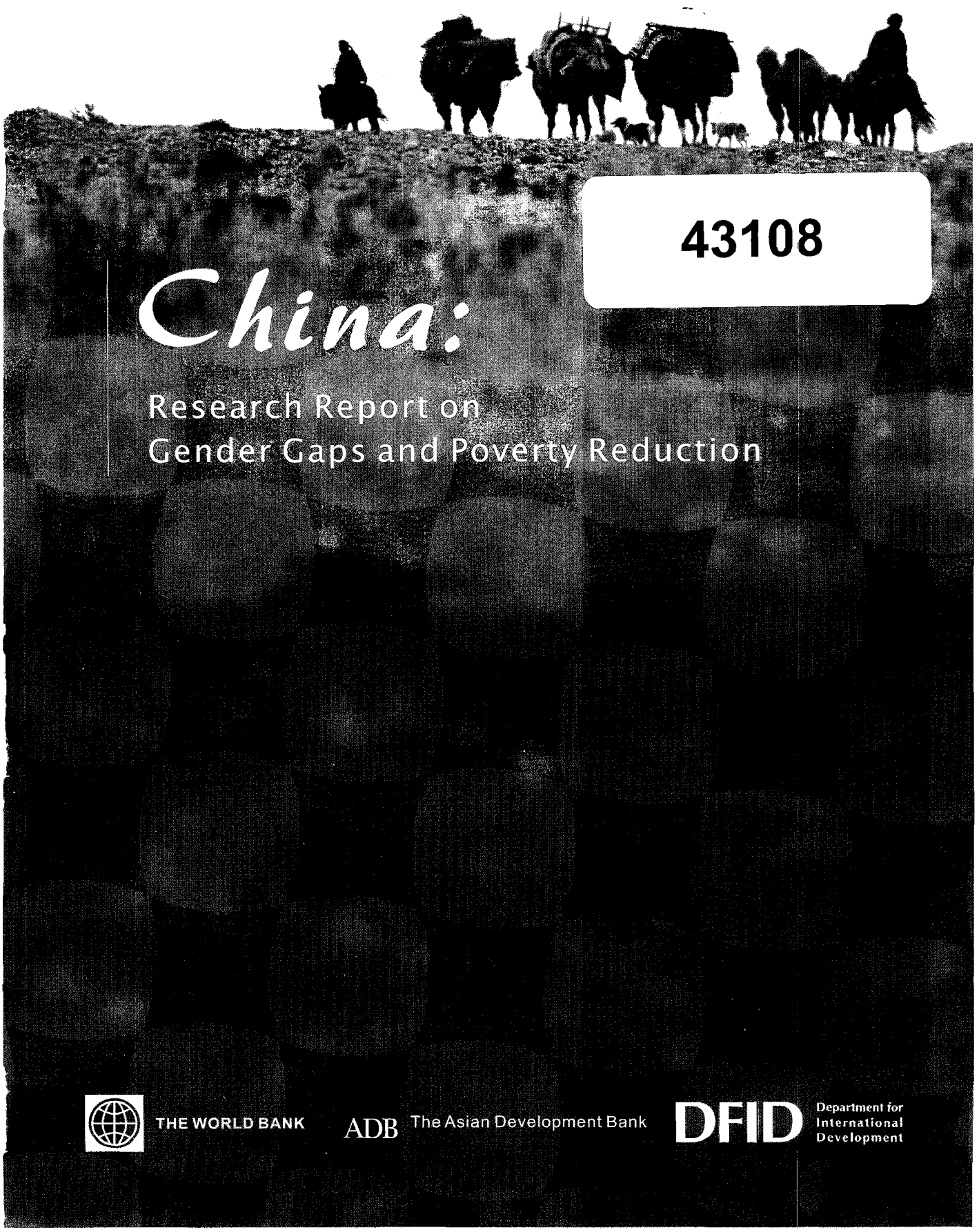



# China:

## Research Report on Gender Gaps and Poverty Reduction

THE WORLD BANK

ADB The Asian Development Bank

DFID Department for International Development

# China:

## Research Report on
## Gender Gaps and Poverty Reduction

**October, 2006**

# Acknowledgements

This study was a joint effort between the World Bank and Asian Development Bank with funding support fi-om DFID. National Bureau Statistics (NBS) provided great support on data to the study. It mainly includes two parts: a "Study on Gender Inequality and Poverty in China", which was managed by Wang Chaogang, Gender Coordinator in the Environment and Social Development Unit at the World Bank Office Beijing, and an "Overall Country Gender Assessment", which was managed by Amy Leung and Sri Wening Handayani of the ADB. Prof. Duan Chengrong fi-om Renmin University, Chen Shaohua and Martin Ravallion of the WB, and Yu Hongwen from NBS, contributed to preparation of quantitative study reports; Prof. Li Xiaoyun from China Agricultural University and his team prepared the qualitative study report; Ms. Du Jie, Ms. Lin Zhibin drafted the overall country gender assessment; Prof. Bettina Gransow from Berlin Free University drafted the synthesis report. To further improve the quality of the study, consultations with researchers, policymakers, non-government organizations and donor agencies were undertaken in China.

A number of domestic and foreign development scholars or practitioners have contributed in various ways to this study. For reviewing and commenting on various draft of reports, we would specially like to thank: Ms. Judith Banister formerly with the U.S. Bureau of the Census; Prof. Guo Zhigang and Prof. Zheng 'Xiaoying from Beijing University; Ms. He Xiaojun from Foreign Capital Project Management Center of Poverty Alleviation and Development Office of State Council; Rahul Malhotra, Katy Oswald, and Jillian Popkins from DFID; Ms. Shireen Lateef from ADB, and Mayra Buvinic, Juan Carlos Guzman, Gillian Brown, Daniel R. Gibson, Karen Mason, Liu Xiaofan, Li Shaojun, Anis Wan, Xiao Liping and Andres Liebenthal from the World Bank.

Wang Chaogang, Task Manager of the WB
Amy Leung and Sri Wening Handayani, TTL of ADB

# Contents

# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| ACWF | All China Women's Federation |
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| AIDS | Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome |
| CASS | Chinese Academy of Social Sciences |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women |
| CGA | Country Gender Assessment |
| CPC | Communist Party of China |
| CPPCC | Chinese People's Consultative Conference |
| DFID | Department for International Development |
| DG | Director General |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |
| HIC | High Income Counties |
| HIP | High Income Provinces |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| IMR | Infant Mortality Rate |
| IUD | Intrauterine Device |
| LIC | Low Income Counties |
| LIP | Low Income Provinces |
| MDG | Millenium Development Goals |
| NBS | National Bureau of Statistics |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organization |
| NPC | National People's Congress |
| NWCWC | National Working Committee on Women and Children |
| PRC | People's Republic of China |
| PSC | Poverty Stricken Counties |
| SC | State Council |
| SRB | Sex Ratio at Birth |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Program |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| URC | Urban Resident Committee |
| WB | WorldBank |

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# Executive Summary

China has achieved a great deal through its efforts at implementing the basic state policy of equality between men and women in social economy and political affairs. Even in poor communities, gender equality has made obvious progress in grass roots women's organizations, community participation, training, family planning, health, education and the prevention of domestic violence. In poor areas today, compared with the past, greater progress has been made in providing boys and girls with equal educational opportunities at primary level. However, gender inequality is still very common in poor rural areas and emerging news forms of urban poverty are accompanied by gender specific forms of discrimination and personal dependency.

Gender gap or gender inequality is defined here as the inequalities between men and women, based on socially constructed norms, practices and power relations. Gender inequality is clearly not, or not only, a left-over phenomenon originating from a patriarchal agrarian society which is dissolving as a result of increasing economic growth; gender inequality – as well as poverty – should be seen as dynamic social phenomena which are reproduced in the context of China's transformation into a modem industrial, information and service society, into a responsible part of the global world system. Gender imbalance and its long-term impacts should be considered as a serious policy area by the Chinese Government with regard to developing a harmonious society and building a new socialist countryside. At the same time, it should be a key area for international donor agencies in their China strategies and interventions.

The Chinese government has been making large investments in poverty reduction and has had considerable success in reducing poverty. Learning from national and international development experience, the government poverty reduction programs have started adopting participatory approaches to meet the needs of the poorer sectors of the population and communities and this has certainly provided an opportunity for women's empowerment and gender equality, even though the policy language is still gender absent.

The gender dimensions of poverty in the PRC are largely under-diagnosed in official statistics since many figures are collected on a household basis and are not sex-disaggregated. Little is officially recorded on intra-household income and welfare distribution. The absence of gender in poverty statistics makes it difficult for the government to give the anti-poverty strategy a gendered face.

Crucial questions posed in this paper are

What are the manifestations of gender inequality in China and what are the ways in which gender inequality affects the poverty reduction efforts?
What contribution does public policy make towards bringing about favourable or unfavourable conditions for achieving greater gender equality?

What kind of measures are necessary to mainstream gender into poverty reduction policies?

## *Long-term trends in gender inequality in China*

Based primarily on population census data and encompassing findings from participatory poverty assessments, long-term trends in gender inequalities can be identified in the areas of population and health, education, employment and governance. The main gender gaps identified are the following:

Population: Surviving circumstances for girl infants are not for optimism
Since the early 1980s, sex ratios at birth[1] have deviated from the normal range in China, the elevation of which has been constant, increasing and widespread. In the past 20 years, China has seen a clear drop in infant mortality rate. However, in both rural and urban areas, there appears an abnormal phenomenon of higher female infant mortalities compared to the male ones, which exists in most regions of the country. The surviving circumstances of girl infants in China are not for optimism. Marked deviations from expected patterns of gender difference can reveal not only female but also male disadvantage or interdependent impacts. The extreme masculine sex ratio at birth in China might be followed by a distorted "marriage market" within the next twenty years, bringing the institution of marriage under heavy pressure. Given the long-term trend of continuing high sex ratios at birth, trafficking in women for marriage and other purposes will be probably become more serious in future decades.

*Health: New issues concerning women's reproductive health*
New issues have recently emerged concerning women's reproductive health. For the groups of young women, there have been increasing numbers of abortions among young unmarried women in urban areas. As for middle-aged women, there has been an increase
in cases of gynaecological diseases, particularly in rural areas where clean water is scarce or difficult to come by. If women fall ill, furthermore, they usually delay seeking medical treatment (due to lack of money and time), and also because their health is ignored and not prioritized by the family. Recent years have seen some efforts being undertaken to link HIV/AIDS prevention and care issues with gender equality. In China, women still form a minority of the HIV/AIDS-infected population, but their numbers have increased rapidly in recent years. Although migration experiences have empowered women to some extent, migration exposes women to unprotected sex, an increase in abortions, and an increased risk of HIV/AIDS due to lesser access to needed services at the destination. There is an increasing demand for

[1] Sex ratio at birth (SRB) shows the number of boy infants compared to girl infants who are born within a given period, usually represented by the number of boys per 100 girl infants. A ratio standing between 103 and 107 is considered normal. When SRB deviates from the normal range, it indicates a preference of male (or female) infants and the neglect of the other gender in society. An analysis of the statistics on SRB in China in the past 50 years shows that before the 1980s, SRB remained within the normal range in China. Since 1982, the elevations in SRB have been constant. For nearly 20 years, the ratio has climbed increasingly higher. By the year 2000, it had already reached close to 120.

local reproductive health and family planning agencies to tailor their services to make them more appropriate for migrants.

Education: Medium-level education is increasing, but gender inequalities are significant at both ends of the education level

In the field of education, be it urban or rural, in regions with more developed or less developed economy, or in areas where the Han ethnic group is concentrated or the ethnic minority groups, education level of China's population has been rising. Although gaps still exist between male and female in terms of indicators such as illiteracy rate or years of school attainment, the gender gaps have been closing and already diminished to relatively small extent. However, gender inequalities are significant at both ends of the education level. Female illiteracy rates are markedly higher than the male ones. In regard to attainment of high-level education, women are disadvantaged. Generally, lower-income and poverty-stricken areas are at a pronounced disadvantage in terms of educated population. Education for girls is still a central concern in poor and low income areas.

Employment: Gender segregation in the labor market

Since the 1990s, China has been experiencing increasing pressure in the field of employment. Many urban people of working age have lost their jobs. Two basic characteristics can be identified from the 2000 gender-age specific employment rate curve for urban China: 1.The decline in the curve for the women's labor force occurs five, or even more than five years earlier than it does in the curve for men; 2. The curve declines faster for the women's labor force than it does for men. The most prominent change in the sectoral structure of the Chinese labor force between 1982 and 2000 was the decline in numbers of both men and women in the labor force concentrated in farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries. The proportions in this sector fell from 74% in 1982 to 64% in 2000, with a decrease of more than nine percentage points for men (fi-om 70% to 61 %) as well as for women (fi-om 78% to 69%). Differences in the sectoral distribution of men and women have an impact on their wages. Whether we look at the distribution nationwide, in the urban areas or in the rural areas, the concentration of women in low-wage sectors is always higher than that of men; in the high-wage sectors, it is vice versa. In terms of employment and wages, women are in disadvantage.

Governance: China is lagging behind in terms of women's representation

China is lagging behind in terms of women's representation in parliament in a global context. The ranking of the proportion of Chinese female NPC deputies is dropping in comparison with the number of women parliamentary members in many other countries. The enforced retirement age policy exerted negative impacts on women's participation in decision-making bodies at different levels, particularly in high-level politics. Regulations for promoting officials set women at a disadvantage with regard to their gaining promotion when they reached middle age and thus resulted in a gender gap in career development between men and women. When the party and

government reform the management of cadres or civil servants, gender differences have not been taken sufficiently into account. The goal of equal numerical representation in village decision-making is still far from being achieved. Although elections to village committees and assemblies have enhanced political participation in China's rural areas, women are conspicuously absent from village governance and their participation in village management is much less than that of men. On most village committees, the number of women representatives has yet to reach the critical mass of thirty per cent in decision-making bodies as advocated by the United Nations and the Beijing Platform of Action in 1995.

### *Gender inequality may hamper efforts atpoverty reduction*

From the data presented, it becomes clear that there is no simple or one-way relation between gender inequality and poverty. Gender inequality does not arise out of poverty per se and both gender inequality and poverty may have different causes. Given that gender and poverty are both defined as complex and multi-dimensional phenomena, more efforts have to be invested in understanding not only the causes and effects of poverty and gender inequality, but also in understanding the nature of the causes and the way they interrelate (see Oyen 2004). On the one hand, it is quite obvious that capabilities in terms of health and education are closely linked to the economic development levels of certain regions. Being born female and living in a poorly developed area may serve as an additional disadvantage. This disadvantage could also turn into an obstacle to development and thus hamper further efforts at poverty reduction. A rising female IMR can be interpreted as an obstacle to efforts to reduce poverty through economic growth, even if the male IMR is decreasing. On the other hand, the data suggests that gender inequalities are not necessarily related to regional patterns of high or low income; gender inequalities cannot be attributed to a low level of development alone. They may also be related to cultural variations, to a patrilocal marriage system and a male-dominated political culture, to public policy and its intended and unintended impacts, or they may represent some combination of poverty, male domination and public policy.

Quantitative and qualitative studies shed light on the relationship between gender inequality and poverty from different perspectives. Quantitative data such as those collected from the three censuses in 1982, 1990 and 2000 respectively, show the long-term and representative trends of gender inequality. They indicate trends which have continually strengthened over the years, whereby the imbalances in SRB and IMR obviously require particular attention.

### *The Chinese government made gender equality a basic state policy*

In recent years, the Chinese government has made fairness and justice, including gender equality, an important part of its efforts to build a harmonious socialist society.

This is formulated in the government's "White Paper on Gender Equality and Women's Development in China", published in August 2005 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. At the Beijing conference, the previous President, Jiang Zemin, stated: "Attaching great importance to the development and advancement of women, we in China have made gender equality a basic state policy in promoting social development. We are resolutely against any forms of discrimination against women and have taken concrete steps to maintain and protect the equal status and rights of women in the country's political, economic and social life." This high-level commitment to gender equality is reflected in the Constitution of the PRC and in many of the policies and legislative measures adopted by the Chinese government since 1949, and especially in the 1990s.

### *Poverty reduction: Targeting women, but gender-blind?*

Since 2001, the Chinese government has made gender indicators a component of the poverty monitoring work in rural areas, and has stressed that attention should be paid to gender equality in the poverty-reduction work. On the basis of the specific conditions in different areas, they have endeavoured to help rural women out of poverty by way of providing small-sum credit loans, labour export and pairing-off assistance. In spite of these measures, politicians and policy-makers are often too little aware of gender-related inequalities. This does not only apply to cadres at lower administrative levels, but also to some of those involved in central decision-making in the government and ministries, thus, those who have the influence and resources at their disposal to implement a gender-sensitive policy. Although the Chinese Party/state advocates increasing the proportion of women leaders and improving women's capacity in management and decision-making in state and social affairs, the policies or programs, including poverty reduction programs, have been compromised by gender blindness on the part of the public administrative reform that has left the gender norms and structures untouched.

In the field of poverty alleviation, too, it can be assumed that there is only very limited awareness of the very diverse effects on men and women which can ensue from legislation and public policies. In addition, due to the pressure of working with limited resources in poor rural areas and to the fact that, even at local level, the strategies for reducing poverty are geared towards economic success, there is very little incentive to develop and implement gender-sensitive policies. But gender-blind laws and policies can lead to unintended and unwanted discrimination against girls and women. It is therefore necessary, at all levels of the administration and during all stages of legislation and policy development, to be aware of gender differences and the possibility that those differences may turn into discriminating practices.

### *Giving public policy a gendered face*

Giving public policy a gendered face is an important precondition for developing a response to recent policy changes embodied in the revised poverty reduction policy,

which include the willingness to explore methods based on local participation, gender targeting, community-based planning and expanded roles for NGOs in implementation, progress monitoring and impact assessment. The emphasis on participatory, bottom-up procedures implies changes in governance at both national and local levels, including gender sensitive public policy. Such changes represent a development of poverty planning in China towards a demand-responsive approach to poverty reduction in contrast to the top-down approaches in the past.

In order to mainstream gender into poverty reduction policies, the following intervention strategies are recommended:

### *1. Promote research on the interaction between public policies, gender issues, economic growth and poverty dynamics in China*

To back up suggestions for gender sensitive poverty reduction policies and to target these policies more accurately, more research is required on gender related constraints to poverty reduction efforts at both macro level and micro level. This research should include

- studies of the root causes of the imbalanced sex ratio at birth and the increasing gender gaps in the infant mortality rate, including their impacts on poverty reduction efforts;
- gender assessments of poverty reduction policies (including security, opportunity and empowerment as an expanded framework for poverty reduction) and of specific interventions such as grain for green (tuigenghuanlin), micro credits, compulsory education, resettlement, infrastructure, labor mobility, etc.;
- gender sensitive analyses of the complex dynamics of poverty production embedded in processes of transformation, marketization and urbanization in China (including urban unemployment, unfavorable environmental conditions, impoverishment related to loss of land and/or involuntary resettlement, labor (and return) migration (e.g. in cases of illness and injuries), old age poverty and children's poverty, interaction between gender, poverty and minority issues, students from poor areas etc.);
- evaluation of the effectiveness of international donor activities in promoting gender equality as part of poverty reduction interventions, including more systematic attention being paid to gender issues as part of social assessment in investment projects outside the human development sector; these may have poverty reduction as a secondary project objective (such as projects in the transport, energy or environmental sector, agricultural development or natural resource management projects which all may be accompanied by resettlement and impoverishment risks for the population affected by the project.

### *2. Develop general guidelines to improve gender responses in the government system related to poverty reduction*

It is recognized that government agencies, NGOs and researchers working in the area of poverty reduction tend to have a higher level of gender awareness. This is largely because they are influenced by international cooperations that place great emphasis on poverty reduction and normally have a strong gender focus. However, such gender awareness often stagnates at project level and has not yet been integrated into the government system. One suggestion is to establish a joint working group under the NWCWC and the NDRC Social Development Department to prepare general guidelines on improving gender responses in various departments of the government system related to poverty reduction (such as the Ministry of Civil Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, National Bureau of Statistics/Rural Survey Department etc.). This may be seen as as an entry point for the relevant departments to develop their own guidelines on strengthening gender awareness and gender responsive action plans in their specific fields of poverty reduction. If appropriate, the establishment of 'gender officers' may be considered. For example, in cooperation with the ILO, the Ministry of Labor has established a gender responsive system; two 'gender officers', one at director general level and one at staff level, have been nominated. One good practice in one ministry has certainly opened a window for change.

### *3. Develop and coordinate gender action plans indifferent government departments related to poverty reduction*

Different Chinese governmental departments are in charge of civil affairs, education, health, and land administration. The Ministry of Civil Affairs is responsible for autonomous elections among villagers; the Ministry of Education is responsible for the education system and the Family Planning Commission is responsible for birth control. These ministries do not have close relations with the All China Women's Federation and the Women and Children Working Commission of the State Council at micro level. Gender inequality in the process of autonomous village elections is serious, and women comprise a very low proportion of the representatives on village committees. The gender imbalance in birth control is high in rural and urban areas. There is also serious gender inequality among school-age children in poverty areas. Planned policy interventions for these phenomena are absent at community level. These departments should therefore concentrate their attention on strengthening gender equality in their grass-roots work. On the basis of general guidelines government departments involved in poverty

reduction should design specific gender action plans. The following measures could be part of gender action plans:

- ***Gender disaggregated statistics.*** Sex-disaggregated data from the National Bureau of Statistics and relevant ministries will have to be obtained for sound gender-responsive poverty reduction policies to be formulated. The inclusion of gender statistics into national and ministerial data collection systems is an important step towards promoting gender sensitive poverty reduction policy making.

- ***Gender checklists*** for poverty reduction interventions, including key action points and gender sensitive indicator systems for project preparation, mplementation, monitoring and evaluation.

- ***Gender budgets:*** analysis of poverty reduction budgets.
  Gender budgets are tools and processes designed to facilitate gender analysis in the formulation of government budgets and the allocation of resources. Gender budgets are not separate budgets for women, or for men. They are attempts to break down or disaggregate the government's mainstream budget according to its impacts on women and men. They are an important tool for analyzing the gap between the expressed commitments of governments and the decision-making processes involved with how governments raise and spend money.

**4. Build capacity for mainstreaming gender in poverty reduction offices at all levels**

The Chinese government is now undertaking mid-term reviews of its ambitious program for poverty reduction in poor areas (2001-2010). Under the unified coordination and planning of the State Council Leading Group, this program is being carried out in 592 poor counties all over China. This program is aimed at 100 million poor people, half of whom are women. The poor areas have received great financial support through poverty reduction funds, work for food funds and credit loans. However, distinct gender-sensitive principles and framework are absent from the operating process of such support. The relationship between gender inequality and poverty has not been made one of the key issues in China's rural poverty reduction policies. The poverty alleviation system lacks the capacity to formulate gender sensitive policy and plans. It is therefore proposed that capacity building should be carried out within China's poverty alleviation system on gender mainstreaming and gender budget; there should also be a poverty reduction plan aimed at promoting gender equality jointly organized by the State Council Poverty Alleviation Leading Group and All China Women's Federation. Training should be carried out at central, provincial and county levels and should include the training of trainers. It is recommended that international donor agencies provide technical assistance for such a plan.

# Summary Report

# Introduction

China has achieved a great deal through its efforts at implementing the basic state policy of equality between men and women in the social economy and political affairs. Even in poor communities, gender equality has made obvious progress in grass roots women's organizations, community participation, training, family planning, health, education and the prevention of domestic violence. In poor areas today, compared with the past, greater progress has been made in providing boys and girls with equal educational opportunities at primary level.

However, gender inequality[2] is still very common in poor rural areas and emerging new forms of urban poverty are accompanied by gender specific forms of discrimination and personal dependency. Gender inequality is clearly not a left-over phenomenon originating from a patriarchal agrarian society which is dissolving as a result of increasing economic growth; gender inequality – as well as poverty – should be seen as dynamic social phenomena which are produced and reproduced in the context of China's transformation into a modern industrial, information and service society, into a responsible part of the global world system. Gender imbalance and its long-term impacts should be considered a serious policy area by the Chinese Government with regard to developing a harmonious society and building a new socialist countryside. At the same time, it should be a key area for international donor agencies in their China strategies and interventions.

The Chinese government has been making large investments in poverty reduction and has had considerable success in reducing poverty. Learning from national and international development experience, the government poverty reduction programs have started adopting participatory approaches to meet the needs of the poorer sectors of the population and communities and this has certainly provided an opportunity for women's empowerment and gender equality, even though the policy language is still gender absent.

Crucial questions posed in this report are

What are the manifestations of gender inequality in China and what are the ways in which gender inequality affects the poverty reduction efforts?
What contribution does public policy make towards bringing about favorable or unfavorable conditions for achieving greater gender equality?

The report starts, in Chapter 1 to 4, by giving an overview of the long-term tendencies of gender-related developments in China during the reform period, presenting analyses and interpreting data mostly obtained from the population censuses. The gender gaps are measured using the following indicators:

[2] Gender inequality (or gender gap) is defined here as the inequalities between men and women, based on socially constructed norms, practices and power relations.

- Population and health
  sex ratio at birth,
  infant mortality rate,
  reproductive health and HIV/AIDS
- Education
  adult illiteracy rate
  educational composition among population aged 6 and older
  years of school attainment and enrollment rate
- Employment
  employment rate
  sectoral distribution of labor force, including wage differences
  informal and migrant labor
  unemployment rate
- Governance
  female delegates in political institutions

After identifying the most striking gender gaps in Chinese society, each chapter examines whether and how the identified gender inequalities are related to regions/provinces [3] with different levels of economic development and cultural variation. Regional disparities are looked at from the perspective of rural and urban areas, minority nationality areas[4],
the three provinces (and fifty counties) with the highest GDP per capita[5] (hereafter called high income provinces or HIPs and HICs) in comparison with the three provinces (and fifty counties) with the lowest GDP per capita[6] (hereafter called low income provinces, or LIPs and LICs),
592 poverty stricken counties (PSC)[7]

Chapter 5 discusses the relationships between gender inequality and poverty as seen from the results of quantitative and qualitative studies. Chapter 6 provides a discussion of the policies and programs related to gender equality and poverty reduction, looking at the norms, laws and policies which promote gender equality, at the institutional framework which has been established to address women's issues, and at the political culture of public policy and its gender dimensions. Taking these factors into consideration, presents recommendations for mainstreaming gender into poverty reduction policies.

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[3] Provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities, from now on referred to as provinces.
[4] Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Yunnan, Guangxi
[5] Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin
[6] Guangxi, Gansu, Guizhou
[7] In order to improve the assistance given to poverty-stricken areas in the struggle to eliminate poverty, the Chinese government developed a list of poverty-stricken counties as priorities for assistance in 1986. The counties included in this list were provided with favorable assistance in terms of funds, projects and policies. The list has been adjusted when necessary. A total of 592 key PSCs appears on the latest list of those being targeted for state assistance.

# Chapter 1 Gender Inequality in Population and Health

Based primarily on population census data and encompassing findings from different sources, this chapter presents some long-term trends in gender inequalities in reform China, in the areas of population and health.

## *Sex ratios at birth: little optimism regarding survival chances for girl infants*

Sex ratio at birth (SRB) shows the number of male infants compared with female infants who are born within a given period, usually represented by the number of boys per 100 girl infants. A ratio standing between 103 and 107 is considered normal. When SRB deviates from the normal range, it indicates a preference of male (or female) infants and the neglect of the other gender in society. *An* analysis of the statistics on SRB in China in the past 50 years shows that before the 1980s, SRB remained within the normal range in China.

**Table 1 Sex ratios at birth in China (1953-2000, selected years)**

| Year | SRB | Year | SRB |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1953 | 104.9 | 1990 | 114.7 |
| 1964 | 106.6 | 1991 | 116.1 |
| 1970 | 105.9 | 1992 | 114.2 |
| 1979 | 105.8 | 1993 | 114.1 |
| 1982 | 107.2 | 1995 | 117.4 |
| 1987 | 111.0 | 1997 | 120.4 |
| 1989 | 111.3 | 2000 | 119.9 |

Data sources: calculated by using data taken from the population censuses, sampling surveys on 1% population, and annual sampling surveys on population change.

Since the early 1980s, China's SRB has gradually diverged from the norm, taking on continuing, increasing and widespread elevations. The specific manifestations are:

(1) the ratio exceeded the normal range of 103 to 107 in 1982 and has remained higher than normal ever since;

(2) since 1982, the elevations in SRB have been constant. For nearly 20 years, the ratio has risen systematically and continually, rather than showing occasional increases in some years;

(3) the ratio has climbed increasingly higher. By the year 2000, it had already reached close to 120;

(4) instead of being local, elevation in SRB has been widespread in the bulk of regions in China, the highest being in Guangdong province and Jiangxi province at 138 and higher.

**Table 2 Sex ratios at birth by province, 2000**

| Province | SRB | Province | SRB |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 114.58 | Heilongjiang | 107.52 |
| Tianjin | 112.97 | Shanghai | 115.51 |
| Hebei | 118.46 | Jiangsu | 120.19 |
| Shanxi | 112.75 | Anhui | 130.76 |
| Inner Mongolia | 108.48 | Zhejiang | 113.11 |
| Liaoning | 112.17 | Fujian | 120.26 |
| Jilin | 109.87 | Jiangxi | 138.01 |
| Shandong | 113.49 | Chongqing | 115.80 |
| Henan | 130.30 | Sichuan | 116.37 |
| Hubei | 128.02 | Yunnan | 110.57 |
| Hunan | 126.92 | Guizhou | 105.37 |
| Guangdong | 137.76 | Tibet | 97.43 |
| Guangxi | 128.80 | Shaanxi | 125.15 |
| Hainan | 135.04 | Gansu | 119.35 |
| Qinghai | 103.52 | Ningxia | 107.99 |
| Xinjiang | 106.65 | | |

Data sources: provincial data taken from: Population Census Office under the State Council, 2002: 1681; county data calculated using data by county gathered by NBS.

Unusually high sex ratios at birth, which are also found in other East Asian[8] and South Asian countries,[9] may either indicate excess female mortality in utero, presumably the result of sex-selective abortion (which is forbidden by law in China) or may result from the sex-selective undercounting of children in the data sources. The difference here depends on whether girls are nominally missing or truly missing. Undercounting implies that girls are hidden in the population. The truly missing girls have various demographic effects: they never go to school, never join the labor force, never marry, etc. The growing dearth of females in the population – whether virtual or real - has a variety of social and policy implications, including potential effects on the "marriage market" and other social costs (Cai and Lavely 2003:14,21). From 2000 to 2002, 25,116 cases of kidnapping and selling women were reported. There were 6,766 cases of kidnapping and selling children during the same period (Department of Population 2004:98) Given the long-term trend of continuing high sex ratios at birth, trafficking in women for marriage and other purposes will be probably become more serious in future decades.

Investigation disaggregated by rural and urban areas shows that between 1990 and 2000, there was a consistent trend towards increasingly higher SRBs in cities, urban towns and rural areas.

**Table 3 Sex ratio at birth by rural-urban areas in China (1990 and 2000)**

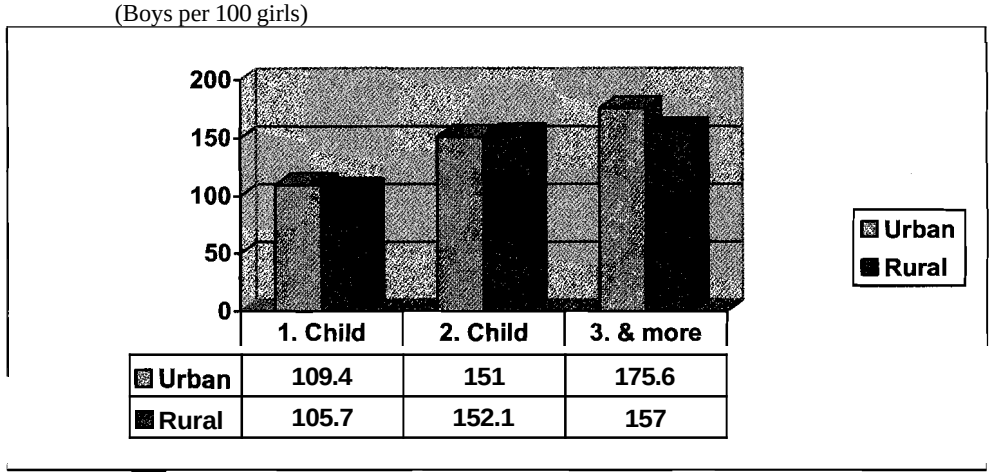
| Year | City | Urban Town | Rural |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1990 Census | 110.4 | 113.5 | 114.4 |
| 2000 Census | 114.2 | 119.9 | 121.7 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

[8] Taiwan, Republic of Korea
[9] India, Nepal, Pakistan

The data in Table 3 also reveals that, although the problem was more prominent in rural areas and urban towns, an imbalance in SRB has also been encountered in cities in recent years. A look at the birth rates for second and third children shows this even more clearly.

Figure 1 Sex ratio at birth by parity (urban and rural), 2000




| | 1. Child | 2. Child | 3. & more |
|---|---|---|---|
| Urban | 109.4 | 151 | 175.6 |
| Rural | 105.7 | 152.1 | 157 |

Source: Department of Population, Social, Science and Technology, National Bureau of Statistics, Women and Men in China. Facts and Figures (Beijing) 2004:19

The sex ratio at birth assumes an even more clearly disparate shape particularly with the births of the second and more children, particularly in urban areas.

In the ethnic minority areas, the SRBs are relatively normal. The populations of the minority groups are concentrated in the six provinces of Tibet, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Ningxia and Yunnan. Disaggregated by province, except for an obviously abnormal ratio in Guangxi (128.80) and a relatively abnormal ratio in Yunnan (110.57), all the other four minority nationality provinces have SRBs which are normal (Tibet, Xinjiang) or slightly higher than normal (Inner Mongolia, Ningxia). According to data obtained from the long version of the 2000 Population Census, only the four provinces of Tibet, Qinghai, Guizhou and Xinjiang had SRBs lower than 107. Whether the more normal SRB in minority nationality areas is due to more relaxed family planning policies or cultural variations in son preference (e.g. the Zhuang minority, like the Han, is characterized by the severe neglect of girls) is a subject for future research.

The mean SRBs for the fifty counties with the highest incomes and the fifty counties with the lowest incomes both exceed the norm. Via the county

specific data from the 2000 Rural Socioeconomic Survey[10], the 50 counties with the highest GDP per capita in 2000 and the 50 counties with the lowest GDP per capita[11] are generated. The mean SRB for the 50 HICs was 111.3 and that for the 50 LICs, 111.7, according to the 2000 Population Census data. The two ratios are close and both are significantly in excess of the normal range, but below the national average (119.9). Thus, there is no correlation between regional income levels and higher or lower SRBs. The SRBs in poverty-stricken counties present a similar picture. According to data obtained from the 2000 Population Census, the mean SRB for the 592 PSCs was 114.7, which obviously falls outside the normal range, but is still below the national average (119.9).

### *Infant mortality rate: absolute increase in female IMR in rural areas*

Using population census data, the health status of a population can be studied with the indicator of infant mortality rate (IMR). Yet IMR is restrained by the quality of data, which must be carefully selected for analysis[12]. In the past 20 years, China has seen a clear drop in infant mortality rates, which decreased from 38‰ in 1981 to 28‰ in 2000. However, in both rural and urban areas, there is an abnormal phenomenon of higher female infant mortality than male infant mortality which seems to exist in most regions of the country.

Women are biologically at an advantage compared with men, so in a normal case, the mortality rate for female infants would be lower than that for males. The Chinese male and female IMRs revealed in the 1982 Census were consistent with this rule. However, in 1989 and 2000, the Chinese IMR deviated from the above rule: the female IMR started to exceed the male IMR. In 1989, the male and female rates stood at 32.36‰ and 33.48‰, respectively, with the female rate one point higher than the male; in 2000, the rates were 24‰ and 34‰ respectively in China, the female rate being 10 points above the male rate. Over a period of ten years, the abnormal gap between the male and female IMRs was critically reinforced.

The IMR in rural China is much higher than the urban rate, and the disadvantaged status of the rural rate has been further reinforced during the past twenty years. By the time the 1982 Population Census was held, the rural rate was 1.67 times that of the urban rate and by 2000, the rural rate had reached 2.68 times that of urban areas.

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[10] Provided by the General Team for Rural Socioeconomic Survey of NBS.

[11] *50* HIC and *50* LIC are defined by GDP per capita of *2000.50* HIC includes some counties from Western China, such as Kuerle, Shanshan and Geermu.

[12] Analysis of the relevant data shows that the quality of mortality data in the early 1980s was relatively reliable in China. However, by the early 1990s, the variation between calculations of 1989 IMRs from different researchers using the 1990 Population Census data had increased dramatically. The 2000 Population Census IMR was calculated and provided by NBS. When calculating IMRs from the 2000 Population Census data, NBS multiplied the number of deaths directly enumerated from the census by 1.08 and obtained the gender-age specific number of deaths between November 1st, 1999 and October 31,2000.

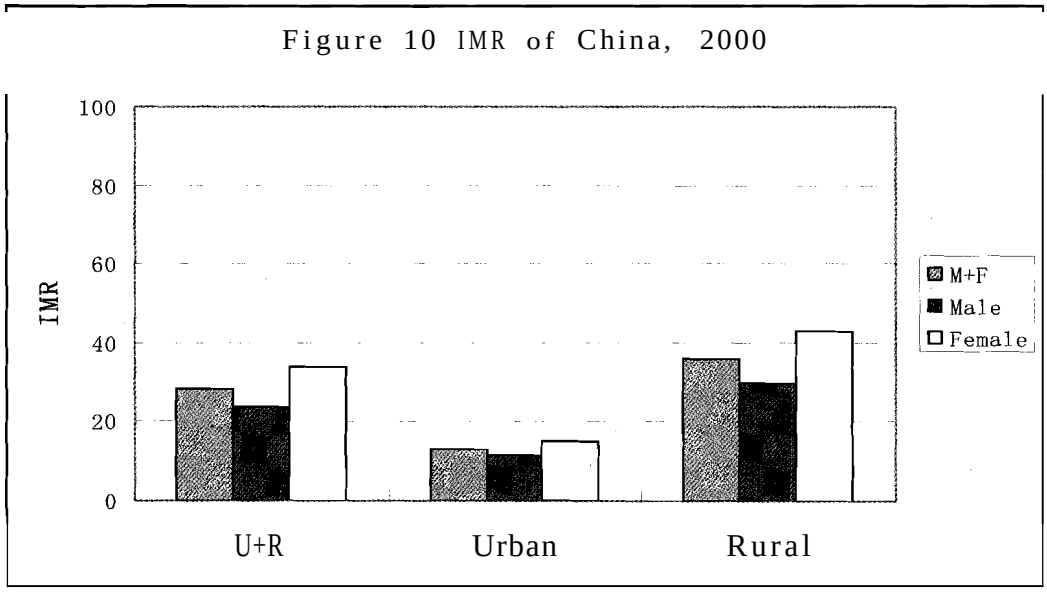
Data sources: the infant mortality rate obtained from the 1982 Population Census is cited from (Huang R.Q., 1995, Page 21-37); the infant mortality rate obtained from the 1990 Population Census is cited from (National Bureau of Statistics, 1995, Page 232-330. The data fails to provide infant mortality rates for rural and urban areas); the infant mortality rate obtained from the 2000 Population Census is calculated and provided by NBS.

**Table 4 Infant mortality rates in rural and urban China (‰) (1982,1990,2000)**

| | 1982 Census | | | 1990 Census | | | 2000 Census | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female1 |
| Total | 38 | 39 | 37 | 33 | 32 | 33 | 28 | 24 | 34 |
| Urban | 24 | 25 | 23 | | | | 13 | 11 | 15 |
| Rural | 40 | 41 | 39 | | | | 36 | 30 | 43 |

A female IMR higher than the male exists in both rural and urban areas of China, but only in rural areas has there been an absolute increase in the female IMR compared with 1982, while the male IMR has decreased significantly.

**Figure 2 IMRs in rural and urban areas, 2000**




Data sources: See table 4.

By 2000, the regional differences in terms of IMR had changed considerably. While in regions such as Beijing and Shanghai, the IMR had been lowered to a level of some 4‰, the IMR remained as high as 70‰ in Yunnan province. Provinces have been consistent regarding the abnormally high female IMR compared with that of the male. With the exception of a few regions, including

Heilongjiang, Ningxia, Tibet and Xinjiang, where female IMRs are slightly lower than the male, the remaining provinces have female IMRs quite obviously much higher than the male IMRs. In some provinces like Jiangxi, the female rate even amounts to more than twice that of the male. The 'abnormal' phenomena related to IMRs mainly originate in the abnormal rises in female IMR in rural China; although there are disparities in IMR between regions at varied income levels in absolute volumes, the trend toward a higher female than male IMR does not reflect any difference between the HICs and LICs.

