The Influence of the Gender Equality in Family Education on Female's Future Career Choices

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Abstract. Family education is a hot issue of widespread concern in today's society. Some researchers have found there exists a degree of gender inequality in family education, and the influence of this issue on females' future career choices lacks further study. Therefore, the subject of this essay is the influence of gender equality in family education on a female future career choice. This essay is based on the in-depth study of the existing literature, and data, and carries out a further analytical investigation. The study found that there still exists inequality in family education values, family education investments, and family education expectations in our society. To a certain extent, it causes the difference in the types of career options and income between women and men. And these inequalities have a certain negative impact on female career choices and development.

Keywords: Family education; c=Career choices; Gender equality; Female.

1. Introduction

Family education is an important component of comprehensive education and is the important foundation of school education and social education. It is an educational activity throughout one's whole life and is the basic education for a person's growth and development. It also plays an important role in an individual's growth and development.

In recent years, with the constant adjustments of our country's childbearing policy, from the initial one-child policy aiming to strictly control the population and fully implementing the two-child policy to the three-child policy at the present stage, the number of children is increasing, which further highlights the importance of the family education. Meanwhile, according to relevant research, the element of family education will also have a significant impact on an individual's career choices. However, in modern society, there still exists issues of gender inequality, which are mainly reflected in the inequality in educational resources assignment, education expectations, education concepts, and so on. Up to now, the systemic investigation of the influence of gender equality in family education on females' future career choices is lacking.

Focus on this phenomenon, this essay will develop an analytical investigation of the influence of gender equality in family education on a female's future career choices.

The study aims to reveal the influence of gender equality in family education on females' future career choices, emphasizing the significance of gender equality in family education on females' future career choices.

2. Educational Inequality within the Family

2.1 Inequality of Education Investment

According to the research, Chinese society as a whole has slightly higher investments in female education in non-agricultural households but much lower in generally impoverished agricultural

families. What's more, considering the difference between single-child families and multiple-child families, it is easily concluded that the equality status of women receiving education investments and the household economic status have a clear positive correlation. Depending on what researches show , the traditional gender notion and household income are the two significant factors in the inequality of education investment. As a result, gender inequality primarily exists in families which have relatively low incomes and poor-educated matters; where the gender conception is more conventional and the culture of the boy preference is denser. Thus, it can be seen that in the urban higher-income families, although the investment females earn is higher, males could also gain a sufficient guarantee. Nevertheless, in rural low-income families, the restricted resources are male-oriented, which, certainly, requires the sacrifices of women. Comfortingly, recently, due to the mounting national economy, women from medium-to-high-income households are acquiring investments equal to or even higher than males. In response to the normally advanced academic achievements and academic responsibilities of women, the older generations are more likely to be prompted to heighten investments to females, for instance, attending extracurricular cram schools. Based on what the survey shows, there are nearly 25.3% of female students taking part in supplementary tutoring in contrast to 20.78% men students. On contrary, in the top 25% of students in a class, women account for 61.3% but men only make up 47.3%. However, plenty of inequality is presented in lower-income agricultural households. The stronger dependency of female education on income conditions can be detected as well. In addition, the coronavirus imposes a tremendous converse impact on the domestic economy, according to the data publicized by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 11,000,000 girls are not able to accomplish education as a result of the pandemic all over the world, it can never be overthinking about what other negative consequences female students have to take if this trend continues to spread. Meanwhile, as resource dilution theory tells us when the quantity of offspring expands, the average investments each child can acquire dwindles. Nevertheless, in reality, is that males are normally less affected by resource dilution no matter in the metropolis or in the countryside, which is another performance of crucial inequality in educational investments.

2.2 Inequality of Education Expectation

Generally Chinese parents, as a whole, expect more from male children as a consequence of the conventional ideology of patriarchy in which expectations toward boys in only-child households dominate. Based on the data presented in the Chinese Educational Tracking survey, although parents' expectations of daughters achieving higher education surpassed those of sons, the expectations of daughters acquiring doctorate degrees are inferior to those of boys. It is partially due to the traditional marriage idea. A woman with a doctor's degree is always connected with the dilemma of getting married and making men feel stressed under the language context of China, which may lead to a decrease in expectations from the older generation. Furthermore, the educational expectations parents put on the younger generation normally include the expectation of pension feedback. Consequently, in the circumstance that men generally own added employment opportunities, it is understandable that parents expect more from their sons. From the perspective of traditional culture, the Chinese would distinguish "getting married with" and "marrying someone", which means that women no longer belong to their original family and become family members in their husbands' households after they get married. As a result, they cannot enjoy the feedback of investments. Contrary to high expectations from parenthood, boys themselves hold less educational expectations, which is reflected on the transcript, thus leading to a degradation of educational investments followed by an equal trend in the additional educational investment of households that are wealthy enough to afford the extra-curriculum tuition.

