

# Research on Gender Equality Education Policy in China

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**Abstract.** Since the reform and opening up, China has formulated a series of laws and regulations to guarantee women's equal right to receive education and pursue gender equality in education. The Fourth Plenary Session of the 19th CPC Central Committee put forward that "the essence of the modernization of state system and state governance system is the modernization of people. The equality and dignity of human nature is the proper meaning of human modernization, which is the consensus of modern civilization. " Gender equality education is the foundation of the development of gender equality, and it is also the top priority of the continuous progress of people's rights and undertakings. This paper will make a simple analysis from the following aspects: the influence of gender inequality on women and society, the significance and principles of gender equality education, the evaluation of existing policies and suggestions for the future.

**Keywords:** gender education; Gender equality; educational policy.

## 1. Introduction

A large part of educational equity is reflected in gender equality in education. As early as the 2003 Human Development Report, it was clearly pointed out that "gender equality in education is not only the goal of gender itself, but also the core of achieving all other goals." In 2017, a document proposed that the average length of education for women aged 18-64 should reach 10.16 years in 2020, an increase of 1.36 years compared with 2011. Even if the number of years of education increases and the opportunities for education increase, gender inequality still exists in the education system, and the number of women is generally lower than that of men at all ages and educational levels. And to some extent, women still have less opportunities to change their quality of life and improve their social status by relying on academic education than men. This means that China still needs a lot of time and effective policies to balance gender issues in education.

## 2. Overview of gender inequality

### 2.1. Definition of gender equality

The United Nations Children's Fund once defined gender equality as follows: "Gender equality means that both men and women can enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protection ... Gender equality definitely does not mean that men and women should become the same, but there is no prejudice or discrimination. Gender equality is not only a human rights issue, but also a prerequisite and indicator for sustainable and people-oriented development. " Simply put, in today's society, gender equality is to keep the status of men and women at the same level, so that gender will not become an obstacle to people's normal life.

### 2.2. Gender inequality and its impact

At present, gender inequality still focuses more on women. Materialization of women is a major problem of gender inequality at present. The so-called "materialization" means treating women as an accessory of capital or rights. In ancient China, the concept of "having the right to have money to marry without worrying" was once popular. Due to the serious inequality in political and social status between men and women in ancient China, men occupied an absolute control position over rights and capital. Therefore, in the subconscious of ancient men, capital and status were used as chips to control



women. Nowadays, with the continuous development of the times, this feudal idea has been abandoned by people, but the prejudice against women still exists. Some people still keep the idea that women must get married and have children, care for their husbands and children, and handle housework, in an attempt to make the image of women simple and flat, and do not recognize the outstanding performance of women in society and industry. This concept of gender inequality represents discrimination against women and is not conducive to the harmonious development of today's society.

In order to maintain social equality to a certain extent, the state should emphasize the concept of gender equality, which should also be infiltrated in education bit by bit, so that more people can see and recognize the value of women, so as to treat women's roles and contributions equally and vigorously promote gender equality education.

### **3. Development of gender equality education in China**

In ancient social education in China, there were very unequal gender differences, which were still exposed to female groups. Influenced by the traditional feudal thought, "women are virtuous without talent" has become the cognition of most ancient people. It is precisely because of this misconception that women are difficult to obtain more educational resources, are not treated equally in education, and do not enjoy equal rights to education. Compared with all kinds of school education received by men, family is the only place for women to receive education, and the contents they learn are mainly women's appearance, women's words, women's morality, women's work and so on. These educations for women are mainly aimed at cultivating them into "three obedience and four virtues" wives and good mothers. Later, some substantial education was only aimed at consolidating and strengthening the education methods of women's loving wives and mothers, such as *Four Books for Women* and *Biography of Women*, which appeared from the Han Dynasty to the early Qing Dynasty. They were all set by men to strengthen their rule over women, firmly binding women to the traditional moral concept of "three obedience and four virtues" and making it difficult for women to further develop their human rights.

At the end of the Qing Dynasty, the western idea of equality between men and women was introduced into China, and people's awareness of gender equality was awakened. The establishment of church women's schools and the advocacy of advanced people's related women's schools effectively improved the education for women. Liang Qichao once said, "If we push the foundation of the world's weakness, women will not learn." He believed that one of the important reasons for the decline of the country was that women did not learn. Then, the trend of promoting women's education grew slowly. In 1907, on the 24th day of the first month of Guangxu's thirty-third year (March 8, 1907), the Ministry of Education of the Qing Government promulgated the articles of association of women's normal school, which showed that women's education in China had achieved a legal status in the academic system. However, at that time, men and women still could not study in the same school, so boys' schools and girls' schools were born. At the beginning of the Republic of China, there were rules and regulations to set up corresponding women's higher normal schools and women's middle schools. In the primary schools in the primary education stage, coeducation mode was also realized, indicating that the concept of gender equality between men and women has made further development.

