	.0094043	52.95	0.000	.4795696	.5164339

From the results of regression analysis, we can find that the skill level, education level, industry type and regional distribution of employers have a significant impact on female labor demand. The coefficient of education level for workers is negative, which indicates that enterprises with lower educational level require higher demand for female labor force, and enterprises are more willing to employ female employees. The coefficients in front of labor-intensive enterprises, capital intensive enterprises, technology intensive enterprises and resource intensive enterprises are all positive, and the coefficients in front of the eastern, central and western regions are also positive. Based on the above data, it can be inferred that the overall proportion of women in capital intensive industries is similar to that in general, and the problem of gender discrimination in capital intensive industries is not obvious. From the perspective of sum of

squares of error, the error value is relatively large, and the proportion of labor-intensive and technology intensive industries may be too large, and the proportion of women may be larger than the overall situation.

4. Women's Employment Difficulties and the Causes of Gender Differences in Employment

(1) Employers consider the physiological factors, marriage factors, achievement motivation of female employees, as well as maternity insurance and labor protection costs of female workers. Under the same circumstances, they compare the work costs of women and men, and prefer to choose male employees with lower costs, resulting in the current situation of female employment difficulties.

(2) Based on the estimated results of the model, we find that the more traditional the concept of gender role is, the lower the probability of women engaging in employment, and the lower the total personal income and labor income are. Therefore, in the early stage of employment, women often have higher expectations for the working environment, employment units, employment areas and wages. Most of the female employment areas tend to be in developed cities, especially in these eastern regions, which also reduces their employment channels. At the same time, they are pushed into the competition of certain types of jobs, making employment more difficult.

5. Policy Suggestions

(1) We should improve the current law and amend the discrimination against women in employment.

The "labor law" puts women as a vulnerable group in the state of social employment, emphasizes women's physiological characteristics, and stipulates that special protection should be given in the case of employment. However, this law has become a stumbling block for women's equal employment. To some extent, it has exerted certain pressure on enterprises. On the contrary, it has intensified the rebellious psychology of enterprises in hiring female employees. We should take fairness and justice as the global agenda and an important goal of China's economic and social development, adhere to equal pay for equal work, and accelerate the reform of China's distribution mechanism.

(2) Enhance the operability of the current law.

Some employers set the ratio of male to female without permission, and require women to sign restrictions on marriage and childbearing. The practice of these employing units has not been severely punished by the law, because our current law can not make clear the boundaries of the provisions in the laws and regulations, can not punish the enterprises that violate the provisions, and can not give full play to the protection role of the law. When sex employment is discriminated against, it often falls into the embarrassing situation that there is no place to seek relief channels.

(3) We should pay attention to the investment in women's education and improve their competitiveness in the labor market by improving their education level.

The government should strengthen the reform of education and cultivation system, colleges and universities should pay attention to the design of majors and the choice of cultivation methods, and actively promote the continuous optimization of education structure.

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