

Analysis Of Educational Equity in China from The Perspective of Gender Differences

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Abstract. Currently, the topic of educational fairness in China is a significant societal concern; nevertheless, there remain several deficiencies in the study of educational equity from the standpoint of gender disparities across various locations. This study examines the current state of educational equity in China through the lens of gender disparities, particularly focusing on variations in access to educational opportunities, distribution of educational resources, and achievement of educational results across genders. It reveals that while awareness of gender equality has increased in recent years, women still face obstacles in some key areas. This analysis shows that although legal frameworks and policies promote gender equality, there are still many challenges in practical implementation. For instance, females in rural regions have greater dropout rates compared to males, and women are underrepresented in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) disciplines within higher education. Sociocultural variables and conventional gender norms also constrain women's education and job advancement to a certain degree. Based on this, this paper puts forward the following suggestions: First, strengthen the role of family education in gender equality education. Second, increase educational input and optimize the allocation of educational resources. Third, strengthen gender equality education and change the social gender concept; Fourth, strengthen social publicity on gender equality through the media and public policies to change the stereotype of traditional gender roles.

Keywords: Gender difference; educational equity; problems countermeasures.

1. Introduction

In recent years, due to the increasing differentiation of urban and rural economic development in China, the distribution of urban and rural educational resources has become increasingly unbalanced. More and more attention has been paid to the performance of gender in the field of education, especially in the actual situation of the number of male and female students in urban and rural primary and secondary schools, which reflects the intricate relationship between gender and educational equity [1]. In a wide range of rural areas, especially in remote mountainous areas, the enrolment rate of girls is still lower than that of boys, which not only reflects the lack of educational resources but also reveals the influence of deeper sociocultural factors on gender education. This phenomenon reflects the conflict between the traditional gender concept and the emerging educational concept in the process of economic development and modernization in Chinese society. In many rural areas, parents still tend to prioritize investing in boys' education, believing that boys will be able to shoulder more financial responsibility in the family in the future. This perception not only contributes to the lack of educational opportunities for girls but also further exacerbates the cycle of gender inequality [2]. Consequently, the examination of educational equity through the lens of gender disparities not only elucidates the prevailing educational inequities but also offers valuable insights for policy formulation. This paper intends to systematically examine the influence of gender disparities on educational equity in China, with particular emphasis on the enrollment figures of male and female students in urban and rural primary and secondary schools, while investigating the underlying social and cultural factors and the imperative for policy intervention. This work is significant as it offers a theoretical foundation for advancing educational policy reform and practice by conducting a thorough examination of the link between gender inequalities and educational equality, therefore facilitating the achievement of educational equity in China. Worldwide, educational equity is considered a significant indicator of societal advancement, with gender equality serving as the fundamental

prerequisite for attaining educational equity. Education serves as the foundation for personal growth and is a crucial catalyst for the sustained advancement of both the nation and society [3]. Attaining equity in education, particularly gender equity, is crucial for elevating the overall educational standards of society, fostering economic development, and strengthening social cohesion.

2. Gender Differences in Education Equity in China

2.1. Gender Differences in Access to Education

Access to educational opportunities is an important manifestation of educational equity. However, in China, there are still significant differences between men and women in terms of access to education due to a variety of factors [4]. Family economic constraints significantly influence access to educational possibilities. In certain impoverished households, heightened economic strain frequently leads parents to favor the education of males, believing that they are more capable of assuming future financial duties for the family. This gender bias places females at a disadvantage regarding educational access. Conversely, the idea of social gender significantly influences access to educational opportunities. In some traditional areas, women are regarded as appendages of the family, and their educational needs are often overlooked or underestimated. The existence of this gender concept further intensifies the gender difference in access to education opportunities [5].

2.2. Gender Differences in Educational Resource Allocation

According to the statistics of the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education in recent years, although China's investment in education continues to increase, there is still a certain imbalance in the distribution of educational resources between the sexes [6]. In urban regions, the average years of schooling for women is 0.41 years lower than that of males. Rural women have, on average, 1.33 years less schooling than males. Gender disparity in educational access is far more pronounced in rural regions than in metropolitan ones.

Taking higher education as an example, the enrollment rate of women in higher education has increased significantly in recent years, but in some subject areas, such as science and technology, the proportion of female students is still significantly lower than that of men. This reflects that the gender gap is still prominent in the allocation of higher education resources [7]. Furthermore, in basic education, particularly in rural and isolated regions, females frequently face disadvantages regarding access to schools, educational facilities, and qualified instructors due to a scarcity of educational resources. The inequitable allocation of resources adversely impacts the quality of girls' education and their future developmental prospects.