As with SRB, IMR data may suffer from sex selective underreporting. We should therefore distinguish the truly missing from the nominally missing girls. It is estimated that one third of the nominally missing girls are hidden in the population and around two thirds are truly missing from China's population. In the 1980-2000 birth cohorts, the number of truly missing girls is estimated to be about 4% or 8.5 million (Cai and Lavely 2003: 20-22).[13]

In the HIPs, the IMRs have fallen to around 4‰. In the year 2000, the average IMR was 4.1‰ for male infants and 4.3‰ for female infants in these provinces. In the 3 LIPs, however, the rates were much higher. In 2000, the IMRs in Guangxi, Gansu and Guizhou were 31‰, 53‰ and 66‰, respectively, which were far above the rates in the higher income regions. In the LIPs, the average IMR was 50‰ (59.5‰ for females, 42‰ for males), which is much higher than the national average level. This finding indicates a clear negative correlation between a high IMR and a low level of local development.

The average IMRs (39.94‰) of the 592 PSCs are much higher than the national average. In these counties, both their male rate at 35.2‰ and their female rate at 45.44‰ are critically higher than the national level. This finding is of crucial importance, because poverty equations looking into the effect of health indicators on the elasticity of poverty to growth in China show that a higher IMR reduces the elasticity of poverty with respect to the primary output per capita. In other words, the higher the IMR, the more difficult it is to reduce poverty through economic growth. This result holds true for the female IMR as well as for the male IMR. This means that if the male IMR alone is lowered, and not the female IMR, this will have a negative impact on poverty reduction efforts.

[13] The estimate (by Cai and Lavely 2003) is based on a comparison of cohorts enumerated as small children in the 1990 census with the same cohorts enumerated 10 years later in the 2000 census. The comparison reveals that fewer than a third of the girls missing in the first enumeration subsequently appeared in the second.

### *Reproductive health and HIV/AIDS: lack of services and increasing risk for women*

It is still mainly women who shoulder the responsibility for family planning in both urban and rural areas. The two most common methods of contraception in 2001 were the IUD at 45.6 percent, and female sterilization at 38.1 percent. Methods undertaken by women constitute 83.7 percent of the total. (Department 2004:31, Table 3.9). As a matter of fact, recent years have seen an increase in the demand for men's participation in sharing responsibility for family planning.

New issues have recently emerged concerning women's reproductive health. For the groups of young women, there have been increasing numbers of abortions among young unmarried women in urban areas. It is reported that women between 20 and 29 years old have the most abortions and the percentages of those who are unmarried vary from 23 to 65 percent depending on the region. Unmarried women accounted for about 65 percent of abortions in 2004, compared with only 25 percent in 1999, in major cities such as Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin (Shanghai Daily June 6, 2005). Experts have asserted that the high abortion rate is due to the growing prevalence of premarital sex, the lack of contraceptive knowledge and the inappropriate counseling and service (UNFPA & CFPA, 2004).

As for middle-aged women, there has been an increase in cases of gynaecological diseases such as vaginitis and cervicitis, particularly in rural areas where clean water is scarce or difficult to come by (Liu 2004). However, in many cases, reproductive tract infections were left untreated (Ford Foundation 1997). If women fall ill, they usually delay seeking medical treatment (due to lack of money and time), and also because their health is ignored and not prioritized by the family. The lack of women doctors contributed to the unwillingness on the part of the infected women to seek treatment. On the other hand, the state of the migrant women's reproductive health has aroused the attention of more and more scholars.

HIV/AIDS infection still poses a serious public health problem across the borders of rural and urban areas. In China, women still form a minority in the HIV/AIDS-infected population, but their numbers have increased rapidly in recent years. The proportion of reported female HIV cases as a proportion of all cases[14] increased from 14.3% in 1999 to 39% in 2004 (Joint 2004:4, Table 1). This reflects the increase in HIV cases reported among former blood and plasma donors and the higher numbers of HIV cases found among sex workers.

[14] By the end of 2003, the cumulative number of HIV cases in China was estimated 840.000; the cumulative number of reported HIV positive cases from 1985-2004 was 89.067 (Joint 2004:4).

Recent years have seen some efforts being undertaken to link HIV/AIDS prevention and care issues with gender equality. For instance, a national team of experts for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission has been established to conduct training; a project on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission was launched to provide HIV virus testing and a counseling service for perinatal women in areas of high HIV/AIDS prevalence. At same time, ACWF and the Central Communist Youth League have collaborated with the Ministry of Health to conduct "face to face" educational activities for women and young people in order to disseminate knowledge about HIV/AIDS Prevention and Treatment, and to raise awareness of these issues.

However, a gender equality and rights-based approach has yet to be fully integrated into various governmental and non-governmental responses to curb the increase in HIV infection and to provide services and care for the infectors and infected. In general, interventions are carried out in a gender-neutral way that, disregarding gender discrimination, place women in a more vulnerable situation. For example, the lower economic and social status of women makes it difficult for them to negotiate safer sex. Particularly in rural areas of China, the high pressure exerted by parents-in-law and the community on women to have sons makes it difficult for them to refuse to have unsafe sex with their husbands. Female HIV+ are more discriminated against both as HIV infectors and as women. Those who are involved with sex services are even more despised by society. In addition, it is usually women – wives, mothers, daughters, grand-mothers - who, without any payment, take care of sick people. None of these issues, however, has been taken sufficiently into consideration in the relevant policies or programs. In fact, "ignoring gender is discriminatory, because this results in going along with and reinforcing existing gender inequalities" (DFID, 2002: 9).

Research has (Zheng and Gu 2004) shown that although migration experiences have empowered women, to some extent, in terms of self confidence and the gaining of relevant skills, "migration exposes women to unprotected sex, an increase in abortions, and an increased risk of HIV/AIDS due to lesser access to needed services at the destination" (Zheng and Gu 2004:68). There is an increasing demand for local reproductive health and family planning agencies to tailor their services to make them more appropriate for migrants.

# Chapter 2 Gender Inequality in Education

The direct output of education is people with skills and knowledge, who will probably profit from the return of education investment in the human resource market. Knowledge and skills endow people with the rights to make decisions and choices, so it is safe to say that economic rewards and empowerment are the dual benefits of education. The gender gaps that are now going to be explained show the consequences of unequal gender relations in the existing social structure. Through indicators such as the adult illiteracy rate, the educational composition of the population aged six and over, and the years of school attainment, this section presents the differences between males and females in terms of education in China, and the related trends during the last twenty years.

### *Adult illiteracy rate: the gender gap exceeds the gap between urban and rural areas*

China has made great achievements in illiteracy elimination during recent decades. The adult illiteracy rate[15] dropped considerably among people aged fifteen and over throughout the nation between 1982 and 2000. The national adult illiteracy rate fell from 34% in 1982 to 9% in 2000.[16] During the same period, there were synchronous decreases in both the male and female adult illiteracy rates. The rate for male adults declined from 21% in 1982 to 5% in 2000, and the rate for women from 49% in 1982 to 13% in 2000.

The higher illiteracy rate among the elderly population is attributed to the lack of educational opportunities for these people when they were young. Since the foundation of the PRC in 1949, the Chinese government has been committed to developing education, in particular, basic education, and also, in the meantime, to providing literacy education for adults. Regarding the extent of the decrease, the adult illiteracy rate among women has dropped faster than that among men. Although these gains are worth celebrating, it should also be noted that, in eliminating illiteracy, China still has a long way to go, because

- firstly, despite the general decrease in the adult illiteracy rate, one in twelve Chinese adults is still illiterate
- secondly, women comprise a high proportion of the illiterate population: on average, three out of four illiterates are women.

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[15] The adult illiteracy rate is the percentage of illiterates and semi-illiterates in a population aged 15 years and over.

[16] *It is necessary to point out that there have been changes in data collection methods for China's population censuses. The changes may not alter the declining trend in illiteracy rates in general, but they are likely to affect the extent to which the rate drops.*

During the period from 1982 to 2000, the adult illiteracy rate dropped considerably among the population aged 15 and above. There were synchronous decreases in both the male and female adult illiteracy rates.

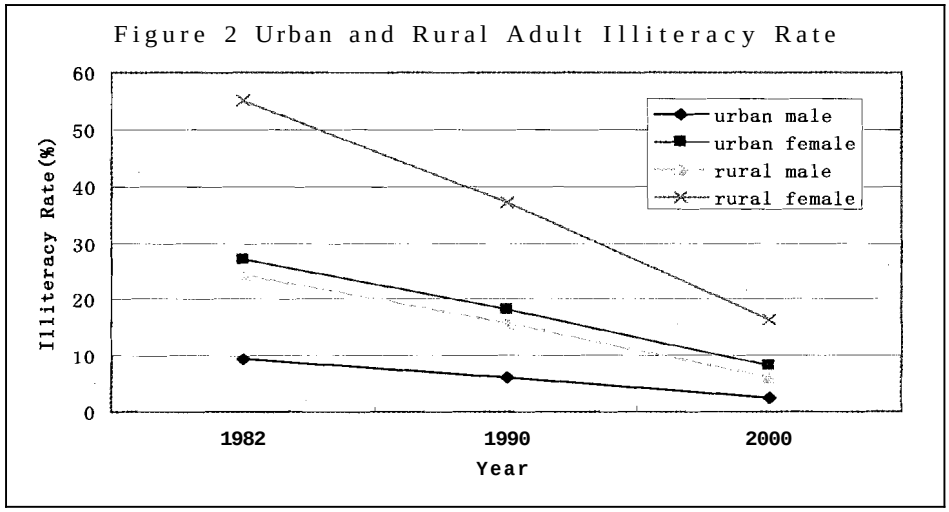
**Table 5: Male and female illiteracy rates in rural and urban areas (%)**

| Year | 1982 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| *National Total* | 34 | 22 | 9 |
| Male Nationwide | 21 | 13 | 5 |
| Female Nationwide | 49 | 32 | 13 |
| *Urban Total* | 18 | 12 | 5 |
| Urban Male | 9 | 6 | 3 |
| Urban Female | 27 | 18 | 8 |
| *Rural Total* | 39 | 26 | 11 |
| Rural Male | 24 | 16 | 6 |
| Rural Female | 55 | 37 | 16 |

Note: 'Urban' in the table refers to the total of city and urban town data.
Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

In a perspective disaggregated by rural and urban areas, the adult illiteracy rates in urban areas are far lower than the rural rate, which indicates that there is a need to prioritize rural areas for illiteracy elimination.

**Figure 3 Urban and rural adult illiteracy rates, selected years**




Data sources: Calculated by using data from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

In both rural and urban China, the adult illiteracy rates among women are much higher than the rates among men. The urban female rate (8%) is even higher than the

rural male rate (6%). Regarding the adult illiteracy rate, the gender gap exceeds the gap between urban and rural areas.[17]

Adult illiteracy rates are obviously lower in high-income areas than those in the lower-income areas. This point can be demonstrated through a comparison of provinces. In Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin, where the GDP per capita ranks the highest, male adult illiteracy rates have declined to 2-3% and the female rates to about 10%, with an average male illiteracy rate of 2.4% and a female rate of 9.5%. On the other hand, among the 3 LIPs, only Guangxi has a lower illiteracy rate (the male and female rates stand at 2% and 9%, respectively), similar to the average of the three HIPs, but the rates in Guizhou and Gansu provinces are high at about 10% for males and some 30% for females. The average rates of the 3 LIPs are 8% for men and 22% for women. The mean adult illiteracy rate stands at 13.6% for males and 30.81% for females in the 592 PSCs, whose rate is far above the national average (5% for males and 13% for females). The work of illiteracy elimination is more difficult in the poorer areas.

### *Educational composition: the gender gaps are closing*

This section examines the proportionate numbers of boys and girls in the population aged six and above with their different levels of educational attainments, and also the underlying trends. From 1982 to 2000, among the population aged six and above, the numbers of those who received a medium-level or high-level education increased greatly. The proportion of those who received a medium-level education almost doubled, climbing from 28% to 48%; those who received a high-level education increased proportionately from 0.7% to 3.8%, showing a more than five-fold increase. Over the same period, the proportion of the population who received a basic-level education rose from 40% in 1980 to 42% in 1990 and dropped back to 40% in 2000, a small increase followed by a small decrease. The slight drop between 1990 and 2000 was attributed to the rapid progress in medium-level and high-level educational attainments which resulted in a rapid increase in their numbers respectively and thus in a relatively decreased proportion of basic-level education attainments.

**Table 6 composition of educational attainment of population aged 6 years and older (%)**

| Edu. Attain. | 1982 | | | 1990 | | | 2000 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| Basic Level | 39.9 | 44.8 | 34.8 | 42.3 | 43.2 | 41.3 | 40.0 | 37.6 | 42.4 |
| Med. Level | 27.5 | 33.5 | 21.1 | 35.5 | 42.0 | 28.7 | 48.5 | 53.5 | 43.2 |
| High Level | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 1.0 | 3.8 | 4.6 | 3.0 |

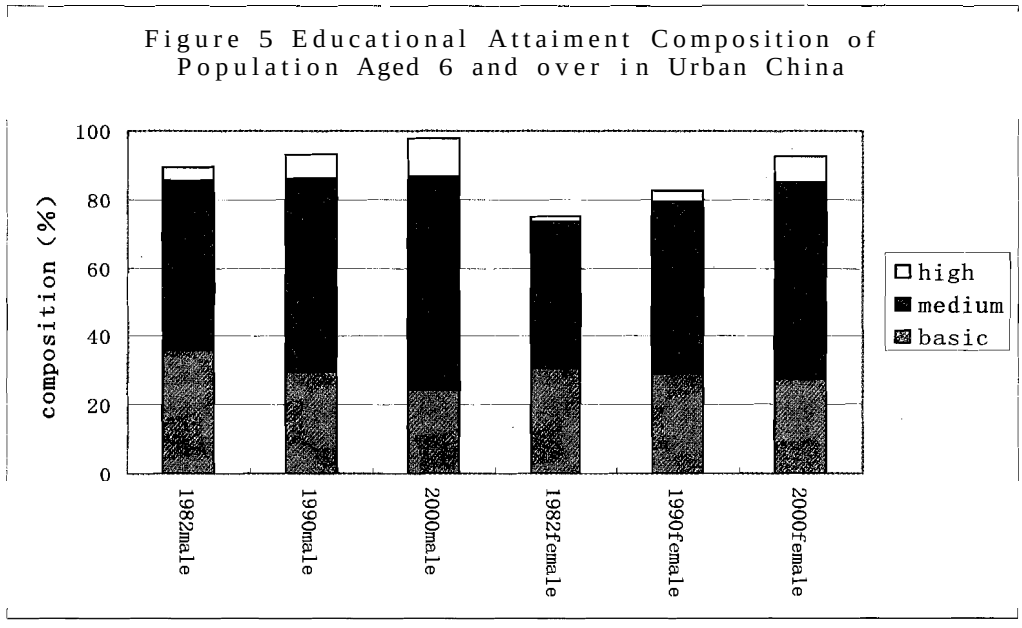
Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

[17] This statement may not be consistent for the category of "city" (chengshi) alone; it may only apply when "city and town" (chengshi and zhen) are lumped together.

Marked differences still exist between the composition of the educational attainments of men and women in 2000: among the female population, 42% received only a basic-level education. This was a higher percentage than that of men at 38%, but the percentages of women who received medium-level and high-level educations were much lower than those of men, although female rates increased faster than those of men, especially from 1990 to 2000.[18]

The educational attainments of the rural population, especially the female population, were fairly low, compared with those of urban residents. The proportionate number of the rural people who had received medium-level education was markedly lower than the comparable number of the urban population and the number of those who had received a high-level education in the rural areas was almost zero.

**Figure 4 Educational attainment composition of population aged 6 years and older in urban China**




Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the **1982, 1990** and **2000**

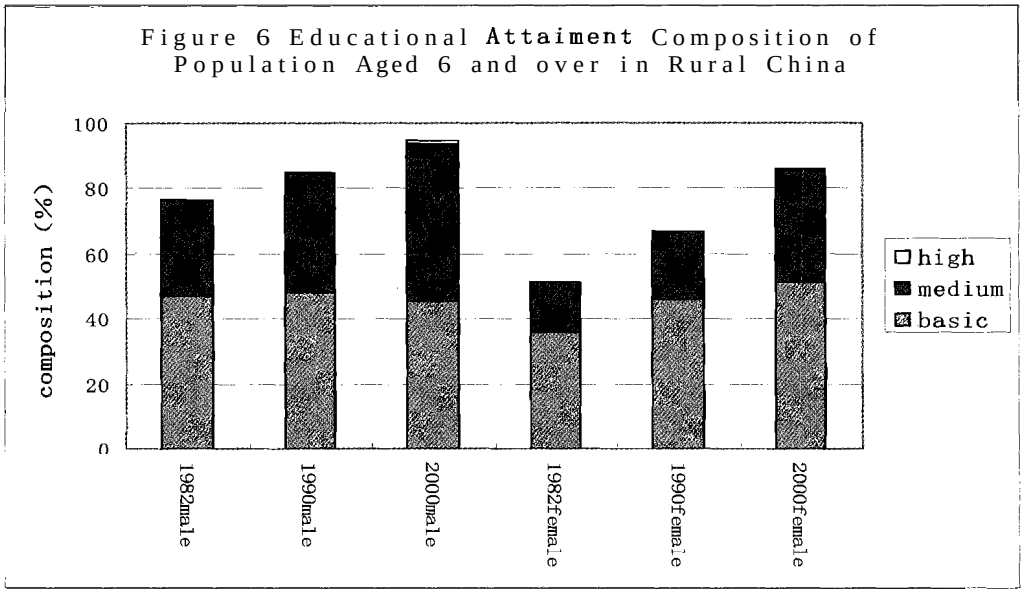
Population Censuses.

Between the high and the low income provinces, there was a considerable gap, in terms of educational attainments composition, among people aged six and above. In the 3 HIPs, the numbers of people who had received a high-level education were ranked at 14% for men and 11% for women, both far higher than the national average

[18] The faster increase in female rates is probably due to demographic changes, with better educated younger cohorts gradually outweighing the less well educated older cohorts.

level (4.6% for men and *3.0%* for women). The percentages in the Beijing municipality even reached 19% and 16%, respectively. In contrast, in the 3 LIPs, the proportion of those who had received a high-level education was much lower, on average only 3% of men and 2% of women.

**Figure 5 Educational attainment composition of population aged 6 years and older in rural China**




Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

There was an even wider gap in the educational attainments of the population aged 6 and above between the *50* HICs and the *50* LICs than between the HIPs and the LIPs. In the *50* HICs, the proportionate number of people who had received a medium-level education amounted to *57%* for men and 48% for women, much higher than the comparable figures for the *50* LICs (31% for men, 19% for women).

**Table 7 Composition of educational attainments in high and low income areas of people aged 6 years and over, 2000** (%)

| | Men | | | Women | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Basic-Level | Medium-Level | High-Level | Basic-Level | Medium-Level | High-Level |
| National | 37.6 | 53.5 | 4.6 | 42.4 | 43.2 | 3.0 |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | 20.8 | 62.9 | 14.1 | 23.3 | 57.1 | 11.4 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | 46.0 | 43.6 | 3.2 | 48.6 | 30.6 | 1.9 |
| Mean value for 592 PSCs | 45.06 | 41.84 | 1.89 | 46.27 | 28.89 | 0.95 |
| Mean value for 50 HICs | 35.01 | 56.93 | 3.71 | 36.99 | 47.89 | 2.26 |
| Mean value for 50 LICs | 49.03 | 30.62 | 1.13 | 42.92 | 19.11 | 0.49 |

Data source: Calculated by using data obtained from the 2000 population census.

The table shows that in the 50 HICs, the proportionate number of the population who had received a high-level education amounted to around four times that of the 50 LICs. The education level was lowest in the 50 LICs, even when compared with the PSCs. Lower-income areas are generally at a prominent disadvantage in terms of educated population, both male and female, but particularly with regard to the female population.

In the 592 PSCs, the numbers of people who had received medium-level and high-level education were slightly higher than the average figures for the 50 LICs. In the 592 PSCs, the years of school attainment for males amounted to 7 and the years for females amounted to 6, both far below the national averages (male: 8 years, female 7 years) and levels of the 50 HICs (male:9 years, female:8 years). Lower-income and poverty-stricken areas are at a particular disadvantage with regard to shortages of talent.

### *Disproportionate sex ratio for enrolled graduate students*

Despite the shrinking gaps between the educational attainments of men and women, the inequalities between men and women in terms of higher education still persist. In China, women continue to be in the minority among that proportion of the population which is currently receiving an undergraduate education. **At** the higher levels, in postgraduate education, women are seen to be even more under-represented. The 2000 Population Census revealed that among undergraduate students enrolled in China, there were 146 male students for every 100 female students. Similarly, among Chinese postgraduate students enrolled, there were 164 male students for every 100 females. In each case, the males markedly out-numbered the females. The phenomenon of male undergraduates and postgraduates outnumbering females occurred in most provinces and manifested basically the same trend. The only variation was in the extent to which females were disadvantaged.

# Chapter 3 Gender Inequality in Employment

The employment situation is crucial to gaining a perspective on the social status of a population group. This section looks into the employment inequalities among Chinese men and women, for example, the employment rate[19] and the sectoral structure of the employed population (including wage distribution) as well as the unemployment rate of the Chinese population.

### *Employment rate: the cuwe declines earlier and faster for the female labor force*

Between 1982 and 2000, generally speaking, there was a decrease in the employment rate among the Chinese working age population. The national rate decreased from 87% to 82%, a drop of five percentage points, for both male and female employment rates. The male employment rate was always some 8 per cent higher than that of women.

**Table 8 Gender-specificemployment rates, selected years (%)**

| Year | 1982 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| National Total | 86.59 | 87.15 | 81.63 |
| National Male | 91.01 | 90.07 | 85.96 |
| National Female | 81.55 | 83.82 | 76.88 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

There was a considerably high employment rate among the working age population in China; especially at the peak employment age, the male employment rate was higher than 95% and the female rate also reached close to 90%. Such high rates are rare in other countries worldwide. There is a marked difference between the age patterns of male and female employment. The female employment rate is higher than the male in the young group aged 15-20. The higher rate of female employment in this young group is an indication of their disadvantage in terms of educational attainments, particularly in higher education. After the age of 22, the average age at which males start to be employed, the employment rate for women never surpasses that of men.

According to statistical data, the employment rate for the working age population in rural China is higher than in the urban areas. Distinct differences exist between the trends in rural and urban employment rates for working age people. Over the past twenty years, both male and female rural employment rates for working age people remained, basically unchanged, at a high level. Meanwhile, there was a large decrease

[19] Prior to calculating the employment rate, the age limits of the working age population must be defined. To do this, two methods are frequently employed: one is to regard that proportion of the population aged 15-64 as the working age population, and the other is to define men aged 15-59 and women aged 15-54 as the working age population. The latter approach is more often used in Chinese research on employment rates and, also in this report, the employment rate is calculated using the second method

in the urban employment rates, with the men's rate dropping by fourteen percentage points and the women's rate by seventeen points. Given that women have to retire five years earlier than men, it may be assumed that the figures do not accurately represent the employment rate of urban women.

**Table 9 Gender-specific employment rates by urban-rural (%)**

| Year | 1982 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***National Total*** | 86 | 87 | 82 |
| National Male | 91 | 90 | 86 |
| National Female | 81 | 84 | 77 |
| ***Urban Total*** | 86 | 80 | 70 |
| Urban Male | 91 | 85 | 77 |
| Urban Female | 80 | 75 | 63 |
| ***Rural Total*** | 92 | 90 | 89 |
| Rural Male | 98 | 92 | 92 |
| Rural Female | 87 | 87 | 86 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

Obvious differences exist between China's urban and rural employment rates. These differences are concentrated in the following three aspects: firstly, compared with urban areas, rural China has a higher employment rate among younger age groups, which is mainly accounted for by the decreased opportunities for the rural young people, many of whom become employed after they graduate from junior middle school (some even fail to graduate); secondly, the employment of an able rural labor force has reached its peak, nearly 100% of the able men being employed, while the urban peak employment rate remains relatively low; lastly, after reaching old age, the employment rate for the urban labor force declines rapidly, falling below 10% after the age of sixty. In contrast, the rural employment rate is still very high among the elderly: this is a well-established tradition passed down from older generations, and is also related to the poor status of social security in rural China. The absence of social security provisions forces the elderly rural population to work for as long as they possibly can.

The employment disparities between men and women are more prominent regarding the employment of the urban middle-aged labor force. Since the 1990s, China has been experiencing increasing pressure in the field of employment. Many urban people of working age have lost their jobs. Two basic characteristics can be identified from the 2000 gender-age specific employment rate curve for urban China:

- The decline in the curve for the women's labor force occurs five, or even more than five years earlier than it does in the curve for men
- The curve declines faster for the women's labor force than it does for men.

**Figure 6 Gender and age specific employment rate in urban China, 2000**

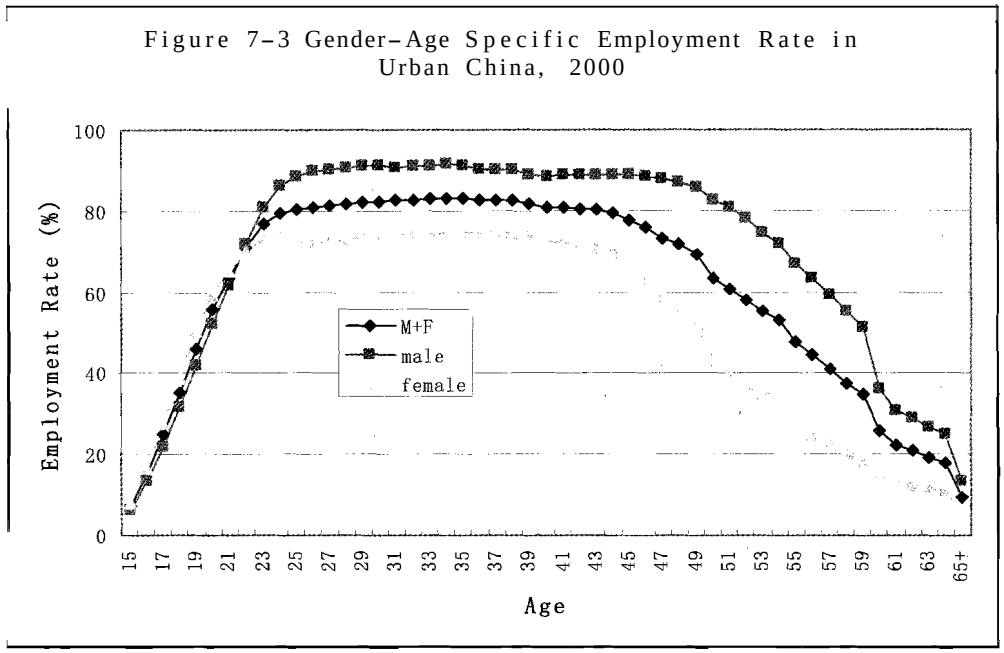
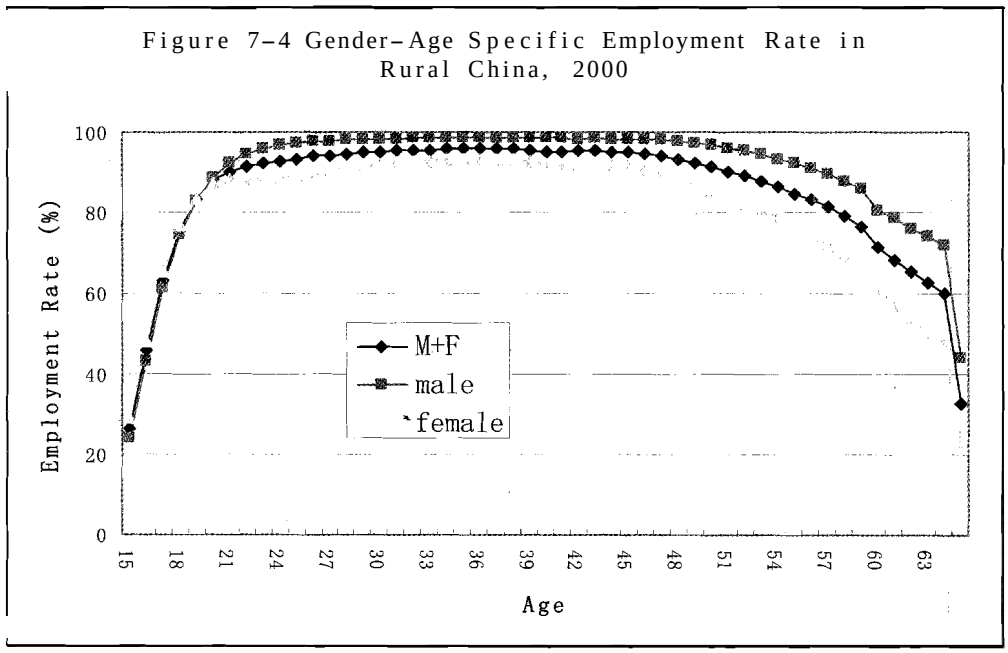



**Figure 7 Gender and age specific employment rate in rural China, 2000**



The causes of the disparities between the male and female employment rates in urban China are many and various. The main causes include: (1) gender differences regarding legal code provisions for the retirement ages of men and women, with women having to retire some five years earlier than men; (2) increasing pressure in the urban employment situation since the mid-1990s which has placed a heavier burden upon women and put them at a greater disadvantage with regard to employment. In some urban areas, women workers in their forties, and even some in their thirties, were forced out of their jobs, were laid-off or had to retire early.

### *Gender segregation in sectoral distribution of the labor force*

The most prominent change in the sectoral structure of the Chinese labor force between 1982 and 2000 was the decline in numbers of both men and women in the labor force concentrated in farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries. The proportions in this sector fell from 74% in 1982 to 64% in 2000, with a decrease of more than nine percentage points for men (from 70% to 61 %) as well as for women (from 78% to 69%).

**Table 10 Gender-specific sectoral composition of China's labor force (%)**

| Sector | 1982 | | | 1990 | | | 2000 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M&F Total | Male | Fern. | M&F Total | Male | Fern. | M&F Total | Male | Fern |
| Farming, Forestry, | 73.7 | 70.3 | 78.0 | 72.2 | 69.1 | 76.1 | 64.4 | 60.7 | 68.8 |
| Construction | 2.1 | 3.0 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 0.7 | 2.7 | 4.4 | 0.7 |
| Finance & Insurance | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Scientific Research & Technical Services | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Agencies & Organizations | 1.5 | 2.2 | 0.7 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 1.0 | 2.4 | 3.1 | 1.4 |
| Education & Culture | 2.4 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.8 |
| Health Care & Sports | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 1.3 |
| Transport, Post & Telecommunication | | 2.4 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 0.8 | 2.6 | 3.9 | 1.0 |
| Geological Prosp. & Water Conservancy | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Manufacturing | 11.8 | 11.7 | 11.9 | / | / | / | 12.5 | 12.4 | 12.5 |
| Electric Power & Gas | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.2 | / | / | / | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.4 |
| Real Estate | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Wholesale & Retail Trade, Catering Serv. | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 6.7 | 6.2 | 7.3 |
| Mining and Quarrying | / | / | / | / | / | / | 1.0 | 1.6 | 0.4 |
| Social Services | / | / | / | / | / | / | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.0 |
| Mining & Wood | 1.6 | 2.3 | 0.7 | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| Industry | / | / | / | 13.4 | 13.9 | 12.8 | / | / | / |
| Miscellaneous | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 population censuses.
Note: There were changes in the sectoral classification criteria in the three population censuses.

While the labor force was declining in the farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery sectors, other sectors were experiencing a rise. The proportions of the labor force increased between 1982 and 2000 for men and women in the following sectors: finance and insurance, agencies and organizations, health care and sports, manufacturing, electric power and gas. In transport, post and telecommunications there was a greater increase in men than in women in the labor force and in the wholesale and retail trades and the catering services? there was a greater increase in women than in men. In the construction sector, the labor force only showed an increase in men; in education and health, there was only an increase in women.

Differences in the sectoral distribution of men and women have an impact on their wages. Whether we look at the distribution nationwide, in the urban areas or in the rural areas, the concentration of women in low-wage sectors is always higher than that of men; in the high-wage sectors, it is vice versa. In addition, the average years of schooling in the low-wage sectors are fewer for women than for men, but in the high-wage sectors, the average years of education are one year longer for women than for men (Wang 2006:260/61)

**Table 11 Male and female wages according to sector distribution and years of education (2000)**

| Education and sector distribution | | | | Urban areas | | Rural areas | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | female | male | female | Male | female | male |
| Low wages sectors | Employment (%) | 94.67 | 89.93 | 85.00 | 77.86 | 99.02 | 96.07 |
| | Years education | 7.11 | 8.11 | 9.04 | 9.51 | 6.36 | 7.53 |
| High wages sectors | Employment (%) | 5.33 | 10.07 | 15.00 | 22.14 | 0.98 | 3.93 |
| | Years of education | 11.68 | 10.98 | 11.91 | 11.48 | 10.07 | 9.57 |

Source: Wang Meiyan 2006: 261 (data from 2000 population census)

Where the income level was lowest, the percentage of women in agriculture (68.8 per cent) was considerably higher than the percentage of men (60.7 per cent of the male labor force were in agriculture). From 1990 to 2000, however, the female population employed in non-agricultural sectors increased from 24 to 31 per cent (Department 2004:45). Off-farm labor markets began to develop for both men and women during the 1990s. Nevertheless, age and marital status have to be taken into account: the majority of rural migrant women are young and unmarried whereas the married rural women stay behind more often and fill vacancies in agricultural production when their husbands go away to work.

## *Informal and labor migration*

[20] in 1982 classified as business, food and beverage services, material supply and sale and storage; in 1990 as business, public food and beverage services, material supply and sale and storage

In China, although there is no agreed definition for the "Informal Sector", it generally refers to the "own-account" production of the self-employed urban and rural poor, and the relatively more productive workers engaged in wage-labor in a capitalistic setting with close links to the formal sector. Those who are self-employed workers, private entrepreneurs, employees of the private entrepreneurs, household workers, members of collectives for production, and informal employees of formal sectors, have all been referred to as workers in informal sectors (You 2005).

As in most countries, women in China also comprise the majority of informal sector workers who work in the segments that have low productivity; the links to the formal economy are marginal. The results of the 2nd national survey on women's status by the ACWF and the NBS showed that the numbers of women employed in non-public and private enterprises have increased by 60 percent since 1995 (ACWF & NBS, 2002). In 2000, 52,2% of the urban female labor force and 40,2% of the urban male labor force were employed in non-state enterprises (Jin 2006:181). Moreover, women are concentrated at the lower stratum of the informal sector, where they involve themselves in community and home-based work. Very few of them have ascended the employment ladder to become entrepreneurs with their own private capital.

Women with lower levels of education, particularly female migrants, are the cheapest source of labor in the labor market. In recent years, many joint enterprises have drawn young unmarried female migrants from rural areas to work long hours in export-oriented industries under poor working conditions. However, some enterprises did not abide by the law, for example, they did not sign labor contracts with women workers; they used girl child labor; they refused to provide women workers with the necessary labor protection facilities (State Council, 2005). Reports of infringements of women workers' labor rights and interests have indicated cases of injury among female migrant workers, involving for example, poisonous chemicals in the factories in some areas along the Southern coastline in China. (Nan 2003; Tan 2000 & 2004; Yi 2002).

Between 1998 and 2003 the number of labor migrants with a temporary resident certificate nearly doubled. According to the Statistical Yearbook in 2003, 105.85 millions of the population were registered in other places, but had actually resided in the enumeration area. Out of these 105.85 million migrant population, 53.64 million (50.7%) were male and 52.22 million (49.3%) were female. (China Statistical Yearbook 2004:103) From these different sets of figures, it may be assumed that there are fewer registered female migrants than male migrants (Gransow 2003), a finding we are familiar with from international migration research. It is estimated that the number of migrants is at least double the number of registered migrants.

### *Unemployment rate: higher female rates in most provinces*

It should be pointed out that the definition of unemployment applied in the 1990 and the 2000 Population Censuses was not exactly the same[21] and the comparability of the

[21] In China, it was once believed that there was no unemployment. Even in cases of enormous employment pressure, it was only viewed in terms of people waiting to be employed. Not until the 1990s did unemployment become a widely accepted fact. In the 1990 Population Census, the unemployment

unemployment rate data from the two Population Censuses is not high. However, this data still represents the basic tract of China's unemployment rate, especially the reported unemployment rate.

**Table 12 Employment of labor migrants with temporary resident certification (1998 und 2003 (Mio.)**

| | 1998 | % | 2003 | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Total** | 40,5 | 100 | 69,9 | 100 |
| Male | 24,3 | 60 | 41.0 | 58,6 |
| Female | 16,2 | 40 | 28,9 | 41,4 |
| **Labor migration** | 32,6 | 80 | 61,5 | 88 |
| Male | 19,6 | | 36,1 | |
| Female | 13,0 | | 25,4 | |
| **Employment of labor migrants** | 32,6 | 100 | 61,5 | 100 |
| **Industry** | 21,8 | 66,9 | 45,8 | 74,5 |
| Male | 13,7 | | 27,5 | |
| Female | 8,2 | | 18,2 | |
| **Agriculture** | 1,4 | 4,3 | 1,8 | 2,9 |
| Male | 0,9 | | 1,1 | |
| Female | 0,5 | | 0,7 | |
| **Trade** | 5,9 | 18 | 8,0 | 13 |
| Male | 3,8 | | 5,1 | |
| Female | 2,1 | | 2,9 | |
| **Services** | 3,3 | 10,1 | 5,5 | 8,9 |
| Male | 1,3 | | 2,3 | |
| Female | 2,0 | | 3,2 | |
| **Domestic helpers/Nannies** | 0,22 | 0,7 | 0,36 | 0,6 |
| Male | 0,01 | | 0,02 | |
| Female | 0,21 | | 0,34 | |

Sources: Gongan 1998:2; Gongan 2004:2; own calculations.

population mainly referred to the urban population waiting to be employed. In the 2000 Population Census, the unemployment population included the following two types of individuals: those who had never worked and were seeking jobs, and those who had lost their jobs and were seeking jobs.

Over the last ten years, the unemployment rate among the Chinese working age population has been increasing. The national unemployment rate for working age people rose from 0.88% in 1990 through 2.44% in 1995[22], to 3.68% in 2000. A period of ten years saw a fourfold increase in China's unemployment rate. The results

**Table 13 Gender-specific unemployment rates by urban and rural areas in China (%)**

| Year | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|
| ***National Total*** | 0.88 | 3.68 |
| National Male | 0.81 | 3.60 |
| National Female | 0.96 | 3.88 |
| ***Urban Total*** | 1.79 | 8.36 |
| Urban Male | 1.64 | 7.78 |
| Urban Female | 1.99 | 9.17 |
| ***Rural Total*** | 0.17 | 1.20 |
| Rural Male | 0.16 | 1.26 |
| Rural Female | 0.19 | 1.16 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

of population censuses and sample surveys indicate that the unemployment rate for Chinese women (3.88 per cent) has been somewhat higher than that of men (3.60). The male and female unemployment rates in Tibet, Yunnan and Shandong are all about 1%, compared with male and female rates as high as 10% in Shanghai and Liaoning. With the few exceptions of Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan provinces, the female unemployment rates are higher than the male rates in most provinces.

The 3 HIPs had the highest unemployment rates, which ranged from 5% to 10% for males and females. The average male unemployment rate for the three provinces was 8% and the female, 9%. In contrast, the unemployment rates were lowest in the 3 LIPs, where both male and female rates were around 2%. The lower unemployment rates in the regions where economies are less developed are mainly attributed, first of all, to the higher proportion of agricultural population in the regions. In the vast area of rural China, where a natural economy prevails, people continue to work for as long as they can. Hence, the unemployment rate stays low among the older population in rural areas. Secondly, young people in rural areas receive less education and leave school early to join the labor force, which makes the employment rates for younger age groups in rural areas higher than in urban China.

[22] Result obtained from the 1% population sampling survey in 1995 conducted by NBS.

[25] Interviews and surveys undertaken by Li Xiaoyun and his team were conducted in June 2005 in the following poverty regions of China: Cangxi County of Sichuan province; Xiushui County of Jiangxi province; Maijishan District in Tianshui of Gansu province; Pucheng County of Shaanxi and Dawukou District in Shizuishan City of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

Unemployment rates for the male and female rural labor forces revealed by population censuses have been low. Yet this phenomenon is primarily caused by defects in the methods of rural labor force unemployment registration. According to the relevant requirements of the population censuses, the rural labor force with contracted land was not included among the figures for the unemployed. Hence, the rural unemployment rate attained via population census registration cannot properly reflect the actually higher unemployment situation in rural China.

# Chapter 4 Gender Inequality in Governance

Many efforts have been made to raise the representation of women in China's political institutions. In spite of these efforts, however, the number of women entering high-level politics in China is only increasing very slowly.