After the founding of People's Republic of China (PRC), coeducation was basically realized in all study sections, and relevant laws and regulations began to constantly emphasize gender equality. In 1995, Jiang Zemin delivered an important speech at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, at which he announced that China would attach great importance to women's progress and development, and integrate gender equality education into education content, further emphasizing that gender equality is a basic national policy and that gender equality education should be realized. Adhere to equality between men and women as a basic national policy to effectively ensure the legitimate rights and interests of women and children. At present, women's rights and status have

attracted more and more attention. However, in real life, gender inequality still exists, and some inherent prejudices against women and men continue to affect people's normal lives.

#### **4. The significance of gender equality education**

With the development of the times and the popularization of education, most people have begun to face up to and understand the importance of gender equality, but there are still more or less inherent prejudices.

For women, some people think that women "should get married before the age of 30, or they will enter the ranks of leftover women", which is a manifestation of objectifying women. People who hold this idea attempt to turn women's age into an obstacle to women's pursuit of freedom and equal rights. They do not regard women as free individuals, but only regard them as "reproductive tools" to undertake reproductive tasks. This misconception places a heavy yoke on women. However, gender equality education has made it clear that every mother is great, and giving birth is a choice that women can make, but it is not an obligation that every woman should fulfill.

At present, under the influence of gender equality education, people have gradually formed a consensus: both men and women have the right to be beautiful and exquisite; Women can be resolute and strong, and men can be calm and quiet. It is an important goal of gender equality education to let both men and women enjoy the same right to be respected without putting a solid label on gender. It can be seen that with the popularization of gender equality education, people have generally established new ideas. No matter male or female, the length and color of hair, the choice of clothing, the strength of personality, the size of strength, etc., they can not be used as a standard to judge a person, which is everyone's unique characteristics. Everyone's characteristics should be shining and proud, not being criticized by others. Physiological characteristics are immutable and cannot be forced. Society is an important platform for education, and social ethos and trends will affect the educational concept, teachers' and students' thoughts. With the development and progress of the times, gender equality education has eliminated the inherent prejudice of the public and made gender equality education develop better.

#### **5. Principles of gender equality education**

Gender inequality in education is the result of the complex integration of social economy and culture. To achieve gender equality education, we must go hand in hand from the national, social and school levels. In recent years, the state has issued many policies to protect women's right to education, actively calling for the formation of a social atmosphere of equality for all, and schools are trying their best to carry out gender education. However, in gender equality education, some problems still emerge and need to be solved urgently.

##### **5.1. the principle of freedom and equality**

In today's society, there are still some people who think that boys must be better at science, girls must be better at liberal arts, boys can improve their majors, and girls' majors are normal. This traditional concept will even affect students' orientation and teachers' teaching, and affect the number of men and women in liberal arts and science classes in some schools. This is extremely unfair to girls who are good at science, and it is a disguised discrimination against girls. Then, in gender equality education, we need to follow the principle of freedom and equality. In education, things that determine the direction of life, such as choosing arts and sciences, should conform to students' own wishes and let students choose subjects freely, instead of using gender to decide what to be good at and what to study.

## **5.2. The principle of educational equity**

In recent years, some colleges and universities still fail to fully uphold the awareness of gender equality in the examination recruitment policy. In the enrollment plan of colleges and universities in Heilongjiang Province in 2019, it can be seen that the scores of some colleges and universities recruiting girls are 20 points or more higher than those of boys, and the proportion is also seriously tilted. In the early years, the enrollment plan of Shanghai International Studies University was seriously uneven, and the scores of male and female candidates were very different, which was contrary to the policy of gender equality in education. It is worth noting that as early as 2005, the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests in People's Republic of China (PRC) mentioned that "schools should not refuse to admit women or raise the admission standards for women except for special majors". Although the situation has improved now, and some famous schools have cancelled the policy of different scores for men and women in minority languages, there are still some inequalities. Therefore, through the principle of educational equity in gender equality education, we can improve gender equality in education and comprehensively consider educational equity. No matter whether the professional major is special or not, it is the greatest preferential treatment for women not to treat women. Both men and women can choose their own learning direction based on their own interests and future development .

## **6. Suggestions on gender equality education**

### **6.1. Schools and teachers should have a high awareness of gender equality.**

From primary education to higher education, school teachers play a leading role in forming students' correct values and value orientation, and are the basic force to achieve the great goal of gender equality in education.

First, we should establish an efficient and capable team of teachers with correct gender awareness. A team of teachers with high quality and gender equality concept is an important factor for the society and the country to realize gender equality education. Teachers are the executors and controllers of educational means, and they will unconsciously reflect their thoughts on gender in daily teaching and life. If teachers show their awareness tendency of gender inequality in daily life, it will have a negative impact on the establishment of students' correct gender concept. Therefore, teachers should strengthen the publicity and internalization of gender equality education in the teaching process, infiltrate relevant knowledge and policies, prevent gender discrimination in classes, and bring the basic national policy of gender equality and socialist core values into the classroom, which requires teachers to have good gender education concepts and correct values.