2.3 Inequality of Education Concept

According to the data derived from World Economic Forum Global Gender Report, China has the highest proportion of females achieving higher education, which is well ahead of the rest of the world.

At the same time, women also show outstandingly stronger academic capacities and responsibilities. Whereas, there are plenty of women who accept higher education who are struggling against the traditional male-preference thoughts in their original families notwithstanding. Some are so unconsciously influenced that they even place those into their life planning. For instance, a large number of women who graduated from excellent universities have to subsidize their brothers financially and support their parents simultaneously. Parents in this kind of family although invest in their daughter for a satisfactory education degree, they still hold conventional thoughts since the reason why they are eager to champion their daughters is that they hope they can marry well or take advantage of the income females earn to provide for the male offspring. Countless women grow up in a family with the edifying of a concept like that, which is easy for them to rationalize and internalize this heavy burden. At the same time, existing research testifies that the quantity of children especially the number of sons has a stimulative effect on mothers' conventional male-preferred conception. From the external perspective, this phenomenon can be attributed to the higher status women can acquire if they give birth to a son in today's Chinese society. Nevertheless, from the internal opinion, it is the unfair conception that is imparted through a household level that leads to it. So, even though it is a society that makes huge progress in gender equality, from a historical perspective, the hyper-stable trait of Chinese society still penetrates the family environment and influences the conception of inner family education radically.

3. Women's Career Choices

3.1 Major Career Choices

The rapid development of the Internet enables titles such as "10 Best Careers for Women" and "The most advantageous professions for women in the next 10 years" to frequently appear online. The emergence of recommended occupations (e.g., teachers, public nutritionists, civil servants, translators, and accountants) provides a reference for women choosing a career. On the other side, there is a scientific basis for these occupational analyses, which helps women choose their ideal careers. The occupations above are related to women's strengths: First of all, women have an inherent advantage in language, a linguistic strength, and are better suited to careers as editors, translators, announcers, etc. Secondly, women perform better at holistic thinking. They are more sensitive and attentive, and also tend to see things from diverse angles, making them suitable for a career in image design. In addition, women's unique personal trait, patience, makes them stand out in the accounting profession. In short, the work of an accountant is a repetitive job of making tables and analysing data, so it is a great test of a woman's patience. Then there is the advantage of women's communication skills, as they are more amiable with people. They are particularly suitable for jobs such as teachers and secretaries. Last but not least, Women are also very good at management. The economic and social development gives an increasing number of women who have received higher education an opportunity to reach more people and events and to be a good helper in the management of institutions. According to the "2020 Survey Report on the Current Situation of Women in the Workplace in China" released by Zhilian Recruitment and the mother and baby community platform "Baby Tree", females have a higher distribution of positions than males in finance, accounting, auditing, human resources, administration, and civilian positions, while males dominate in production, processing, and technical positions. Beyond personal preference, women's main career choices are linked to the traditional gender culture of 'male superiority and 'three subordinates' virtues. These ideas are rooted in all areas and aspects of society. The influence of traditional gender concepts is widespread and can be seen in gender positioning, policy-making, allocation of market resources, and even in school and family education. Women's career choices remain influenced by conservative attitudes and their careers are focused on professions such as teaching, nursing, and accounting.

3.2 Characteristics of Chosen Careers

Several characteristics are seen in contemporary women's career choices. Firstly, the ability to be financially independent; secondly, the ability to balance work and family; and thirdly, job stability. Each person is an independent individual with the ability to give themselves the right to financial independence. Having the ability to earn money gives the greatest confidence for women. Having a job not only gives women financial independence and reduces the strain on their families but also gives them enough money to spend after marriage. From a female's viewpoint, a career like teaching is not only financially rewarding but also reduces unhealthy competition in the workplace. Teachers face mostly students every day, who is quite simple-minded and can improve themselves while teaching them. Teachers are respected and considered by the elders as the perfect vocation for women. In the long term, women who choose a teaching career can grow up with their children in the future and have more time to balance their families. From a social perspective, being a teacher, one of the oldest professions in human society, has good stability and is the "engineer of the human soul".

Today, more and more women are afraid to get divorced in broken marriages, the biggest reason is that they are a housewife and financially dependent on their men. If they return to the workplace, they will face many difficulties. There are three influences on contemporary women when choosing a career: themselves, their families, and society. Women are defined as virtuous wives and mothers due to the traditional gender concept of "men in charge, women in charge", which affects their sustainable development. Although it has changed in recent years, the traditional concept has not disappeared substantially. "Society expects much more from women in their domestic roles than in their social roles. Women are the main carriers of domestic work, and society's emphasis on this view has, to some extent, led to gender stereotypes of women belonging to the family. As a result, it leads society to invest less in women in terms of education, training, and promotion."