### *Representation in China's political institutions*

The NPC is very gradually gaining a large role in the political system in China. In recent years, the NPC has been responsible for reforms to make the Chinese legislative process more representative and transparent. (Information Office of the SC of the PRC, 2004). However, the increasing importance of the NPC in politics in China was accompanied by a decreasing numerical presence of women deputies in the recent session in 2003.

**Table 14 Number of female delegates in NPC congresses (selected years)**

| Session | Year | Number of Female Delegates | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Sixth** | 1983 | 632 | 21,1 |
| **Seventh** | 1988 | | 21,3 |
| **Eight** | 1993 | 626 | 21,3 |
| **Ninth** | 1998 | 650 | 21,8 |
| **Tenth** | 2003 | 604 | 20,2 |

Sources: Department of Population 2004:87; Ding Juan 2006:56

There is an unevenness in the distribution of female deputies in the Tenth NPC in different provinces and autonomous regions, ranging from as high as 30.51 percent in Beijing to as low as 11.94 percent in Jilin, a northeastern province of China, known for its heavy industry (China Women's Newspaper, 5 March 2003). Moreover, in a global context, China is lagging behind in terms of women's representation in parliament. The ranking of the proportion of Chinese female NPC deputies is dropping in comparison with the number of women parliamentary members in many other countries. The percentage of female NPC deputies in China ranked 12$^{th}$ in 1994, 16$^{th}$ in 1997, 24$^{th}$ in 2000, 28$^{th}$ in 2002, and dropped further to 41st by 2005 (Inter-Parliament Union, 2005).

The People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) is the multi-party and political consultation organ in China, comprising various other political parties, mass organizations and personages of different social circles, which serve as the political consultation organ of the state. The proportion of women deputies in the CPPCC rose from 15.5% at the Ninth Session (1998-2003) to 16.8% at the Tenth Session (2003-2008).

The presence of women is rare in the country's supreme political institution, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC). Women's share of the seats in the Central Committee of the CPC peaked at 10 percent in 1973 in the Maoist socialist regime. However, their numbers dropped particularly after the 1978 Economic Reform and have continued to fall since the end of the 1980s. At the Sixteenth Party Congress in November 2002 only five women were elected to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, which was only 2.5 percent of the total 198 seats, a decline from 4 percent at the last Congress in 1997. Since the late 1980s, women have not held any seats on the all-important Politburo Standing Committee of the CPC (WSIC 2004). There has never been a female general secretary of the Central Committee since the creation of the CPC in 1927. Although the percentage of women members in the CPC increased by 3.3%, women members only constituted 17.8% of the total members of the CPC in 2002 (Department 2004:83).

By 2002, women constituted 8.3% of the ministerial/provincial leaders, 11.7% of the total Director Generals (DGs) or vice DGs among prefecture level leaders, and 16.1% of the total number of County Directors or Vice Directors. The figures were still far from the 30% proposed by the UN 1995 Beijing Platform for Action. The proportion of female civil servants was 37.4% in 2002. However, very few of them were in the principle decision-making positions. Female officials constituted 8.3% of the ministerial rank officials, 11.7% of the prefecture level officials and 16.1% of the county level officials in 2002. The general percentage of women as first leaders is 5.4% of the total, which shows the characteristics of the lower female ratio at decision-making levels.

The competitive village election, the most significant political reform to have taken place in China since the 1980s, opened channels for both men and women to participate in village governance. The Village Committee Organization Law (1998) indicated that 'the village committee should have an appropriate number of women'. Although elections to village committees and assemblies have enhanced political participation in China's rural areas, women are conspicuously absent from village governance and their participation in village management is much less than that of men. The goal of equal numerical representation in village decision-making is still far from being achieved. On most village committees, the number of women representatives has yet to reach the critical mass of thirty per cent in decision-making bodies as advocated by the UN and the Beijing Platform of Action in 1995. Although there is no data available at national level, sample surveys showed that the percentage of female village heads was only one percent and the number of female members in the VCs had reached sixteen per cent by 2002 (Fan 2003).

At the same time that competitive village elections were instituted, China also introduced Neighborhood Committee Election to communities in urban areas; compared with the participation of women in village elections, women's participation in Neighborhood Committee Election is much higher in terms of numerical representation. Since the Economic Reform in 1978, the Urban Resident Committees (URC) have been taking over more and more of the social services that had

previously been covered by the government. In 1989, the National People's Congress enacted the "Law of resident committee in People's Republic of China", which guaranteed women's proportional representation on the URCs. The presence of women on URCs has been above 50% since 2000; the number peaked at 60.6% in 2002 (Department 2004:89). However, the real question is whether this is indicative of women holding high positions in community level decision-making processes. Historically, the URCs were mainly operated by women throughout the 1950s. They were also called Neighborhood Committees and they have, in fact, been identified as women's work. The portfolio of the URC has been very much welfare-oriented which includes mediating over disputes within families, delivering government instructions, etc. The staff received low salaries from the local government. After the reform, some URCs opened small enterprises. The positions of the URCs are increasingly being used as re-employment opportunities for laid-off workers from the State Owned Enterprises, where women constitute a majority. In this context, the increasing percentage of women in URCs cannot be interpreted as an increase in the status of women in politics at community level. Recent years have seen the emergence of autonomous organizations created voluntarily by local residents in new districts. There are an ever-increasing number of cases to show how successfully these autonomous organizations have protected residents' rights and interests. There is, however, a lack of gender-disaggregated data to show women's participation in these new organizations at community level.

### *Gender impacts of enforced retirement policy*

An enforced retirement age policy was introduced by the Government as one of the core components of the administration reforms in the 1980s prior to its organizational restructuring. The government recognized that the cadre system produced under the planned economy which was endowed with senility and low expertise was not able to serve the development of the market economy effectively. Early reform measures included the imposition of a mandatory retirement age (60 for men and 55 for women) for officials in the middle ranks of the bureaucracy or the ranks below in the Government Civil Servant Regulations. High-ranking officials were exempted from this policy of enforced retirement. By implementing the enforced retirement policy, the government has considerably "lowered the average age of government officials from 1981 to 1998, and the number of senior officials aged 60 or older dropped from 81 percent to 54 percent" (ADB 2001: 33)

Attention should be drawn to the fact that the above-mentioned reductions in the average age were achieved at the expense of the female civil servants, whose numbers of working years were reduced compared with those of their male colleagues. Apart from their pension losses after retirement, the enforced retirement age policy exerted negative impacts on women's participation in decision-making bodies at different levels, particularly in high-level politics. It proved to be discriminatory against female cadres, shortening the duration of their participation in social and public affairs administration, and thus putting them at a disadvantage with regard to promotion to higher level administrative posts. Many researchers (Chen 1995; Du 2001; Liu 2001)

have argued that when women cadres reached senior age, they were seen as a worthless investment in terms of further promotion. They had to leave their posts in favor of promising "young, well educated, professional, and revolutionary" cadres who were preferred by the personnel departments of the Party and governmental organizations. This goes some way towards explaining the low numbers of women who have been involved in high political positions in China especially since the reform.

# Chapter 5 Relationships between Gender Inequality and Poverty: What can be Learned from Quantitative and Qualitative Studies

From the data presented, it becomes clear that there is no simple or one-way relation between gender inequality and poverty. Gender inequality does not arise out of poverty per se and both gender inequality and poverty may have different causes. Given that gender and poverty are both defined as complex and multi-dimensional phenomena, more efforts have to be invested in understanding not only the causes and effects of poverty and gender inequality, but also in understanding the nature of the causes and the way they interrelate (see Oyen 2004). On the one hand, it is quite obvious that capabilities in terms of health and education are closely linked to the economic development levels of certain regions. Being born female and living in a poorly developed area may serve as a additional disadvantage. This disadvantage could also turn into an obstacle to development and thus hamper further efforts at poverty reduction. A rising female IMR can be interpreted as an obstacle to efforts to reduce poverty through economic growth, even if the male IMR is decreasing. On the other hand, the data suggests that gender inequalities are not necessarily related to regional patterns of high or low income; gender inequalities cannot be attributed to a low level of development alone. They may also be related to cultural variations, to a patrilocal marriage system and a male-dominated political culture, to public policy and its intended and unintended impacts, or they may represent some combination of poverty, male domination and public policy.

### *Quantitative studies: long-term and representative trends of gender inequality and their relation to regionalpatterns ofpoverty*

Quantitative and qualitative studies shed light on the relationship between gender inequality and poverty from different perspectives. Quantitative data such as those collected from the three censuses in 1982, 1990 and 2000 respectively, show the long-term and representative trends of gender inequality. They indicate trends which have continually strengthened over the years (for example, the male birth-rate and the disproportionate development of the IMR) and also trends which have gradually become more in line with each other (for example, in the field of education but with exceptions, however, at the upper and lower ends of the education ladder. Important starting points emerge here for the assessment of the spread, the relevance and the potential developing tendencies of certain gender inequalities, whereby the imbalances in SRB and IMR obviously require particular attention. A comparison of these findings for urban and rural areas, for higher-income and lower-income areas indicates a clear correlation, in some cases, between gender inequalities and the lack

of development or income level in a region; other indicators show patterns which are not necessarily the same as regional patterns of income or poverty.

Son preference in China is often explained by pointing to the lack of a social security system in rural areas. From the data, however, we can see that son preference is not only dominant in rural areas, but also in urban areas. What, then, is the reason for son preference in urban areas? In addition to cultural explanations, the low social position of women as indicated by the low percentage of women in responsible positions, such as government officials, high ranking party cadres or managers, can be seen as another reason for the low female birth rates. This assumption is reinforced by the finding that according to the 5th census the SRB in families of government and party cadres in responsible positions was as high as 250. This finding can be interpreted to a certain extent as the acknowledgement by these families of the better position of sons regarding upward mobility. (Cai Fang 2005:22) The low social position of women may result in low investment in female human capital, lower educational levels and discrimination against women in the labor market. This is a vicious circle. Policies and interventions are needed that benefit families with girl children. Existing programs and projects that aim to balance the sex ratio at birth, such as the "Care for Girls Campaign", should be promoted countrywide.

There is no significant correlation between low regional income levels or poverty areas and extreme masculine SRB. More research is needed to clarify whether (or to what extent) high SRB results from sex selective abortions and/or from the sex selective undercounting of female children in the data sources. The role of birth control policies and its interaction with cultural preferences should be analyzed more thoroughly. Comparative research on minority nationalities (who are exempted from birth control policies or subject to moderate forms of it) may contribute towards clarifying the complex interactions between gender differences, cultural preference, birth control policies and poverty. On the contrary, a clear correlation can be found between a high (female) IMR and a low level of local development. More research is needed to find out whether there is a causal correlation and why the IMR is higher in LICs than in poor counties.

### *Qualitative studies: Complex dynamics of gender inequality andpoverty*

Qualitative studies of gender differences in designated poverty areas, on the other hand, show the complex and dynamic interlacing and interweaving of gender inequality with poverty. They highlight the ways in which different aspects of poverty and gender inequality are interrelated. Ill-health, for example, may be both a major cause and a consequence of poverty. It may also be related to the eco-environment. This underlines the need for a comprehensive approach to poverty reduction. Hunger may undermine school attendance as well as the capacity to learn, while food-for-education programs help to address both. Qualitative studies can show that gender differences cause women and men to experience poverty differently – and not only poverty, but also poverty reduction policies.

Despite the birth control policy, most families interviewed in poverty-stricken areas[2] had two to three children because they had been trying for a male child. High

education costs often result in these families being debt-ridden. In addition, wives may not have any decision-making powers regarding child-bearing, but may be manipulated by their husbands and mothers-in-law. During interviews, some women in poverty-stricken areas said that when their first-born child turned out to be a girl, their mothers-in-law did not allow them to breast-feed their baby girls, because they wanted them to become pregnant again as soon as possible so that the family would have another chance of getting a male child. For this reason, some infant girls had suffered from poor health since birth. Child-bearing renders women more vulnerable to disease, and if these diseases are not treated in time, women have to continue to live and work in spite of illness, which places their health at further risk. Birth control operations undertaken by women may result in their suffering ill-health, thus preventing them taking on heavy laboring work. Women in poverty-stricken areas who suffer from poor health have fewer opportunities to work for a living, to participate in community affairs and social communication. As a result, they are unable to acquire more information about development opportunities. A lack of access to health services is not only found in rural areas, but also applies to female rural migrant workers in urban areas. Measures to improve access to health care services for rural women and female migrant workers are recommended.

Poverty makes education a scarce resource. Under normal conditions, villagers invest in the education of boys and girls maybe almost the same. But when household expenditure increases or when the provision of finances becomes scarce, gender inequality may occur in allocating educational resources in families with a few children in school at the same time. Depending on conditions of agricultural production in mountainous areas, the contributions by male members of the household to economic income are higher valued than the female contributions. This may result in unequal allocation of resources biased towards female members, including allocation of educational resources. When primary or middle schools are far away from villages, poor road conditions are impacting on children, especially girls. The vulnerability of girls may make them go to school at older age. In families with a shortage of laborers, girls tend to drop out from school earlier than boys thus resulting in a phenomenon in which girls have a later start of schooling and an earlier drop-out.

The two main factors which prevent women from benefiting from economic development are the lack of educational opportunities or gaining only a low level of education. To solve this problem, the underlying causes must be identified. Education is an investment, and receiving education means acquiring resources. In this sense, education is a process of resource distribution, which is mainly effected at two levels: national policy and family. The social structure of gender relations has an influence simultaneously at both levels and affects the distribution of educational resources between the two sexes. A social revolution is necessary to reverse unequal gender relations within the family structures, which all takes time. To tackle this problem, government must provide females with affirmative support to enable them to overcome the barriers raised by unequal resource allocation within the family.

In the poverty-stricken rural areas, if peasants go away to seek employment outside agriculture, they can earn a higher income to increase the living standard of the family. In the survey, it was found that in most comparatively better-off families, both men and women are engaged in non-agricultural employment, while in the poverty-stricken families, they spend more time on crop production and livestock breeding and seldom go away to find employment. Women's lower educational levels and physical condition become obstacles to their employment. The illiteracy rate of women is high in poverty-stricken areas. Both formal and informal employment needs social capital. The differences in social capital owned by men and women influences the opportunities of the individuals' entry into the labor market. Lack of social capital results in more restricted employment opportunities for women.

Due to the limited participation of women in community administration and decision-making, women lack opportunities to express their needs and wishes. In the process of village self-government, the policy of holding intersectoral positions in two committees is the main obstacle to women being elected to village committees, because this policy increases the difficulties for women to be elected. The low level of women's representation does not only hold true for rural community administration and decision- making, but also for village level poverty reduction and development programs.

The biggest change we have seen in poverty reduction in China in the new century is the shift in targeting, from county level to village level, which has been achieved by identifling key poverty reduction villages nation-wide and formulating participatory village-level poverty reduction and development program. The former top-down approach to poverty reduction and development deprived the poor of the right to know the inside story and to participate. The current approaches and the extent to which the poor are now involved in poverty reduction activities are more far-reaching than in the past. The main means of participation among the poor in the poverty reduction measures is their involvement in the formulation and implementation of the participatory village-level poverty reduction and development program. The current operation of the village-level poverty reduction program lacks any clear gender-sensitive principle and framework, and this will restrict, to some extent, the national poverty reduction programme. Half the target group in the national poverty reduction programme is made up of poor women and it is very important to deal consistently with the relations between gender inequality and poverty.

# Chapter 6 Gender Equality and Poverty Reduction: Conclusion and Recommendations

In recent years, the Chinese government has made fairness and justice, including gender equality, an important part of its efforts to build a harmonious socialist society. This is formulated in the government's "White Paper on Gender Equality and Women's Development in China", published in August 2005 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995. At the Beijing conference, the previous President, Jiang Zemin, stated: "Attaching great importance to the development and advancement of women, we in China have made gender equality a basic state policy in promoting social development. We are resolutely against any forms of discrimination against women and have taken concrete steps to maintain and protect the equal status and rights of women in the country's political, economic and social life." This high-level commitment to gender equality is reflected in the Chinese Constitution of the PRC and in many of the policies and legislative measures adopted by the Chinese government since 1949, and especially in the 1990s.

China has made substantial efforts to set up government institutions to promote the development of women and children. The governmental and legislative institutions on women's issues serve as venues or coordinators to put women's concerns onto policy agenda. The government created the National Working Committee on Women and Children (NWCWC) in 1992 and by 2000, its membership had expanded to twenty-four ministries and five mass organizations.

The NWCWC plays an important role in protecting women's and children's rights and interests in China. It has succeeded in promoting the promulgations of laws and national plans on the development of women and children in China, and acts as a "watch dog" in monitoring the implementations of the policies and laws concerning women's and children's rights and development. However, like many national mechanisms for women in development worldwide, the NWCWC suffers under constraints concerning its location, resources, and staffing problems. The NWCWC is under-resourced by the central government. Most of its funds come from donors, a fact which implies that it will be driven by the donors' priorities. In addition to the NWCWC (under the State Council), the Office of Workers, Youth and Women Committee in Internal and Judicial Affairs of the National People's Congress are the most important institutions. At same time, the All China Women's Federation (ACWF) also plays an important role in national women's affairs.

The reform policies gave the ACWF a new role. It formulates the problems facing women and has contact and advocacy functions, attempting to support women, especially in their careers. Funding and personnel have, however, been notably cut back. At the same time, however, the beginnings of a non state-run, active women's movement in China are developing, aiming to reach a wide audience in different social domains. In recent years, government departments have cooperated with

women's federations, international donor organizations and a variety of NGOs to organize all kinds of activities for the promotion of gender equality and women's development.

Nevertheless, the discourse of basic policy has yet to become prevalent among policy/law makers. There is a lack of a concrete framework for enforcement.

### *Poverty reduction policies: targeting women but gender-blind?*

Programmatic documents such as China's White paper on gender equality (see above) and the White paper on poverty reduction in China's rural areas (2001) have formulated preferential policies for the elimination of poverty among women in poor areas. Over the past years, while calling for the equal protection of women under the law, the government has intensified efforts to solve the poverty problem existing among the rural female population through various methods, such as organizing job opportunities in wealthier areas, skills training for poor women, extending small loans to women entrepreneurs, and passing legislation to ensure all pregnant women receive medical insurance coverage.

Since 2001, the Chinese government has made gender indicators a component of the poverty monitoring work in rural areas, and has stressed that attention should be paid to gender equality in the poverty-reduction work. On the basis of the specific conditions in different areas, they have endeavored to help rural women out of poverty by way of providing small-sum credit loans, labor export and pairing-off assistance.

In recent years, women's federations at all levels have launched, in view of local conditions, the "Poverty-Reduction Action for Women". The China Population Welfare Foundation has launched the "Happiness Project" with the aim of helping poor mothers. This foundation raises funds to help poor mothers participate in economic and social development, and to enhance their health and cultural standards. The project of "Love of the Earth, Water Cellars for Mothers," initiated by the China Women's Development Foundation, has raised funds to build more than 90,000 rain-water collecting cellars and 1,100 small central water supply projects in the water-short northwest part of China, benefiting nearly one million poverty-stricken people.

In spite of these measures, politicians and policy-makers are often too little aware of gender-related inequalities. This does not only apply to cadres at lower administrative levels, but also to those involved in central decision-making in the government and ministries, thus, those who have the influence and resources at their disposal to implement a gender-sensitive policy. This is the result of a survey which was carried out in September 2004 among 242 policy-makers ranked as ministers, vice-ministers, department leaders and their deputies (Nanfang zhoumo 9.9.2004). In these upper echelons of the administration hierarchy, the numbers of female cadres (who are generally more open to gender-related forms of inequality) are very scarce. In the male-dominated political culture of the administrative apparatus in China, investment

in equal opportunities for the sexes does not figure high on the list of priorities. It is certainly not a field which counts as being particularly prestigious among the - mostly male - cadres. There is the widespread assumption that equality of the sexes has already been achieved since the legal groundwork for it has already been established. Furthermore, it is also widely assumed that the position of women has improved as a result of the general improvements in living standards. The participants did not see any need for special action to be taken. 28% of those who were asked whether they considered it possible that special measures for men and women would have unjust and unfair consequences, answered in the negative.

In the field of poverty alleviation, too, it can be assumed that there is only very limited awareness of the very diverse effects on men and women which can ensue from legislation and public policies. The gender dimensions of poverty in the PRC are largely under-diagnosed in official statistics since many figures are collected on a household basis and are not sex-disaggregated. Little information is officially recorded on intra-household income and welfare distribution (ADB, 2004). The absence of gender in poverty statistics makes it difficult for the government to give the anti-poverty strategy a gendered face. In addition, due to the pressure of working with limited resources in poor rural areas and to the fact that, even at local level, the strategies for reducing poverty are geared towards economic success, there is very little incentive to develop and implement gender-sensitive policies.

It has been shown over and over again that a lack of gender awareness in the formulation of laws, regulations, political measures and public policies can have unintended consequences. A first example of this is found in apparently sex-neutral laws, the practical effects of which, however, have led to sex-specific discrimination, as in the case of the Land Administration Law of 1998. According to this, land use contracts were valid for thirty years. Readjustments of land use contract distribution in response to changing household circumstances were handled differently in different communities, with some communities readjusting the land distribution once a year, others once in several years. In the case of young families, where the bride had recently moved into the husband's house and there were newborn children, special hardship could result unless there was readjustment of the land to provide a land use contract to support the new household. Here the patrilocal marriage system in China's rural areas was not taken into consideration when designing a law and this, later on, gave rise to numerous complaints by rural women without land. A second example is provided by regulations which are directly discriminating. Thus married couples in rural areas can have a second child, but only if the first child is a daughter. A third example is found in laws and regulations which were actually intended to protect women but which, in practice, however, have had a rather discriminatory effect, such as, the bringing forward of the retirement age for women *(55* instead of 60) or the generous guarantees of maternity leave which actually result in unemployment with minimal security or early dismissal.

Measures and projects to reduce poverty, which appear to be sex-neutral, can prove to have discriminatory effects. If, for example, a new potential for earning arises in a

household as the result of a measure to reduce poverty, the children (particularly the girls) might be taken out of school in order for them to be able to take part in income-generating activities. There is, in addition, the possibility that a considerable number of additional tasks arising from the poverty reduction projects will devolve upon women which will lead to an increase in working hours. For this reason alone, rural women often suffer under time constraints because they have to allocate much of their time to unpaid work: housework, including washing and cleaning; reproductive work, including caring for children and the elderly; household subsistence work, including water and firewood collection; and low productive work for household food security, agricultural and animal husbandry work. It is also possible that a project will offer training activities to rural households on some agricultural techniques. If these activities are mostly carried out by women, it would be advisable for them to participate in the training courses offered, but the training courses might well be attended mainly by men, because the location (outside the village) and the duration of the training period (several days) would create difficulties for women who would otherwise attend.

All these are examples of the ways that gender-blind laws and policies can lead to unintended and unwanted discrimination against girls and women. It is therefore necessary, at all levels of the administration and during all stages of legislation and policy development, to be aware of gender differences and the possibility that those differences may turn into discriminating practices.

### *Public Policy: Lack of Gender Perspective, Make it hard to Achieve the National Millennium Development Goals (MDG)*

The requirements of the UN MDGs include the reduction of poverty (goal 1: eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) and the promotion of gender equality (goal 3). Sex-disaggregated data should be reflected in all MDGs progress reports; this is not yet the case, however, for China. Here, goal 4 will be taken as an example to explain the gender implications of MDGs. Goal 4 is: ***Reduce Child*** Mortality. The target is a two-thirds reduction in the under-five mortality rate between 1990 and 2015. China is on track for reducing infant mortality and the mortality rate among under-fives. In order to meet the MDGs in 2015, the under-five mortality rate must be reduced to 20‰. As previously stated, the female infant mortality rate should be lower than the male infant mortality rate but the opposite is now the case in China. In 1990, the female infant mortality rate was 33.5‰, while the male infant mortality rate was 32.4‰. In 2000, the gender gap widened: the female infant mortality rate was 33.72‰, while the male infant mortality rate went down to 23.90‰. China will not be able to reach the MDG (Goal 4, target 5) of reducing the IMR by two thirds between 1990 and 2015, if the female IMR in the countryside is not curbed.

# Chapter 7 Poverty Reduction: Giving Public Policy a Gendered Face

Public policy in various sectors such as finance, education and health, is of crucial importance in promoting gender sensitive poverty reduction policies. Giving public policy a gendered face is an important precondition for developing a response to recent policy changes embodied in the revised poverty reduction policy, which include the willingness to explore methods based on local participation, gender targeting, community-based planning and expanded roles for NGOs in implementation, progress monitoring and impact assessment. The emphasis on participatory, bottom-up procedures implies changes in governance at both national and local levels, including gender sensitive public policy. Such changes represent a development of poverty planning in China towards a demand-responsive approach to poverty reduction in contrast to the top-down approaches in the past.

In order to mainstream gender into poverty reduction policies, the following intervention strategies are recommended:

### *1. Promote research on the interaction between public policies, gender issues,economic growth and poverty dynamics in China*

To back up suggestions for gender sensitive poverty reduction policies and to target these policies more accurately, more research is required on gender related constraints to poverty reduction efforts at both macro level and micro level. This research should include:

- studies of the root causes of the imbalanced sex ratio at birth and the increasing gender gaps in the infant mortality rate, including their impacts on poverty reduction efforts;
- gender assessments of poverty reduction policies (including security, opportunity and empowerment as an expanded framework for poverty reduction) and of specific interventions such as grain for green (tuigenghuanlin), micro credits, compulsory education, resettlement, infrastructure, labor mobility, etc.;
- gender sensitive analyses of the complex dynamics of poverty production embedded in processes of transformation, marketization and urbanization in China (including urban unemployment, unfavorable environmental conditions, impoverishment related to loss of land and/or involuntary resettlement, labor (and return) migration (e.g. in cases of illness and injuries), old age poverty and children's poverty, interaction between gender, poverty and minority issues, students from poor areas etc.);
- evaluation of the effectiveness of international donor activities in promoting gender equality as part of poverty reduction interventions, including more systematic attention being paid to gender issues as part of social assessment in investment projects outside the human development sector; these may have poverty reduction as a secondary project objective (such as projects in the

transport, energy or environmental sector, agricultural development or natural resource management projects which all may be accompanied by resettlement and impoverishment risks for the population affected by the project.

### *2. Develop general guidelines to improve gender responses in the government system related to poverty reduction*

It is recognized that government agencies, NGOs and researchers working in the area of poverty reduction tend to have a higher level of gender awareness. This is largely because they are influenced by international cooperations that place great emphasis on poverty reduction and normally have a strong gender focus. However, such gender awareness often stagnates at project level and has not yet been integrated into the government system. One suggestion is to establish a joint working group under the NWCWC and the NDRC Social Development Department to prepare general guidelines on improving gender responses in various departments of the government system related to poverty reduction (such as the Ministry of Civil Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Labor and Social Security, National Bureau of Statistics/Rural Survey Department etc.). This may be seen as as an entry point for the relevant departments to develop their own guidelines on strengthening gender awareness and gender responsive action plans in their specific fields of poverty reduction. If appropriate, the establishment of 'gender officers' may be considered. For example, in cooperation with the ILO, the Ministry of Labor has established a gender responsive system; two 'gender officers', one at director general level and one at staff level, have been nominated. One good practice in one ministry has certainly opened a window for change.

### *3. Develop and coordinate gender action plans indifferent government departments related to poverty reduction*

Different Chinese governmental departments are in charge of civil affairs, education, health, and land administration. The Ministry of Civil Affairs is responsible for autonomous elections among villagers; the Ministry of Education is responsible for the education system and the Family Planning Commission is responsible for birth control. These ministries do not have close relations with the All China Women's Federation and the Women and Children Working Commission of the State Council at micro level. Gender inequality in the process of autonomous village elections is serious, and women comprise a very low proportion of the representatives on village committees. The gender imbalance in birth control is high in rural and urban areas. There is also serious gender inequality among school-age children in poverty areas. Planned policy interventions for these phenomena are absent at community level. These departments should therefore concentrate their attention on strengthening gender equality in their grass-roots work. On the basis of general guidelines government departments involved in poverty reduction should design specific gender action plans. The following measures could be part of gender action plans:

- *Gender disaggregated statistics:* Sex-disaggregated data from the National Bureau of Statistics and relevant ministries will have to be obtained for sound gender-responsive poverty reduction policies to be formulated. The inclusion of gender statistics into national and ministerial data collection systems is an important step towards promoting gender sensitive poverty reduction policy making.

- *Gender checklists:* for poverty reduction interventions, including key action points and gender sensitive indicator systems for project preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

- *Gender budgets:* analysis of poverty reduction budgets.
  Gender budgets are tools and processes designed to facilitate gender analysis in the formulation of government budgets and the allocation of resources. Gender budgets are not separate budgets for women, or for men. They are attempts to break down or disaggregate the government's mainstream budget according to its impacts on women and men. They are an important tool for analyzing the gap between the expressed commitments of governments and the decision-making processes involved with how governments raise and spend money.

### *4. Build capacity for mainstreaming gender in poverty reduction offices at all levels*

The Chinese government is now undertaking mid-term reviews of its ambitious program for poverty reduction in poor areas (2001-2010). Under the unified coordination and planning of the State Council Leading Group, this program is being carried out in 592 poor counties all over China. This program is aimed at 100 million poor people, half of whom are women. The poor areas have received great financial support through poverty reduction funds, work for food funds and credit loans. However, distinct gender-sensitive principles and framework are absent from the operating process of such support. The relationship between gender inequality and poverty has not been made one of the key issues in China's rural poverty reduction policies. The poverty alleviation system lacks the capacity to formulate gender sensitive policy and plans. It is therefore proposed that capacity building should be carried out within China's poverty alleviation system on gender mainstreaming and gender budget; there should also be a poverty reduction plan aimed at promoting gender equality jointly organized by the State Council Poverty Alleviation Leading Group and All China Women's Federation. Training should be carried out at central, provincial and county levels and should include the training of trainers. It is recommended that international donor agencies provide technical assistance for such a plan.

# Appendix 1 Background Papers

This synthesis report is based on:

1. A statistical facts and figures report about gender inequality, prepared by Prof Duan Chengrong, People's University, based on the data from three censuses taken in 1982, 1990 and 2000. It contains information on a broad range of demographic, economic and social issues. The material provided allows for discovering long-term tendencies as well as regional disparities, especially between rural and urban areas, and low and high income regions.

2. A quantitative analysis of the effect of gender on the elasticity of poverty to growth in China, prepared by Chen Shaohua and Martin Ravallion, World Bank, which aims to explore the nature and significance of the correlation between gender inequality and poverty, and tries to establish the direction of causality. The analysis poses the question of whether gender inequality is affecting poverty reduction through economic growth by using education and health indicators.

3. A qualitative analysis (of rural poverty based on survey questionnaires), prepared by Prof. Li Xiaoyun and his team, China Agricultural University, which tries to identify the underlying stories behind the results of the quantitative analysis and also seeks to reveal the "other part" of the gender/poverty interaction that could not be captured by the quantitative analysis but that would help us to understand the stories behind the facts and figures presented in the statistical report.

4. A comprehensive country gender assessment (CGA) for the PRC, prepared by Dr. Lin Zhibin and Prof. Du Jie, Institute of Women's Studies, ACWF, which nat only provides an in-depth analysis of poverty and gender inequality and updates gender-related data, but also creates harmonization among different international development and donor agencies, including the WB, ADB and DFID. The purpose of the CGA is to analyze the gender dimensions of development, identify the gender-responsive policies and actions important for poverty reduction and development effectiveness in the country, and provide information on the gender-related issues to assist the staff of the Bank and ADB in mainstreaming gender concerns in country programming, project design and implementation, and policy interventions. The collaborative CGA process will culminate in suggested priorities for gender-related interventions, including those offering opportunities for effective involvement of the WB, ADB and DFID.

# Appendix 2 Methodology - Gender Dimensions of Poverty Assessment

Policies that seek to address the gender dimensions of poverty are confronted with a multitude of definitions, with multidimensionality, and with the infinite number of causes and effects of poverty. In its most basic form, three approaches to poverty analysis dominate the development literature[27]:

1. The poverty line approach which measures the income level of households and individuals which is required to meet their basic needs
2. The capability approach which explores a broader range of means and ends
3. Participatory poverty assessments (PPAs), which explore the causes and outcomes of poverty in more context-specific ways and from the perspective of the poor themselves

## *1. The poverty line approach*

Data on household income collected routinely through household expenditure surveys form the basis for measuring the incidence of poverty in China as well as internationally. The PRC uses the income per head measure. In 2002 prices, the official rural poverty line was 627 Yuan annual net income per capita. Using this poverty line, the number of rural poor was estimated at 28.2 million in 2002, or 3% of the rural population. In addition to these absolute poor, 88.2 million (or 9.2%) of the rural population with a per capita income below 869 Yuan in 2002 were defined as the low income rural population. The 869 Yuan benchmark comes close to the World Bank calculation of one US$ a day in PPP values in year 2002 prices. The PRC does not have an official urban poverty line. The urban poverty line is estimated at three times the official rural poverty line. Under the Minimum Living Standard Scheme (MLSS), each city sets its own poverty (or benefits) line. The floating population is not included in the MLSS scheme (ADB 2004:4).

The poverty line approach, which measures poverty at household level, has become the most widely used method of separating the poor from the non-poor. This has revealed, worldwide, a disproportionate number of female-headed households among the poor which, in turn, has led to the claim that there has been a "feminization of poverty". Female-headed households may, however, occur within or outside the poverty population and for very different reasons (such as custom, widowhood, divorce, migration etc.) with different implications for household poverty. Female-headed households tend to be smaller and to have higher dependency ratios. As part of the poverty population, female-headed households will need special attention because of their specific vulnerability, but from a policy perspective, it is unlikely that

[27] The following section is based on Kabeer 2003 (Chapter 4) and adjusted to the Chinese situation.

female-headed households will be effective in all cases as criteria for anti-poverty programs.[28]

Since it has become clear that economic growth does not necessarily benefit poorer sections of society, a concern with the poverty line method has emerged. Other approaches, all of which are relevant to the gender dimensions of poverty, are becoming increasingly important.

Criticism of the poverty line approach includes the following points:
People meet their survival needs not only through monetary income but through a variety of resources, including subsistence, production and access to public goods,
People have assets such as health, education, natural resources, financial resources (e.g. access to credit) and social networks
The well-being of human beings does not only depend on their purchasing power, but also on dignity and self-respect.

The most serious concern with the poverty line approach from a gender perspective is that it neglects to take into account intra-household inequalities, the most pervasive of which are those related to gender. Household-based calculations have little to say about women's and girls' experience of poverty relative to that of men and boys within the same household.

### *2. The capability approach*

The capability approach[29] sees income and commodities as important only in as much as they contribute to people's capabilities to achieve the lives they want (their 'functioning achievements'). Capabilities are about what individuals are able to achieve; they depend partly on personal circumstances and partly on social constraints; the term does not only include basic individual capabilities such as education and health, but also more complex social capabilities, such as taking part in the community and self-respect. Unlike the poverty line approach, which is defined in relation to the household, capabilities are defined in relation to the individual and this is why they can be measured and interpreted in gender-disaggregated ways. The UNDP Human Development Index (HDI) provides an example of this.[30]

In the same year as the 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the UNDP launched two new measures to track progress in tackling inequalities between women and men. These were the Gender-related Development Index (GDI)[31] and the

[28] See also Chapter 3.4. "Is there evidence to support the feminization of poverty hypothesis?"
[29] This approach was based on the idea of "functionings and capabilities" by Amartya Sen (1987, 1992; Robeyns 2003)
[30] The HDI was created to re-emphasize that people and their lives should be the ultimate criteria for assessing the development of a country, not economic growth or interest rates. A country is certainly not in a healthy state if a substantial number of people are living in poverty.
[31] The GDI measures the same variables as the HDI except that the GDI makes adjustments for gender inequalities in the three aspects of human development.

Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM)[32]. These measures have been used every year since then in the UNDP annual Human Development Report alongside HDI.

A look at the outcomes of GDI-Indices gives rise to the need to differentiate between those aspects of gender inequality that are responsive to economic growth and those that may need to be addressed through additional policy measures. This differentiation would, in addition, also help to identify those aspects of inequality that are most resistant to change. The first of the three basic human capabilities identified by the GDI relates to economic opportunity and is measured by per capita GDP. It reveals inequalities in labor force participation and in wages earned. The second component of GDI relates to life expectancy (including maternal mortality) which represents gender differences in health and physical well-being. Sex ratios of populations are another indicator of gender discrimination at the level of basic survival chances. Masculine sex ratios[33] are associated with high levels of excess female mortality in the younger age groups. The "geography of gender" (of sex ratios) is mirrored in the regional distribution of strong son preference. Education is the third of the capabilities included in estimates in the GDI. It is widely agreed that the most effective strategy for eliminating poverty and achieving sustainable development in any country is to expand educational access and improve educational quality (Zhang 2004). Keeping girls out of school is costly and undermines development.

The capability approach makes a number of useful contributions towards understanding the relation between gender and poverty: it helps monitor gender differences in basic achievements across regions and time and it draws attention to patterns of gender inequality that are not necessarily the same as regional patterns of income or poverty.

### *3. Participatory Poverty Assessments*

PPAs use a variety of mainly qualitative methods which have originated from earlier attempts by practitioners of PRA methods to promote "bottom up" approaches in the assessment and evaluation of development projects.

Key contributions of PPA approaches have shown that

- the poor themselves, men and women, rural and urban, young and old, sick and healthy, have their own perspectives on the experience of poverty
- poverty is multi-dimensional and includes not only economic deprivation but also various forms of vulnerability
- poor people are not only concerned with meeting their immediate food needs but also have long-term goals such as security, accumulation of savings, social standing and self-respect

[32] The GEM also measures gender using the following variables: seats in parliament held by women; female legislators, senior officials and managers; female professional and technical workers; ratio of estimated female to male earned income (http://hdr.undp.org/reports/global/2002/eu/pdf/backtwo/pdf)
[33] A sex ratio at birth with more than 105 (103-107) males per 100 females may be characterized as "masculine sex ratio".

- poverty may force poor people into humiliating patron-client relations or extremely exploitative forms of work
- poverty tends to be associated with insecurity, vulnerability and dependence

PPAs highlight the ways in which different aspects of poverty are interrelated. This underlines the need for a comprehensive approach to poverty reduction. Ill-health, for example, may be both a major cause and a consequence of poverty. It may also be related to the eco-environment. Hunger may undermine school attendance as well as the capacity to learn, while food-for-education programs help to address both. PPAs may identify gendered aspects of poverty, such as the following:

- forms of disadvantage that have a greater effect on poor women, including women's greater time burden, domestic violence, daughters seen as "tools", e.g. when their wages are taken to subsidize investment in sons' education or marriage
- forms of disadvantage that have a greater effect on poor men, including the risk of remaining unmarried because of unaffordably high marriage costs
- the connections between production and reproduction
- the vulnerability of female-headed/single-parent headed households
- gender differences in individual priorities
- policy-related inequalities and unequal treatment
- women's lack of access to resources

The limitations of PPAs are:

- they may be as gender-blind or as gender-aware as those who conduct them
- they may usegender issues simply as a synonym for women
- 'poor people's perception' may reflect the norms and values of society that do not attach any weight to gender inequalities or to violations of women's human rights. Women themselves frequently subscribe to such value systems and accept that they have lesser worth as human beings.

The three approaches are complementary rather than competitive. Each approach reveals different insights and, taken together, they provide a more comprehensive understanding of the gender dimensions of poverty than any single approach on its own.

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# Sub-Report One

# Gender Gaps in China:

## Facts and Figures

**October 2006**

# Contents

# Executive Summary

Based on the data taken from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses, the report examines from a quantitative perspective gender gaps in China in terms of sex ratio at birth, education, employment, infant mortality rate and average life expectancy as well as their long-term trends of changes in the past 20 years.

***The main findings are as follows:***

1. Since early 1980s, China's sex ration at birth has deviated from the normal range, taking on continuing, increasing and widespread elevations.
2. In the field of education, wherever in urban or rural, in regions with more developed or less developed economy, or in areas where the Han ethnic group is concentrated or the ethnic minority groups, education level of China's population has been rising. Although gaps still exist between male and female in terms of indicators such as illiteracy rate, years of school attainment, enrollment rate or dropout rate, the gender gaps have been closing and already diminished to relatively small extent.

   Meanwhile, however, gender inequalities are significant at both ends of the education level. Female illiteracy rates are markedly higher than the male ones, and gender gaps in terms of illiteracy rate are bigger than rural-urban gaps. In regard to attainment of high-level education, women are disadvantaged.

   Lower-income and poverty-stricken areas are at a pronounced disadvantage with regard to shortages of talent.

3. China has experienced high employment rates for both female and male labor force. The past 20 years have seen changes in terms of sectoral and occupational structures for China's female and male labor force.
   The employment rates for both male and female working force are both high in China. In the past 20 years, there have been changes in both the sectoral and occupational structures of male and female working force. Since 1990s, unemployment rate for the working age population had climbed up considerably with the female unemployment rate being higher than the male rate. In urban areas, women leave their former jobs five years earlier than men do, and they also leave faster than men do. Women are at a disadvantaged status in terms of employment.
4. Average life expectancy in China has been increasing. In the past 20 years, China has seen a clear drop in the infant mortality rates. However, in both rural and urban areas, there is an abnormal phenomenon of higher female infant mortality than male infant mortality, which seems to exist in most regions of the country.

