

The Research on Women's Equal Employment and Countermeasures in the Background of “Comprehensive Two-Child” Policy

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Keywords: “Comprehensive two children”, Policy, Female employment, Equal employment, Problems and countermeasures.

Abstract: From the perspective of women's perspective, this paper finds that as the main body of fertility, women's health status, ideological concepts, personal energy, employment discrimination in society and the degree of public welfare perfection affect women's willingness to give birth to two children, thus affecting the implementation effect of the “two-child” policy. The introduction of the “Comprehensive Two-Child” policy provides all families with fertility wishes with the opportunity to give birth to two children. However, the conflict between childbearing and employment faced by women has also increased. The “two-child” policy will seek employment for women career development, and re-employment have direct or indirect effects.

1. Introduction

The aging of the population is a problem faced by most countries in the world. The aging of the population will slow down the country's economic development, increase the burden of old-age care, and bring about a series of social problems, which is not conducive to national development. China's aging is characterized by rapid growth, large scale, and unprecedented prosperity. The degree of aging has been accelerating.

The excessive aging of the population will result in the loss of vitality in population, economic, social, political, cultural and other aspects. Moreover, it takes a long time and difficulty to restore the vitality of development [1]. According to the data survey of the 2015 Economic Blue Book of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China's current total fertility rate is only 1.4, far below the replacement level of 2.1, which is very close to the internationally recognized 1.3 “low birth trap”. There are indications that, without the intervention of external factors, China's existing fertility status will continue to develop, China's population age structure will be more dysfunctional, and the problem of aging will become more serious.

Based on the above situation, China has made adjustments to the existing birth policy. In 2015, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th CPC Central Committee decided to “fully implement the policy of two couples for two children”. However, after the implementation of the policy, the number of newborn babies increased very slowly, and the number of couples who filed for further births in the country was less than half of what was expected. The two-child policy has always been considered an important measure to restore China's demographic dividend, but it was not as smooth as it was supposed to be in practice [2].

Marriage and childbirth are often the main factors for women to be discriminated against in employment. The lack of male roles in the family leads to women being forced to devote more energy to family responsibilities, so they cannot pursue career opportunities and achieve their own professional development. In the context of the new policy, how to improve the female birth guarantee mechanism and protect the legitimate rights and interests of female employees has become the focus of social attention.

2. Characteristics of women's career development in society

Although the social status of women has been greatly improved, it is undeniable that women still

have a series of obstacles in the process of career development. These obstacles mainly include the following three levels.

2.1 Social level

Workplace prejudice and occupational marginalization caused by gender bias are the biggest difficulties faced by working women. Although the status of women in society is constantly improving, women are still often subjected to various tangible or intangible gender biases in their daily lives and work. The feudal culture of China for thousands of years has made the backward thoughts of “male respect for women” and “women's talents are virtues” deep-rooted. The public's prejudice against “women's strong women” and “female doctors” still exists [1]. With a little attention, we can find that among the high-level outstanding talents in major key fields such as science, politics, and economy, there are only a handful of women, and the term “glass ceiling” is not a hypothesis. For the majority of professional women, they can only engage in marginal and auxiliary work, but miss key and core positions. They are like a glass ceiling with a beautiful career prospect, and the future looks infinitely bright, but in reality it is often beyond reach.

2.2 The family level

As the operator of the dual roles of family life and social work, women always shoulder the responsibility and pressure of both family and occupation. As the pillar of the family, women must spend a lot of time and energy to focus on family life and play the role of a good wife, a good mother, and a good wife. The advent of the second child era is undoubtedly a big challenge for professional women [3]. As a person in the workplace, women must spend a considerable amount of time and energy on their work, and they must continue to learn and improve their professional competitiveness. The contradiction of “life or rise” is plaguing many women. When women can't take care of both family and work, it is inevitable that family conflicts will increase and work performance will be poor. This further weakens women's workplace competitiveness and creates a stereotype for women in society.