2.3. Gender Differences in Enjoyment of Educational Outcomes

The enjoyment of educational achievements, as an essential metric for assessing educational equity, refers to the equal access and opportunity for individuals, regardless of gender, to benefit from and be recognized for their academic pursuits and accomplishments [8]. It encompasses not just the attainment of formal qualifications but also the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and personal growth that enhance an individual's capacity to contribute to society and lead fulfilling lives. This notion underscores the importance of creating an equitable educational environment where all students can thrive and realize their full potential. However, in China, there are some differences between men and women in the enjoyment of educational achievements. On the one hand, in terms of educational achievement, women do well in some fields such as literature, art, and social sciences, but are relatively weak in science and technology and information technology [9]. To some extent, this difference reflects gender bias in the allocation of educational resources and subject Settings. On the other hand, in the job market, female graduates often face a more severe employment situation and gender discrimination. Some employers have an implicit rule of "male preference" when recruiting, which leads to unfair treatment of female graduates in the process of job hunting. This kind of

employment discrimination not only damages women's labor rights and interests but also further aggravates the gender gap in the enjoyment of educational achievements.

3. Analysis of the Causes and Effects of Educational Equity from the Perspective of Gender Differences

3.1. Impact of Urban-Rural Economic Development Differences on Educational Equity

The social and economic disparities between urban and rural regions contribute to patriarchal culture, or conventional gender norms, which are significant variables influencing educational equity challenges. In urban areas, the degree of industrialization and modernization is notably high, residents possess a relatively elevated level of education, have greater access to the Internet, exhibit more progressive cultural attitudes, and are significantly influenced by foreign cultures; consequently, the patriarchal mindset among urban residents is comparatively diminished. In rural regions, the economic and cultural standards are comparatively poor, the population's average educational attainment is limited, and several rural places are physically isolated and minimally impacted by foreign cultures. While the advancement of the modern economy has diminished the patriarchal cultural paradigm in rural regions to some degree, it continues to have significant influence in several rural areas and among peasant communities. Consequently, the issue of educational fairness persists due to gender disparities. Numerous females in mountainous regions continue to lack significant access to educational equity. Certain families with several children prioritize the education of males, often compelling women to forgo their studies and enter the workforce prematurely to financially support their male siblings' education.

3.2. Gender Stereotypes and Prejudices

Gender stereotypes and prejudice are some of the important factors that hinder the education fair. In the social culture, traditional positioning and expectations of male and female roles are still deeply rooted. This idea leads to gender bias in the education content and teaching method, neglecting the female student's specific needs and interests [10]. For example, in science and engineering fields such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, female students tend to face more stereotypes and challenges, affecting their participation and achievement in these fields. For example, in many places, male nurses, male gynecologists, and female engineers all have a certain bias. In addition, gender bias can also lead to injustice in the educational evaluation system, affecting the self-confidence and motivation of female students.

3.3. Gender Differences in Educational Process Experience

Gender differences also have a profound impact on student's experience of the educational process. Some teachers who have been teaching for a long time generally believe that in primary school, women have obvious advantages in learning, especially in the lower grades, where women's concentration is higher than that of boys. However, in junior middle school, many boys with a weak foundation in primary school will often surpass many girls with good grades [11]. These stereotypes also lead to the tilt of the balance of educational fairness in the classroom. In some sciences, which favor math, physics, and chemistry, teachers may be more likely to encourage boys to participate in class discussions and ask questions, while being more conservative with girls. This difference not only affects students' self-confidence and motivation to learn but also exacerbates the academic achievement gap between the sexes. In addition, gender segregation and gender stereotypes in peer relationships also limit students' social circles and communication opportunities, affecting their overall development.

3.4. Gender Differences in Educational Outcomes

Educational achievement is the ultimate embodiment of educational equity and quality. However, under the influence of gender differences, there are also significant differences in the educational outcomes of male and female students [12].

There are often differences in the performance of male and female students in different subject areas. In languages and literature, for example, female students tend to show a stronger advantage; In math and science subjects, male students are more prominent. To some extent, this difference reflects the impact of gender differences on students' academic achievement. However, it is important to note that this difference is not an unbridgeable chasm, but one that can be narrowed through educational interventions and personalized teaching [13]. On the other hand, in terms of employment and career development, gender differences also have a profound impact on students' future. In the job market, female graduates often face more severe employment situations and gender discrimination. Some employers have an implicit rule of "male preference" when recruiting, which leads to unfair treatment of female graduates in the process of job hunting. This kind of employment discrimination not only damages women's labor rights and interests but also further aggravates the gender difference in educational outcomes.

4. Effective Measures to Promote Education Equity in China Under Gender Differences

4.1. Increase Investment in Education and Optimize the Allocation of Education Resources

To achieve a balanced distribution of educational resources, the state should continue to increase financial investment in education, especially in rural and remote areas, to ensure that the educational infrastructure in these areas is fundamentally improved. Local governments should help schools invest in building modern school buildings with advanced teaching equipment. Improve teachers' pay, attract and retain excellent teachers; On the other hand, the use of information technology means, such as distance education, online education, etc., to expand the coverage of high-quality education resources. In addition, a gender-sensitive resource allocation mechanism should be established to ensure that gender differences are fully taken into account in the resource allocation process, such as adding courses and activities suitable for female students, providing necessary psychological counseling and support, to promote the all-round development of female students [14].