There is little optimism regarding survival chances for female infants. The average life expectancy in poverty-stricken areas is lower than the national average and their IMR is obviously higher than the national average.

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## *1. Definition*

Gender gaps refer to differences or inequalities between men and women, based on factors such as social and cultural factors.

## *2. Research Methods*

Based data taken from China's population censuses, this report examines in a quantitative manner gender gaps on the Chinese mainland in terms of sex ratio at birth, education, employment, infant mortality rate and average life expectancy at birth as well as their long-term trends of changes in the past 20 years.

According to the needs of the research, analyses for each of the sections are conducted from the'perspectives of nationwide, by rural-urban areas, by provinces, three provinces with the highest average per capita GDP (highest-income provinces, or HIPs) and three provinces with the lowest figure (lowest-income provinces or LIPs), six minority-group-concentrated areas, 50 highest-GDP counties (highest-income counties, or HICs) and 50 lowest-GDP counties (lowest-income counties or LICs) as well as 592 poverty-stricken counties (PSCs).

## *3. Data Sources*

All data in this report is official data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) of China, especially that of the population censuses conducted respectively in 1982, 1990 and 2000. Some of the data is cited from the findings of scholars.

Some indicators may be disputable, but because there lacks more authoritative and reliable data the report is still based on these reported official figures.

# Chapter 2 Gender Gaps: Sex Ratio at Birth

Sex ratio at birth (SRB) shows the number of boy infants compared to girl infants who are born within a given period, usually represented by the number of boys per 100 girl infants. A ratio standing between 103 and 107 is considered normal. When SRB deviates from the normal range, it indicates a preference of male (or female) infants and the neglect of the other gender in society. An analysis of the statistics on SRB in China in selected years shows:

1) Before the 1980s, SRB remained within the normal range in China (See Table 1).
2) Since early 1980s, China's SRB has deviated from the normal range, the elevation of which has been constant, increasing and widespread. Specific manifestations are:

   i) After 1982, SRB has exceeded the normal range of 103-107 (Table 1 and Figure 1);
   ii) Since 1982, SRB has not only remained at a high range, but also experienced constant elevations. For nearly 20 years, the ratio has climbed increasingly higher, rather than showing occasional increases in some years;
   iii) By the year 2000, it had already reached close to 120;
   iv) Instead of being local, elevation in SRB has been widespread in the bulk of regions in China. According to the results of the 1982 Population Census, higher SRBs are seen in 18 provinces, but none of which has exceeded 115; according to data obtained from the long version of the 2000 Population Census, only the four regions of Tibet, Qinghai, Guizhou and Xinjiang had SRBs lower than 107, while more than 11 regions had SRBs higher than 120 with Jiangxi Province being highest at over 138 (Table 2).

**Table 1: China's Sex Ratio at Birth in Selected Years**

| Year | SRB | Year | SRB |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1953 | 104.9 | 1990 | 114.7 |
| 1964 | 106.6 | 1991 | 116.1 |
| 1970 | 105.9 | 1992 | 114.2 |
| 1979 | 105.8 | 1993 | 114.1 |
| 1982 | 107.2 | 1995 | 117.4 |
| 1987 | 111.0 | 1997 | 120.4 |
| 1989 | 111.3 | 2000 | 119.9 |

Data sources: calculated by using data taken from the population censuses, sampling surveys on 1% population, and annual sampling surveys on population change.

3) In terms of births of children, the birth rate for the first child is basically normal. However, with birth increases birth rates rise. Based on the long-version data of the 2000 Population Census, SRB for the first child is 107.1 and SRBs for the

second and third children and more reach as high as 151.9 and 159.4 respectively. The 1990 and 1982 Population Censuses also show the trends of rising SRBs with the number of births.

SRB relates not only to the number of births but also to the sexes of children. Where the born child is a girl, sex ratio for the second child is remarkably higher. According to the 2000 Population Census, sex ratio for the second child while the first child is a girl reaches as high as 191.3 and while the first child is a boy the rate is only 103.9 (You Yunzhong, etc., 2004).

4) An examination by rural and urban areas[1] shows that cities, urban towns and rural areas have all consistently demonstrated the trends of increasing SRBs (See Table 3).

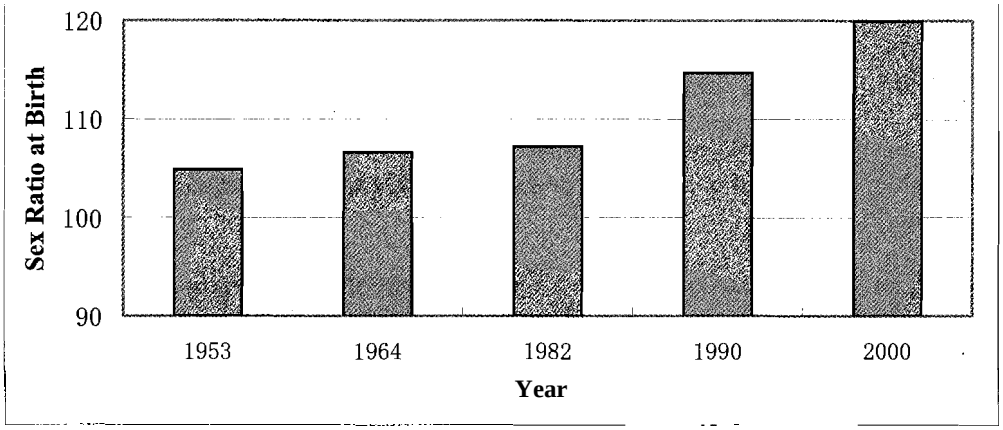
The data in Table 3 also reveals that, although the problem is more prominent in rural areas and urban towns, an imbalance in SRB has also been encountered in cities in recent years.

5) Both high-income and low-income provinces have got consistently higher SRBs. According to the average per capita GDP ranking, the three HIPs are Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin, and the three LIPs are Guizhou, Gansu and Guangxi. Table 2 shows that, among the above six provinces, with the exception of Guizhou which has a rather normal SRB (105.4), SRBs for the rest five provinces are obviously higher with the most developed regions of Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin reaching 115.5, 114.5 and 113.0 respectively and lower-income provinces of Gansu and Guangxi reaching 119.4 and 128.8. The mean values of SRBs for the three HIPs and three LIPs are 114.4 and 117.8 respectively, which are clearly higher than the normal range. However, from the data disaggregated by provinces, the higher

[1] In many cases, it is both important and essential to make a comparison between urban and rural areas. China has taken different approaches towards disaggregating rural and urban areas during the past three population censuses. The demographic scope for urban areas in the 1982 Population Census was: all population within the jurisdiction of cities and urban towns. The demographic scope for urban areas in the 1990 Population Census was: district population of those cities with districts, neighborhood population of cities without districts, Resident Committee population of urban towns and towns of counties under the jurisdiction of cities without districts. The demographic scope for urban areas in the 2000 Population Census was: (i) all population of administrative areas under the jurisdiction of districts with the population density of over 1,500/km$^2$; (ii) all population of cities with or without districts with the population density of below 1,500/km$^2$ and of township-level areas where the district or township govemment is located; all population of extended township-level areas as a result of development of urban areas where the city or district govemment is located; all population of areas within the neighborhood office under the jurisdiction of districts or cities; (iii) all population of districts with the population density of below 1,500/km$^2$ under the jurisdiction of a city, of other towns under the jurisdiction of a city without districts, as well as of villages where the town govemment is located; all population of extended villages as a result of development of areas where the town govemment is located; all population of other resident committees under the jurisdiction of towns; (iv) all population of towns under the jurisdiction of a county and villages where the town government is located; all population of extended villages as a result of development of areas where the town government is located; all population of other resident committees under the jurisdiction of a town.

SRB has no direct correlation with levels of economic development.

**Figure 1: SRB Trends in China**




Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from previous population censuses.

6) In minority nationality concentrated areas, the SRBs are relatively normal. Xizang, Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Guangxi and Ningxia are the six provinces of China where ethnic minority populations are concentrated (To save space the report refers these provinces as six ethnic minority concentrated areas), whose average SRB was 110.0, which is slightly higher than the norm. Disaggregated by province, except for an obviously abnormal ratio in Guangxi (128.80) and a relatively abnormal ratio in Yunnan (110.57), all the other four minority nationality provinces have SRBs which are normal.

Although the SRB levels in ethnic minority areas have not reached those of the Han's, they demonstrate ever rising trends. Furthermore, great differences in SRBs exist with different minority nationalities. Research indicates that, among China's 36 largest minority nationalities, those which have SRBs exceeding 120 include Zhuang, Dong, Yao, Tujia, Tu and Shui, etc. Some of these nationalities have higher population growth and others have lower growth, indicating that imbalanced SRBs are not fully related to the birth control policy (H. Luo and S. D. Bao, 2005).

7) SRBs in poverty-stricken areas are considerably higher than the normal range.

The Chinese Government is highly committed to poverty reduction. In order to improve the assistance given to poverty-stricken areas in the struggle to eliminate poverty, the Chinese government developed for the first timea list of PSCs as priorities for assistance in 1986. The counties included in this list were provided with

**Table 2: China's Sex Ratio at Birth by Province, 2000 Population Census**

| Province | SRB | Province | SRB |
|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 114.58 | Heilongjiang | 107.52 |
| Tianjin | 112.97 | Shanghai | 115.51 |
| Hebei | 118.46 | Jiangsu | 120.19 |
| Shanxi | 112.75 | Anhui | 130.76 |
| Inner Mongolia | 108.48 | Zhejiang | 113.11 |
| Liaoning | 112.17 | Fujian | 120.26 |
| Jilin | 109.87 | Jiangxi | 138.01 |
| Shandong | 113.49 | Chongqing | 115.80 |
| Henan | 130.30 | Sichuan | 116.37 |
| Hubei | 128.02 | Yunnan | 110.57 |
| Hunan | 126.92 | Guizhou | 105.37 |
| Guangdong | 137.76 | Tibet | 97.43 |
| Guangxi | 128.80 | Shaanxi | 125.15 |
| Hainan | 135.04 | Gansu | 119.35 |
| Qinghai | 103.52 | Ningxia | 107.99 |
| Xinjiang | 106.65 | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs (HIPs): 114.4 | | | |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs (LIPs): 117.8 | | | |
| Mean value for 6 ethnic-minority-group-concentrated areas (EMAs): 110.0 | | | |
| Mean value for 592 PSCs (PSCs): 114.66 | | | |
| Mean value for 50 HICs: 111.29 | | | |
| Mean value for 50 LICs: 111.74 | | | |

Data sources: provincial data taken from: Population Census Office under the State Council, 2002: 1681; county data calculated using data by county gathered by NBS.

**Table 3: Sex Ratio at Birth by Rural-Urban Areas in China (1999 and 2000)**

| Year | City | Urban Town | Rural |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1990 Census | 110.4 | 113.5 | 114.4 |
| 2000 Census | 114.2 | 119.9 | 121.7 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

favorable assistance in terms of funds, projects and policies. The list has been adjusted when necessary. A total of 592 key PSCs appear on the latest list of those being targeted for state assistance.

According to data obtained from the 2000 Population Census, the mean SRB for these 592 counties was 114.7, which obviously falls outside the normal range, but is still below the national average (120).

8) The mean SRBs for 50 HICs and 50 LICs both exceed the normal range.

Via the county specific data from the 2000 Rural Socioeconomic Survey provided by the General Rural Survey Team of NBS, the 50 HICs and 50 LICs are generated[2].

As shown in Table 2 and according to the data of the 2000 Population Census, the mean SRB for 50 HICs was 111.3 and that for 50 LICs, 111.7. The two ratios are close and both are significantly in excess of the normal range, but below the national average (119.9). Similar to the results of province-specific data, the county-specific data also reveal that there is no linear correlation between SRB and economic development levels.

9) Various available demographic data show that China's SRB has demonstrated a rising trend after the 1980s. However, considering the underreporting of children in the data sources, there have been debates among Chinese and foreign scholars regarding the seriousness of China's imbalanced SRBs.

Recently, according to the analysis by scholars of the data taken from the 1997 "National Sampling Survey Materials on Population and Reproductive Health", prenatal sex identification and sex selective abortions are the main reasons of rising SRBs (Qiao Xiaochun, 2002; Chen Wei, 2005; Pang Lihua and Zheng Xiaoying, 2006).

Data from the 2001 "National Survey on Family Planning/Reproductive Health" also reveals that, SRB for the first child is basically normal (107.3), but the SRB for second child after sex selective abortions for the first child has reached a high of 120.1 and the SRB for child after a girl is borne and sex selective abortions have chosen reached a high of 195.7 (Pang Lihua, Zheng Xiaoying, 2006).

Some scholars agreed that underreporting female infants is an important reason leading to imbalanced SRBs (You Yunzhong, et. al, 2005); others also pointed out that higher SRBs are the consequences of interaction between "real increase" and "virtual increase" (Qiao Xiaochun, 1992).

[2] 50 HIC and 50 LIC are defined by GDP per capita of 2000. 50 HIC includes some counties from Western China, such as Kuerle, Shanshan and Geermu.

# Chapter 3 Gender Gaps: Education

In a civilized society, education has important implications for people's career development, economic conditions and social status.

This report will examine inequalities between men and women in the field of education and their changes in the past 20 years through the indicators such as adult illiteracy rate, composition of educational attainments of population aged six and over, average years of education, enrollment rate and dropout rate.

## *3.1 Adult Illiteracy Rate*

Eliminating illiteracy is both the important target and precondition of modernization. First of all, we are going to examine the differences between males and females in terms of adult illiteracy rate and their changes. The adult illiteracy rate is the percentage of illiterates and semi-illiterates in a population aged 15 years and over.

Table 4 and Figures 2 and 3 present gender differences in terms of adult illiteracy rates disaggregated by rural and urban areas, by gender and by age in the selected years of 1982, 1990 and 2000. The table and figures indicate:

1) The adult illiteracy rate dropped considerably among people aged fifteen and over throughout the nation between 1982 and 2000, which fell from 34% in 1982 to 9% in 2000[3].
2) From a gender-specific perspective, during the same period, there were synchronous decreases in both the male and female adult illiteracy rates. The rate for male adults declined from 21% in 1982 to 5% in 2000, and the rate for women from 49% in 1982 to 13% in 2000 with the female rate dropping faster than the male rate.
3) From the age distribution patterns of illiteracy rate, the older the age, the higher the illiteracy rate (Figure 3). Figure 3 adequately reflect great results China has achieved in eliminating illiteracy over the past decades. The higher illiteracy rate among the elderly population is attributed to the lack of educational opportunities for these people when they were young. Since the foundation of the PRC in 1949,

[3] It is necessary to point out that there have been changes in data collection methods for China's population censuses. The changes may not alter the declining trend in illiteracy rates in general, but they are likely to affect the extent to which the rate drops. For example, in the 1990 Population Census, there was no separate information on "literacy". In the item of educational level, the level below primary education was listed as "illiterate or can read only a few words". But in the 2000 Population Census, separate information on "literacy" was collected (the option were Yes or No). A situation may thus arise: a "semi-literate" person was registered as "illiterate or can read only a few words " in the 1990 Population Census and became an illiterate while the same person may be registered as literate and thus became a non-illiterate. As a result, the illiteracy rate obtained according the information collection methods used in the 2000 Population Census may be slightly lower than that obtained by using the 1990 Census methods.

**Table 4: Male and Female Adult Illiteracy Rates in Rural and Urban China (%, Selected Years)**

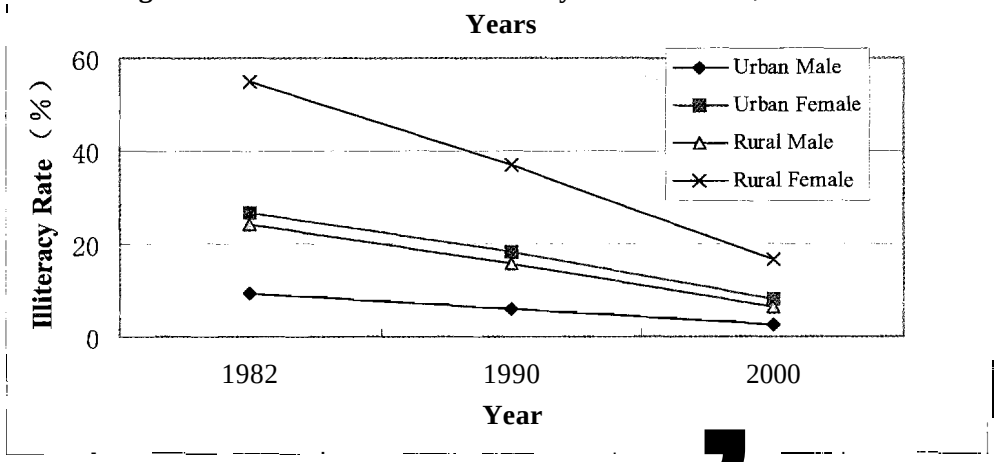
| Year | 1982 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| National Total | 34.49 | 22.21 | 8.80 |
| Male Nationwide | 20.78 | 12.98 | 4.66 |
| Female Nationwide | 48.88 | 31.93 | 13.11 |
| Urban Total | 17.75 | 11.97 | 5.22 |
| Urban Male | 9.47 | 6.08 | 2.38 |
| Urban Female | 26.96 | 18.36 | 8.17 |
| Rural Total | 39.42 | 26.23 | 11.19 |
| Rural Male | 24.23 | 15.74 | 6.18 |
| Rural Female | 55.09 | 37.11 | 16.43 |

Note: 'Urban' in the table refers to the total of city and urban town data.
Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

the Chinese government has been committed to developing education, in particular, basic education, and also, in the meantime, to providing literacy education for adults, thus enabling rapid decrease of illiteracy rate among young people who grew up after China's liberation.

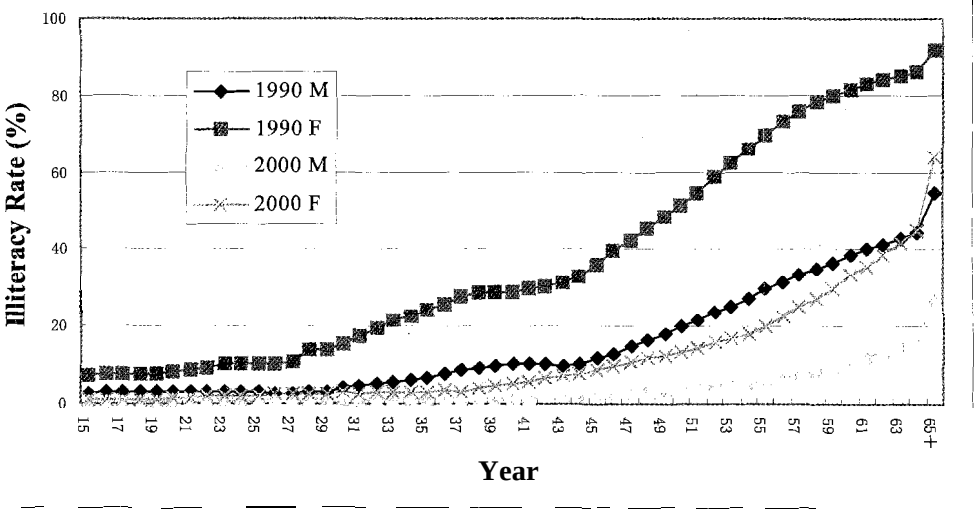
4) Between 1990 and 2000, the illiteracy rates both for male and female age groups had declined considerably.
5) Comparisons both from a provincial perspective and a county perspective or nationality perspective show, a rule is that adult illiteracy rates are obviously lower in high-income areas than those in the lower-income areas, indicating that differences in adult illiteracy rates are basically the reflection of gaps in socioeconomic development.

**Figure 2 Rural-Urban Adult Illiteracy Rate in China, Selected Years**




Data sources: Calculated by using data from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

**Figure 3: Gender-Specific Illiteracy Rate in China, 1990-2000**




Data sources: Calculated by using data from 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

First, a comparison of provinces indicates that, in Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin, where the GDP per capita ranks the highest, male adult illiteracy rates have declined to 2-3% and the female rates to about 10%, with an average male illiteracy rate of 2.4% and a female rate of 9.5% (Table 5). On the other hand, among the 3 LIPs, only Guangxi has a lower illiteracy rate (the male and female rates stand at 2% and 9%, respectively), similar to the average of the three HIPs, but the rates in Guizhou and Gansu provinces are high at about 10% for males and some 30% for females. The average rates of the 3 LIPs are 8% for men and 22% for women.

Second, from a comparison of counties, as indicated in Table 5, the mean adult illiteracy rate of 50 HICs has dropped to 4.62% for men and 14.88% for women, while that of the 50 LICs still stands at a high of 24.77% for males and 50.58% for females, much higher than the comparable rate of 50 HICs. The average adult illiteracy rate is 13.6% for males and 30.81% for females in the 592 PSCs, which are far above both the mean rate of 50 HICs and the national average. The work of illiteracy elimination is more difficult in the poorer areas.

Third, from a comparison of nationalities, among the six ethnic minority areas, Guangxi and Xinjiang have lower adult illiteracy rates, which are close to that of the 3 HIP, while Tibet, Ningxia, Yunnan and Inner Mongolia have higher adult illiteracy rates. The average adult illiteracy rate for the six areas is 11% for males and 23% for females, which are higher than their respective national average. These areas still face heavy tasks for eliminating illiteracy. Tibet is worth special attention, whose male and female illiteracy rates have reached as high as 34% and 60% respectively.

Forth, from the differences in educational levels of the elderly, according to data from

**Table 5: Adult Illiteracy Rate by Province in China (%)**

| Province | Male | Female | Sex Ratio of Illiterate Population | Province | Male | Female | Sex Ratio of Illiterate Population |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 2.02 | 8.1 | 27.13 | Tianjin | 2.8 | 10.23 | 28.19 |
| Hebei | 6.47 | 10.76 | 61.46 | Shanxi | 3.21 | 8.31 | 41.19 |
| Inner Mongolia | 6.98 | 16.53 | 45.21 | Liaoning | 2.93 | 8.72 | 34.59 |
| Jilin | 3.46 | 8.12 | 44.40 | Heilongjiang | 3.68 | 9.08 | 42.23 |
| Shanghai | 2.35 | 10.28 | 24.09 | Fujian | 5.57 | 13.96 | 41.48 |
| Jiangsu | 3.49 | 12.27 | 28.33 | Jiangxi | 3.09 | 11.04 | 29.25 |
| Zhejiang | 4.35 | 12.92 | 35.06 | Shandong | 5.53 | 15.98 | 34.68 |
| Anhui | 7.55 | 19.5 | 39.90 | Henan | 4.25 | 11.67 | 37.36 |
| Hubei | 4.44 | 14.49 | 32.66 | Guangdong | 1.72 | 8.6 | 19.99 |
| Hunan | 2.76 | 9.45 | 31.38 | Guangxi | 2.07 | 8.85 | 25.68 |
| Hainan | 3.84 | 16.11 | 25.98 | Shaanxi | 5.65 | 14.24 | 42.04 |
| Chongqing | 4.56 | 13.53 | 35.94 | Gansu | 12.04 | 27.81 | 46.01 |
| Sichuan | 5.37 | 14.62 | 38.70 | Qinghai | 15.69 | 35.87 | 46.79 |
| Guizhou | 9.96 | 30.61 | 35.36 | Ningxia | 9.47 | 22.25 | 44.50 |
| Yunnan | 9.32 | 22.15 | 46.06 | Xinjiang | 5.74 | 9.87 | 62.85 |
| Tibet | 34.38 | 60.47 | 58.43 | | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | | 2.40 | 9.50 | 26.5 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | | 8.00 | 22.40 | 35.7 |
| Mean value for 6 ethnic minority areas | | | | | 11.30 | 23.40 | 47.1 |
| Mean value for 592 poverty-stricken | | | | | 13.60 | 30.81 | - |
| Mean value for 50 HICs | | | | | 4.62 | 14.88 | - |
| Mean value for 50 LICs | | | | | 24.77 | 50.58 | - |

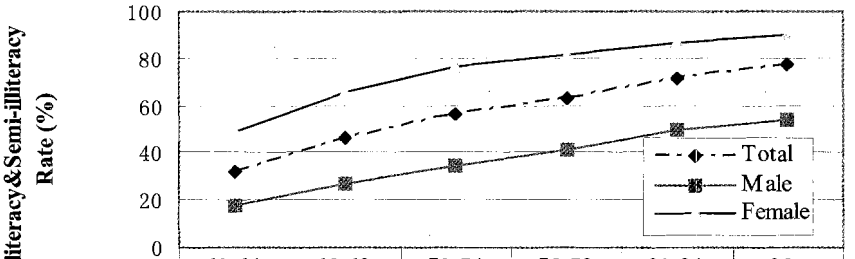
Data Sources: Calculated by using data from 2000 Population Census.

the 5th Population Census (See Figure 4), the changes in the elderly illiteracy and semi-illiteracy rates in China have two remarkable features: (i) as age increases, illiteracy and semi-illiteracy rates also rise, i.e. the illiteracy and semi-illiteracy rates in higher age groups are higher than lower age groups; (ii) in all age groups, the illiteracy and semi-illiteracy rates are higher than the female rates.

From an international perspective, China has relatively higher illiteracy and semi-illiteracy rates for its old-aged population. In the 1982 Population Census, the literacy rate of the population aged 60 and over was 39.1% for males and 4.6% for females. In contrast, the rates in the Philiphines and Mexico were higher than China, with the male rates being 20% and 27% higher (1980) and the female rates, 44% and

50% respectively. In the 1990 Population Census, the literacy rate: of the population aged 60 and over was 50.4% for males and 10.7% for females with the male rate being fivefold of the female rate, indicating the progress of the times and the younger old-aged people have higher proportionate number of being educated. On the other hand, it also indicates that gender differences in educational rate have kept certain continuity within the elderly group, demonstrating that historical gender inequalities in the rights to education for men and women kept a fairly long period and maintained a certain stable patterns of gender differences.

**Figure 4: Changes in the Illiteracy & Semi-illiteracy Rate of China's Old-Aged Population**




| | 60-64 | 65-69 | 70-74 | 75-79 | 80-84 | 85+ |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total | 32.35 | 45.99 | 56.22 | 63.15 | 71.36 | 77.46 |
| Male | 17.43 | 26.75 | 34.71 | 40.92 | 49.59 | 53.82 |
| Female | 48.5 | 65.57 | 76.61 | 81.58 | 86.48 | 89.55 |

Age

Data sources: CD-Rom provided by NBS containing original data Rom sampling surveys on 0.95‰ population conducted during the 5th Population Census.

Although these changes are worth celebrating, it should also be noted that, in eliminating illiteracy, China still has a long way to go, because

(i) Despite of considerable decrease in the adult illiteracy rate, one in twelve Chinese adults is still illiterate and the illiteracy rate remains high.

(ii) Among the illiterate, female illiterates are clearly more than male illiterates. On average, three out of four illiterates are women, which indicates deficiencies of social gender equality in terms of educational development. In both rural and urban China, the adult illiteracy rates among women are much higher than the rates among men. The urban female rate (8%) is even higher than the rural male rate (6%). Regarding the adult illiteracy rate, the gender gap exceeds the gap between urban and rural areas. In all age groups, the female illiteracy rate is higher than the male rate. The older the age is, the wider the gender gaps are. In terms of adult illiteracy rate, China's gender gaps are wider than its rural-urban gaps.

(iii) Adult illiteracy rate in rural areas is obviously higher that the urban rate, showing that rural areas are always the priority for eliminating illiteracy.

(iv) Poverty-stricken areas, the poor and poor women are the most vulnerable to illiteracy risks.

(v) From a historical perspective, China's gender inequalities in the rights to education for men and women kept a fairly long period and maintained a certain stable patterns of gender differences.[4]

### *3.2 Educational Composition of Population Aged Six and Over in China*

This section examines the proportionate numbers of boys and girls in the population aged six and above with their different levels of educational attainments, and also the underlying trends. In the population censuses, the educational attainments have been classified in a detailed manner, and there have been changes in the methods for classifying educational attainments in each of the population censuses. For example, in the 1982 Census educational attainments were classified to six categories while the figure had reached nine by 2000[5]. To facilitate comparisons among different periods, we have classified the educational attainments to the following four categories: (i) illiterate, referring to those who cannot read or read only a few characters; (ii) primary level, referring to those who have attended literacy classes or received primary school education[6]; (iii) medium level, referring to those who have received junior and high middle school education or polytechnic education; (iv) high level, referring to those who have received above-professional-college (including professional-college, undergraduate and postgraduate) education.

The proportionate numbers of population aged six and above with their different levels of educational attainments are shown in Table 6 and Figure 4, which indicate:

1) From 1982 to 2000, among the population aged six and above, the numbers of those who received a high-level education had the greatest increase followed by those who received a medium-level education. The proportion of those who received a medium-level education almost doubled, climbing from 28% to 48%; those who received a high-level education increased proportionately from 0.7% to 3.8%, showing a more than five-fold increase.

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[4] See Mu Guangzong, et. al: The Educational Level of the Old-aged Population in China, Market and Population Analysis, **2005** Issue 3.

[5] Compared with the 1982 and **1990** Population Censuses, the **2000** Population Census provides much more information on education. In the long version questionnaires of the **2000** Population Census, information on four aspects have been collected, including literate or illiterate, educational attainment, adult education or not, and status of schooling completion.

[6] In the population census, so long as a person received primary school education no matter for one year or six years was registered as "primary school" educational level. Similar circumstances are seen in other educational levels. Therefore, a certain educational level obtained from the data of population censuses refers to that a person has more or less received education of such level rather than "having completed" such level of education.

Table 6: Composition of Educational Attainment of Population Aged 6 Years and Older in China in Selected Years (%)

| Educational Attainment | 1982 | | | 1990 | | | 2000 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| Basic Level | 39.9 | 44.8 | 34.8 | 42.3 | 43.2 | 41.3 | 40.0 | 37.6 | 42.4 |
| Med. Level | 27.5 | 33.5 | 21.1 | 35.5 | 42.0 | 28.7 | 48.5 | 53.5 | 43.2 |
| High Level | 0.7 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 1.6 | 2.2 | 1.0 | 3.8 | 4.6 | 3.0 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

Over the same period, the proportion of the population who received a basic-level education rose from 40% in 1980 to 42% in 1990 and dropped back to 40% in 2000, a small increase followed by a small decrease. The slight drop between 1990 and 2000 was attributed to the rapid progress in medium-level and high-level educational attainments which resulted in a rapid increase in their numbers respectively and thus in a relatively decreased proportion of basic-level education attainments.

2) Marked differences still exist between the composition of the educational attainments of men and women: among the female population, 42% received only a basic-level education. This was a higher percentage than that of men at 38%, but the percentages of women who received medium-level and high-level educations were much lower than those of men. A satisfying change is that, a comparison between 2000 and 1982 reveals that the proportionate numbers of those who received a medium-level education outnumber those who received a primary-level education, but the changes for women lag behind the changes for men. In other words, the improvement in the educational status for men is better than for women.
3) From a perspective disaggregated by rural and urban areas, there was marked increase in the proportion of those who received medium-level education in both rural and urban areas (See Figures 5 and 6). The proportionate number of the rural people who had received medium-level education was markedly lower than the comparable number of the urban population and the number of those who had received a high-level education in the rural areas was almost zero.
4) In areas with better economic conditions, the educational status of their population is better; vice versa. Between the high and the low income provinces, there was a considerable gap, in terms of educational attainments composition, among people aged six and above.

In the 3 HIPs, the numbers of people who had received a high-level education were ranked at 14% for men and 11% for women, both far higher than the national average level. The percentages in the Beijing municipality even reached 19% and 16%, respectively. In contrast, in the 3 LIPs, the proportion of those who had received a high-level education was much lower, on average only 3% of men and 2% of women, which are lower than the national averages of 5% and 3%, respectively.

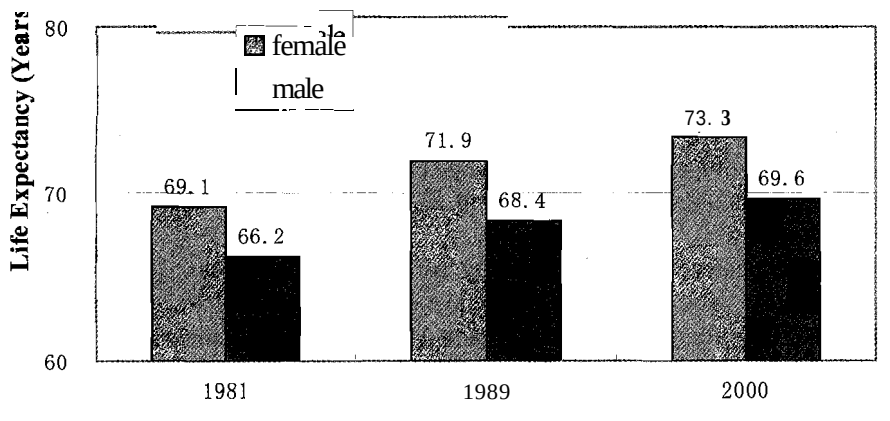
There was an even wider gap in the educational attainments of the population aged 6 and above between the 50 HICs and the 50 LICs than between the HIPs and the LIPs.

In the 50 HICs, the proportionate number of people who had received a medium-level education amounted to 57% for men and 48% for women, much higher than the comparable figures for the 50 LICs (31% for men and 19% for women). It should be noted that, although the population who have received higher-level education are more concentrated in urban China, the proportionate number of people who have received higher-level education is not high. Table 7 clearly shows that significant gaps exist between the 50 HICs and 50 LICs in terms of the number of population who have received a high-level education, with the number for the former amounting to around four times that of the latter.

In the 592 PSCs, the proportionate number of those who have received medium- and high-level education was slightly higher than the mean value of 50 LICs, but was markedly lower than the mean value of 50 HICs. These have reflected that there exist disadvantages in talents in the lower-income and poverty stricken areas.

5) Gaps still exist between ethnic minorities and the Hans in terms of educational status while gaps also exist among different ethnic minorities.

**Figure 4: Life Expectancy in China**



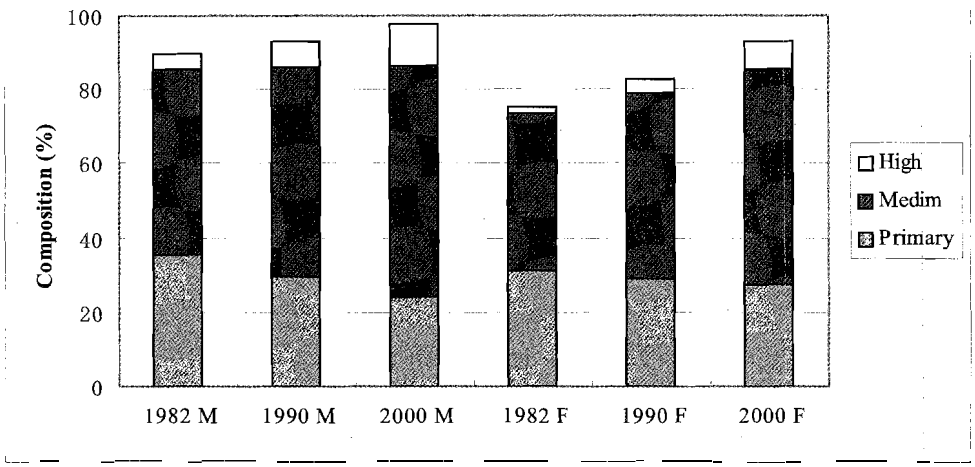

Data sources: calculated by using data taken from 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

### *3.3 Years of School Attainment*

The numbers of years of school attainment are important indicators for any study of a population's educational level.[7] Table 8 presents the years of school attainment for

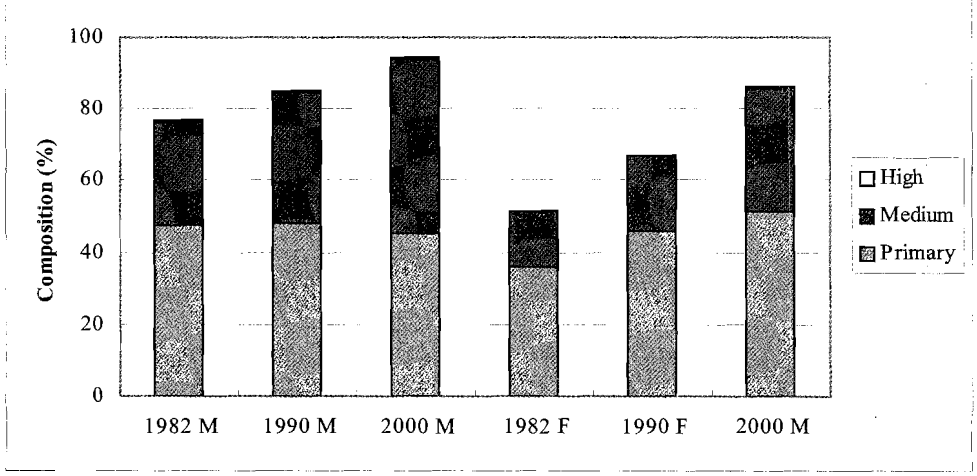
[7] China's population censuses haven't directly gathered information on the years of school attainment. The average years of education are calculated indirectly according to the level of education. When calculating the average years of education, it is necessary to assign a value to the year of education corresponding to different educational level. According to China's school system, the report has assigned values to the years of different educational levels as follows: illiteracy and semi-illiteracy: 0 years; literacy class: 2 years; primary school: 6 years; junior middle school: 9 years; high school and polytechnics: 12 years; professional college: 15 years; postgraduate: 16 years; graduate: 19 years.

**Figure 5: Educational Attainment Composition of China's Urban Population Aged 6 Years and Above (1982-2000)**




Data sources: calculated by using data taken from 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

**Figure 6: Educational Attainment Composision of China's Rural Population Aged 6 Years or Above (1982-2000)**




Data sources: calculated by using data taken from 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

China's population aged 6 and above. Table 8 indicates:

polytechnics: 12 years; professional college: 15 years; postgraduate: 16 years; graduate: 19 years.

**Table 7: Composition of Educational Attainment by Province of Population Aged 6 Years and Above (%)**

| Province | Male | | | Female | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Primary Level | Medium Level | High Level | Primary Level | Medium Level | High Level |
| Beijing | 17.18 | 62.40 | 18.53 | 18.97 | 57.29 | 16.46 |
| Tianjin | 25.90 | 61.14 | 10.47 | 27.89 | 55.16 | 8.38 |
| Hehei | 34.43 | 58.11 | 3.28 | 41.15 | 48.47 | 2.48 |
| Shanxi | 33.59 | 58.95 | 4.25 | 38.44 | 51.07 | 3.19 |
| Inner Mongolia | 32.56 | 56.70 | 4.52 | 35.58 | 46.75 | 3.60 |
| Liaoning | 30.84 | 58.98 | 7.28 | 33.05 | 53.33 | 5.74 |
| Jilin | 34.31 | 56.55 | 5.80 | 37.91 | 50.26 | 4.55 |
| Heilongjiang | 31.56 | 59.27 | 5.67 | 35.37 | 52.11 | 4.45 |
| Shanghai | 19.19 | 65.28 | 1336 | 22.95 | 58.74 | 9.24 |
| Jiangsu | 33.51 | 58.20 | 5.32 | 40.68 | 46.06 | 2.93 |
| Zhejiang | 40.47 | 51.50 | 4.17 | 43.87, | 42.31 | 2.60 |
| Anhui | 39.43 | 51.06 | 3.35 | 46.90 | 35.76 | 1.59 |
| Fujian | 37.35 | 54.09 | 4.17 | 47.59 | 39.62, | 2.09 |
| Jiangxi | 39.17 | 54.34 | 3.78 | 49.69 | 39.41 | 1.81 |
| Shandong | 33.08 | 57.78 | 4.46 | 40.30 | 43.65 | 2.63 |
| Henan | 34.40 | 58.66 | 3.45 | 40.79 | 47.48 | 2.27 |
| Hubei | 36.00 | 55.18 | 5.11 | 41.50 | 43.52 | 3.06 |
| Hunan | 39.78 | 54.01 | 3.86 | 44.22 | 45.55 | 2.32 |
| Guangdong | 34.29 | 58.59 | 4.41 | 39.90 | 49.46 | 2.83 |
| Guangxi | 43.91 | 50.69 | 3.20 | 50.53 | 39.98 | 1.91 |
| Hainan | 36.05 | 55.51 | 4.60 | 41.64 | 42.56 | 226 |
| Chongqing | 47.44 | 44.83 | 3.65 | 48.90 | 37.13 | 2.39 |
| Sichuan | 47.73 | 44.12 | 3.26 | 49.58 | 35.66 | 2.05 |
| Guizhou | 52.11 | 36.46 | 2.66 | 50.63 | 22.17 | 1.60 |
| Yunnan | 53.14 | 35.75 | 2.69, | 53.67 | 25.55 | 1.72 |
| Tibet | 49.08 | 13.37 | 1.87 | 32.62 | 8.97 | 1.02 |
| Shaanxi | 36.52 | 53.40 | 5.38 | 41.10 | 43.65 | 3.56 |
| Gansu | 42.03 | 43.72 | 3.69 | 44.53 | 29.77 | 2.10 |
| Qinghai | 39.95 | 40.38 | 4.23 | 35.35 | 29.35 | 2.90 |
| Ningxia | 38.16 | 48.70 | 4.86 | 40.64 | 37.34 | 3.32 |
| Xinjiang | 42.18 | 46.17 | 5.90 | 44.78 | 40.91 | 5.34 |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | 20.80 | 62.90 | 14.10 | 23.30 | 57.10 | 11.40 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | 46.00 | 43.60 | 3.20 | 48.60 | 30.60 | 1.90 |
| Mean value for 6 EMAs | 43.20 | 41.90 | 3.80 | 43.00 | 33.30 | 2.80 |
| Mean value for 592 PSCs | 45.06 | 41.84 | 1.89 | 46.27 | 28.89 | 0.95 |
| Mean value for 50 HICs | 35.01 | 56.93 | 3.71 | 36.99 | 47.89 | 2.26 |
| Mean value for 50 LICs | 49.03 | 30.62 | 1.13 | 42.92 | 19.11 | 0.49 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 2000 Population Census.