2.3 Personal level

First of all, due to the profound influence of traditional Chinese gender division of labor and family concept, some women are not self-conscious, have emotional attachment, emotional, psychological and conscious, lack of achievement motivation, enterprising spirit and professionalism. Low position, thus losing the competitiveness of the workplace. Secondly, due to the particularity of the physiological structure and the natural laws of breeding and breeding offspring, the special social division of labor is doomed. The early stage of women's career is also a crucial period of career development. It is the period of marriage, childbirth and breastfeeding. Physiology and psychology will be affected, and even premature depression, postpartum depression, etc. will occur due to excessive stress [3]. The interruption of work during this period is an inevitable obstacle in the career development of women.

3. The status quo of women's employment under the policy of “two children”

The employment rate of Chinese men is much higher than that of women, and gender discrimination in employment is widespread. According to the data of the sixth national census, the unemployment rate of Chinese women is 0.31 percentage points higher than that of men, while the employment rate of men is 14.42 percentage points higher than that of women. The situation of gender discrimination in the labor market has further deteriorated when the “Comprehensive Two-Child” policy is liberalized. The most serious areas of gender discrimination in women of childbearing age are employment, mainly in employment, career development, and reemployment. In terms of the number, the demand for female employees is not only small, but also the quality and requirements of women in all aspects are relatively higher than men [4].

According to a survey conducted by China Youth Daily on the employment impact of two births, 53.1% think that promotion and salary increase will be restricted, 41.5% think that it will encounter

the “ceiling” of the workplace earlier, 35.6% think it will be forced to give up work, 31.7% I believe that I will be discriminated against when I apply. iiWorkplace social platform LinkedIn (Leading) 2019 released the “Women Career Opportunities” survey shows that nearly one-third of women before and after birth changed jobs, or did not return to the workplace to become freelancers; 46% of women due to fertility Career or passive missed career opportunities, and lack of family support is the biggest obstacle to equal opportunities in both sexes.

It can be seen that women face many factors such as marriage and childbirth, family, employment pressure, job promotion is difficult, and the rate of return on work is lower than that of men. Under the background of the “two-child comprehensive” policy, the employment situation of women is even more severe [4]. Women cannot compete fairly with men in the career development of job hunting, employment, and promotion.

4. The Impact of the “Comprehensive Two-Child” Policy on Women's Employment

Women often bear special functions in the division of labor, not only the main bearers of population reproduction, but also the responsibility of social reproduction. The social role of women determines that there is a certain degree of employment discrimination in the labor market, whether it is the “two-child” policy period or the “full two-child” policy period.

4.1 The impact on women's job hunting

In the recruitment of employers, in order to reduce the cost of human resources in the later period, raise the standard of female recruitment, and secretly raise the threshold for women is the overall situation of recruitment and selection of gender discrimination. The specific performance is: in the recruitment and selection of job conditions, male and female inequality, recruitment clearly indicates that male priority or only male delivery resume; for some positions that are particularly suitable for women, employers will clearly make age restrictions, recruitment adult women under the age of 25 try to extend the time that women serve the business before pregnancy, thus reducing the average human resource cost [5].

The “comprehensive two-child” policy is liberalized, and the state actively encourages fertility, which will enable women to enjoy longer holidays. However, as the cost of employers increases, women will face more difficulties in job hunting. Many companies have more severe age restrictions on women of childbearing age, explicitly ask women about marriage and childbirth programs or whether they plan to have two children, or directly ask women not to give birth within three years. This policy may also exacerbate discrimination against female college students [6]. Many companies have said that the “comprehensive two-child” policy further highlights the disadvantages of female employees in employment, making them pay more attention to and cherish male employees.

4.2 The impact on the development of women's workplace

Women are the main bearers of fertility behavior, and the best period of childbirth is also the rising period of career development of women in the workplace. The birth of two children will lead to the interruption and downward mobility of women, which will increase wage punishment and gender discrimination for working women [5]. From the perspective of enterprises, enterprises pursue the maximization of interests, and consider more the ratio of input and output of human resources costs. Female births will inevitably increase the cost of employing enterprises. From the perspective of women themselves, in the current objective background of oversupply of labor and increasingly fierce competition in employment, the second child is not suitable for women in the workplace, regardless of working time or work intensity.