3.3 Types of Career Choices and Income Differences between Women and Men

The profit-seeking tendency of employers under the conditions of a market economy is the economic reason for the widespread existence of "gender discrimination in the workplace". Employers, as the main body of the labor market, have the primary goal of maximizing profits. From the perspective of enterprises, whether a person can be employed and what kind of jobs they can get is related to how much value they can create. Gender discrimination in the workplace stems from the misunderstanding of employers, and companies pay too much attention to the productivity of labor in the short term. In the job market, women will get married and have children, which will lead to interruptions in work. In addition, during the reproductive period of women, the company needs to provide extra subsidies in addition to holidays, which deviates from the economic benefit of the company. Therefore, companies will try to reduce women as much as possible in terms of employment. "Physiologically, women have a smaller bone-to-muscle ratio than men. Women's muscles make up about 36 percent of their body weight, while men 's are about 41 percent; women's bones are relatively lighter, and women's bones are about 15% of body weight, about 19% for men. A weaker muscular system makes women's muscle performance relatively weak." Therefore, men have an advantage over women in physical activity, and the proportion of men in the manual labor industry is greater than female. However, the radius of movement of all joints of women is larger than that of men. They can coordinate their movements better and outperform men in delicate movements, while men's movements are relatively clumsy and lag. Therefore, women are better than men in terms of durability and fine manual operation. In terms of career choices, women's career choices are also narrower than men 's. For example, research fields such as physics, medicine, computer, and engineering are dominated by men. In terms of career choice, women's career development forms are more abundant than men 's. Women are greatly affected by marital status and family role changes, and their occupations are not continuous but engage in professional life at a certain age. For example, work before marriage, become a housewife after marriage, then find a relatively easy job after the children go to school.

Salary is an important factor in measuring workplace status. Although the "Labor Law of the People's Republic of China" clearly states "equal pay for equal work", there is still a difference in the phenomenon that the average salary of men is higher than that of women. According to Zhiwang's 2020 and 2021 monthly income difference survey data, the overall income of women in the Chinese workplace is currently 12% lower than that of men. But this gap has narrowed by 5% year-on-year, and the degree of differentiation has declined for two consecutive years. Guo Sheng, CEO of Zhaopin Recruitment, pointed out that "the salary of women is lower than that of men. In addition to the low proportion of management, women are mainly in finance, administration, human resources, and sales positions. Technology and product positions in high-tech zones are dominated by men, which also has an impact on women's average pay."

4. The Influence of Family Education on Female Vocational Preferences

4.1 The Influence of the Family Education Concept on Women's Career Choices

Family roles have been formed via social order construction, social resource allocation, and social status organization in terms of social gender since the Paleolithic era. The generalization of the traditional family role division model of "men earn money and women take care of the home" is based on the far-reaching consciousness of patriarchy . Women show more inclination to look after their children due to their unique fertility and Oxycontin during childbirth, strongly stimulating maternal instincts, while men are responsible for food supplies in one family and physically stronger to fit in the hunting environment. Under the absolute physical power difference, the status of men and women had changed from a "matriarchal society" to a "patriarchal society", which profoundly affects modern family education. Boys are prioritized and ensured when teaching resources are limited, while girls, in some cases, are deprived of opportunities of receiving education and hampered when pursuing further study.

Women usually play the role of educators in modern family education, therefore, the next female generation in the family is usually instilled with established social ideas. Women are required to put the family in first place, which subconsciously instills a concept that women should pay more to the family. Therefore, women tend to balance family and working time in their future employment, which affects women's all-out efforts at work and further affects career promotion.

According to the fourth Chinese Women's Social Status Survey, women undertake more housework at home than men. The time men spend on housework is within one hour, while women spend around 154 minutes in family members' care, cooking, cleaning, daily purchasing, and other housework, about twice that of men. Women bear the primary responsibility for family care. 76.1%, 67.5%, and 63.6% of the daily life care, homework tutoring, and school pick-up of children aged 0-17 were mainly undertaken by mothers, respectively. Women spend an average of 136 minutes a day on childcare, tutoring, picking up children, and caring for family members such as the elderly and sick. Married women spend an average of 120 minutes a day doing housework .

Modern society emphasizes women's reproductive function and the best age for childbearing (about 22-35 years old). In addition, the social idea of "carrying on the family name" requires women to return to the family during this period. Childbearing interrupts a high proportion of women's career development, taking up their energy and attention, which makes it impossible for them to balance work and family. In this case, women choose to become full-time housewives. The main data from the fourth Chinese Women's Social Status Survey showed that among workers aged 18-64, 43.5% were female and 56.5% were male .