1) Between 1982 and 2000, the years of school attainment for China's population aged 6 and above went up from 5.2 years to 7.6 years, an increase of 46%.
2) Over the same period, there was a rise in the years of school attainment for both males and females, the latter achieving a higher rate (67%) of increase than men (32%). Nevertheless, the women's years of school attainment were still one year lower than the men's.
3) Disaggregated by urban and rural areas, a clear increase was evident in the proportionate numbers of people who received medium-level education in both urban and rural China.

**Table 8: Average Years of Education for Population Aged 6 Years and Above in China (Selected Years)**

| | 1982 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| National Total | 5.20 | 6.25 | 7.6 |
| National Male | 6.14 | 7.02 | 8.12 |
| National Female | 4.22 | 5.44 | 7.05 |
| City Total | 7.22 | 8.02 | 9.38 |
| City Male | 7.86 | 8.6 | 9.78 |
| City Female | 6.53 | 7.39 | 8.96 |
| Urban Town Total | 6.98 | 7.95 | 8.36 |
| Urban Town Male | 7.62 | 8.55 | 8.86 |
| Urban Town Female | 6.24 | 7.28 | 7.84 |
| Rural Total | 4.69 | 5.6 | 6.76 |
| Rural Male | 5.69 | 6.43 | 7.33 |
| Rural Female | 3.65 | 4.74 | 6.15 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

4) Significant gaps exist between areas with different income levels in terms of the average years of education. The higher the income level is, the longer the average years of education and the lower the income level, the shorter the average years of education. Whether a comparison between provinces or counties, the conclusion is fully consistent with the above rule. First, the average years of school attainment for *3* HIPs is about 1.3 years higher than the national average (Table 9). Contrary to this, the average figure for *3* LIPs is about 1 year lower than the national average. Among the three provinces, the average figure for Guangxi is higher while the figures for Guizhou and Gansu are obviously lower.

Second, a comparison between counties shows that, among the 50 HICs, the average years of school attainment of population aged 6 and above is 8.26 years for males and 7.24 for females, which are all higher than their respective national average. In the 50 LICs, the comparable average figure for 6.07 years for males and 4.48 years for females, which are way lower than their respective national average. In the 592 PSCs, the comparable figure is 7.06 years for males and 5.7 years for females, which are obviously lower than the national average and that of the 50 HICs.

Second, a comparison between counties shows that, among the 50 HICs, the average years of school attainment of population aged 6 and above is 8.26 years for males and 7.24 for females, which are all higher than their respective national average. In the 50 LICs, the comparable average figure for 6.07 years

**Table 9: Average Years of Education by Province for Population Aged 6 Years and Above in China, 2000**

| Province | Male | Female | Province | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 10.29 | 9.60 | Anhui | 8.33 | 7.64 |
| Tianjin | 9.32 | 8.55 | Fujian | 8.19 | 7.24 |
| Hebei | 8.07 | 7.36 | Jiangxi | 8.51 | 7.90 |
| Shanxi | 8.70 | 8.03 | Shandong | 8.54 | 7.88 |
| Inner Mongolia | 9.82 | 8.67 | Henan | 7.68 | 6.22 |
| Liaoning | 8.49 | 7.16 | Hubei | 8.16 | 6.86 |
| Jilin | 7.98 | 6.88 | Hunan | 8.18 | 7.20 |
| Heilongjiang | 8.10 | 6.81 | Guangdong | 8.33 | 7.11 |
| Shanghai | 8.22 | 6.89 | Guangxi | 8.21 | 7.31 |
| Jiangsu | 8.56 | 7.53 | Hainan | 8.00 | 7.05 |
| Zhejiang | 8.33 | 6.90 | Chongqing | 7.69 | 6.79 |
| Sichuan | 7.53 | 6.54 | Gansu | 7.30 | 5.69 |
| Guizhou | 6.98 | 5.21 | Qinghai | 6.89 | 5.24 |
| Yunnan | 6.93 | 5.65 | Ningxia | 7.68 | 6.30 |
| Tibet | 4.13 | 2.69 | Xinjiang | 7.90 | 7.46 |
| Shaanxi | 8.20 | 7.14 | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | 9.30 | 8.30 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | 7.50 | 6.10 |
| Mean value for 6 minority-group-concentrated areas | | | | 7.40 | 6.30 |
| Mean value for 592 PSCs | | | | 7.06 | 5.70 |
| Mean value for 50 HICs | | | | 8.26 | 7.24 |
| Mean value for 50 LICs | | | | 6.07 | 4.48 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from 1982, 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

for males and 4.48 years for females, which are way lower than their respective national average. In the 592 PSCs, the comparable figure is 7.06 years for males and 5.7 years for females, which are obviously lower than the national average and that of the 50 HICs.

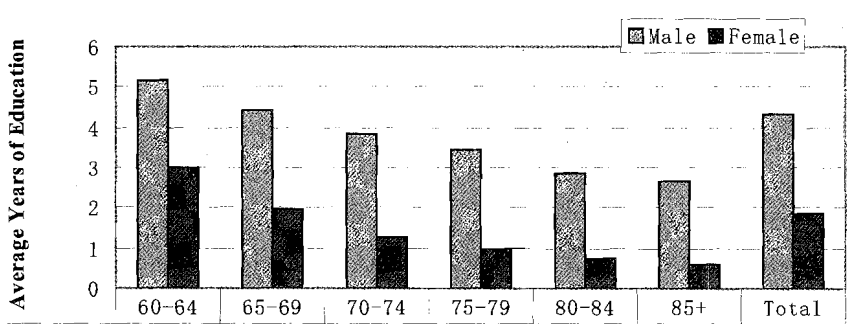
Third, a comparison between different ethnic groups reveals that the average years of education for six ethnic minorities are very close to those of the three LIPs. However, major gaps exist between these minority areas in terms of average years of education. Of which, the average figures for Inner Mongolia and Guangxi are higher than the national average, Xinjiang and Ningxia are close to the national average and Tibet is much lower than the national average.

*5)* The gaps between rural and urban areas in the development of educational

level for the old-aged population are attributed to the gaps between the female old-aged populations. Contrary to the trends of illiteracy and semi-illiteracy rates, with the rise in the ages for different age groups of the elderly, the average age-specific years of education demonstrated a declining trend in 2000, explaining that younger old-aged people received more education. The average years of education for the old-aged in different age groups is at a low level of 1-4 years.

In terms of the average years of education for both men and women, those for the male old-aged population aged 60 and above are 2.5 years than the female figure with the years of education for males being 2.3 times of the female figure, indicating the vulnerability of female old-aged population.[8] As shown in Table 7, the difference in the years of education for each of the age groups is above 2 years. Knowledge development in the past for the female old-aged population lagged seriously behind both from a absolute sense and a relative sense.

**Figure 7: Gender Gaps of China's Old-Aged Population in Terms of Average Years of Education**




| | 60-64 | 65-69 | 70-74 | 75-79 | 80-84 | 85+ | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male | 5.18 | 4.44 | 3.85 | 3.44 | 2.87 | 2.64 | 4.34 |
| Female | 3.02 | 1.95 | 1.3 | 1 | 0.73 | 0.57 | 1.87 |

Data sources: CD-Rom provided by NBS containing original data from sampling surveys on 0.95 ‰ population conducted during the 5th Population Census.

### *3.4 Enrollment Rate*

[8] The average years of education for the population under the 60-64 age group and the population aged 65 and older are the weighted mean value of the educated people years (the product of educational years and the number of corresponding population) for the population under different age groups. The criteria for calculation are: (i) the old criteria are the broad criteria, which suppose 16 as the weighted figure for university and college education, 12 for polytechnic and high school education, 9 for junior middle school education, 6 for primary school education and 0 for illiteracy and semi-illiteracy; (ii) the new criteria are given according to the actual years of education for China's old-aged population, with 13 for university education, 11 for college education, 9 for polytechnic and high school education, 7 for junior middle school education, 5 for primary school education, 0 for illiteracy and semi-illiteracy. See Mu Guangzong, et. al: The Educational Level of China's Old-Aged Population, Market and Population Analysis, 2005, Issue 3.

The enrollment rate and dropout rate of the school-age population can mirror the immediate changes in the status of education. Enrollment rate in this report refers to the proportionate number of the enrolled 7-year-old population out of the total 7-year-olds.[9] Table 10 contains the enrollment rate of school age children obtained from the 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses, which indicates:

1) Between 1990 and 2000, there was a significant increase in the enrollment rate for China's 7-year-old school-age children, climbing from 75.83% to 96.48%.

**Table 10: Gender-specific Enrollment Rate of 7-year-old Children in China's Rural and Urban Areas (%), (Selected Years)**

| Year | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|
| National Total | 75.83 | 96.48 |
| National Male | 77.82 | 96.86 |
| National Female | 73.66 | 96.03 |
| City Total | 79.16 | 97.95 |
| City Male | 79.29 | 98.01 |
| City Female | 79.02 | 97.88 |
| Urban Town Total | 81.42 | 97.93 |
| Urban Town Male | 81.60 | 98.05 |
| Urban Town Female | 81.22 | 97.78 |
| Rural Total | 74.64 | 95.86 |
| Rural Male | 77.19 | 96.37 |
| Rural Female | 71.87 | 95.26 |

Data sources: calculated by using data taken from 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

2) Over the same period, the improvement in the enrollment rate for China's school-age children was demonstrated as the simultaneous improvements in both male and female rates.
3) In 1990s, the female enrollment rate climbed up faster than the male rate and the differences between boys and girls in enrollment rate diminished from 5% to 0.8%. Such differences were originally small and will get smaller over time.
4) The enrollment rate of rural children was slightly lower than their urban partners.
5) In cities and urban towns, there were virtually no gaps between boys and girls in terms of enrollment rate and in some cases, the enrollment rate of girls was even

[9] In line with China's Compulsory Education Law, children aged 6 should be timely enrolled to receive education. However, affected by traditions and customs in different localities, children in some areas start to receive school education at the age of seven, leading to lower enrollment rate for the 6-year-old children. For example, the enrollment rate for the 6-year-olds obtained from the 2000 Population Census was only 80.06%, a big gap with 98% announced in recent years by departments of education. That is to say, the enrollment rate for 6-year-olds cannot accurately reflect that of China's school age children. Therefore, the report has selected the enrollment rate for the 7-year-olds so as to accurately depict the enrollment rate for the school age children in China.

slightly higher than boys' rate. The gaps between boys and girls in rural areas are slightly higher than those of urban areas. Therefore, China's the small gaps between boys and girls in terms of enrollment rate mainly exist in rural areas.

6) The enrollment rates for the school age children of 3 HIPs were higher than the national average, close to 100% (Table 11). The comparable rates of 3 LIPs (92% for boys, 91% for girls) were evidently lower than the national average (97% for boys and 96% for girls).

**Table 11: Enrollment Rate by Province of 7-year-old Children in China (%), 2000**

| Province | Male | Female | Province | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 100.0 | 100.0 | Zhejiang | 99.0 | 98.2 |
| Tianjin | 97.8 | 98.1 | Anhui | 97.4 | 97.1 |
| Hebei | 98.6 | 99.3 | Fujian | 96.1 | 97.8 |
| Shanxi | 97.9 | 98.0 | Jiangxi | 98.2 | 97.6 |
| Inner Mongolia | 95.8 | 96.8 | Shandong | 97.4 | 96.4 |
| Liaoning | 96.7 | 97.8 | Henan | 99.2 | 98.8 |
| Jilin | 94.1 | 96.2 | Hubei | 98.9 | 99.5 |
| Heilongjiang | 97.6 | 98.6 | Hunan | 97.5 | 98.0 |
| Shanghai | 98.5 | 100.0 | Guangdong | 94.1 | 91.8 |
| Jiangsu | 99.6 | 98.8 | Guangxi | 92.9 | 95.8 |
| Hainan | 89.7 | 88.2 | Shaanxi | 98.1 | 95.6 |
| Chongqing | 98.8 | 98.0 | Gansu | 92.3 | 91.0 |
| Sichuan | 95.4 | 96.2 | Qinghai | 84.3 | 76.1 |
| Guizhou | 91.9 | 87.3 | Ningxia | 91.1 | 94.3 |
| Yunnan | 93.6 | 91.0 | Xinjiang | 92.9 | 94.2 |
| Tibet | 57.7 | 68.0 | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | 98.8 | 99.4 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | 92.4 | 91.4 |
| Mean value for 6 minority group areas | | | | 87.3 | 90.0 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 2000 Population Censuses.

7) The enrollment rates of the six ethnic minority areas were even lower with only 87% for boys and 90% for girls, particularly in Tibet, where the rates were only 58% for boys and 68% for girls. This is a reflection of nationality and regional inequalities in primary education, which allows no more negligence from us.

8) After high school, the educational level of females was obviously lower than that of males.

There are virtually no gender gaps during primary school education. After the year 1999, gender gaps in terms of junior middle school enrollment rate have been narrowing and in 2002, the difference between the male and female enrollment rates for junior middle schools was only 0.9 percentage points. Such differences, however, begin to emerge during high school education, mainly because of different economic

conditions of different households. In China, high school education no longer falls under compulsory education. If families don't have sufficient economic capacity, affected by the traditional gender concept (girls will get married sooner or later) and the patterns of sons supporting the old-aged, male students tend to enter high schools more easily than females.'[10]

**Table 12: Gender Gaps in High-school Enrollment Rate (%)**

| Year | Female | Male | Proportion of Female Students in School |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | 22.2 | 27.3 | 40.4 |
| 2000 | 26.6 | 31.9 | 41.9 |
| 2001 | 30.5 | 34.7 | 43.2 |
| 2002 | 34.1 | 37.7 | 44.1 |

Data sources: China Education Yearbook (1999-2002).

However, in terms of university enrollment rate, the female rate was higher than the male rate and the gaps were getting wider over time (See Table 13). To some extent, this shows that the learning capacity of female students is higher than that of male students and the rate of return of investments in education for girls is higher. Still, the enrolled students, males make up the majority, but the proportionate numbers of girls in the enrolled students increases year by year.

**Table 13: Gender Gaps in University Enrollment Rate (%)**

| Year | Female | Male | Proportion of Female Students Among the Enrolled |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | 58.4 | 59.3 | 40.3 |
| 2000 | 75.3 | 71.7 | 42.1 |
| 2001 | 80.5 | 77.6 | 42.7 |
| 2002 | 87.4 | 80.7 | 44.3 |

Data sources: China Education Yearbook (1999-2002).

## *3.5 Dropout Rate for School Age Children*

According to China's Compulsory Education Law, it is the basic rights of the school age children to receive education at schools. However, in reality, due to various reasons some children have not received school education. The report uses dropout rate to measure the status of children being deprived of education or being dropped out. According to population census data, the dropout rate in the report refers to the percentage of 7-14-year-old children who are not able to go to schools due to a variety of reasons.[11] Table 14 gives the dropout rates of school age children

[10] See Shao Mingbo: Analysis of Features and Status Quo of Female Human Capital in China, Market and Population Analysis, 2005, Issue 4.

[11] The dropout rate obtained in this way is the broad-sense rate. These children who were not receiving education at school include those who once learned at school but were dropped out midway (these are the narrow-sense dropout children), those who never received education at school and those who completed primary school but didn't go to junior middle school. All of these scenarios are inconsistent with the requirements of China for promoting 9-year compulsory education and therefore, these children are identically referred to as dropout children. As stated above, some children didn't go school in time at the age of 6, it is, therefore, necessary to try to avoid this age group. Likewise, this age group should also be avoided when calculating dropout rate. Thus, the reference age for dropout rate is defined between 7-14 years.

calculated according to data from the 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses. Table 14 indicates:

**Table 14: Gender-Specific Dropout Rate of Children Aged 7-14 Years in China's Rural and Urban Areas (%), Selected Years**

| Year | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|
| National Total | 13.16 | 2.68 |
| National Male | 11.44 | 2.50 |
| National Female | 15.01 | 2.89 |
| City Total | 11.55 | 2.51 |
| City Male | 11.27 | 2.58 |
| City Female | 11.86 | 2.44 |
| Urban Town Total | 9.55 | 2.12 |
| Urban Town Male | 9.39 | 2.11 |
| Urban Town Female | 9.73 | 2.14 |
| Rural Total | 13.78 | 2.82 |
| Rural Male | 11.65 | 2.55 |
| Rural Female | 16.06 | 3.13 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

1) Between 1990 and 2000 the dropout rate of China's school age children had decreased from 13.2% to 2.7%, a drop of 80%.
2) Over the same period, the gender gaps in terms of dropout rate had been narrowing. In 1990, girls' dropout rate was 3.6 percentage points higher than that of boys, but by 2000 the gap diminished to 0.4 percentage points.
3) The dropout rate of school age children in rural areas was slightly higher than their urban partners.
4) Gender gaps in terms of dropout rate nationwide were mainly originated from those in rural areas.
5) The dropout rates of 3 HIPs were lower than national average while those of 3 LIPs were evidently higher than national average.
6) Dropout rates of six ethnic minority areas were even higher, which triple the national average. The rates for boys and girls of Xinjiang, Tibet and Yunnan were around or higher than 10%, which is worth attention.

Some basic conclusions can be drawn from the above analysis: in the field of access to education, the education level has been increasing both in urban and rural areas of China. Although there are still some gaps between males and females, such gaps have been closing and already diminished to relatively small extent. Facts have shown that, over the past two decades, social gender inequalities in China in the field of education have been markedly improved.

**Table 15: Gender-Specific Dropout Rate by Province of Children Aged 7-14 Years in China (%), 2000**

| Province | Male | Female | Province | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 1.6 | 1.3 | Anhui | 1.8 | 2.9 |
| Tianjin | 2.8 | 1.2 | Fujian | 2.0 | 2.5 |
| Hebei | 1.3 | 1.5 | Jiangxi | 3.2 | 5.3 |
| Shanxi | 2.9 | 4.1 | Shandong | 2.1 | 4.3 |
| Inner Mongolia | 3.9 | 5.5 | Henan | 1.9 | 3.0 |
| Liaoning | 3.4 | 2.9 | Hubei | 3.6 | 5.5 |
| Jilin | 5.0 | 6.4 | Hunan | 2.9 | 3.3 |
| Heilongjiang | 3.9 | 5.5 | Guangdong | 1.0 | 1.5 |
| Shanghai | 2.8 | 3.3 | Guangxi | 4.1 | 4.9 |
| Jiangsu | 1.4 | 3.3 | Hainan | 2.3 | 3.1 |
| Zhejiang | 1.4 | 1.6 | Chongqing | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| Sichuan | 3.3 | 4.2 | Gansu | 3.0 | 4.3 |
| Guizhou | 3.9 | 7.1 | Qinghai | 5.7 | 5.4 |
| Yunnan | 6.7 | 9.7 | Ningxia | 4.2 | 6.0 |
| Tibet | 13.7 | 9.7 | Xinjiang | 12.1 | 14.3 |
| Shaanxi | 1.7 | 2.2 | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | 2.4 | 1.9 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | 3.7 | 5.4 |
| Mean value for 6 minority group areas | | | | 7.5 | 8.4 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 2000 Population Census.

## *3.6 Sex Ratios for Enrolled Postgraduates and Graduates*

Despite the shrinking gaps between the educational attainments of men and women, we also noted that the inequalities between men and women in terms of higher education still persist, which are fairly significant. To better demonstrate this finding, we have calculated the sex ratios for the enrolled graduates and postgraduates using aggregated data for each of the provinces in the 2000 Population Census (See Table 16).

Data in Table 14 indicates that, in China, women continue to be in the minority among that proportion of the population currently receiving an undergraduate education. At the higher levels, in postgraduate education, women are seen to be even more under-represented.

1) The 2000 Population Census revealed that among undergraduate students enrolled in China, the sex ratio was 146, i.e. there were 146 male students for every 100 female students with the males markedly outnumbering the females.
2) Similarly, among Chinese postgraduate students enrolled, the sex ratio was 164, i.e. there were 164 male students for every 100 females with the males being much higher than the females.

3) Table 14 also indicates that the above phenomenon of male undergraduates and postgraduates outnumbering females occurred in most provinces and manifested basically the same trend. The only variation was in the extent to which females were disadvantaged.

4) Both in the 3 HIPs and 3 LIPs, sex ratios of enrolled postgraduates and graduates were fairly high. At present, disadvantages of females in receiving high-level education have demonstrated similar patterns.

5) In six ethnic minority areas, the sex ratios of enrolled postgraduates and graduates also exceeded 100. This shows that, similar to most of other areas, these had fewer opportunities for access to high-level education for females than for males.

**Table 16: Sex Ratios for Enrolled Postgraduates and Graduates in the Provinces of China, 2000 (Female=100)**

| Province | Sex Ratio for Enrolled Postgraduates | Sex Ratio for Enrolled Graduates | Province | Sex Ratio for Enrolled Postgraduates | Sex Ratio for Enrolled Graduates |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 133.65 | 191.04 | Tianjin | 122.97 | 129.76 |
| Hebei | 117.78 | 96.09 | Shanxi | 129.35 | 105.16 |
| Inner Mongolia | 105.53 | 100.98 | Liaoning | 124.50 | 138.34 |
| Jilin | 123.55 | 126.17 | Heilongjiang | 137.52 | 150.56 |
| Shanghai | 120.60 | 165.64 | Jiangsu | 156.79 | 178.54 |
| Zhejiang | 145.57 | 192.02 | Anhui | 210.56 | 309.92 |
| Fujian | 162.20 | 171.43 | Jiangxi | 208.94 | 192.94 |
| Shandong | 149.67 | 129.67 | Henan | 164.09 | 127.27 |
| Hubei | 170.10 | 190.87 | Hunan | 177.53 | 173.31 |
| Guangdong | 140.43 | 150.57 | Guangxi | 166.49 | 155.79 |
| Hainan | 150.22 | 314.29 | Chongqing | 146.71 | 183.06 |
| Sichuan | 149.54 | 181.34 | Guizhou | 150.24 | 187.80 |
| Yunnan | 133.08 | 185.39 | Tibet | 143.84 | 50.00 |
| Shaanxi | 164.03 | 182.65 | Gansu | 182.47 | 143.06 |
| Ningxia | 103.13 | 233.33 | Qinghai | 109.66 | 140.00 |
| Xinjiang | 89.86 | 168.42 | | | |
| National Total | 146.09 | 164.32 | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | 131.02 | 184.62 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | 168.42 | 153.93 |
| Mean value for 6 minority group areas | | | | 128.91 | 147.92 |

Data sources: Calculated according to data taken from the 2000 Population Census Data for whole China and the provinces published by the State Council Population Census Office and Provincial Population Census Offices.

In the six areas, however, the sex ratios of enrolled postgraduates and graduates were lower than both the national average and the mean figures of 3 HIPs and 3 LIPs. This indicates that, in these areas, more attention has been paid to women's receiving high-level education. However, the scale of high-level education in these areas is still too small, which is not sufficient to alter the overall trends nationwide.

# Chapter 4 Gender Gaps: Employment

Employment status is an important indicator reflecting the status of economic activities conducted by a population. According to the 2000 Population Census Data, the report will explore gender differences in terms of employment rate from the perspectives of employment rate, unemployment rate, sectoral structure of the employed population and occupational structure of the employed population.

## *4.1 Employment Rate*

Prior to calculating the employment rate, the age limits of the working age population must be defined. To do this, two methods are frequently employed: one is based on the international standard, that is to regard that proportion of the population aged 15-64 as the working age population, and the other is based on the retiring age of the working age population, that is to define men aged 15-59 and women aged 15-54 as the working age population. The latter approach is more often used in Chinese research on employment rates and, also in this report, the employment rate is calculated using the second method

Employments rates obtained from three population censuses since 1982 are provided in Table 17, which shows:

**Table** 17: **Gender-specific Employment Rate for China's Rural and Urban Areas in Selected Years** (%)

| Year | 1982 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|---|
| National Total | 86.59 | 87.15 | 81.63 |
| Male Nationwide | 91.01 | 90.07 | 85.96 |
| Female Nationwide | 81.55 | 83.82 | 76.88 |
| Urban Total | 85.73 | 80.49 | 70.20 |
| Urban Male | 90.73 | 84.79 | 77.11 |
| Urban Female | 79.75 | 75.45 | 62.81 |
| Rural Total | 92.48 | 89.81 | 89.12 |
| Rural Male | 97.66 | 92.23 | 91.62 |
| Rural Female | 86.65 | 87.09 | 86.32 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

1) Between 1982 and 2000, generally speaking, there was a decrease in the employment rate among the Chinese working age population. The national rate decreased from 87% to 82%, a drop of five percentage points.
2) Over the same period, both male and female employment rates also decreased by 4-5 percentage points.

3) The male employment rate is always some 8 per cent higher than that of women.
4) The employment rate for the working age population in rural China is higher than that of urban areas[12].
5) Over the past 20 years, the employment rates of China's rural male and female working age population had maintained at high levels. Meanwhile, the employment rate of urban population had dropped significantly by 13 percentage points for male labor force and 15 percentage points for female labor force.

The nationwide drop of employment rate for the working age population is basically attributed to the drop of the rate for urban working age population.

6) Examined by regions, remarkable differences in terms of employment rate exist in different regions. Employment rates of the economically dieveloped regions such as Shanghai were fairly low with the male employment rate below 80% and female rate between 60-65% (Table 18), whereas the male employment rates in most economically backward provinces were above 90% and female rates are around 80%. In some provinces (such as Yunnan, Sichuan, Guangxi and Guizhou, etc.), the female rates were also above 90%.

The attributions for high employment rates in relatively underdeveloped regions are mainly: first, the proportionate numbers of agricultural population are high in these areas. In rural China, the natural employment approach is applied and the laborers work for as long as they possibly can. As a result, the employment rate of the higher-age population is still kept at a higher level. Second, the youngsters in rural areas have received relatively less education and therefore, they left school at a fairly early stage and jointed the labor force. As a consequence, the employment rate of lower-age-group youngsters is higher than that of cities and urban towns.

7) Remarkable gaps exist between 3 HIPs and 3 LIPs in terms of employment rate. The average male employment rate of Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin was 79%, and the female rates of these regions were between 60-65% with an average of 64%. The rates of 3 LIPs of Guizhou, Gansu and Guangxi were all very high with male and female rates all over 90%. The averages of male and female employment rates of the three provinces had all reached 94%.
8) In the six ethnic minority areas, the average male employment rate was 92% and the female rate, 85%. But significant gaps exist among these areas. The male and female employment rates of Inner Mongolia and Xinjiang were relatively low, of which the male rate for Inner Mongolia was 89% and female rate, 72% while the male rate for Xinjiang was 89% and female rate, 73%.

As for the other four ethnic minority areas including Yunnan, Ningxia, Tibet and Guangxi were all considerably high. For example, Yunnan's rates reached 96% for males and 97% for females and those for Guangxi also reached 93% and 95%,

[12] Since the nature and implications of employment by rural and urban population are completely different, and employment of urban population is certain while that of rural population is uncertain, the comparisons can only be of linear nature and cannot be certain.

respectively.

**Table 18: Gender-specific Employment Rate by Province in , (%)**

| Province | Male | Female | Province | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 79.92 | 64.98 | Zhejiang | 95.14 | 75.95 |
| Tianjin | 78.37 | 60.30 | Anhui | 96.63 | 91.05 |
| Hebei | 93.30 | 82.77 | Fujian | 88.86 | 72.12 |
| Shanxi | 91.76 | 67.25 | Jiangxi | 90.63 | 80.57 |
| Inner Mongolia | 89.38 | 71.97 | Shandong | 95.98 | 90.04 |
| Liaoning | 84.99 | 70.04 | Henan | 96.72 | 94.95 |
| Jilin | 84.46 | 67.69 | Hubei | 88.49 | 82.31 |
| Heilongjiang | 83.06 | 61.48 | Hunan | 92.68 | 84.26 |
| Shanghai | 78.74 | 65.75 | Guangdong | 88.25 | 80.20 |
| Jiangsu | 93.57 | 90.59 | Guangxi | 93.37 | 94.82 |
| Yunnan | 96.59 | 97.01 | Hainan | 85.63 | 83.52 |
| Tibet | 93.93 | 89.65 | Chongqing | 95.62 | 93.60 |
| Shaanxi | 89.87 | 81.91 | Sichuan | 97.09 | 97.04 |
| Gansu | 93.36 | 90.59 | Guizhou | 95.36 | 95.95 |
| Qinghai | 89.77 | 83.71 | Ningxia | 91.46 | 81.72 |
| Xinjiang | 88.63 | 73.31 | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | 79.0 | 63.7 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | 94.0 | 93.8 |
| Mean value for 6 minority group areas | | | | 92.2 | 84.7 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 2000 Population Census.

### *4.2 Age-specific Employment Rate*

In order to examine gender gaps in terms of employment rate in a more accurate manner, it is also necessary to examine the age-specific employment rates of the sexes.

Although 'the age limits of working age population have been defined from a statistical perspective, in reality, many people whose age outnumbers such limits are still working. To better reflect people's participation in employment, the age-specific employment rate in this section is calculated according to the real situation and such calculation is not limited in the range of working age population.

In order to more effectively present the calculations, we have produced Figure 7 based on the gender- and age-specific employment rates for the whole of China and its rural and urban areas for 1990 and 2000. Figure 7 indicates:

1) There was a considerably high employment rate among the working age population in China; especially at the peak employment age, the male employment rate was higher than 95% and the female rate also reached close to 90%. Such high rates are rare in other countries worldwide.
2) Between 1990 and 2000, the employment rate of China's working age population had decline. This can be effectively reflected from the position of the peak employment curve disaggregated by gender for 1990 and 2000. In 1990, the employment rate of male working age population aged between 21-45 was close to 100%, and the comparable rate for females aged between 21-40 also reached as high as 90%. In 2000, the male employment rate at the peak employment age group decreased by about 3 percentage points over the 1990 figure and the comparable female rate dropped by about 5 percentage points.
3) Generally speaking, the female employment rate is lower than the male rate.
4) There is a marked difference between the age patterns of male and female employment. The manifestations are:

   (i) The female employment rate is higher than the male in the young group aged 15-20. The higher rate of female employment in this young group is an indication that they left school and joined the labor force earlier than men, showing their disadvantage in receiving higher education.

   (ii) After the age of 22, the average age at which males start to be employed, the employment rate for women never surpasses that of men.

**Figure 7-1: Gender-Age Specific Employment Rate in China, 1990**

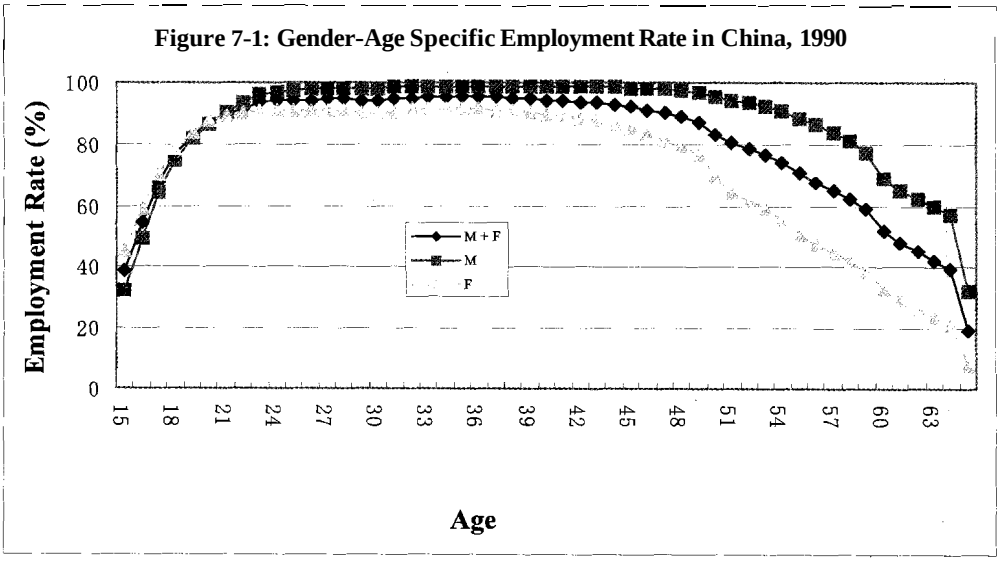


**Figure 7-2: Gender-Age Specific Employment Rate in China, 2000**

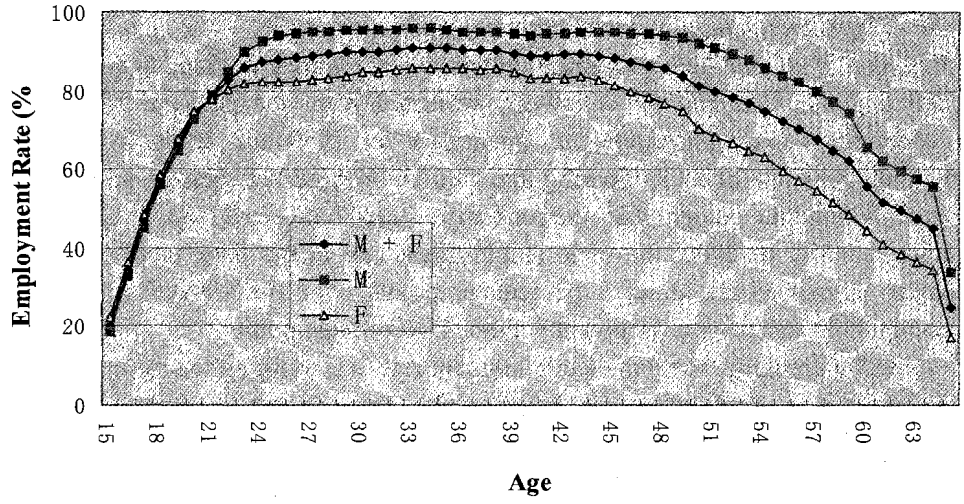



**Figure 7-3: Gender-Age Specific Employment Rate for China's Urban Population, 2000**

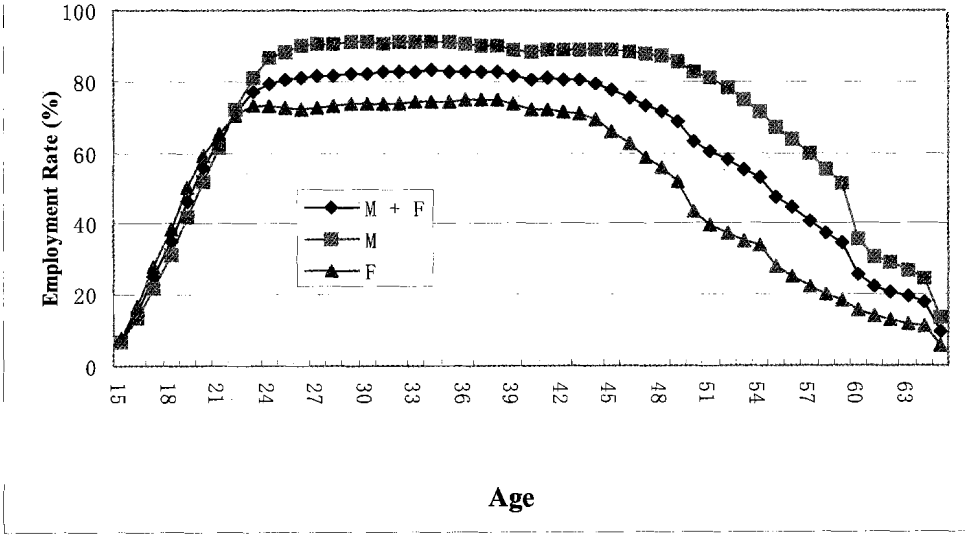
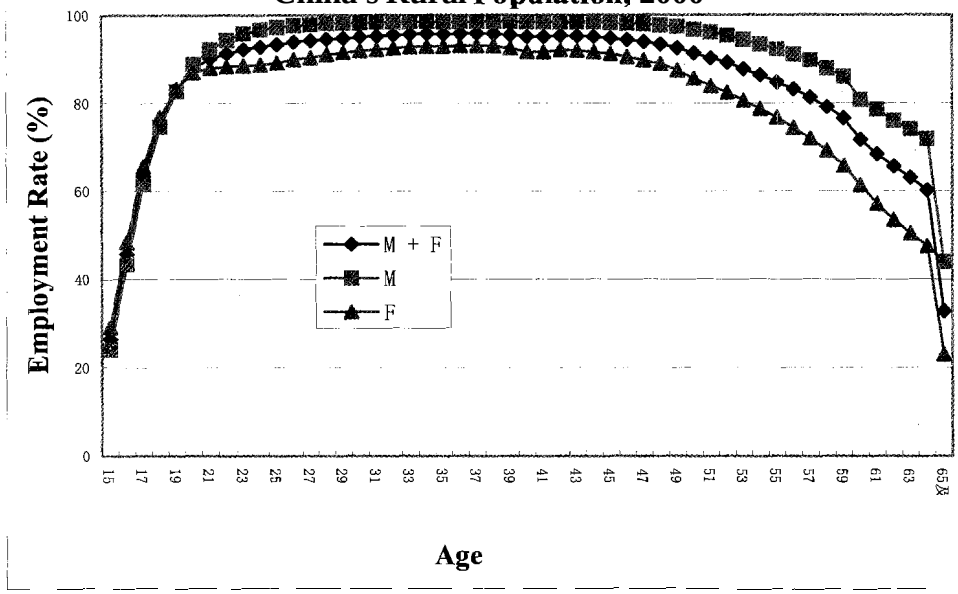


**Figure 7-4: Gender-Age Specific Employment Rate for China's Rural Population, 2000**




Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

(iii) The employment disparities between men and women are more prominent regarding the employment of the urban middle-aged labor force. Since mid 1990s, China has experienced increasing pressure in the field of employment. Many urban people of working age have lost their jobs. Two basic characteristics can be identified from the 2000 gender-age specific employment rate curve for urban China: first, the decline in the curve for women labor force occurs five or even more five years earlier than does in the curve for men; second, the curve declines faster for women labor force than for men.

The causes of the disparities between the male and female employment rates in urban China are many and various. The main causes include: (i) gender differences regarding legal code provisions for the retirement ages of men and women, with women having to retire some five years earlier than men; (ii) increasing pressure in the urban employment situation since the mid-1990s which has placed a heavier burden upon women and put them at a greater disadvantage with regard to employment. In some urban areas, women workers in their forties, and even some in their thirties, were forced out of their jobs, were laid-off or had to retire early.

*5)* Obvious differences exist between China's urban and rural employment rates. These differences are concentrated in the following three aspects: firstly, compared with urban areas, rural China has a higher employment rate among

younger age groups, which is mainly accounted for by the decreased opportunities for the rural young people, many of whom become employed after they graduate from junior middle school (some even fail to graduate); secondly, the employment of an able rural labor force has reached its peak, nearly 100% of the able men being employed, while the urban peak employment rate remains relatively low; lastly, after reaching old age, the employment rate for the urban labor force declines rapidly, falling below 10% after the age of sixty. In contrast, the rural employment rate is still very high among the elderly, reaching some 60% around the age of 60 and even 20% after the age of 65: this is a well-established tradition passed down from older generations, and is also related to the poor status of social security in rural China. The absence of social security provisions forces the elderly rural population to work for as long as they possibly can.