In the process of implementation, it is also necessary to pay attention to the coherence and sustainability of policies. The government should formulate long-term plans, clarify the growth targets of education input and the key areas of resource allocation, and ensure the effective implementation of various policies. At the same time, the supervision mechanism should be established to regularly evaluate and feedback the use of educational resources, and timely adjust and optimize resource allocation strategies.

4.2. Strengthen Gender Equality Education and Change Social Gender Concepts

The core of gender equality education is to break traditional gender stereotypes and establish the value of equality between men and women. To this end, the government should join forces with schools, media, and social organizations to jointly promote the popularization and deepening of gender equality education. At the school level, on the one hand, gender equality education should be incorporated into the curriculum system, by setting up special courses, holding lectures, organizing activities, etc., to teach students the knowledge and concept of gender equality. On the other hand, strengthen teacher training, improve teachers' awareness and ability of gender equality education, and ensure that gender equality elements are integrated into daily teaching [15]. At the media level, it should strengthen the reporting and publicity of gender equality issues, and guide the public to form a correct gender concept through the establishment of positive examples and the exposure of negative

phenomena. In addition, new media platforms, such as social media and short videos, are used to disseminate gender equality messages in a more vivid and intuitive way and expand their influence.

At the level of social organizations, relevant organizations should be encouraged and supported to carry out gender equality education activities and research work, to provide scientific basis and reference for government decision-making. At the same time, it will strengthen exchanges and cooperation with the international community, learn from foreign advanced experience and technical means, and promote the development of gender equality education in China.

4.3. Strengthen the Role of Family Education in Gender Equality Education

Family education is the starting point and foundation of gender equality education. Parents, as the first teachers of their children, have a profound influence on their children [16]. Therefore, it is crucial to strengthen the role of family education in gender equality education. Parents should establish a correct concept of gender equality and discard traditional gender stereotypes and prejudices. Focus on cultivating children's independence and autonomy in daily life. Encourage children to choose careers and paths according to their interests and strengths. At the same time, parents should also pay attention to their children's mental health and emotional needs and provide necessary support and care to help children build self-confidence and self-esteem.

Parents should also pay attention to their learning and promotion to continuously improve their own gender equality literacy and educational capacity. Learn about the latest ideas and methods of gender equality education by attending training courses and reading professional books; Share the experience and experience of gender equality education with other parents to discuss how to better promote the all-round development of children.

4.4. Strengthen Media Publicity and Guidance to Promote the Concept of Gender Equality among the People

In the information age, media as a social public opinion guide, its influence to be reckoned with. To further promote the popularization and deepening of the concept of gender equality in Chinese society, mainstream media, and online media, especially short video platforms, should play a greater role.

First of all, mainstream media should set up columns or special programs to report in depth the successful cases and advanced experiences of gender equality in various fields such as education, employment, and family, show the outstanding contributions of women in all walks of life, and break gender stereotypes. At the same time, through the series of reports and opinion articles, criticizing and exposing the phenomenon of gender discrimination, raising public awareness and attention to gender equality issues. Second, as one of the most active social media, the short video platform has a wide and young user base [17]. The platform shall encourage and support creators to produce and disseminate short video content about gender equality, such as women's career inspirational stories, gender equality education tips, etc., to attract users' attention in a relaxed and interesting way, and to make the concept of gender equality more popular. In addition, the platform can also cooperate with educational institutions and social organizations to jointly launch gender equality-themed challenges or public welfare activities to enhance public participation and interaction.

In response to the problem of girls who drop out of school in less developed areas, the media can increase publicity efforts, and stimulate girls' enthusiasm for learning and desire to learn by reporting successful cases and telling stories about how reading books can change their lives [18]. At the same time, it can cooperate with local governments and schools to carry out public welfare publicity activities "Knowledge changes destiny", and provide girls with learning resources and psychological support to help them return to school or continue their education. Strengthening media publicity and guidance can effectively promote the popularization and deepening of the concept of gender equality in Chinese society, and provide strong support for the realization of educational equity.

5. Conclusion

It is a long and arduous task to solve the problem of education equity in China from the perspective of gender difference. It requires the joint efforts and cooperation of the government, schools, society, and families. Through the implementation of measures such as optimizing the allocation of educational resources, reforming the education model, and improving the employment security policy, the adverse effects of gender differences can be gradually narrowed, and the realization of educational equity and the advancement of social justice can be promoted. In the future, society should continue to pay attention to the new manifestations and trends of gender differences in the field of education, constantly adjust and improve relevant policies and measures, and contribute wisdom and strength to building a more equitable, inclusive, and high-quality education environment.

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