Some scholars define this phenomenon-career interruption- as "role conflict", a kind of incompatible performance in terms of time and energy investment. The incompatibility of work and family roles leads to role conflict, uniquely defined for working women .

4.2 The Influence of Family Education Expectations on Women's Career Choices

"Men are superior to women" was established in feudal society, which affected the contemporary mainstream ideology. Therefore, in modern family education, although women's educational opportunities and investments have been greatly improved, men are still considered the economic pillar of a family. Women's level of education is regarded as a prerequisite to seeking a family with higher economic power, and women's education background provides preponderance in fostering and nurturing the next generation. The main purpose of the education women receive is not to get high-paying jobs in society or fulfill their values, thereby most women will choose relatively easy, stable jobs whose salaries are mostly lower than the average level. In addition, a significant number of women choose to become full-time housewives after marriage.

According to the questionnaire on women working in Shandong city, China, it shows that more than 10% of women choose clerical work, teaching, sales, and freelance jobs. The common feature of these jobs is they allow more, and more flexible personal time and women can better balance family and work. Meanwhile, 6.6% of women chose to work in the technical industry, 8.0% of women chose professional jobs and 9.9% of women chose to be civil servants, which require more energy and a higher threshold. In terms of income, the proportion of women with a monthly income of 3,000 to 5,000 yuan was the highest, reaching 43.4%, while only 4.2% of women earn more than 8,000 yuan per month .

In family education, boys are expected to obtain higher wages to support the whole family in the future, so men are inclined to choose a job with a bigger challenge and high return to dedicate themselves, such as science, politics and economic sectors. However, women are generally expected to engage in work more stable, such as the administration, and the education industry. In terms of educational background, parents are more likely to expect men to get doctoral degrees and women to get master's degrees .

4.3 The Influence of Family Education Investment on Women's Career Choices

Gender inequality in education is influenced by many factors, such as family income, parent's education level, number of children, academic performance, and so on. In one family with abundant economic resources and higher education background, girls are invested more than boys in education, either in extracurricular cram school closely related to academic school or extracurricular classes such as music, art, sports, and dancing. However, the more siblings a family has, the lower the number of years of schooling girls as compared to boys.

In agricultural households with low income and lower-middle income, there is a significant preference for boys in family education investment. The total education investment of boys is higher than that of girls on average, which will lead to the inconsistency of the education level of girls and boys in the family. A woman's education level also affects her choice of employment.

According to the fifth and sixth population censuses and the China Labor Statistical Yearbook [16, 17,18], although on the whole, women's employment has improved along with the ascension of the education level, it is not always positively correlated. Although a larger increase in female employment and labor participation rate can be seen for women who originally have never been to school and now graduate from junior high school. However, it is not obvious for women from undergraduate to postgraduate. Women with low education mainly assume the occupations of production and service. The occupational distribution of women with secondary education is more dispersed, mainly in the business service industry. Highly educated women mainly work as professionals and administrative staff.

5. Conclusion

Studies found that family education exists inequalities in educational resources assignment, education expectations, and education concepts. And these inequalities will cause negative effects on females' future career choices to some extent. In terms of investment in family education, although

in Non-agricultural households with higher income the educational investment in girls is higher than that in boys, the family educational investment still shows a boy preference phenomenon in total. The educational investment will affect education which leads to inequality in man's education and females' education. This phenomenon is apparently in agricultural households' areas. The effects on female future career choices caused by this inequality issue are mainly shown in poorly-educated females undertaking the production personnel, service personnel occupation, and intermediate-educated female occupation distribution is relatively dispersed, which is mainly for business service occupations, and higher educated females mainly undertake professional and technical personnel and clerical personnel occupations. In terms of family education expectations, the study shows that affected by the traditional preference for sons over daughters' parents is more expected of men in education. That generally formed a "man's high expectation, low investment and female's low expectation, high investment" situation. The effects on female's future career choices caused by this inequality issue are mainly shown in that some women could not choose a job with higher income or a job that can better their value, instead, most women will choose a relatively easy, stable job and a large number of women will choose to be housewives after they got married. However, these jobs' salaries are mostly below the social level. In terms of the family education concept, although the amount of higher-educated Chinese females has exceeded higher-educated men and is far ahead in the world, much higher educated females still cannot get rid of the original family's preference for sons over daughters, and some females even insinuate these thoughts into their life plans. Therefore, females pretend to choose jobs that can provide a better balance between home and work. Many females will choose to put more effort into the family, thus will hurt females' concentrated efforts to work, further affecting their job promotions. Therefore, it can be found that the problem of gender equality in family education is significant and noteworthy. Inequality in family education will cause negative effects on females' future career choices to some extent.

In the future, further study on the reasonable methods of how to deal with inequality in family education can be further proposed on this basis.

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