### *4.3 Sectoral Distribution of Labor Force*

Data concerning the sectoral distribution of the employed population in China is shown in Table19, which reveals:

1) The sectors of agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry as well manufacturing (classified as industry in 1990) have absorbed the most labor force. In 2000, the two sectors absorbed 64% and 12% of China's labor force.
2) The most prominent change in the sectoral structure of the Chinese labor force between 1982 and 2000 was the decline in numbers of both men and women in the labor force concentrated in farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fisheries. The proportions in this sector fell from 74% in 1982 to 64% in 2000, with a decrease of ten percentage points.
3) While the labor force was declining in the farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery sectors, other sectors were experiencing a rise, with the greatest increase in the wholesale and retail trades and catering services (classified in 1982 as business, food and beverage services, material supply and sale and storage; in 1990 as business, public food and beverage services, material supply and sale and storage) . The proportionate numbers of labor force concentrated in this sector had seen a two-fold increase from 3% in 1982 to 6.7% in 2000.
4) China's male and female labor force had shared almost identical overall patterns of sectoral distribution 2000 and identical changes in such patterns between 1982-2000.
5) Nevertheless, there were some gaps between male and female labor force in terms of sectoral distribution. A comparison between the male and female sectoral distributions has revealed that that female labor force was more concentrated in agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry, where the distribution of female labor force was 8 percentage points higher than the male distribution. This explains that more rural male laborers have migrated to engage in off-farm work while more rural females stay at home to engage in farming activities, demonstrating the gender-division pattern of "men being in charge of external affairs and women being in charge of internal affairs".

Male labor force was more distributed in the sectors of construction, public departments, political parties and mass groups, transport, post and telecommunication, etc. In these three sectors, the distribution of male labor force was higher than that of the female labor force by 4, 2 and 2 percentage points, respectively.

**Table 19: Gender-specific Sectoral Composition of China's Labor Force (%) in Selected Years**

| Sector | 1982 | | | 1990 | | | 2000 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | M&F Total | Male | Fem. | M&F Total | Male | Fem | M&F Total | Male | Fem. |
| Farming, Forestry, Animal Husbandry, Fishery | 73.7 | 70.3 | 78.0 | 72.2 | 69.1 | 76.1 | 64.4 | 60.7 | 68.8 |
| Construction | 2.1 | 3.0 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 0.7 | 2.7 | 4.4 | 0.7 |
| Finance & Insurance | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 |
| Scientific Research & Technical Services | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Agencies & organizations | 1.5 | 2.2 | 0.7 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 1.0 | 2.4 | 3.1 | 1.4 |
| Education & Culture | 2.4 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.2 | 2.6 | 2.4 | 2.8 |
| Health Care & Sports | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 1.3 |
| Transport, Post & Telecommunication | 1.7 | 2.4 | 0.9 | 1.8 | 2.7 | 0.8 | 2.6 | 3.9 | 1.0 |
| Geological Prosp. & Water Conservancy | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.1 |
| Manufacturing | 11.8 | 11.7 | 11.9 | / | / | / | 12.5 | 12.4 | 12.5 |
| Electric Power & Gas | 0.3 | 0.4 | 0.2 | / | / | / | 0.6 | 0.8 | 0.4 |
| Real Estate | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Wholesale & Retail Trade, Catering Serv. | 3.0 | 3.0 | 2.9 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 4.1 | 6.7 | 6.2 | 7.3 |
| Mining and Quarrying | / | / | / | / | / | / | 1.0 | 1.6 | 0.4 |
| Social Services | / | / | / | / | / | / | 2.2 | 2.3 | 2.0 |
| Mining & Wood | 1.6 | 2.3 | 0.7 | / | / | / | / | / | / |
| Industry | / | / | / | 13.4 | 13.9 | 12.8 | / | / | / |
| Miscellaneous | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

Note: There were changes in the sectoral classification criteria in the previous population censuses. Such changes are: 1) farming, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery (while in 1982 it was farming, forestry, animal husbandry, fishery and water conservancy); 2) construction; 3) finance and insurance; 4) scientific research and comprehensive technical services; 5) public departments, political-party agencies and social groups (in 1982 it was public departments, political parties and mass groups; 6) education, culture and arts and radio, film and television (in 1982 it was education, culture and arts and in 1990 it was education, culture and arts and radio and film. They are only slight different); 7) health, sports and social welfare (in 1982 it was housing, sports and social welfare); 8) transportation, storage and posts and telecommunications (in 1982 and 1990 it was transportation and posts and telecommunications); 9) geological prospecting and water conservancy (in 1982 and 1990 it was geological survey and exploration; 10) manufacturing (absent in 1990); 11) production and supply of power, gas and water (absent in 1990); 12) real estate (in 1982 it was housing, public utilities administration and resident services; in 1990 it was real estate administration, public utilities, resident services and consulting services); 13) wholesale and retail trade and catering services (in 1982 it was commerce, catering, goods supply and marketing and storage; in 1990 it was commerce, public, catering, goods supply and marketing and storage); 14) mining and quarrying (absent in 1982 and 1990); 15) social services (absent in 1982 and 1990); 16) mining and timber logging and transportation (absent in 1990 and 2000); 17) industry (absent in 1982 and 2000), 18) other sectors (slightly different in different years).

### *4.4 Occupational Structure of Labor Force*

The occupational structure of labor force in China is indicated in Table 20, which shows:

1) From 1982 to 2000 the most outstanding characteristics of changes in the occupational distribution of China's labor force were the decline in the proportionate numbers of workers in the sector of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery and the climb in the sector of commerce and services. In

1982 workers in agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery accounted for 72% of the total and declined to *65%* in 2000, a drop of 8 percentage points. Meanwhile, the proportion of workers in commerce and services increased by *5* percentage points from 4% to 9%. This reflects the changes in China's industrial structure since the reforms and opening up.

2) Some gaps exist between male and female labor force in terms of occupational structure. In the occupations such as responsible staff of party and government departments and enterprises, production and transport workers, distribution of men was more concentrated while in the occupational fields such as agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery and services, the distribution of women was more concentrated. It is clear that, in terms of selection of occupations, men tend to engage in the occupations that enjoy higher social status while women engage more in the occupations with lower social status.

**Table 20: Gender-Specific Occupational Composition of China's Labor Force in Selected Years (%)**

| Sector | 1982 | | | 1990 | | | 2000 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | M | F | Total | M | F | Total | M | F |
| Responsible staff of public departments, political and mass organizations and public service units. | 1.56 | 2.48 | 0.37 | 1.75 | 2.81 | 0.45 | 1.72 | 2.61 | 0.64 |
| Various professional and technical staff | 5.07 | 5.56 | 4.44 | 5.31 | 5.29 | 5.35 | 5.85 | 5.16 | 6.69 |
| Clerks and otlier staff | 1.30 | 1.75 | 0.73 | 1.74 | 2.35 | 0.99 | 3.18 | 4.06 | 2.12 |
| Businessmen | 1.81 | 1.74 | 1.89 | 3.01 | 2.92 | 3.12 | 9.42 | 8.60 | 10.41 |
| Service personnel | 2.21 | 2.04 | 2.42 | 2.4 | 2.11 | 2.75 | | | |
| Laborers in agriculture, forestry and animal husbandry | 71.98 | 68.01 | 77.10 | 70.58 | 66.76 | 75.26 | 63.61 | 59.84 | 68.18 |
| Production workers, transport workers and other relevant workers | 15.99 | 18.33 | 12.96 | 15.16 | 17.72 | 12.03 | 16.16 | 19.66 | 11.91 |
| Other unclassified workers | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.08 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.05 | 0.07 | 0.08 | 0.05 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data obtained from the 1982, 1990 and 2000 population censuses.

## *4.5 Unemployment Rate*

The unemployment rates obtained from the 1990 and 2000 are shown in Table 21. It should be pointed out that the definition of unemployment applied in the 1990 and the

2000 Population Censuses was not exactly the same[13] and the comparability of the unemployment rate data from the two Population Censuses is not high. However, this data still represents the basic tract of China's unemployment rate, especially the reported unemployment rate:

**Table 21: Gender-Specific Unemployment Rate in China Rural and Urban Areas (%)**

| Year | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|---|---|
| National Total | 0.88 | 3.68 |
| National Male | 0.81 | 3.60 |
| National Female | 0.96 | 3.88 |
| Urban Total | 1.79 | 8.36 |
| Urban Male | 1.64 | 7.78 |
| Urban Female | 1.99 | 9.17 |
| Rural Total | 0.17 | 1.20 |
| Rural Male | 0.16 | 1.26 |
| Rural Female | 0.19 | 1.16 |

Data sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses.

1) Over the last ten years, the unemployment rate among the Chinese working age population has been increasing. The national unemployment rate for working age people rose from 0.88% in 1990 through 2.44% in 199514, to 3.68% in 2000. A period of ten years saw a fourfold increase in China's unemployment rate.
2) The results of population censuses and sample surveys indicate that the unemployment rate for Chinese women (3.88 per cent) has been somewhat higher than that of men (3.60).
3) Unemployment rates for the male and female rural labor forces revealed by population censuses have been low. Yet this phenomenon is primarily caused by difficulties in defining the employment and unemployment of rural labor force in China. Because household employment prevails in rural areas and farmers work on their own contracted land, it is therefore difficult to define employment based on working time and the number of times they participate in work. According to the relevant requirements of the population censuses, the rural labor force with contracted land was not included among the figures for the unemployed. Hence, the rural unemployment rate attained via population census registration cannot properly reflect the actually higher unemployment situation in rural China.
4) Nevertheless, unemployment rate in rural China has been on the rise since 1990s.
5) Unemployment rate in urban China is relatively high. Ever since 1990s, urban unemployment rate has seen considerable increases. China's urban labor force unemployment rate in 1990 was 1.79% and jumped up to 8.36% by 2000. The

[13] In China, it was once believed that there was no unemployment. Even in cases of enormous employment pressure, it was only viewed in terms of people waiting to be employed. Not until the 1990s did unemployment become a widely accepted fact. In the 1990 Population Census, the unemployment population mainly referred to the urban population waiting to be employed. In the 2000 Population Census, the unemployment population included the following two types of individuals: those who had never worked and were seeking jobs, and those who had lost their jobs and were seeking jobs.

[14] Results of 1995 sampling surveys on 1% population conducted by NBS.

unemployment rate in urban China can properly reflect the then unemployment levels of China's working population, which were more objective and reasonable than the officially registered unemployment rates.

6) Urban female employment rate was slightly higher than the male rate and gender differences in terms of unemployment rate had been expanding over time, reflecting that with employment restructuring unemployment risks for females are markedly higher than males.
7) Disaggregated by provinces (See Table 22), there were major gaps in the unemployment rates of different provinces. The male and female unemployment rates in Tibet, Yunnan and Shandong are all about 1%, compared with male and female rates as high as 10% in Shanghai and Liaoning.
8) With the few exceptions of Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan provinces, the female unemployment rates are higher than the male rates in most provinces.
9) The 3 HIPs had the highest unemployment rates, which ranged from 5% to 10% for males and females. The average male unemployment rate for the three provinces was 8% and the female, 9%.

**Tab 2: Un ıploy ːnt Rate by Province in China, 2000**

| Province | Male | Female | Province | Male | Female |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 5.48 | 5.87 | Zhejiang | 3.16 | 3.52 |
| Tianjin | 8.77 | 10.58 | Anhui | 2.42 | 2.82 |
| Hebei | 2.18 | 2.57 | Fujian | 4.74 | 4.89 |
| Shanxi | 3.73 | 4.80 | Jiangxi | 3.38 | 3.79 |
| Inner Mongolia | 4.76 | 5.53 | Shandong | 1.61 | 1.81 |
| Liaoning | 8.18 | 11.11 | Henan | 2.05 | 2.47 |
| Jilin | 6.53 | 7.58 | Hubei | 4.59 | 4.73 |
| Heilongjiang | 7.67 | 8.73 | Hunan | 3.02 | 3.12 |
| Shanghai | 9.00 | 10.34 | Guangdong | 4.89 | 4.24 |
| Jiangsu | 3.15 | 3.39 | Guangxi | 2.90 | 2.50 |
| Yunnan | 1.34 | 1.30 | Hainan | 7.22 | 6.27 |
| Tibet | 0.93 | 0.79 | Chongqing | 3.43 | 3.80 |
| Shaanxi | 2.57 | 2.53 | Sichuan | 2.01 | 2.13 |
| Gansu | 1.93 | 1.98 | Guizhou | 2.05 | 1.75 |
| Qinghai | 3.56 | 3.45 | Ningxia | 2.73 | 3.73 |
| Xinjiang | 3.82 | 4.14 | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | 7.8 | 8.9 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | 2.3 | 2.1 |
| Mean value for 6 minority group areas | | | | 2.7 | 3.0 |

**Data** sources: Calculated by using data taken from the 2000 Population Census.

In contrast, the unemployment rates were lowest in the 3 LIPs, where both male and female rates were around 2%. The average male unemployment rate for the three provinces was 2.3% and female, 2.1%.

10) The unemployment rates of six ethnic minority areas were lower. The average unemployment rate of the six provinces was 2.7% for males and 3.0% for females. Among them, Inner Mongolia had relatively higher unemployment rate with the male rate at 4.8% and the female rate, 5.5%, and the rest all had lower male and female unemployment rates.

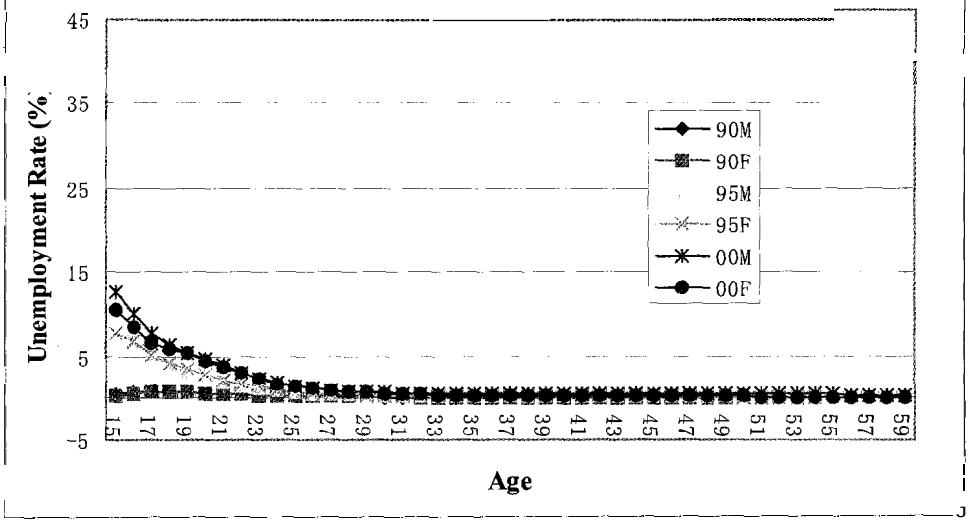
### *4.6 Age-specific Unemployment Rate*

In order to examine the gaps between men and women in terms of unemployment, it is also necessary to examine the age-specific unemployment rate. According to the data taken from the 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses as well as the data from the 1995 sampling surveys on 1% population, the age-specific unemployment rates can be calculated for the years of 1990, 1995 and 2000. To more effectively present the calculations, we have drawn Figure 8 by using the age- and gender-specific unemployment rates in 1990, 1995 and 2000 for the whole of China and urban and rural areas. Figure 8 shows:

1) Due to different scopes of statistics, China's agricultural unemployment rates obtained from the population censuses have been low levels with minor gaps between males and females. China's real unemployment rate is mainly reflected as urban unemployment rate.
2) From the basic shape of the curve for the age-specific unemployment rate of working age population in urban China, the basic patterns of such unemployment rate are: (i) when it enters the labor age, the unemployment rate of young people is high. This is mainly because it takes time for them to find a job. After that, the unemployment rate gradually declines; (ii) after the age of 25, the unemployment rate gradually stabilizes; 3) after the age of 45 the rate again decreases.
**3)** From a comparison between men and women, the basic patterns of gender gaps in terms of unemployment rates are: (i) within the early years after the working age, the male unemployment rate is higher than the female rate. This is perhaps because men are more nitpicking about their jobs; (ii) between 25-45, the female unemployment rate has been higher than men; (iii) after the age of 45, the male unemployment rate is again higher than the female rate. During this period, some of the unemployed women completely give up their hope for employment and no longer seek for employment. Therefore, they are not registered as unemployed population from a statistical perspective, thus resulting in the decline of their unemployment rate.
4) According to the curve of age-specific urban unemployment rate in 2000, around the year 2000, the unemployment rate of the middle-aged labor force, especially the middle-aged female labor force was prominently high. It is clear that middle-aged women rather than the younger women face the highest unemployment risks.

Figure 8: Age-Specific Unemployment Rate in China, 1990, 1005 and 2000


**Figure 8-3: Gender-Age Specific Unemployment Rate in China's Rural Areas, Selected Years**




Data sources: Calculated by using data from the 1990 and 2000 Population Censuses and 1995 sampling surveys on 1% population.

# Chapter 5: Gender Gaps: Health

Using population census data, the health status of a population can be studies with average life expectancy at birth and infant mortality rate （IMR）. Yet both life expectancy at birth and IMR are restrained by the quality of data, which must be selected for analysis.

## *5.1 Infant Mortality Rate*

1) Data Quality Assessment and Data Selection

Since 1980s China has carried out three population censuses. Scholars have calculated the IMRs for different years by using data taken from the three censuses. Analysis of relevant data shows that the quality of mortality data in the early 1980s was relatively reliable in China, and little variation had seen in the calculations of IMRs 1981 from different researchers using the 1982 Population Census data. The variation, which stands at about 3‰, is indicated in Table 23.

However, by early 1990s, the quality of mortality data started to be questioned. The variation between calculations of 1989 IMRs from different researchers using the 1990 Population Census data had increased dramatically. Table 23 shows that the variation for female IMR was 10‰ and that for male IMR had reached as high as 17 ‰. Therefore, it appears critical to select what type of data to examine the IMR before analyzing the status and changing trends of infant mortality rates.

**Table 23: Partial Estimates of Infant Mortality Rates for 1982 and 1990 Population Censuses（‰）**

| Author | 1982 Population Census | | 1990 Population Census | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Male | Female | Male | Female |
| Jiang Zhenhua, etc. | 35.6 | 33.7 | -- | -- |
| Zhai Zhenwu | -- | -- | 43.1 | 38.4 |
| Li Shuzhu | 36.1 | 34.2 | 32.2 | 36.8 |
| Lu Lei, etc. | -- | -- | 30.2 | 34.9 |
| Huan Rong ing, etc. | 38.73 | | | 29.39 |

Data sources: Jiang Zhenghua, et. Al, 1984: 710-711; Zhai Zhenwu,1993:9-16; Lu Lei et. Al, 1994:52-59; Li Shuzhuo, 1994: 37-44; Huang Rongqing, et. Al, 1995:21-41.

The report has selected the following IMR data:

For the IMR in the 1982 Population Census, calculations from Huang Rongqing and others have been adopted. The reasons are twofold: (i) little variation had seen in the IMR calculations from different researchers for this population census, and such selection will not have significant impact on the analysis findings; (ii) Huang Rongqing and others have provided age-specific rural and urban IMRs and can meet

the analysis requirements of this report in terms of data format.

Due to significant variation between IMR calculations from different researchers using the 1990 Population Census, it is very difficult to select the IMR data in the 1990 Population Census. The report eventually selected the calculations from the Department of Population and Employment of NBS. The reasons are: (i) compared with relevant data in Table 23, the nationwide male and female IMRs from this calculations are "in the middle", which are not so extreme and are easily to be accepted; (ii) the calculations are from the most authoritative national statistics agency[15].

The IMR in the 2000 Population Census is calculated and provided by NBS[16]. The selected IMRs for China calculated by using the data from the three population censuses are shown in Table 24.

2) Outcome of Data Analysis

Since 1980s, China has seen a significant drop in infant mortality rates, which decreased from 38‰ in 1981 to 28‰ in 2000, a decrease by 25%. In the past 20 years, the decrease of infant mortality rates in China's urban areas has clearly exceeded those of rural areas. IMR for China's urban areas declined from 36‰ in 1981 to 13‰ in 2000 by a margin of 45%. IMR for rural areas declined from 40‰ in 1981 to 36‰ in 2000 by a margin of only 11%. The IMR in rural China is much

**Table 24: China's Infant Mortality Rate in Selected Years (‰)**

| | 1981 | | | 1989 | | | 2000 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female | Total | Male | Female |
| Total | 37.74 | 38.73 | 36.67 | 32.89 | 32.36 | 33.48 | 28.41 | 23.92 | 33.75 |
| Urban | 24.16 | 25.27 | 22.96 | — | — | — | 13.32 | 11.55 | 15.38 |
| Rural | 40.27 | 41.23 | 39.23 | — | — | — | 35.72 | 29.80 | 42.87 |

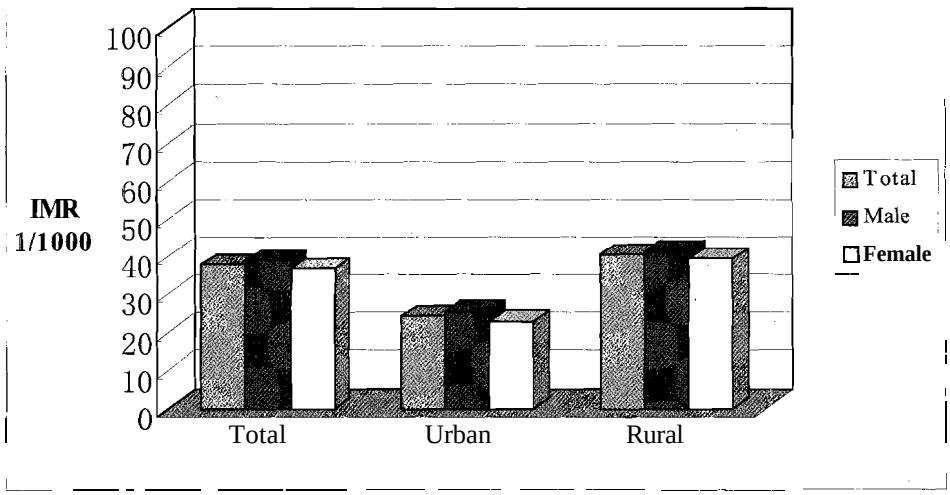
Data sources: the infant mortality rate obtained from the 1982 Population Census is cited from (Huang R.Q., 1995, Page 21-37); the infant mortality rate obtained from the 1990 Population Census is cited from (National Bureau of Statistics, 1995, Page 232-330. The data fails to provide infant mortality rates for rural and urban areas); the infant mortality rate obtained from the 2000 Population Census is calculated and provided by NBS.

[15] China's Ministry of Health conducts annual observations on the IM and discloses IMR data on a regular basis. There is some variation between the IMR disclosed by MOH and that disclosed by NBS. Considering that the IMR data released by MOH doesn't contain detailed categorized information and the scale of the observed sample is small, therefore, the report has selected the IMR obtained from the population censuses.

[16] When calculating IMRs from the 2000 Population Census data, NBS multiplied the number of deaths directly enumerated from the census by 1.08 and obtained the gender-age specific number of deaths between November 1st, 1999 and October 31,2000. The same approach is adopted for addressing the mortality data in calculating life expectancy.

higher than the urban rate, and the disadvantaged status of rural China has been reinforced during the past 20 years. Since the decrease of the urban rate is more significant that the rural rate, rural-urban IMR gaps were growing. In 1981, the rural rate was 1.67 times that of the urban rate and in 2000, the rural rate had reached 2.68 times that of urban areas.

**Figure 9: China's Infant Mortality Rate in 1981**

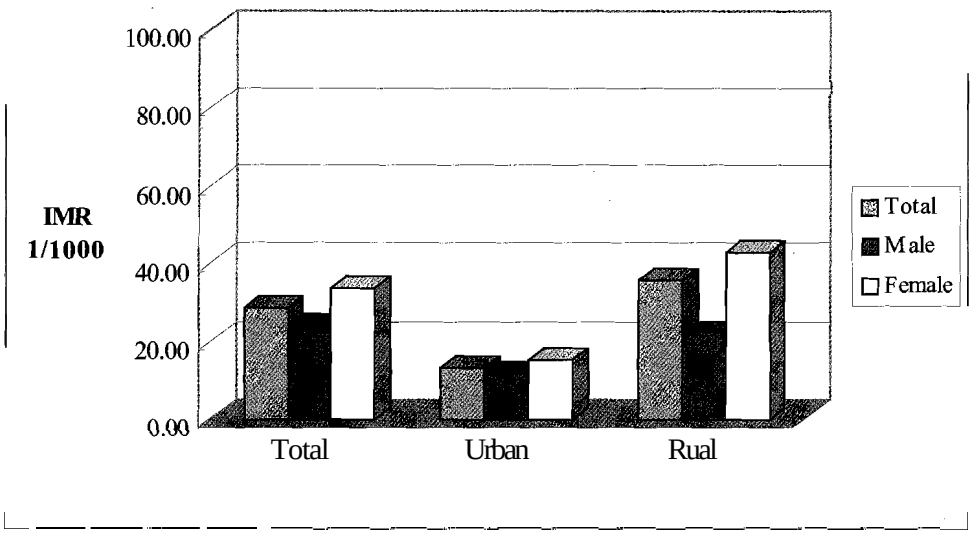



Data sources: See Table 24.

Women are biologically at an advantage compared with men, so in a normal case, the mortality rate for female infants would be lower than that for males (Figure 9). The Chinese male and female IMRs revealed in the 1982 Census were consistent with this rule. However, in 1989 and 2000, the Chinese IMRs deviated from the above rule: the female IMR started to exceed the male IMR. In 1989, the male and female rates stood at 32.36‰ and 33.48‰, respectively, with the female rate one point higher than the male, giving rise to a phenomenon of sex ratio for the IMR being lower than 1 at 0.96; in 2000, the rates were 24‰ and 34‰ respectively in China, the female rate being 10 points above the male rate (Figure 10). The sex ratio for the IMR further declined to 0.71. Over a period of ten years, the abnormal gap between the male and female IMRs was becoming more prominent.

The abnormal phenomenon of higher female IMR than that of the male does not only exist in rural areas, but also in urban areas as well. In rural areas, male IMR had dropped by 11‰ between 1981 and 2000 while the female IMR had shown a rising trend by about 4 points. In 2000, the male and female IMRs for rural China were 30 ‰ and 43‰, respectively, those for urban China were 12‰ and 15‰ respectively, and the sex ratios of rural and urban IMRs stood at 0.70 and 0.75, respectively.

**Figure 10: China's Infant Mortality Rate in 2000**




Data sources: See Table 24.

There are remarkable regional and economic differences with China's IMRs. In the year 2000, the IMRs for the regions of Beijing and Shanghai had fallen to a low level of around 4‰, while those for Yunnan Province remained as high as 70‰ (See Table 25). The regional differences in IMRs have to a large extent reflected their economic differences. The IMRs for the three HIPs have fallen to around 4‰. In 2000, the average IMR was 4.1‰ for male infants and 4.3‰ for female infants in these regions. The average IMRs for 50 HICs were only 8.71‰, which is obviously lower than the national average. As a clear contract, the average IMRs for the three LIPs were much higher. In the year 2000, the IMRs in Guangxi, Gansu and Guizhou were 31‰, 53‰ and 66‰, respectively, which were far above the rates in the higher income regions. The average IMRs of 592 PSCs are 39.94‰ and their male rates and female rates are 35.2‰ and 45.44‰ respectively, which are all much higher than the national average. The average IMRs for the 50 LICs are 53‰, which are not only critically higher than the national average, but also much higher than the average of 592 PSCs.

Although there are remarkable regional and economic differences in terms of IMRs, it is a pervasive phenomenon that female IMR is higher than the male rate. With a few exceptions of Heilongjiang, Ningxia, Tibet and Xinjiang where the female rate was slightly lower than the male rate, female IMRs in other provinces were all way above the male rates. Among the 31 provinces, 8 had their IMR sex ratios lower than 0.7, 11 had their ratios between 0.7 and 0.9 and 8 had the ratios between 0.9 and 1.0. In a few

**Table 25: Infant Mortality Rate for Provinces in , 0 (‰)**

| Province | Infant Mortality Rate | | | Province | Infant Mortality Rate | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Male | Female | | Total | Male | Female |
| Beijing | 3.80 | 3.79 | 3.82 | Fujian | 21.77 | 17.74 | 26.59 |
| Tianjin | 4.44 | 4.42 | 4.45 | Jiangxi | 52.46 | 31.36 | 78.50 |
| Hebei | 18.19 | 15.31 | 21.51 | Shandong | 15.11 | 13.54 | 16.88 |
| Shanxi | 19.37 | 17.83 | 21.09 | Henan | 23.18 | 17.65 | 30.29 |
| Inner Mongolia | 32.06 | 30.25 | 34.02 | Hubei | 19.58 | 17.22 | 22.63 |
| Liaoning | 11.16 | 10.90 | 11.45 | Hunan | 28.48 | 24.50 | 33.50 |
| Jilin | 17.98 | 17.78 | 18.20 | Guangdong | 17.16 | 13.20 | 22.37 |
| Heilongjiang | 10.96 | 11.59 | 10.28 | Guangxi | 31.10 | 22.98 | 41.36 |
| Shanghai | 4.40 | 4.23 | 4.59 | Hainan | 23.85 | 17.37 | 32.77 |
| Jiangsu | 14.53 | 13.28 | 16.02 | Chongqing | 21.75 | 21.55 | 21.98 |
| Zhejiang | 11.93 | 11.09 | 12.90 | Sichuan | 21.57 | 21.12 | 22.09 |
| Anhui | 33.47 | 26.78 | 42.07 | Guizhou | 66.05 | 58.00 | 74.90 |
| Gansu | 52.98 | 45.11 | 62.13 | Yunnan | 70.32 | 61.77 | 79.71 |
| Qinghai | 50.55 | 49.05 | 52.21 | Tibet | 43.01 | 43.67 | 42.34 |
| Ningxia | 27.33 | 27.67 | 26.95 | Shaanxi | 33.04 | 26.62 | 41.01 |
| Xinjiang | 40.10 | 42.41 | 37.64 | | | | |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | | 4.2 | 4.1 | 4.3 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | | 50.0 | 42.0 | 59.5 |
| Mean value for 6 ethnic minority areas | | | | | 40.7 | 38.1 | 43.7 |
| Mean value for 592 poverty-stricken | | | | | 39.94 | 35.20 | 45.44 |
| Mean value for 50 HICs | | | | | 8.71 | 8.54 | 8.93 |
| Mean value for 50 LICs | | | | | 53.04 | 49.11 | 57.76 |

Data sources: Calculated and provided by NBS.

provinces such as Jiangxi, the female IMR even more than doubled the male figure. The average IMR for the six ethnic minority areas was 38‰ for males and 44‰ for females, higher than their respective national average with the IMR sex ratio at 0.87.

Gender differences in IMR have some correlation with economic development levels. The IMR sex ratio in the 3 HIPs was higher than that of the 3 LIPs, at 0.95 and 0.71, respectively; the IMR sex ration in the 50 HICs was higher than that of the 50 LICs, at 0.95 and 0.85, respectively.

## *5.2 Average Life Expectancy*

### 1) Data Quality Assessment and Data Selection

The indicator of average life expectancy has the same problem as IMR in terms of its

data quality. Prior to analyzing the trends of average life expectancy, it is also necessary to carefully select the data. Based on the same considerations as the IMR, the report has selected the average life expectancy for 1981 calculated by Huang Rongqing, etc. As for the 1989 average life expectancy provided by the 1990 Population Census, the calculations of Huang Rongqing, etc. and those of NBS are selected. The average life expectancy in the 2000 Population Census was calculated and provided by NBS.

The data for the average life expectancy in China for the years of 1981 and 1989 are indicated in Table 26 and data for 2000 is presented in Table 27.

**Table 26: Average Life Expectancy in China (1981 and 1989)**

| | Average Life Expectancy (Years) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Male + Female | Male | Female |
| 1981 Nationwide | 67.67 | 66.21 | 69.12 |
| 1981 Urban | 70.87 | 69.08 | 72.74 |
| 1981 Rural | 66.95 | 65.56 | 68.36 |
| 1989 Nationwide | 70.06 (68.55) | 68.35 (66.85) | 71.91 (70.49) |
| 1989 Urban | 72.77 | 70.7 | 75.05 |
| 1989 Rural | 69.18 | 67.59 | 70.91 |

Data sources: Huang Rongqing, Liu Yan (1994):21-53. The figures on average life expectancy in the brackets are calculated by the Department of Population and Employment Statistics (1995:232-236) of NBS.

### 2) Outcome of Data Analysis

The two tables show:

(i) Between 1981 and 2000, average life expectancy in China improved by 3.7 years from 67.7 years to 71.4 years. Rural and urban areas had also seen improvements in the average figure, but there were tendencies of expanding gaps between rural and urban areas. In 1981, the life expectancy gap between rural and urban areas was between 3.5-4 years; by 2000, such gap had been expanded to more than 5 years.

(ii) Over the same period, there had been increases in the male and female life expectancy with the average male figure increased by 3.4 years from 66.2 to 69.6 and the female figure, by 4.2 years from 69.1 to 73.3. The female figure was about 0.8 years higher than the male figure.

Remarkable differences also exist among different regions in terms of average life expectancy (See Table 27). In 2000, Shanghai had the highest average figure of 78 years while Tibet had the lowest figure of only 64 years, a gap as wide as 14 years. According to the average life expectancy of the provinces, they can be classified to four types of regions. The first type refers to those having an average figure above 74 years for males and above 77 years for females, which had reached the level of

**Table 27: Average Life Expectancy for Provinces in China (Years)**

| Province | Average Life Expectancy | | | Province | Average Life Expectancy | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total | Male | Female | | Total | Male | Female |
| Beijing | 76.10 | 74.33 | 78.01 | Shandong | 73.92 | 71.70 | 74.66 |
| Tianjin | 74.91 | 73.31 | 76.63 | Henan | 71.54 | 69.67 | 73.59 |
| Hebei | 72.54 | 70.68 | 74.57 | Hubei | 71.08 | 69.31 | 73.02 |
| Shanxi | 71.65 | 69.96 | 75.36 | Hunan | 70.66 | 69.05 | 73.41 |
| Inner Mongolia | 69.87 | 68.29 | 80.04 | Guangdong | 73.02 | 70.79 | 73.27 |
| Liaoning | 73.34 | 71.51 | 76.23 | Guangxi | 71.29 | 69.07 | 72.47 |
| Jilin | 73.10 | 71.38 | 77.21 | Hainan | 72.92 | 70.66 | 73.75 |
| Heilongjiang | 72.37 | 70.39 | 76.26 | Chongqing | 71.73 | 69.84 | 73.89 |
| Shanghai | 78.14 | 76.22 | 80.04 | Sichuan | 71.20 | 69.25 | 73.39 |
| Jiangsu | 73.91 | 71.69 | 75.93 | Guizhou | 65.96 | 64.54 | 67.57 |
| Zhejiang | 74.70 | 72.50 | 75.26 | Yunnan | 65.49 | 64.24 | 66.89 |
| Anhui | 71.85 | 70.18 | 73.57 | Tibet | 64.37 | 62.52 | 66.15 |
| Fujian | 72.55 | 70.30 | 75.07 | Shaanxi | 70.07 | 68.92 | 71.30 |
| Jiangxi | 68.95 | 68.37 | 75.04 | Gansu | 67.47 | 66.77 | 68.26 |
| Qinghai | 66.03 | 64.55 | 67.70 | Ningxia | 70.17 | 68.71 | 71.84 |
| Xinjiang | 67.41 | 65.98 | 69.14 | | | | |
| Total | 71.40 | 69.63 | 73.33 | | | | |
| Urban | 75.21 | 73.11 | 77.51 | Rural | 69.55 | 67.94 | 71.31 |
| Mean value for 3 HIPs | | | | | 76.4 | 74.6 | 78.2 |
| Mean value for 3 LIPs | | | | | 68.2 | 66.8 | 69.9 |
| Mean value for 6 ethnic minority areas | | | | | 68.1 | 66.5 | 69.9 |
| Mean value for 592 poverty-stricken | | | | | 69.1 | 67.5 | 71.0 |
| Mean value for 50 HICs | | | | | 76.7 | 74.7 | 79.2 |
| Mean value for 50 LICs | | | | | 67.4 | 66.2 | 68.8 |

Data sources: Calculated and provided by NBS.

developed counties, including the three municipalities of Shanghai, Beijing and Tianjin. In 2000, the average figures in the three regions were 77 years for males and 80.8 years for females. The second type refers to the regions with the average figure between 70-72 years for males and 73-76 for females, including 10 provinces of Jiangsu, Liaoning, Hebei, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Shandong, Zhejiang, Guangdong, Henan and Shanxi. The third type covers those with the average figure between 68-70 for males and 70-73 for females, including 13 provinces of Anhui, Fujian, Inner Mongolia, Shaanxi, Jiangxi, Gansu, Hubei, Hunan, Hainan, Guangxi, Ningxia, Sichuan and Xinjiang. The forth type involves the regions with the average figure between 62-68 for males and 64-70 for females, including 3 provinces of Guizhou, Yunnan and Tibet. In addition, Chongqing and Qinghai fall under type 4 regions in terms of their average life expectancy for males and type 3 regions in terms of their female figure.

Differences reflected by average life expectancy are the manifestations of differences in social and economic development. There are remarkable differences in terms of average life expectancy between 3 HIPs and 3 LIPs. In the year 2000, the average life expectancy for Shanghai, Beijing and Tijian reached 78, 76 and 75 years, respectively, which are way higher than the national average (71 years). The average male and female life expectancy figures for these provinces were 75 and 78 years, respectively. The average life expectancy for 3 LIPs was 67 years for men and 70 for women, some 8 years lower than 3 HIPs. Of the 3 LIPs, life expectancy of Guangxi was close to the national average, but Guizhou and Gansu had only 66 and 67 years, which are obviously lower than the national average. The average figure for 50 HICs was 75 years for males and 79 for females, which are 6 years higher than their respective national average. The average figure for 50 LICs was 66 for males and 69 for females, 3 years and 5 years lower than their respective national average.

### *5.3 Summary of the Chapter*

In the latter half of the 20th century, China had achieved great results in the field of population health. The data from the 5th Population Census indicate that the average life expectancy of China's population has reached 71.4 years, 5 years higher than the world's average and 7 years higher than the developing countries and regions. In some regions such as Shanghai, the average life expectancy has reached 79.7 years, the average level of the world's developed countries. However, China has a vast land and imbalanced social development among different regions, there still exist marked differences between rural and urban areas as well as between rich and poor areas in terms of health levels.

Since 1980s, China has seen a further increase in its average life expectancy and a considerable decline in its IMR. For average life expectancy, the growth of females outnumbered that of males over the 20 years between 1981 and 2000. Contrary to this, for IMR, male IMR declined by a large margin while the female rate only saw a minor drop and even a rising trend in rural areas. As a result, there was an abnormal phenomenon of higher female IMR than the male rate. After 1990s, the abnormality was getting worse. The abnormal phenomenon does not only exist in rural areas, but also in urban areas as well, and not only in economically developed regions, but also in underdeveloped regions as well, but more prominent in the underdeveloped regions. The IMR level is determined by biological, population, socioeconomic and environmental factors. In a society free of gender discrimination, due to the biological differences in children's survival, male IMR should be higher than the female rate while the higher female IMR than the male rate would otherwise reflect the gender differences in infant mortality levels.