Women who have two children are faced with conflicts between occupations and families. Women tend to shift their focus to their families, and their energy for professional work and social activities is significantly reduced. In this case, the difficulty of women’s maintenance is further increased. Women’s promotion space has increased women’s disadvantaged position and unequal treatment in the workplace.

4.3 Impact on women's reemployment

Once a female professional resigns, it is very difficult to re-employ. Mainly from the perspective of enterprises and women themselves: From the perspective of enterprises, on the one hand, women born to two children are between 30-35 years old, can create less time for enterprises, and enterprises are seeking to maximize profits. Employees need to create value for them; on the other hand, companies will consider that women have two longer maternity leave, have a long period of disconnection from society, and are difficult to integrate into their work, and take into account the family burden and family care of women who have two children. The situation is unwilling to be hired [6].

From the perspective of individual women, on the one hand, the individual mentality of female professionals who have given birth to two children has also changed. The professionalism and enterprising spirit have gradually weakened. Instead, they are responsible for their children, and their motivation and professional enthusiasm have also emerged. The downward trend and the satisfaction gained at work are reduced. On the other hand, there is no contact with the work content for a long time, and the workplace skills are also unfamiliar, unable to adapt to the rhythm of the workplace immediately, and may face problems such as the loss of the accumulated network resources. As a result, once a female professional is forced to leave during the second child, the likelihood of returning to the workplace is greatly reduced.

5. Countermeasures from the perspective of gender equality

The starting point of the comprehensive “two-child” policy is to encourage women to have two children. This is related to the heavy responsibility of population reproduction and the future development of the nation. This requires the state to solve women's worries at a certain level and eliminate women's employment gender discrimination [7]. Therefore, when the birth policy is further liberalized, we should no longer ignore the dilemmas faced by women as reproductive subjects in their career development, but should focus on the following aspects:

First, improve the labor and employment system and strengthen the protection of women's workplace rights and interests. To implement women's equal employment rights, it is necessary to eliminate employment discrimination in various forms (dominant and implicit) and improve relevant laws and regulations such as the Labor Law and the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests [8]. At the same time, the relevant anti-discrimination legislation will be introduced as soon as possible to ensure that women of childbearing age have the same employment rights as men and create a favorable social environment for women's employment.

Second, improve China's maternity insurance system, change the maternity insurance fund as a three-party fund-raising model, reduce the burden on enterprises, promote women's employment equality, strengthen the responsibility of the state and society for childbearing, and effectively improve the employment of all employers [7]. Standardize and consider measures such as tax incentives to reduce the increase in the cost of childbearing in the employer due to the birth of female employees.

Third, enterprises and the whole society should increase their understanding and support for women in the workplace, and have the responsibility to create equal career opportunities and development paths for women. From the perspective of corporate culture, enterprises should create an equal and inclusive working environment and promotion mechanism, friendly and convenient office facilities, especially for the working mothers who return to the post-natal period, to help them reduce worries and pay attention to work and family.

Fourth, promote the equalization of basic public services such as kindergartens and nurseries, and reduce the burden of female parenting [8]. At the same time, while ensuring mother's maternity leave, the implementation of the national unified “father parental leave”, and in time as much as possible with their partner's maternity leave. Returning men to family responsibilities and helping their wives share family affairs to alleviate women's chores.

6. Summary

It is only the first step to fully open the second child. If you want to meet the expectations of the policy, let everyone dare to have two children and achieve a long-term stable and appropriate fertility rate. The next step is to consider how to encourage and guide the policy-compliant women of childbearing age in a relaxed legal policy environment. Give birth. Therefore, protecting women's equal employment rights has become the key to implementing the two-child policy and realizing the national population strategy.

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