Second, schools are not allowed to carry out activities or remedial classes that treat gender differently. Senior school leaders should keep the concept of gender equality education in mind. Every social practice activity, sports and cultural activity or science intensive remedial class in schools should not be used as an excuse to cause a serious imbalance between men and women. No matter what achievements girls finally achieve, they should give both boys and girls the same opportunities, and they should not be classified as "self-righteous". Similarly, the activities suitable for girls should also give boys corresponding places. The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2020 shows that each item is equal, which is the most ideal state of gender equality education.

### **6.2. Disseminate the knowledge and concepts related to gender equality education through the platform of colleges and universities.**

As the saying goes, children are the "flowers" of the motherland, shouldering the mission of developing advanced culture and inheriting human civilization, especially college students who already have correct values, ability and innovative spirit. Environment can often determine a person's development direction, so it is particularly important to establish a good campus environment for achieving gender equality education.

First of all, school bulletin boards, radio stations, libraries, etc. can broadcast or show some policies and implementation examples about gender equality education, and strengthen publicity and explanation so that students can have a preliminary understanding of gender equality education. Secondly, school associations can carry out more academic activities related to gender equality education, such as debates, speeches, group reports, etc., so that students can deepen their understanding of gender equality while improving their self-learning literacy. Finally, school associations should encourage their members to publicize gender equality education to the public, carry out a series of social practice activities, and enhance people's attention to gender equality education by setting up stalls and preaching, so as to improve their public awareness. By fully infiltrating relevant knowledge in colleges and universities, students' good awareness of gender equality will be constructed, which will greatly improve the understanding and attention level of gender equality education in society and even the whole country.

### **6.3. Use new media to strengthen the publicity of gender equality education.**

In the era of rapid network development, all kinds of new media emerge one after another, and there are also many kinds of social software. While enjoying rich and interesting new media equipment, society and universities should use these channels to publicize the concept of gender equality and imperceptibly improve the popularity of the concept of gender equality.

Nowadays, the promotion of new media can be roughly divided into three categories: video platform, social platform and self-media platform, and corresponding publicity measures should be implemented according to the characteristics of each category. For example, relevant staff can make some concise propaganda videos about gender equality education, and insert them into short video platforms which are highly accepted by the masses, such as Tik Tok and Aauto Quicker, or play them as public service advertisements on some video platforms, such as Tencent Video and Iqiyi Video, so that the audience can understand relevant knowledge during leisure and entertainment. For example, you can use some examples about gender equality education to write articles about the impact and harm of gender inequality, and put them on news platforms such as WeChat WeChat official account and Today's Headlines. This method may not be noticed or achieved by most people in a short time, but over time, every slight progress is made to achieve the success of gender equality education.

### **6.4. improve the importance of moral education in schools.**

Moral education is simply a course to cultivate students to establish correct values. However, it has always been common for school teachers and students to take a "ignoring" attitude towards such courses, occupying the main courses in moral education or carrying out other activities. Even if they attend classes, they are boring lectures and indoctrination for the whole class, and both students and teachers are very passive. This is obviously undesirable, and it is also an obstacle to the realization of gender equality education. Therefore, colleges and universities should pay more attention to moral education from school leaders to teachers to students, so that teachers can teach and students can learn. In the teaching process, we should emphasize the emotional communication between teachers and students, integrate the concept of gender equality into the school moral education classroom, and improve the classroom interest and enthusiasm. This not only improves the teaching level of moral education class, but also realizes gender equality education and spreads advanced gender culture.

## **7. Conclusion**

To sum up, there is still a certain gap between China and the ideal gender equality education, which will also hinder the implementation of other educational work and even affect the ideological concept to a certain extent. It is precisely because the concept of gender equality has not been fully popularized that people will inevitably encounter problems in employment and study because of gender, which will hinder social progress. Therefore, in view of the implementation status of gender equality education in China, it is necessary for the state, government, schools, teachers and individuals to

publicize and popularize the concept of gender equality through active and effective policy guidance and support, and make joint efforts to establish a good gender equality education system. Schools and all teachers must establish a sense of gender equality, take colleges and universities as a propaganda platform for education and related concepts, and increase the dissemination of knowledge and concepts related to gender equality education. During this period, we can use new media to expand the propaganda scope and influence of gender equality education, so that the school moral education classroom can fully and deeply penetrate gender equality education and strengthen its attention. In this way, it can not only have a positive impact on the ideology of the majority of students, but also establish and improve the gender equality education system, thus laying the foundation for the implementation of gender equality education in China in the future and establishing a social environment of gender equality.

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