# Appendix 1: Gender Gap Indicators Calculated Based on Census data in 1982

| | Illiteracy Rate | | | | Yrs of school going | | | | IMR | | | | Life Expectancy at Birth | | | | Sex Ratio for undergraduate students | # of college graduates among 10000 people | | | | # of Highsch graduates per 10000 people | | | | employment rate | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | |
| province | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female |
| Beijing | 4.3 | 17.9 | 16.6 | 36.0 | 9.2 | 8.0 | 6.6 | 5.5 | 13.2 | 11.6 | 22.0 | 21.1 | 72.0 | 75.1 | 68.3 | 71.1 | 194.6 | 459.7 | 259.2 | | | 1696.6 | 1831.6 | | | 88.7 | 78.8 | | |
| Tianjin | 5.9 | 22.0 | 16.5 | 42.3 | 8.3 | 7.1 | 6.4 | 4.7 | 20.8 | 17.9 | 21.2 | 21.6 | 69.7 | 72.0 | 70.5 | 72.1 | 186.0 | 198.2 | 107.9 | | | 1377.6 | 1335.6 | | | 90.3 | 75.8 | | |
| Hebei | 7.3 | 23.4 | 21.4 | 49.4 | 7.9 | 6.8 | 6.1 | 4.3 | 17.7 | 15.7 | 23.7 | 20.5 | 70.4 | 73.9 | 69.0 | 71.7 | 224.2 | 258.8 | 128.0 | 37.0 | 16.8 | 1454.3 | 1572.1 | 861.9 | 567.1 | 90.0 | 75.5 | 92.7 | 73.3 |
| Shanxi | 9.1 | 23.1 | 20.2 | 40.7 | 7.7 | 6.8 | 6.3 | 4.9 | 21.4 | 20.8 | 33.8 | 32.5 | 69.0 | 72.0 | 66.1 | 68.5 | 308.2 | 184.6 | 83.9 | 39.8 | 9.3 | 1288.8 | 1415.8 | 750.7 | 483.5 | 88.8 | 73.6 | 91.8 | 81.5 |
| Neimenggu | 10.4 | 23.8 | 29.3 | 54.9 | 7.6 | 6.7 | 5.4 | 3.7 | 20.2 | 18.0 | 50.5 | 44.0 | 70.2 | 72.6 | 64.8 | 66.4 | 198.6 | 166.7 | 83.7 | 39.8 | 12.1 | 1120.2 | 1065.6 | 822.9 | 565.3 | 86.8 | 72.6 | 89.4 | 66.4 |
| Liaoning | 5.7 | 17.9 | 15.1 | 31.8 | 8.2 | 7.2 | 6.3 | 5.1 | 19.6 | 16.6 | 25.9 | 22.6 | 70.7 | 73.6 | 69.0 | 70.8 | 235.0 | 120.4 | 43.4 | 56.7 | 15.7 | 1048.3 | 840.0 | 1051.3 | 747.6 | 88.6 | 66.0 | 88.4 | 60.3 |
| Jilin | 9.6 | 22.1 | 21.3 | 39.3 | 8.0 | 7.0 | 5.9 | 4.6 | 17.7 | 15.3 | 23.1 | 20.1 | 69.4 | 71.7 | 67.7 | 68.6 | 212.2 | 120.1 | 52.6 | 63.7 | 21.6 | 1179.4 | 1035.7 | 1171.2 | 957.2 | 86.6 | 55.2 | 86.6 | 48.3 |
| Heilongjiang | 9.4 | 22.7 | 20.0 | 41.6 | 7.7 | 6.7 | 6.1 | 4.6 | 25.9 | 19.8 | 44.6 | 35.5 | 69.3 | 72.1 | 66.3 | 67.5 | 234.8 | 198.6 | 77.3 | 39.5 | 10.7 | 1373.3 | 1416.3 | 926.9 | 670.8 | 84.4 | 63.9 | 86.9 | 44.1 |
| Shanghai | 3.8 | 19.4 | 14.4 | 38.9 | 9.5 | 7.8 | 6.9 | 5.2 | 17.4 | 13.1 | 26.1 | 21.7 | 72.0 | 75.7 | 68.7 | 74.8 | 257.4 | 341.4 | 143.8 | | | 2148.4 | 1922.6 | | | 90.0 | 86.2 | | |
| Jiangsu | 8.7 | 28.5 | 23.8 | 60.2 | 8.2 | 6.5 | 6.0 | 3.5 | 23.0 | 20.6 | 33.3 | 36.3 | 69.6 | 74.1 | 67.0 | 71.2 | 419.4 | 307.6 | 132.6 | 37.2 | 9.0 | 1627.3 | 1359.2 | 774.8 | 381.0 | 88.4 | 85.0 | 91.2 | 90.3 |
| Zhejiang | 15.0 | 37.7 | 22.9 | 52.0 | 6.9 | 5.3 | 5.7 | 3.9 | 27.0 | 28.9 | 35.0 | 40.3 | 69.1 | 73.2 | 67.5 | 70.9 | 329.3 | 75.9 | 34.0 | 35.4 | 9.6 | 625.9 | 441.1 | 614.0 | 398.5 | 93.9 | 61.6 | 94.7 | 76.4 |
| Anhui | 13.3 | 35.0 | 36.1 | 74.4 | 7.5 | 5.8 | 4.9 | 2.3 | 21.5 | 26.9 | 29.2 | 33.2 | 69.7 | 73.3 | 67.3 | 70.4 | 424.7 | 158.8 | 61.6 | 24.7 | 6.0 | 1007.0 | 772.2 | 457.0 | 170.8 | 88.5 | 84.8 | 91.4 | 88.9 |
| Fujian | 10.0 | 36.4 | 23.2 | 67.5 | 7.6 | 5.5 | 5.6 | 2.7 | 17.2 | 16.8 | 24.4 | 22.9 | 68.4 | 73.4 | 65.8 | 70.1 | 365.5 | 257.2 | 76.8 | 51.3 | 10.5 | 1258.6 | 911.1 | 701.7 | 300.2 | 87.0 | 75.0 | 91.2 | 65.8 |
| Jiangxi | 8.6 | 28.1 | 21.3 | 58.3 | 7.5 | 6.0 | 5.7 | 3.2 | 37.0 | 36.2 | 47.7 | 47.5 | 67.8 | 71.3 | 64.1 | 66.7 | 371.6 | 162.4 | 58.8 | 38.1 | 7.6 | 1012.1 | 772.2 | 685.2 | 291.7 | 87.7 | 79.9 | 91.4 | 79.8 |
| Shandoug | 13.6 | 39.1 | 26.3 | 60.5 | 7.1 | 5.2 | 5.7 | 3.4 | 19.6 | 18.3 | 21.6 | 21.8 | 69.3 | 72.8 | 68.4 | 71.4 | 365.5 | 90.7 | 34.4 | 28.1 | 7.6 | 1010.7 | 694.0 | 720.9 | 342.0 | 90.9 | 81.3 | 91.7 | 84.1 |
| Heuan | 11.7 | 30.7 | 28.7 | 59.7 | 7.6 | 6.3 | 5.7 | 3.6 | 21.4 | 20.8 | 20.2 | 21.0 | 69.2 | 73.4 | 67.7 | 71.2 | 325.2 | 229.3 | 92.4 | 20.1 | 5.5 | 1530.4 | 1495.9 | 730.4 | 387.4 | 88.2 | 82.5 | 92.7 | 90.3 |
| Hubei | 7.6 | 25.6 | 22.7 | 56.3 | 8.3 | 6.9 | 6.0 | 3.8 | 26.0 | 21.4 | 43.4 | 40.0 | 67.6 | 71.8 | 63.4 | 66.5 | 348.8 | 276.3 | 116.1 | 28.9 | 8.2 | 1723.8 | 1644.0 | 790.7 | 398.6 | 87.4 | 85.4 | 91.8 | 88.5 |
| Hunan | 6.3 | 22.1 | 16.0 | 42.4 | 7.9 | 6.7 | 6.1 | 4.4 | 33.9 | 30.8 | 55.0 | 50.3 | 67.3 | 71.4 | 63.8 | 66.2 | 399.1 | 229.6 | 95.2 | 31.1 | 8.0 | 1251.1 | 1253.2 | 741.8 | 431.2 | 89.5 | 82.9 | 92.4 | 84.1 |
| Guangdong | 5.7 | 26.5 | 11.1 | 43.2 | 8.0 | 6.2 | 6.5 | 4.2 | 13.6 | 14.1 | 20.6 | 19.8 | 70.6 | 76.3 | 68.1 | 73.3 | 349.5 | 207.2 | 80.5 | 36.3 | 6.9 | 1699.5 | 1372.8 | 953.7 | 420.7 | 88.3 | 86.8 | 90.1 | 85.9 |
| Guangxi | 5.0 | 23.0 | 14.4 | 44.1 | 8.1 | 6.7 | 6.0 | 4.1 | 19.8 | 20.7 | 33.1 | 33.0 | 70.4 | 76.0 | 68.1 | 71.5 | 287.3 | 272.9 | 128.8 | 41.9 | 27.3 | 1642.8 | 1531.2 | 740.7 | 418.4 | 86.9 | 84.7 | 91.3 | 91.4 |
| Sichuan | 11.5 | 26.3 | 23.7 | 53.7 | 7.4 | 6.4 | 5.3 | 3.6 | 34.2 | 30.9 | 61.0 | 60.0 | 67.6 | 71.3 | 62.4 | 64.2 | 291.2 | 78.7 | 33.7 | 29.4 | 9.5 | 594.8 | 558.5 | 382.9 | 226.4 | 92.2 | 89.8 | 92.5 | 92.9 |
| Guizhou | 22.1 | 46.8 | 34.2 | 76.8 | 6.2 | 4.5 | 4.6 | 1.9 | 55.3 | 47.3 | 75.5 | 69.3 | 64.0 | 66.3 | 60.8 | 60.9 | 325.0 | 139.0 | 62.8 | 28.4 | 10.7 | 619.3 | 590.1 | 337.3 | 167.4 | 89.2 | 87.6 | 90.9 | 92.1 |
| Yunnan | 14.9 | 33.8 | 40.5 | 73.2 | 7.0 | 5.7 | 4.1 | 2.1 | 46.3 | 34.9 | 89.1 | 76.7 | 66.8 | 71.1 | 59.5 | 60.9 | 219.0 | 253.8 | 111.4 | 20.9 | 6.5 | 962.1 | 877.2 | 294.7 | 161.5 | 89.7 | 88.3 | 93.2 | 92.7 |
| Xizang | 21.5 | 40.0 | 68.3 | 90.7 | 6.3 | 5.2 | 2.0 | 0.7 | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | | 100.1 | 6.7 | 41.0 | 11.7 | 178.7 | 100.3 | 83.3 | 67.8 | 94.7 | 87.8 | 94.6 | 94.6 |
| Shaanxi | 8.6 | 24.0 | 28.4 | 54.5 | 8.3 | 7.0 | 5.7 | 3.9 | 30.2 | 28.1 | 50.8 | 49.8 | 68.0 | 71.2 | 63.5 | 64.9 | 362.0 | 211.7 | 82.7 | 52.2 | 12.5 | 1394.4 | 1153.1 | 768.0 | 475.4 | 86.9 | 80.8 | 90.3 | 80.8 |
| Gansu | 10.8 | 27.4 | 40.2 | 76.2 | 7.8 | 6.6 | 4.6 | 2.2 | 25.5 | 24.1 | 42.6 | 37.9 | 68.9 | 71.8 | 64.6 | 66.0 | 308.9 | 221.6 | 110.4 | 36.7 | 9.8 | 1412.6 | 1328.4 | 699.0 | 305.1 | 89.0 | 83.8 | 91.6 | 89.3 |
| Qinhai | 9.3 | 25.1 | 39.2 | 76.6 | 7.7 | 6.6 | 4.5 | 2.2 | 38.2 | 32.2 | 102.8 | 86.7 | 68.1 | 69.9 | 58.8 | 60.8 | 176.5 | 256.3 | 97.6 | 48.9 | 9.7 | 889.6 | 991.4 | 480.8 | 279.9 | 87.5 | 77.9 | 90.3 | 84.6 |
| Ningxia | 11.4 | 29.2 | 37.9 | 73.9 | 7.6 | 6.3 | 4.6 | 2.4 | 26.4 | 20.6 | 70.1 | 57.5 | 69.5 | 72.8 | 64.1 | 65.4 | 273.3 | 107.1 | 38.6 | 40.2 | 13.7 | 791.1 | 592.6 | 518.8 | 209.8 | 86.8 | 79.1 | 90.7 | 86.5 |
| Xinjiang | 13.4 | 23.7 | 32.6 | 45.4 | 7.3 | 6.6 | 5.0 | 4.3 | 69.3 | 60.3 | 134.5 | 115.6 | 67.2 | 69.7 | 58.5 | 58.6 | 207.5 | 209.1 | 89.0 | 46.1 | 17.6 | 1307.5 | 1364.3 | 598.1 | 496.8 | 84.3 | 73.7 | 88.3 | 76.1 |

| unemployment rate | | % of Pop aged 0–14 | | | | % of Pop aged 65+ | | | | Dropout rate for primary school | | | | Dropout rate for secondary school | | | | % of primary school going | | | | illiteracy rate for pop aged 16–24 | | | | Total Fertility Rate | | Yrs of schooling for pop aged 16–24 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| urban | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | Urban | Rural | urban | | rural | |
| male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | | | male | female | male | female |
| 1.6 | 2.0 | 20.1 | 20.6 | | | 3.5 | 5.1 | | | 17.6 | 24.7 | | | 0.9 | 0.7 | | | 55.9 | 50.1 | | | 0.6 | 1.1 | | | 1584.4 | | 10.7 | 10.8 | | |
| 1.0 | 1.9 | 22.3 | 23.4 | | | 4.5 | 5.0 | | | 20.3 | 21.4 | | | 1.2 | 1.6 | | | 54.0 | 50.8 | | | 1.2 | 3.6 | | | 1642.9 | | 9.9 | 9.7 | | |
| 1.2 | 2.9 | 24.6 | 26.2 | 32.2 | 31.2 | 3.4 | 4.5 | 5.7 | 6.3 | 13.9 | 17.2 | 17.7 | 20.2 | 0.6 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 5.8 | 49.9 | 41.3 | 70.7 | 68.8 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 3.0 | 14.3 | 1824.6 | 2707.1 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 9 | 7.6 |
| 1.4 | 2.4 | 25.0 | 29.5 | 35.1 | 34.6 | 2.9 | 3.2 | 5.4 | 5.6 | 11.8 | 10.9 | 15.4 | 16.2 | 0.8 | 1.4 | 2.3 | 3.7 | 50.8 | 42.5 | 68.3 | 66.8 | 1.1 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 7.5 | 1688.1 | 2524.6 | 10.0 | 9.9 | 9 | 8.1 |
| 2.5 | 3.4 | 31.7 | 31.4 | 36.2 | 38.3 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 4.2 | 3.3 | 8.9 | 9.5 | 11.7 | 8.5 | 1.4 | 3.5 | 5.7 | 10.6 | 46.5 | 41.3 | 69.9 | 67.1 | 3.1 | 9.9 | 5.5 | 20.8 | 1959.5 | 2667.7 | 9.6 | 9.0 | 8.6 | 7 |
| 1.4 | 2.5 | 24.0 | 24.4 | 32.5 | 32.4 | 3.5 | 4.1 | 5.5 | 5.2 | 14.7 | 16.6 | 16.8 | 16.1 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 2.7 | 60.7 | 58.1 | 75.1 | 73.9 | 0.8 | 1.5 | 2.0 | 5.6 | 1688.7 | 2128.3 | 9.2 | 9.0 | 8.9 | 8.2 |
| 1.1 | 2.4 | 29.5 | 29.0 | 35.4 | 36.1 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 4.4 | 3.7 | 12.9 | 12.7 | 12.4 | 10.3 | 2.4 | 4.4 | 2.4 | 4.3 | 69.0 | 67.4 | 72.5 | 70.7 | 2.9 | 6.9 | 2.8 | 7.1 | 1725.2 | 1822.5 | 9.2 | 8.7 | 9 | 8.4 |
| 2.7 | 5.1 | 31.7 | 30.6 | 37.2 | 38.0 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.0 | 11.3 | 11.5 | 9.4 | 7.8 | 1.1 | 1.4 | 3.2 | 6.1 | 54.5 | 50.2 | 71.8 | 69.4 | 0.9 | 1.7 | 3.7 | 12.0 | 1564.5 | 2193.2 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 8.7 | 7.7 |
| 1.3 | 2.1 | 14.8 | 15.3 | | | 5.8 | 8.0 | | | 39.2 | 52.6 | | | 0.8 | 0.7 | | | 48.8 | 43.9 | | | 0.7 | 0.7 | | | 1310.1 | | 10.9 | 10.7 | | |
| 1.0 | 1.4 | 22.5 | 23.9 | 30.8 | 29.5 | 4.2 | 6.7 | 4.5 | 6.7 | 18.6 | 27.8 | 14.7 | 22.7 | 1.1 | 4.1 | 2.4 | 10.9 | 44.8 | 45.3 | 65.4 | 64.7 | 1.6 | 7.6 | 3.9 | 21.2 | 1743.0 | 2101.0 | 10.4 | 9.4 | 8.9 | 6.8 |
| 0.6 | 1.2 | 24.4 | 24.7 | 31.0 | 30.9 | 4.8 | 7.1 | 5.0 | 6.4 | 19.7 | 28.6 | 16.0 | 20.7 | 5.1 | 13.7 | 1.9 | 6.0 | 56.4 | 55.5 | 56.4 | 60.7 | 6.7 | 21.9 | 3.6 | 15.6 | 2232.0 | 1895.1 | 8.2 | 6.6 | 8.6 | 7.1 |
| 1.1 | 1.6 | 27.1 | 28.3 | 37.8 | 37.1 | 3.2 | 5.3 | 2.9 | 5.3 | 11.9 | 18.6 | 7.7 | 14.3 | 7.2 | 18.3 | 9.4 | 36.4 | 63.4 | 58.0 | 73.0 | 54.8 | 5.5 | 17.6 | 9.8 | 41.4 | 2149.4 | 2937.4 | 9.2 | 7.7 | 7.8 | 4.7 |
| 1.5 | 2.8 | 28.8 | 29.2 | 38.8 | 38.3 | 3.5 | 6.2 | 3.3 | 5.2 | 12.3 | 21.4 | 8.6 | 13.5 | 2.1 | 12.9 | 5.8 | 31.4 | 61.9 | 58.5 | 67.1 | 54.0 | 4.0 | 19.4 | 7.2 | 42.1 | 2003.0 | 2895.0 | 9.1 | 7.2 | 8 | 4.6 |
| 1.2 | 1.8 | 31.5 | 33.8 | 40.7 | 40.1 | 3.4 | 5.1 | 3.7 | 5.3 | 10.7 | 15.0 | 9.0 | 13.2 | 2.3 | 10.7 | 3.6 | 20.0 | 61.7 | 57.7 | 70.9 | 66.8 | 2.2 | 12.1 | 4.9 | 26.1 | 2003.0 | 2924.6 | 9.3 | 7.9 | 8.3 | 5.7 |
| 0.4 | 0.4 | 28.0 | 27.9 | 32.5 | 31.2 | 4.1 | 5.7 | 5.2 | 6.5 | 14.7 | 20.3 | 15.9 | 20.7 | 1.8 | 5.5 | 3.6 | 14.9 | 66.7 | 67.1 | 72.6 | 68.6 | 1.8 | 10.3 | 4.6 | 25.2 | 1853.2 | 2134.4 | 9.4 | 8.2 | 8.8 | 6.4 |
| 1.7 | 2.4 | 28.7 | 30.2 | 36.6 | 35.1 | 3.3 | 5.4 | 4.5 | 6.3 | 11.5 | 18.0 | 12.2 | 18.0 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 4.9 | 16.3 | 42.8 | 39.1 | 68.7 | 62.8 | 1.1 | 1.8 | 4.5 | 21.3 | 1699.3 | 2698.0 | 10.3 | 10.1 | 8.9 | 6.9 |
| 1.1 | 1.4 | 25.5 | 26.5 | 34.2 | 34.0 | 3.4 | 5.7 | 4.3 | 6.0 | 13.5 | 21.4 | 12.6 | 17.6 | 1.2 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 8.8 | 45.4 | 44.5 | 66.9 | 70.1 | 0.7 | 4.1 | 3.1 | 16.2 | 1755.3 | 2509.4 | 10.6 | 10.0 | 9 | 7 |
| 0.9 | 1.2 | 26.6 | 28.4 | 34.9 | 35.1 | 3.8 | 5.8 | 4.4 | 5.6 | 14.1 | 20.4 | 12.7 | 16.0 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 2.5 | 5.8 | 54.6 | 51.9 | 70.6 | 75.6 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 2.2 | 8.7 | 1954.0 | 2876.3 | 10.0 | 9.8 | 8.8 | 7.7 |
| 2.9 | 2.6 | 26.9 | 27.2 | 36.2 | 34.8 | 3.8 | 6.9 | 4.1 | 6.9 | 14.2 | 25.3 | 11.2 | 19.8 | 0.9 | 1.4 | 2.5 | 10.5 | 63.7 | 62.7 | 76.7 | 74.3 | 0.6 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 10.5 | 2096.5 | 3412.1 | 10.1 | 9.5 | 8.8 | 7.3 |
| 3.0 | 2.6 | 27.5 | 29.1 | 38.9 | 38.3 | 4.4 | 7.1 | 4.7 | 6.3 | 15.9 | 24.4 | 12.2 | 16.6 | 1.4 | 3.4 | 4.9 | 12.0 | 54.5 | 52.7 | 78.7 | 75.0 | 0.9 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 10.0 | 1991.4 | 4236.2 | 10.4 | 10.1 | 8.8 | 7.6 |
| 0.6 | 0.9 | 23.5 | 26.4 | 35.9 | 35.8 | 4.1 | 5.8 | 3.8 | 5.5 | 17.6 | 22.1 | 10.5 | 15.3 | 4.1 | 6.0 | 5.9 | 13.4 | 68.7 | 68.1 | 73.0 | 72.2 | 3.7 | 7.2 | 5.7 | 17.8 | 1944.9 | 2613.4 | 8.5 | 8.2 | 8 | 6.6 |
| 1.8 | 2.1 | 34.3 | 35.0 | 42.4 | 42.0 | 4.0 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 5.1 | 11.5 | 15.0 | 9.6 | 12.8 | 17.8 | 40.9 | 14.0 | 44.8 | 96.4 | 36.3 | 70.1 | 45.2 | 11.6 | 37.4 | 11.1 | 47.7 | 3476.1 | 4467.7 | 8.0 | 6.0 | 7.5 | 4.2 |
| 0.8 | 1.2 | 28.0 | 31.6 | 41.4 | 40.0 | 3.5 | 5.4 | 3.9 | 5.1 | 12.4 | 17.1 | 9.5 | 12.8 | 5.4 | 8.7 | 21.5 | 42.5 | 58.9 | 54.7 | 66.4 | 48.5 | 3.7 | 9.8 | 16.9 | 46.8 | 1461.8 | 3985.8 | 9.3 | 8.5 | 6.7 | 4.2 |
| | 0.0 | 28.4 | 31.5 | 37.9 | 36.5 | 1.4 | 3.3 | 4.2 | 6.1 | 5.0 | 10.4 | 11.1 | 16.6 | 45.9 | 75.6 | 66.2 | 78.3 | 47.7 | 19.4 | 31.9 | 19.9 | 41.0 | 60.4 | 59.8 | 82.6 | | | 4.2 | 3.0 | 2.8 | 1.2 |
| 0.9 | 1.1 | 25.2 | 28.5 | 34.7 | 34.4 | 3.2 | 3.9 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 12.8 | 13.8 | 14.1 | 13.6 | 2.5 | 4.3 | 7.1 | 15.7 | 60.4 | 61.1 | 70.6 | 65.1 | 1.5 | 8.2 | 6.8 | 21.3 | 1932.6 | 2477.5 | 10.1 | 9.0 | 8.6 | 7 |
| 1.6 | 1.4 | 26.1 | 29.2 | 38.1 | 37.6 | 2.5 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 9.7 | 10.9 | 9.2 | 10.2 | 3.3 | 7.9 | 20.8 | 43.7 | 66.2 | 63.6 | 65.8 | 47.7 | 2.3 | 12.3 | 16.2 | 48.0 | 1752.7 | 2872.1 | 10.0 | 9.0 | 7.6 | 4.5 |
| 1.1 | 1.9 | 30.9 | 34.5 | 42.1 | 42.8 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 2.3 | 3.1 | 5.4 | 5.1 | 5.4 | 7.3 | 12.0 | 19.4 | 28.8 | 44.6 | 47.2 | 37.7 | 54.2 | 38.9 | 11.2 | 24.5 | 23.3 | 57.1 | 2523.0 | 4765.8 | 8.6 | 7.6 | 6.6 | 3.9 |
| 0.9 | 1.6 | 33.6 | 34.9 | 44.3 | 44.5 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 3.6 | 2.9 | 8.0 | 7.9 | 8.2 | 6.6 | 3.8 | 9.0 | 21.7 | 43.2 | 59.5 | 53.7 | 60.6 | 41.8 | 4.8 | 14.4 | 15.3 | 50.8 | 2378.8 | 5047.4 | 9.2 | 8.0 | 7.6 | 4.3 |
| 1.1 | 1.6 | 33.9 | 34.8 | 40.8 | 41.3 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 4.4 | 3.6 | 7.7 | 7.5 | 10.9 | 8.7 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 10.5 | 12.4 | 45.5 | 41.0 | 63.2 | 59.6 | 2.1 | 2.6 | 14.2 | 17.7 | 1617.3 | 4308.8 | 9.9 | 10.1 | 7.5 | 7.1 |

# Appendix 2: Gender Gap Indicators Calculated Based on Census data in 1990

| | Yrs of School going for inflow migrants aged 15+ | | | | Illiteracy Rate among Pop aged 16~24 | | | | Yrs of School going for pop aged 16~24 | | | | Total Fertility Rate | | enrollment rate of primary school | | | | dropout rate of primary school | | | | enrollment rate of secondary school | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | rural | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | |
| Province | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | | | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f |
| Beijing | 8.7 | 7.0 | 11.2 | 10.5 | 0.5 | 1.2 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 10.9 | 10.9 | 11.0 | 10.6 | 997.5 | 1424.1 | 95.9 | 96.9 | 90.1 | 91.0 | 1.5 | 1.1 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 92.3 | 90.8 | 96.3 | 98.0 |
| Tianjin | 8.6 | 7.4 | 8.4 | 6.8 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 11.0 | 11.4 | 8.8 | 8.6 | 1262.6 | 2013.2 | 83.1 | 83.4 | 83.7 | 82.2 | 4.8 | 4.7 | 3.7 | 4.5 | 99.6 | 98.6 | 98.5 | 96.3 |
| Hebei | 8.4 | 7.5 | 7.8 | 6.4 | 1.2 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 6.0 | 9.4 | 9.2 | 8.2 | 7.6 | 1796.8 | 2342.7 | 83.9 | 82.0 | 84.8 | 83.8 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 4.8 | 5.6 | 96.9 | 96.6 | 96.9 | 95.0 |
| Shanxi | 7.9 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 6.4 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 2.1 | 3.0 | 9.2 | 9.3 | 8.2 | 7.9 | 1871.1 | 2665.8 | 89.9 | 87.1 | 89.5 | 88.3 | 3.1 | 3.6 | 4.2 | 4.6 | 94.6 | 94.5 | 91.1 | 89.5 |
| Neimenggu | 7.2 | 6.5 | 7.5 | 5.7 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 3.0 | 7.9 | 9.6 | 9.9 | 8.2 | 7.6 | 1460.7 | 2143.5 | 65.0 | 64.6 | 65.3 | 60.2 | 10.0 | 10.1 | 10.9 | 14.4 | 96.7 | 93.1 | 93.1 | 88.6 |
| Liaoning | 7.9 | 7.1 | 7.6 | 6.6 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 1.1 | 9.8 | 9.9 | 8.5 | 8.2 | 1258.8 | 1780.3 | 58.3 | 59.2 | 76.7 | 72.5 | 10.1 | 9.4 | 5.7 | 6.6 | 99.4 | 98.4 | 97.9 | 97.6 |
| Jilin | 7.4 | 6.8 | 6.9 | 5.9 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 1.7 | 3.0 | 9.3 | 9.3 | 8.1 | 7.8 | 1410.8 | 2064.1 | 65.0 | 63.5 | 69.6 | 65.4 | 8.6 | 8.4 | 8.5 | 9.8 | 97.9 | 96.8 | 96.8 | 95.0 |
| Heilongjiang | 7.4 | 6.3 | 7.3 | 6.3 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 2.4 | 4.6 | 9.3 | 9.4 | 8.2 | 7.9 | 1480.7 | 1935.5 | 62.7 | 61.8 | 69.6 | 69.0 | 9.6 | 10.2 | 9.1 | 10.2 | 95.8 | 95.9 | 95.8 | 91.7 |
| Shanghai | 8.9 | 8.7 | 7.9 | 7.0 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 11.1 | 11.0 | 9.0 | 9.1 | 1165.5 | 1176.2 | 97.9 | 98.8 | 96.2 | 97.7 | 2.2 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 97.4 | 97.6 | 99.3 | 96.6 |
| Jiangsu | 8.1 | 7.3 | 7.7 | 6.5 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 1.1 | 4.1 | 10.0 | 9.5 | 8.7 | 7.7 | 1391.3 | 1980.6 | 91.7 | 92.9 | 91.0 | 88.4 | 2.2 | 2.4 | 2.9 | 4.5 | 95.0 | 95.1 | 96.1 | 91.3 |
| Zhejiang | 8.5 | 7.7 | 8.3 | 6.7 | 1.2 | 3.6 | 1.4 | 4.4 | 8.8 | 8.3 | 8.5 | 7.8 | 1209.5 | 1380.9 | 74.9 | 75.9 | 68.7 | 67.2 | 7.6 | 8.2 | 9.9 | 11.2 | 80.6 | 77.1 | 78.5 | 73.7 |
| Anhui | 7.3 | 5.8 | 7.0 | 5.7 | 1.7 | 8.1 | 4.4 | 22.5 | 9.2 | 7.9 | 7.7 | 5.6 | 1813.7 | 2502.7 | 86.3 | 84.6 | 73.3 | 63.7 | 5.4 | 8.2 | 11.2 | 19.8 | 90.1 | 83.8 | 89.3 | 73.1 |
| Fujian | 7.8 | 6.4 | 7.1 | 5.4 | 1.9 | 5.0 | 1.9 | 13.5 | 9.1 | 8.4 | 8.1 | 6.3 | 1588.7 | 2395.5 | 82.5 | 79.1 | 78.4 | 70.6 | 6.4 | 9.4 | 7.5 | 15.8 | 89.9 | 87.8 | 88.5 | 71.9 |
| Jiangxi | 7.7 | 6.2 | 7.2 | 6.6 | 0.9 | 3.8 | 2.8 | 15.1 | 8.9 | 7.9 | 7.9 | 6.0 | 1962.2 | 2547.9 | 74.2 | 68.8 | 68.4 | 51.6 | 8.7 | 13.2 | 10.6 | 21.2 | 91.6 | 83.4 | 89.7 | 69.3 |
| Shandong | 8.6 | 6.9 | 8.1 | 6.1 | 1.1 | 3.8 | 1.5 | 6.4 | 10.0 | 8.9 | 8.5 | 7.3 | 1728.8 | 2083.7 | 79.1 | 77.9 | 80.3 | 76.2 | 6.6 | 8.0 | 6.1 | 9.1 | 96.5 | 92.2 | 95.8 | 88.2 |
| Henan | 8.7 | 7.7 | 8.0 | 7.0 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 2.0 | 7.6 | 10.0 | 10.0 | 8.3 | 7.3 | 1690.9 | 2867.5 | 87.2 | 88.8 | 86.5 | 83.9 | 4.1 | 4.3 | 5.6 | 8.6 | 93.6 | 91.2 | 95.1 | 87.2 |
| Hubei | 7.7 | 6.9 | 8.0 | 7.0 | 0.9 | 2.6 | 1.6 | 5.3 | 9.6 | 8.7 | 8.5 | 7.5 | 2079.5 | 2381.8 | 93.9 | 91.7 | 88.4 | 83.2 | 2.5 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 7.6 | 94.6 | 90.2 | 93.5 | 86.2 |
| Hunan | 8.6 | 7.7 | 7.7 | 6.6 | 1.0 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 3.6 | 9.8 | 9.5 | 8.3 | 7.5 | 1796.2 | 2388.5 | 92.9 | 89.3 | 86.5 | 83.0 | 3.0 | 4.4 | 5.4 | 8.0 | 90.9 | 88.8 | 91.8 | 84.6 |
| Guangdong | 9.5 | 7.7 | 8.3 | 7.3 | 0.4 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 4.2 | 11.4 | 10.1 | 8.5 | 7.4 | 1849.8 | 2619.3 | 68.9 | 61.1 | 70.0 | 64.0 | 8.6 | 11.4 | 9.0 | 13.6 | 97.7 | 97.0 | 97.4 | 93.0 |
| Guangxi | 8.1 | 7.5 | 8.0 | 6.2 | 1.2 | 3.4 | 2.0 | 6.6 | 8.4 | 8.0 | 7.7 | 6.9 | 1902.4 | 2524.1 | 64.3 | 58.3 | 63.9 | 60.6 | 12.6 | 15.8 | 13.4 | 18.4 | 93.6 | 85.6 | 92.9 | 84.8 |
| Hainan | 9.8 | 7.7 | 9.0 | 7.7 | 0.0 | 0.8 | 1.9 | 5.4 | 10.0 | 10.1 | 8.8 | 8.1 | 1596.9 | 2749.2 | 66.7 | 94.4 | 71.0 | 66.4 | 11.0 | 4.2 | 11.9 | 16.6 | 59.1 | 55.6 | 93.3 | 89.2 |
| Sichuan | 7.9 | 7.1 | 7.6 | 6.4 | 1.3 | 1.6 | 2.9 | 5.8 | 9.3 | 8.7 | 7.7 | 7.0 | 1270.2 | 1770.3 | 82.1 | 81.7 | 82.3 | 78.6 | 6.3 | 6.6 | 8.0 | 11.4 | 89.0 | 88.2 | 88.0 | 82.8 |
| Guizbou | 7.5 | 6.4 | 6.5 | 5.0 | 5.7 | 21.8 | 11.5 | 35.9 | 8.0 | 6.6 | 6.7 | 4.5 | 2427.8 | 2986.5 | 64.8 | 56.3 | 63.6 | 50.4 | 15.0 | 29.6 | 19.0 | 37.3 | 85.6 | 66.9 | 83.7 | 60.4 |
| Yunnan | 7.9 | 6.7 | 7.4 | 6.2 | 5.0 | 15.2 | 12.9 | 31.6 | 8.3 | 7.2 | 6.7 | 5.1 | 1874.7 | 2635.8 | 76.3 | 70.9 | 56.5 | 47.9 | 11.0 | 16.2 | 22.6 | 35.5 | 82.6 | 72.8 | 79.5 | 61.4 |
| Xizang | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Shaanxi | 8.7 | 7.8 | 8.8 | 7.0 | 4.7 | 9.7 | 5.6 | 13.0 | 9.6 | 9.2 | 8.0 | 7.0 | 2094.9 | 2796.4 | 84.7 | 82.1 | 85.1 | 79.6 | 5.2 | 8.6 | 7.1 | 11.5 | 94.2 | 89.0 | 91.7 | 85.4 |
| Gansu | 8.1 | 6.4 | 8.1 | 5.1 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 19.0 | 42.5 | 8.7 | 8.0 | 6.5 | 4.3 | 1692.6 | 2407.9 | 86.2 | 81.9 | 66.4 | 53.9 | 6.1 | 9.1 | 18.5 | 33.6 | 90.1 | 87.2 | 83.3 | 63.5 |
| Qinhai | 7.4 | 6.2 | 5.9 | 3.9 | 3.8 | 9.0 | 28.6 | 57.7 | 9.0 | 9.3 | 5.8 | 3.5 | 1601.4 | 2780.5 | 78.9 | 85.0 | 56.8 | 51.41 | 7.6 | 5.7 | 36.4 | 46.0 | 95.8 | 92.6 | 60.5 | 52.4 |
| Ningxia | 7.8 | 6.1 | 6.6 | 4.4 | 2.0 | 2.5 | 16.3 | 40.3 | 9.4 | 9.3 | 6.8 | 4.7 | 1385.5 | 3162.8 | 80.0 | 82.1 | 60.4 | 51.11 | 5.1 | 7.5 | 23.2 | 37.4 | 90.6 | 89.2 | 80.4 | 63.6 |
| Xinjiang | 7.7 | 6.5 | 8.0 | 6.9 | 1.3 | 3.4 | 6.3 | 7.5 | 9.6 | 9.9 | 7.7 | 7.5 | 1757.3 | 3843.8 | 77.5 | 79.1 | 61.7 | 61.9 | 7.9 | 8.1 | 17.2 | 18.5 | 93.3 | 90.1 | 84.0 | 81.5 |

| dropout rate of secondary school | | | | enrollment rate of high school | | | | sex ratio of undergraduate students | # of college graduates | | | | # of Highsch graduates per 10000 people | | | | % of in-migrants | | | | %of Pop aged 0–14 | | | | % of Pop aged 65+ | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | |
| m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | urban | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f |
| 5.6 | 5.9 | 5.0 | 2.4 | 85.8 | 86.6 | 86.3 | 85.1 | 91.2 | 1118.8 | 581.7 | 72.7 | 53.5 | 1500.5 | 1542.0 | 670.0 | 813.8 | 5.2 | 4.8 | 6.1 | 2.3 | 19.1 | 18.0 | 23.9 | 22.8 | 5.9 | 6.7 | 5.5 | 6.3 |
| 2.7 | 2.5 | 7.9 | 7.5 | 86.3 | 86.3 | 74.8 | 71.7 | 141.5 | 291.3 | 142.8 | 53.5 | 18.9 | 1078.9 | 1203.0 | 670.6 | 683.7 | 11.8 | 6.2 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 18.5 | 19.8 | 28.6 | 26.2 | 4.9 | 5.8 | 5.3 | 5.6 |
| 4.0 | 5.9 | 6.4 | 11.2 | 76.2 | 69.4 | 63.4 | 55.5 | 100.0 | 137.9 | 75.4 | 7.6 | 2.2 | 909.2 | 838.3 | 611.8 | 335.9 | 3.9 | 3.1 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 25.9 | 25.3 | 30.6 | 29.6 | 4.6 | 5.8 | 5.5 | 6.4 |
| 10.1 | 10.2 | 16.0 | 21.7 | 64.1 | 65.1 | 51.0 | 43.5 | 66.7 | 115.9 | 55.1 | 6.5 | 1.2 | 878.6 | 846.4 | 487.1 | 301.3 | 4.2 | 4.2 | 1.6 | 0.9 | 27.1 | 25.7 | 29.7 | 29.2 | 4.9 | 5.3 | 5.6 | 6.5 |
| 8.6 | 9.4 | 13.5 | 20.2 | 69.5 | 75.3 | 59.1 | 51.1 | 130.0 | 170.5 | 74.6 | 19.3 | 4.7 | 1148.8 | 1178.8 | 619.1 | 425.7 | 5.3 | 5.1 | 2.2 | 1.8 | 23.3 | 22.5 | 29.4 | 30.6 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 4.5 | 3.9 |
| 2.2 | 2.2 | 5.9 | 9.2 | 86.0 | 86.0 | 67.1 | 61.9 | 166.7 | 218.8 | 95.5 | 24.1 | 5.9 | 1124.2 | 1044.2 | 580.4 | 382.7 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 21.5 | 20.7 | 25.3 | 25.1 | 5.5 | 5.7 | 5.8 | 6.0 |
| 5.1 | 6.4 | 8.7 | 13.4 | 75.0 | 76.9 | 64.7 | 56.0 | 95.0 | 188.9 | 89.4 | 24.1 | 5.8 | 1372.3 | 1273.3 | 646.2 | 494.8 | 2.6 | 3.0 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 24.4 | 23.5 | 28.3 | 28.0 | 4.7 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 4.5 |
| 7.2 | 8.3 | 9.2 | 14.2 | 73.7 | 71.9 | 63.2 | 54.3 | 110.7 | 135.6 | 51.9 | 8.5 | 2.3 | 1118.9 | 1042.8 | 685.4 | 466.6 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 24.6 | 24.3 | 28.4 | 28.9 | 3.7 | 3.8 | 4.0 | 3.5 |
| 2.2 | 3.9 | 1.7 | 2.2 | 81.3 | 85.2 | 90.6 | 90.5 | 295.2 | 434.4 | 160.3 | 108.5 | 31.7 | 2033.9 | 1659.2 | 789.8 | 659.2 | 12.1 | 9.1 | 2.3 | 1.7 | 11.9 | 17.4 | 22.3 | 20.0 | 5.8 | 10.7 | 6.9 | 9.7 |
| 4.1 | 4.7 | 6.5 | 13.7 | 87.7 | 84.6 | 76.0 | 57.4 | 129.4 | 218.7 | 73.5 | 16.5 | 2.6 | 1328.6 | 1116.0 | 676.5 | 341.1 | 5.4 | 5.7 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 22.5 | 20.9 | 25.3 | 23.7 | 5.5 | 7.2 | 5.9 | 8.1 |
| 23.3 | 27.5 | 26.4 | 33.1 | 43.0 | 33.1 | 40.9 | 30.3 | 100.0 | 97.9 | 39.8 | 29.4 | 6.3 | 678.8 | 597.1 | 506.5 | 346.7 | 4.9 | 5.0 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 21.1 | 20.2 | 24.3 | 23.5 | 6.1 | 8.0 | 6.0 | 7.5 |
| 11.5 | 16.5 | 15.5 | 28.0 | 68.5 | 53.3 | 56.0 | 29.6 | 72.7 | 141.8 | 44.8 | 13.3 | 1.8 | 859.0 | 683.4 | 313.1 | 109.5 | 5.2 | 4.6 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 24.8 | 24.6 | 29.0 | 28.1 | 4.3 | 5.9 | 4.3 | 6.6 |
| 13.1 | 19.2 | 22.4 | 36.9 | 64.3 | 52.1 | 47.6 | 26.7 | 114.0 | 208.7 | 71.7 | 19.5 | 3.4 | 881.3 | 748.2 | 479.2 | 214.9 | 7.7 | 8.1 | 1.7 | 1.8 | 25.8 | 24.6 | 33.3 | 32.3 | 5.1 | 7.3 | 4.1 | 5.9 |
| 14.6 | 26.8 | 19.3 | 38.8 | 61.8 | 45.0 | 49.8 | 21.9 | 88.9 | 84.3 | 23.2 | 11.4 | 1.7 | 729.6 | 565.7 | 463.4 | 152.6 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 29.0 | 29.1 | 32.9 | 33.2 | 4.4 | 5.4 | 4.3 | 5.9 |
| 5.6 | 11.3 | 8.3 | 18.6 | 75.6 | 64.8 | 67.6 | 47.3 | 346.4 | 153.1 | 56.3 | 12.3 | 2.3 | 805.5 | 633.6 | 546.0 | 248.0 | 2.5 | 1.8 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 24.6 | 24.3 | 27.8 | 26.0 | 5.1 | 6.6 | 5.5 | 7.2 |
| 8.1 | 12.1 | 11.0 | 18.5 | 69.6 | 68.0 | 55.7 | 39.3 | 161.5 | 150.0 | 68.1 | 8.4 | 1.5 | 1188.1 | 1146.0 | 556.8 | 261.4 | 6.3 | 4.0 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 23.3 | 22.8 | 30.9 | 29.1 | 4.0 | 5.7 | 5.0 | 7.1 |
| 10.0 | 18.5 | 12.4 | 23.0 | 65.5 | 52.1 | 59.9 | 44.6 | 161.3 | 82.3 | 24.2 | 26.4 | 4.1 | 981.8 | 779.8 | 644.2 | 367.4 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 1.0 | 0.8 | 27.0 | 25.8 | 29.1 | 28.8 | 4.7 | 6.1 | 4.6 | 6.0 |
| 11.9 | 17.3 | 15.3 | 25.9 | 66.7 | 62.9 | 61.3 | 42.4 | 139.5 | 211.0 | 65.7 | 11.7 | 1.7 | 1012.7 | 931.1 | 569.2 | 316.1 | 3.1 | 3.6 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 23.5 | 24.5 | 28.7 | 28.9 | 4.5 | 5.8 | 5.1 | 6.2 |
| 4.8 | 8.1 | 6.3 | 13.6 | 82.0 | 71.0 | 75.9 | 53.6 | 479.4 | 213.9 | 81.1 | 9.7 | 1.1 | 1202.2 | 959.7 | 641.8 | 235.0 | 12.3 | 9.5 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 22.7 | 23.7 | 32.5 | 31.2 | 4.1 | 6.6 | 4.8 | 7.5 |
| 10.8 | 18.1 | 11.5 | 19.1 | 64.4 | 52.6 | 64.1 | 44.7 | 400.0 | 115.4 | 33.2 | 10.7 | 1.5 | 982.0 | 882.6 | 546.0 | 271.7 | 4.4 | 4.7 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 31.0 | 28.4 | 34.2 | 33.6 | 4.8 | 6.3 | 4.7 | 6.5 |
| 39.6 | 36.8 | 8.8 | 11.5 | 41.7 | 47.4 | 67.1 | 62.3 | | 138.7 | 64.9 | 22.6 | 3.2 | 1827.1 | 1630.2 | ##### | 539.7 | 5.0 | 7.7 | 5.9 | 4.2 | 21.3 | 20.3 | 33.1 | 31.3 | 6.4 | 7.5 | 3.9 | 6.8 |
| 16.9 | 19.3 | 18.1 | 27.6 | 64.0 | 56.0 | 55.4 | 38.4 | 203.2 | 131.3 | 46.0 | 12.0 | 3.4 | 743.3 | 781.3 | 289.1 | 176.5 | 3.7 | 2.8 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 20.8 | 20.5 | 24.0 | 23.3 | 5.6 | 6.6 | 5.1 | 6.5 |
| 14.3 | 17.6 | 14.8 | 19.0 | 59.9 | 41.2 | 53.4 | 29.8 | 300.0 | 103.4 | 47.2 | 5.0 | 1.6 | 389.0 | 325.2 | 190.8 | 69.5 | 2.7 | 2.4 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 30.0 | 29.7 | 33.7 | 33.5 | 4.6 | 5.8 | 4.2 | 5.1 |
| 16.8 | 19.7 | 19.6 | 22.5 | 62.8 | 52.3 | 49.1 | 33.3 | 133.3 | 246.4 | 116.7 | 18.0 | 4.6 | 593.1 | 513.0 | 214.9 | 152.2 | 5.4 | 3.5 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 23.9 | 24.8 | 33.0 | 32.6 | 4.8 | 5.2 | 4.2 | 5.3 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7.9 | 12.4 | 10.8 | 15.1 | 67.4 | 65.9 | 60.3 | 48.6 | 172.4 | 280.4 | 114.6 | 21.4 | 4.2 | 1134.7 | 1076.8 | 613.7 | 336.2 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 1.8 | 0.7 | 24.5 | 24.1 | 30.2 | 29.9 | 4.4 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.2 |
| 9.9 | 11.0 | 9.2 | 11.7 | 69.5 | 65.5 | 59.7 | 39.9 | 200.0 | 131.2 | 54.1 | 2.9 | 0.6 | 1064.2 | 955.2 | 481.1 | 172.2 | 2.3 | 2.7 | 1.1 | 0.9 | 25.4 | 24.1 | 29.5 | 29.3 | 4.0 | 3.9 | 3.9 | 4.3 |
| 7.5 | 6.2 | 14.0 | 9.6 | 72.8 | 71.2 | 41.4 | 30.5 | | 76.4 | 43.8 | 10.7 | 4.0 | 819.8 | 948.4 | 283.0 | 193.0 | 6.1 | 5.2 | 3.8 | 1.9 | 23.9 | 22.4 | 33.4 | 34.8 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 3.8 |
| 7.9 | 8.7 | 11.6 | 15.0 | 77.3 | 78.7 | 63.3 | 42.4 | | 315.3 | 175.2 | 3.8 | 2.0 | 823.8 | 1150.6 | 254.4 | 98.3 | 1.6 | 1.9 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 25.4 | 24.9 | 38.2 | 38.5 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.7 | 3.6 |
| 11.4 | 12.8 | 22.8 | 23.6 | 67.4 | 67.0 | 45.4 | 48.8 | 180.0 | 170.0 | 57.8 | 15.9 | 6.5 | 1032.4 | 1096.9 | 413.3 | 357.3 | 5.9 | 4.8 | 4.1 | 3.1 | 25.4 | 24.9 | 35.9 | 36.9 | 4.0 | 3.1 | 4.4 | 3.6 |

| employment rate | | | | unemployment rate | | | | illiteracy rate | | | | Sex Ratio at Birth | | Years of School going | | | | life expectancy at birth | | | | IMR | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | rural | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | |
| m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | | | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f | m | f |
| 86.8 | 80.7 | 80.4 | 71.5 | 2.0 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 2.9 | 12.6 | 11.8 | 26.0 | 106.6 | 109.2 | 9.5 | 8.7 | 7.4 | 6.5 | 72.9 | 76.1 | 71.1 | 74.5 | 9.5 | 8.0 | 9.1 | 7.0 |
| 85.5 | 74.6 | 91.8 | 75.2 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 2.9 | 10.4 | 9.5 | 25.2 | 105.6 | 115.8 | 9.0 | 8.5 | 7.1 | 6.0 | 72.2 | 74.7 | 71.9 | 74.2 | 11.3 | 10.0 | 8.6 | 9.2 |
| 90.2 | 80.6 | 93.5 | 81.7 | 1.1 | 1.6 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 5.4 | 17.0 | 15.0 | 34.2 | 107.9 | 113.1 | 8.8 | 7.8 | 6.7 | 5.4 | 70.6 | 74.5 | 70.2 | 74.2 | 9.3 | 9.1 | 9.5 | 9.4 |
| 89.0 | 72.0 | 92.1 | 65.2 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 2.7 | 9.6 | 12.4 | 25.2 | 109.3 | 109.4 | 9.4 | 8.7 | 7.0 | 6.0 | 68.7 | 72.0 | 68.0 | 71.2 | 19.2 | 19.2 | 20.8 | 20.8 |
| 85.5 | 68.4 | 89.7 | 67.3 | 2.5 | 3.6 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 6.9 | 17.7 | 18.8 | 37.4 | 108.5 | 108.7 | 8.5 | 7.6 | 6.5 | 5.2 | 67.4 | 69.8 | 66.3 | 68.1 | 27.5 | 30.6 | 32.4 | 37.4 |
| 87.3 | 79.3 | 91.5 | 74.8 | 1.9 | 2.2 | 0.6 | 0.8 | 4.4 | 13.0 | 9.2 | 20.7 | 106.1 | 113.3 | 8.6 | 7.7 | 7.0 | 6.1 | 70.2 | 73.3 | 69.6 | 72.0 | 18.9 | 18.4 | 19.5 | 20.5 |
| 87.5 | 72.2 | 91.0 | 65.9 | 2.4 | 3.1 | 1.2 | 1.7 | 5.9 | 15.1 | 12.3 | 23.4 | 106.0 | 109.7 | 8.9 | 8.0 | 6.8 | 5.9 | 67.5 | 70.6 | 66.8 | 69.1 | 25.3 | 23.5 | 29.5 | 27.8 |
| 84.1 | 61.3 | 88.8 | 57.6 | 3.7 | 4.9 | 1.0 | 1.6 | 6.2 | 15.7 | 12.6 | 25.9 | 105.8 | 108.2 | 8.6 | 7.8 | 6.8 | 5.8 | 67.9 | 71.2 | 66.9 | 69.2 | 19.9 | 16.8 | 24.0 | 20.3 |
| 91.9 | 84.5 | 92.6 | 93.4 | 1.8 | 2.5 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 3.9 | 13.9 | 12.0 | 32.7 | 105.4 | 103.8 | 9.6 | 8.7 | 7.4 | 6.0 | 73.4 | 77.6 | 71.3 | 77.1 | 13.9 | 10.9 | 17.6 | 12.1 |
| 89.0 | 85.2 | 92.1 | 91.8 | 2.0 | 2.1 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 5.8 | 19.6 | 13.8 | 37.3 | 111.9 | 115.6 | 9.0 | 7.6 | 7.0 | 5.3 | 70.3 | 75.0 | 69.7 | 74.6 | 15.0 | 15.1 | 15.6 | 15.8 |
| 93.7 | 83.7 | 93.9 | 76.0 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 8.1 | 23.4 | 15.4 | 37.5 | 106.9 | 119.8 | 8.0 | 6.8 | 6.5 | 5.1 | 70.5 | 74.9 | 69.9 | 74.1 | 15.7 | 18.7 | 17.2 | 21.1 |
| 88.4 | 83.7 | 92.3 | 90.1 | 1.2 | 1.4 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 9.0 | 25.8 | 23.9 | 53.5 | 109.1 | 111.0 | 8.5 | 6.9 | 6.1 | 4.1 | 68.7 | 72.7 | 68.2 | 72.0 | 24.7 | 27.6 | 25.9 | 29.2 |
| 87.4 | 62.1 | 91.0 | 71.0 | 1.8 | 2.4 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 6.1 | 23.8 | 12.1 | 40.2 | 112.0 | 109.5 | 8.4 | 6.8 | 6.7 | 4.7 | 68.5 | 73.0 | 68.1 | 72.2 | 20.1 | 26.2 | 20.6 | 27.3 |
| 87.2 | 81.6 | 87.4 | 86.6 | 2.6 | 3.2 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 4.1 | 16.7 | 14.3 | 41.8 | 110.7 | 110.7 | 9.1 | 7.8 | 6.6 | 4.6 | 66.6 | 69.2 | 65.8 | 68.2 | 36.5 | 50.1 | 38.8 | 53.3 |
| 86.7 | 86.2 | 92.5 | 92.1 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 6.2 | 20.7 | 15.5 | 36.3 | 114.4 | 115.2 | 8.7 | 7.2 | 6.8 | 5.1 | 70.0 | 73.9 | 69.6 | 73.4 | 11.4 | 14.7 | 12.2 | 16.1 |
| 86.7 | 79.3 | 92.7 | 90.6 | 1.9 | 2.7 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 6.3 | 19.3 | 15.9 | 35.0 | 112.8 | 116.5 | 8.8 | 7.6 | 6.9 | 5.4 | 68.8 | 73.2 | 68.5 | 72.8 | 16.2 | 21.3 | 16.8 | 22.3 |
| 87.8 | 86.9 | 92.1 | 88.9 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 4.8 | 17.7 | 15.4 | 38.4 | 109.0 | 109.4 | 9.1 | 7.7 | 6.8 | 5.1 | 66.6 | 70.4 | 65.5 | 69.0 | 25.2 | 25.0 | 27.8 | 27.8 |
| 86.4 | 81.0 | 91.0 | 87.2 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 3.7 | 14.0 | 10.4 | 28.1 | 107.5 | 110.6 | 9.1 | 8.0 | 6.9 | 5.6 | 66.5 | 69.7 | 66.1 | 69.0 | 36.2 | 40.2 | 38.2 | 42.6 |
| 77.1 | 73.9 | 88.6 | 86.0 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 3.3 | 16.8 | 7.2 | 29.2 | 113.0 | 110.6 | 8.6 | 7.1 | 7.0 | 5.4 | 70.6 | 76.0 | 69.9 | 75.2 | 14.7 | 17.1 | 15.9 | 17.8 |
| 88.5 | 86.5 | 90.7 | 91.0 | 3.5 | 2.9 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 2.8 | 14.2 | 8.5 | 28.0 | 112.0 | 117.3 | 8.9 | 7.8 | 6.7 | 5.3 | 69.1 | 71.0 | 68.7 | 70.3 | 27.3 | 63.7 | 28.7 | 67.5 |
| 74.9 | 67.3 | 82.6 | 77.9 | 19.0 | 18.8 | 3.7 | 4.4 | 3.9 | 18.5 | 11.8 | 37.5 | 110.2 | 113.7 | 9.2 | 7.5 | 7.1 | 5.2 | 69.5 | 75.4 | 69.2 | 74.9 | 27.3 | 31.4 | 29.2 | 33.3 |
| 86.6 | 85.9 | 91.9 | 92.4 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 5.3 | 13.8 | 14.5 | 33.2 | 107.9 | 112.8 | 8.8 | 8.1 | 6.4 | 5.1 | 66.7 | 69.2 | 66.1 | 68.4 | 36.2 | 40.8 | 37.0 | 42.7 |
| 84.3 | 83.0 | 90.2 | 91.8 | 3.4 | 3.1 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 8.3 | 24.1 | 24.0 | 58.9 | 101.3 | 100.9 | 8.4 | 7.1 | 5.7 | 3.6 | 65.1 | 66.9 | 64.6 | 66.1 | 49.9 | 55.0 | 52.6 | 57.9 |
| 87.8 | 86.3 | 90.5 | 90.9 | 2.1 | 2.0 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 9.3 | 25.0 | 27.8 | 56.6 | 104.4 | 107.6 | 8.1 | 6.9 | 5.4 | 3.8 | 63.6 | 66.0 | 62.8 | 65.0 | 66.7 | 64.9 | 70.4 | 69.0 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 85.0 | 71.7 | 91.3 | 80.2 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 3.9 | 13.4 | 20.4 | 40.4 | 110.4 | 111.4 | 9.6 | 8.5 | 6.6 | 5.1 | 67.7 | 70.5 | 66.9 | 69.7 | 21.1 | 23.0 | 22.0 | 24.0 |
| 82.6 | 77.8 | 90.6 | 89.0 | 2.7 | 3.3 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 4.8 | 18.1 | 32.1 | 61.8 | 108.9 | 110.9 | 9.4 | 8.0 | 5.7 | 3.6 | 67.4 | 69.2 | 66.7 | 68.3 | 29.0 | 34.2 | 31.0 | 37.2 |
| 83.5 | 69.4 | 91.3 | 86.0 | 5.4 | 7.3 | 0.6 | 0.7 | 7.3 | 21.6 | 35.7 | 68.4 | 107.1 | 104.0 | 8.9 | 7.8 | 5.3 | 3.4 | 62.3 | 65.0 | 60.3 | 62.9 | 69.6 | 62.8 | 79.0 | 72.0 |
| 80.7 | 67.1 | 89.1 | 90.3 | 6.6 | 6.3 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 4.8 | 16.6 | 29.6 | 56.4 | 108.5 | 106.7 | 9.3 | 8.1 | 5.8 | 4.1 | 68.2 | 70.4 | 67.4 | 69.2 | 38.9 | 35.6 | 44.0 | 40.6 |
| 81.4 | 67.2 | 89.1 | 75.8 | 2.9 | 3.2 | 1.5 | 2.5 | 8.3 | 15.9 | 20.8 | 28.3 | 105.5 | 104.6 | 8.5 | 7.9 | 6.1 | 5.6 | 65.8 | 67.7 | 64.5 | 65.4 | 63.1 | 53.7 | 72.8 | 62.3 |

# Appendix 3: Gender Gap Indicators Calculated Based on Census data in 2000

| | unemployment rate | | | | employment rate | | | | % of in-migrants | | | | % of out-migrants | | # of postgraduates | | # of college graduates | | | | # of highsch graduates per 10000 pop | | | | sex ratio of undergraduate students | sex ratio of graduate students |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | rural | urban | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | urban |
| province | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | | | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | | |
| Beijing | 4.9 | 5.1 | 2.9 | 1.3 | 76.6 | 64.7 | 84.2 | 64.8 | 23.8 | 18.2 | 18.5 | 11.9 | 6.1 | 4.0 | 158 | 106 | 861 | 668 | 54 | 26 | 1473 | 1456 | 805 | 687 | 163 | 210 |
| Tianjin | 9.6 | 9.8 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 72.8 | 50.3 | 86.9 | 74.9 | 9.7 | 9.0 | 6.0 | 5.5 | 5.3 | 2.9 | 24 | 16 | 461 | 292 | 7 | 15 | 1328 | 1252 | 520 | 361 | 40 | 4700 |
| Hebei | 4.3 | 4.8 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 75.8 | 61.0 | 90.5 | 82.2 | 12.6 | 12.0 | 2.9 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 14 | 7 | 294 | 191 | 8 | 5 | 1133 | 1015 | 545 | 305 | 261 | 3800 |
| Shanxi | 5.3 | 5.8 | 2.3 | 2.0 | 78.8 | 53.8 | 90.8 | 69.3 | s | 11.8 | 6.2 | 5.1 | 3.6 | 5.1 | 20 | 0 | 220 | 142 | 3 | 3 | 1184 | 1061 | 462 | 271 | 136 | |
| Neimenggu | 8.3 | 7.9 | 1.5 | 1.1 | 73.9 | 51.0 | 92.6 | 81.0 | 20.3 | 20.8 | 7.3 | 7.7 | 9.9 | 13.0 | 22 | 4 | 235 | 153 | 6 | 2 | 1370 | 1231 | 486 | 283 | 90 | 1900 |
| Liaoning | 11.8 | 14.1 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 71.3 | 53.7 | 92.6 | 82.9 | 9.1 | 9.4 | 6.2 | 5.9 | 3.9 | 6.2 | 20 | 13 | 335 | 193 | 8 | 3 | 1243 | 1123 | 386 | 212 | 240 | 1071 |
| Jilin | 9.8 | 9.3 | 1.9 | 1.7 | 67.9 | 49.3 | 92.8 | 80.5 | 11.5 | 10.9 | 5.0 | 5.3 | 4.4 | 5.1 | 16 | 16 | 363 | 202 | 14 | 15 | 1715 | 1518 | 361 | 219 | 231 | 917 |
| Heilongjiang | 11.2 | 9.4 | 2.2 | 1.7 | 69.7 | 46.0 | 92.2 | 74.2 | 11.3 | 10.6 | 5.7 | 6.2 | 3.8 | 6.6 | 5 | 15 | 265 | 159 | 10 | 3 | 1474 | 1329 | 437 | 242 | 102 | 3350 |
| Shanghai | 7.8 | 8.9 | 3.8 | 2.2 | 76.0 | 59.9 | 91.6 | 82.8 | 28.5 | 25.8 | 22.2 | 20.5 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 53 | 22 | 570 | 286 | 53 | 22 | 1551 | 1342 | 682 | 391 | 163 | 533 |
| Jiangsu | 5.5 | 5.5 | 1.3 | 1.2 | 80.1 | 69.1 | 92.5 | 91.0 | 15.8 | 15.2 | 5.2 | 5.7 | 5.6 | 10.4 | 19 | 10 | 295 | 119 | 15 | 2 | 1399 | 1112 | 715 | 277 | 157 | 1288 |
| Zhejiang | 4.4 | 3.9 | 1.9 | 1.4 | 83.6 | 67.1 | 92.0 | 75.9 | 23.2 | 21.8 | 7.4 | 7.8 | 5.2 | 14.7 | 31 | 8 | 204 | 107 | 8 | 4 | 948 | 799 | 436 | 231 | 131 | 450 |
| Anhui | 5.6 | 7.5 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 77.5 | 62.5 | 93.0 | 89.9 | 10.3 | 10.3 | 1.8 | 1.6 | 2.6 | 7.6 | 17 | 13 | 238 | 95 | 7 | 1 | 1032 | 753 | 304 | 90 | 372 | |
| Fujian | 6.0 | 5.7 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 81.4 | 63.8 | 87.4 | 74.3 | 23.1 | 21.6 | 6.5 | 6.2 | 6.8 | 15.6 | 23 | 15 | 274 | 105 | 6 | 1 | 994 | 740 | 374 | 115 | 108 | 400 |
| Jiangxi | 7.7 | 7.3 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 76.1 | 59.8 | 90.9 | 85.5 | 14.1 | 14.5 | 4.0 | 3.7 | 4.1 | 9.9 | 8 | 4 | 299 | 122 | 11 | 2 | 1365 | 1079 | 442 | 116 | 318 | |
| Shandong | 2.8 | 3.5 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 82.3 | 69.4 | 93.0 | 89.5 | 11.6 | 11.2 | 2.3 | 2.2 | 3.5 | 5.6 | 19 | 7 | 288 | 117 | 7 | 3 | 986 | 772 | 497 | 173 | 149 | 1063 |
| Henan | 5.9 | 6.8 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 77.8 | 65.1 | 92.6 | 91.0 | 12.0 | 10.8 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 5.0 | 7.6 | 21 | 2 | 274 | 105 | 10 | 5 | 1316 | 1162 | 519 | 241 | 113 | |
| Hubei | 7.2 | 7.5 | 1.8 | 1.4 | 74.2 | 60.7 | 91.3 | 88.9 | 13.5 | 13.5 | 2.4 | 2.3 | 6.4 | 13.4 | 34 | 15 | 263 | 101 | 6 | 1 | 1300 | 1077 | 497 | 172 | 198 | 553 |
| Hunan | 6.7 | 7.1 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 74.9 | 61.6 | 90.9 | 85.1 | 12.9 | 13.2 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 6.9 | 15.8 | 22 | 11 | 288 | 129 | 10 | 4 | 1324 | 1202 | 520 | 236 | 155 | 571 |
| Guangdong | 6.0 | 4.9 | 2.7 | 1.5 | 83.1 | 71.6 | 87.1 | 84.0 | 36.2 | 38.1 | 12.8 | 14.5 | 6.1 | 15.5 | 27 | 16 | 223 | 107 | 9 | 3 | 1351 | 919 | 521 | 197 | 81 | 1043 |
| Guangxi | 7.9 | 5.4 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 75.5 | 68.0 | 90.3 | 90.1 | 15.0 | 16.0 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 8.0 | 15.5 | 7 | 7 | 232 | 73 | 7 | 1 | 1226 | 957 | 440 | 171 | 100 | |
| Hainan | 9.8 | 10.6 | 3.5 | 2.5 | 74.1 | 63.1 | 83.6 | 86.3 | 18.8 | 17.1 | 5.2 | 4.9 | 6.9 | 12.6 | 64 | 28 | 222 | 103 | 13 | 0 | 1368 | 1048 | 665 | 197 | | |
| Chongqing | 7.8 | 8.4 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 77.1 | 64.8 | 93.8 | 93.5 | 11.7 | 12.1 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 8.2 | 20.9 | 20 | 14 | 289 | 150 | 3 | 2 | 1164 | 1128 | 240 | 84 | 186 | 2100 |
| Sichuan | 5.6 | 6.0 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 76.5 | 64.9 | 95.0 | 95.0 | 15.2 | 14.5 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 7.1 | 14.9 | 17 | 7 | 301 | 132 | 6 | 1 | 1000 | 909 | 253 | 113 | 178 | 590 |
| Guizhou | 5.2 | 4.8 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 78.1 | 63.3 | 91.8 | 91.5 | 17.9 | 16.6 | 2.4 | 2.8 | 8.0 | 12.8 | 5 | 0 | 236 | 105 | 4 | 0 | 799 | 599 | 142 | 38 | 74 | 3100 |
| Yunnan | 3.7 | 4.1 | 0.5 | 0.4 | 82.0 | 70.8 | 93.5 | 94.4 | 23.2 | 20.4 | 4.1 | 3.2 | 4.0 | 5.3 | 23 | 14 | 271 | 131 | 8 | 0 | 788 | 764 | 203 | 94 | 116 | |
| Xizang | 2.7 | 1.4 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 75.8 | 72.7 | 91.5 | 86.2 | 40.6 | 35.2 | 2.9 | 1.2 | 6.2 | 7.6 | 0 | 0 | 56 | 86 | 10 | 0 | 599 | 219 | 41 | 10 | | |
| Shaanxi | 4.9 | 4.1 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 75.6 | 60.7 | 88.1 | 81.5 | 12.6 | 11.3 | 3.2 | 2.4 | 3.8 | 8.9 | 49 | 16 | 361 | 173 | 9 | 3 | 1549 | 1348 | 538 | 276 | 127 | |
| Gansu | 6.3 | 6.0 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 76.4 | 63.3 | 92.1 | 90.3 | 15.4 | 14.2 | 2.1 | 1.9 | 5.4 | 6.9 | 15 | 16 | 306 | 138 | 8 | 1 | 1447 | 1368 | 437 | 124 | 155 | |
| Qinhai | 9.5 | 7.7 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 76.6 | 56.9 | 95.1 | 92.1 | 21.8 | 22.4 | 5.2 | 4.0 | 7.6 | 6.6 | 0 | 0 | 374 | 194 | 25 | 6 | 1405 | 1274 | 283 | 174 | | |
| Ningxia | 4.8 | 6.5 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 82.3 | 63.6 | 91.8 | 86.4 | 18.4 | 18.2 | 8.8 | 7.8 | 5.3 | 6.8 | 17 | 0 | 350 | 174 | 31 | 6 | 1156 | 1076 | 408 | 205 | 20 | |
| Xinjiang | 6.4 | 6.4 | 2.1 | 1.8 | 75.1 | 58.1 | 87.8 | 74.3 | 26.9 | 22.0 | 11.3 | 10.8 | 4.8 | 4.5 | 17 | 9 | 317 | 238 | 23 | 20 | 1167 | 1153 | 364 | 321 | 50 | |

| enrollment rate of high school | | | | dropout rate of secondary school | | | | enrollment rate of secondary school | | | | dropout rate of primary school | | | | enrollment rate of primary school | | | | illiteracy rate | | | | Sex Ratio at Birth | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | rural |
| male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | | |
| 91.2 | 95.8 | 86.5 | 91.3 | 2.2 | 1.6 | 3.9 | 3.4 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 96.6 | 97.4 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 1.2 | 6.2 | 5.2 | 15.1 | 116.0 | 110.9 |
| 87.2 | 90.9 | 86.2 | 86.4 | 6.1 | 1.3 | 4.4 | 4.5 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 97.1 | 100.0 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 97.4 | 97.2 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 2.2 | 8.6 | 4.7 | 15.0 | 107.7 | 123.8 |
| 90.9 | 96.4 | 82.8 | 80.7 | 2.6 | 1.3 | 2.7 | 3.6 | 98.0 | 99.2 | 98.9 | 98.0 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 98.2 | 99.2 | 3.4 | 6.9 | 7.7 | 12.2 | 114.4 | 119.8 |
| 82.7 | 76.4 | 54.5 | 54.8 | 6.0 | 3.4 | 7.3 | 13.1 | 98.0 | 95.7 | 97.3 | 93.4 | 1.3 | 0.7 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 97.0 | 96.9 | 1.9 | 5.7 | 4.0 | 9.8 | 111.4 | 113.3 |
| 85.3 | 81.8 | 54.4 | 39.6 | 4.7 | 6.8 | 11.5 | 17.3 | 98.7 | 100.0 | 96.2 | 92.2 | 0.0 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 90.9 | 98.2 | 98.8 | 96.0 | 3.4 | 9.7 | 9.7 | 22.0 | 104.2 | 111.8 |
| 90.5 | 93.3 | 55.6 | 69.4 | 2.0 | 2.8 | 12.3 | 8.1 | 99.4 | 98.8 | 97.3 | 99.4 | 0.1 | 0.7 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 98.2 | 98.1 | 95.5 | 97.7 | 1.8 | 6.3 | 4.4 | 11.9 | 108.6 | 115.3 |
| 84.4 | 84.3 | 47.9 | 46.0 | 4.3 | 5.9 | 14.2 | 19.0 | 100.0 | 99.1 | 95.4 | 93.7 | 1.5 | 1.2 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 96.4 | 96.1 | 92.8 | 96.3 | 2.2 | 6.0 | 4.8 | 10.4 | 111.3 | 108.6 |
| 79.8 | 78.6 | 52.4 | 50.4 | 3.8 | 5.1 | 12.0 | 18.3 | 97.2 | 98.1 | 94.3 | 91.9 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 1.2 | 0.4 | 99.2 | 98.4 | 96.1 | 99.1 | 2.6 | 7.4 | 4.8 | 11.1 | 109.1 | 106.0 |
| 88.3 | 94.4 | 50.0 | 100.0 | 2.2 | 2.2 | 3.4 | 3.8 | 100.0 | 97.7 | 92.3 | 100.0 | 0.3 | 1.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 98.1 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 1.8 | 8.6 | 6.6 | 22.7 | 114.1 | 123.5 |
| 87.7 | 85.6 | 75.2 | 62.4 | 1.3 | 3.0 | 3.5 | 9.5 | 99.5 | 97.5 | 98.3 | 97.0 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.6 | 99.3 | 99.4 | 99.7 | 98.4 | 2.3 | 9.1 | 4.4 | 14.7 | 116.4 | 123.2 |
| 87.8 | 87.2 | 78.4 | 77.1 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 3.2 | 4.1 | 100.0 | 98.6 | 98.6 | 97.8 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.4 | 99.3 | 98.5 | 98.9 | 97.9 | 2.8 | 9.3 | 5.9 | 16.5 | 112.8 | 113.4 |
| 90.3 | 81.5 | 67.4 | 54.1 | 1.5 | 3.5 | 5.3 | 7.7 | 100.0 | 99.0 | 98.5 | 98.1 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 96.6 | 96.3 | 4.3 | 13.2 | 8.8 | 22.0 | 119.0 | 134.8 |
| 85.8 | 82.3 | 74.6 | 63.3 | 3.7 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 6.2 | 98.2 | 98.2 | 98.0 | 97.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 96.3 | 100.0 | 96.0 | 96.6 | 3.6 | 9.9 | 7.2 | 17.2 | 115.1 | 123.7 |
| 78.6 | 80.0 | 64.9 | 51.2 | 7.6 | 5.6 | 7.6 | 14.1 | 95.0 | 95.1 | 97.7 | 94.5 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 97.7 | 97.0 | 1.7 | 7.0 | 3.7 | 12.7 | 130.0 | 140.8 |
| 82.3 | 79.6 | 72.2 | 63.5 | 2.7 | 3.8 | 4.6 | 10.2 | 99.3 | 97.8 | 98.4 | 96.3 | 0.4 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 99.4 | 97.2 | 96.2 | 96.0 | 3.0 | 10.6 | 7.2 | 19.4 | 112.7 | 114.0 |
| 83.7 | 84.1 | 70.4 | 64.8 | 2.8 | 4.7 | 4.4 | 7.4 | 99.1 | 98.6 | 98.7 | 97.7 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 98.5 | 100.0 | 99.3 | 98.4 | 2.1 | 7.4 | 5.0 | 13.1 | 122.7 | 132.3 |
| 83.4 | 76.6 | 61.0 | 53.8 | 5.1 | 5.7 | 9.2 | 14.5 | 98.2 | 98.3 | 93.9 | 94.7 | 0.3 | 1.3 | 1.1 | 1.5 | 99.5 | 100.0 | 98.7 | 99.2 | 2.3 | 9.2 | 6.0 | 18.4 | 122.9 | 131.8 |
| 86.3 | 85.6 | 70.3 | 69.1 | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 6.4 | 97.5 | 97.7 | 96.7 | 96.5 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 97.1 | 100.0 | 97.6 | 97.3 | 1.2 | 5.3 | 3.4 | 11.2 | 115.6 | 131.3 |
| 85.7 | 85.5 | 85.3 | 75.9 | 2.0 | 2.7 | 3.0 | 4.2 | 98.6 | 98.7 | 99.2 | 98.6 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 94.8 | 94.3 | 93.6 | 89.8 | 1.1 | 5.9 | 2.6 | 12.6 | 133.5 | 143.7 |
| 82.3 | 84.1 | 65.1 | 64.8 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 9.9 | 11.8 | 97.4 | 97.6 | 96.1 | 95.5 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 1.3 | 0.9 | 95.6 | 100.0 | 92.3 | 94.8 | 1.2 | 6.2 | 2.5 | 10.0 | 129.8 | 128.3 |
| 93.1 | 80.9 | 83.9 | 73.3 | 5.9 | 12.6 | 5.6 | 6.1 | 97.5 | 96.8 | 96.1 | 100.0 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.7 | 94.8 | 86.5 | 87.7 | 89.1 | 2.0 | 10.5 | 5.2 | 20.6 | 141.4 | 131.5 |
| 90.0 | 83.6 | 67.7 | 58.1 | 5.5 | 6.6 | 9.4 | 8.9 | 98.0 | 96.1 | 93.6 | 93.9 | 0.9 | 0.0 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 98.3 | 97.1 | 2.3 | 7.5 | 5.8 | 16.9 | 106.4 | 120.6 |
| 90.7 | 81.5 | 60.1 | 57.6 | 2.2 | 4.5 | 8.3 | 9.7 | 99.5 | 99.2 | 95.3 | 92.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.9 | 99.2 | 99.0 | 94.4 | 95.5 | 2.3 | 7.5 | 6.6 | 17.5 | 110.0 | 118.8 |
| 89.7 | 83.5 | 67.3 | 58.1 | 7.9 | 12.0 | 7.7 | 15.7 | 93.7 | 97.5 | 97.1 | 86.4 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 2.5 | 97.7 | 100.0 | 90.3 | 84.1 | 4.0 | 14.0 | 12.1 | 36.6 | 110.5 | 104.1 |
| 77.3 | 76.7 | 50.3 | 42.6 | 4.6 | 3.7 | 17.9 | 23.6 | 98.6 | 91.5 | 89.7 | 84.8 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 1.1 | 2.8 | 98.3 | 98.1 | 92.9 | 89.8 | 4.0 | 11.6 | 11.2 | 25.8 | 106.3 | 111.6 |
| 86.7 | 82.3 | 19.2 | 7.1 | 0.0 | 12.5 | 19.7 | 14.5 | 53.3 | 100.0 | 52.2 | 36.8 | 33.0 | 4.1 | 4.1 | 3.9 | | 100.0 | 57.7 | 52.9 | 14.1 | 32.1 | 40.5 | 68.0 | 86.6 | 99.4 |
| 92.8 | 86.2 | 77.4 | 80.2 | 3.0 | 1.1 | 3.6 | 5.4 | 97.1 | 99.0 | 98.1 | 98.9 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 100.0 | 96.5 | 97.5 | 95.3 | 2.2 | 7.7 | 7.5 | 17.7 | 116.3 | 129.3 |
| 96.7 | 83.0 | 74.6 | 62.5 | 2.5 | 5.7 | 7.8 | 9.4 | 100.0 | 92.6 | 91.9 | 84.6 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 0.7 | 1.3 | 97.6 | 91.7 | 91.4 | 90.9 | 3.4 | 11.2 | 15.2 | 33.6 | 113.1 | 121.2 |
| 100.0 | | 44.8 | 26.1 | 7.8 | 5.4 | 11.7 | 11.6 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 83.9 | 68.6 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 2.7 | 2.9 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 80.5 | 68.6 | 5.5 | 15.7 | 21.3 | 46.8 | 102.1 | 103.9 |
| 95.9 | 92.6 | 63.3 | 38.9 | 23.1 | 9.0 | 9.3 | 14.8 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 90.6 | 91.7 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 95.3 | 100.0 | 90.3 | 93.3 | 3.7 | 10.7 | 12.7 | 28.6 | 101.4 | 110.4 |
| 83.9 | 88.3 | 77.9 | 68.9 | 3.4 | 3.7 | 3.9 | 8.6 | 95.5 | 91.2 | 98.9 | 96.3 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 100.0 | 97.4 | 90.1 | 93.2 | 3.1 | 7.2 | 7.3 | 11.4 | 106.5 | 106.7 |

| Years of School going | | | | life expectancy at birth | | IMR | %of Pop aged 0–14 | | | | %of Pop aged 65+ | | | | Total Fertility Rate | | Illiteracy Rate among Pop aged 16–24 | | | | Yrs of School going for pop aged 16–24 | | | | Yrs of School going for inflow migrants aged 15+ | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| urban | | rural | | | | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | | urban | | rural | |
| male | female | male | female | male | female | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | urban | rural | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female | male | female |
| 10.8 | 10.2 | 8.4 | 7.4 | 74.3 | 78.0 | 3.8 | 12.10 | 12.3 | 19 | 20.1 | 9.3 | 9.8 | 7.4 | 8.8 | 632.4 | 897.5 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 11.8 | 11.1 | 8.4 | 7.4 | 10.1 | 9.7 | 8.4 | 7.4 |
| 10.0 | 9.2 | 7.8 | 6.8 | 73.3 | 76.6 | 4.4 | 14.30 | 15.2 | 24.4 | 24.1 | 8.5 | 9 | 7.6 | 7.2 | 772.7 | 1177.6 | 0.4 | 1.2 | 0.0 | 0.7 | 11.1 | 10.6 | 7.8 | 6.8 | 9.7 | 9.4 | 7.8 | 6.8 |
| 9.6 | 8.9 | 7.7 | 6.9 | 70.7 | 74.6 | 15.3 | 20.30 | 18.3 | 24.9 | 23.3 | 5.9 | 6.4 | 7.1 | 8.2 | 1075.3 | 1380.3 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 10.7 | 10.8 | 7.7 | 6.9 | 10.0 | 9.1 | 7.7 | 6.9 |
| 9.4 | 8.9 | 7.6 | 6.9 | 70.0 | 73.6 | 17.8 | 23.10 | 23.1 | 27.7 | 27.5 | 6 | 5.9 | 6.2 | 7.7 | 1186.8 | 1380.3 | 0.6 | 0.5 | 0.6 | 1.2 | 10.6 | 10.2 | 7.6 | 6.9 | 9.3 | 8.6 | 7.6 | 6.9 |
| 9.5 | 8.8 | 7.3 | 6.0 | 68.3 | 71.8 | 30.3 | 20.50 | 19 | 22.9 | 23.1 | 5 | 4.4 | 6.2 | 5.8 | 992.9 | 1160.8 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 2.7 | 10.3 | 10.2 | 7.3 | 6.0 | 8.8 | 7.9 | 7.3 | 6.0 |
| 9.8 | 9.1 | 7.6 | 6.7 | 71.5 | 75.4 | 10.9 | 15.70 | 15.2 | 21.2 | 19.8 | 8.1 | 8.2 | 7.3 | 8.3 | 812.6 | 1202.3 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 1.2 | 0.4 | 11.3 | 10.1 | 7.6 | 6.7 | 9.3 | 8.8 | 7.6 | 6.7 |
| 9.8 | 9.0 | 7.3 | 6.5 | 71.4 | 75.0 | 17.8 | 17.10 | 16.9 | 21.1 | 21.9 | 6.5 | 6.7 | 6 | 6.5 | 752.7 | 922.9 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.8 | 11.1 | 10.1 | 7.3 | 6.5 | 9.7 | 8.7 | 7.3 | 6.5 |
| 9.5 | 8.9 | 7.5 | 6.7 | 70.4 | 74.7 | 11.6 | 17.70 | 16.7 | 21.2 | 21.8 | 6.3 | 6 | 5.7 | 5.4 | 787.9 | 963.4 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.9 | 0.8 | 10.6 | 10.1 | 7.5 | 6.7 | 9.2 | 8.2 | 7.5 | 6.7 |
| 10.1 | 9.0 | 7.7 | 6.1 | 76.2 | 80.0 | 4.2 | 12.30 | 12.5 | 12.8 | 13 | 10.4 | 13.4 | 9.9 | 13.4 | 678.6 | 802.4 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 11.5 | 10.8 | 7.7 | 6.1 | 10.0 | 9.4 | 7.7 | 6.1 |
| 9.4 | 8.3 | 7.7 | 6.3 | 71.7 | 76.2 | 13.3 | 19.30 | 15.9 | 23.3 | 20.5 | 7.2 | 8.3 | 8.4 | 10.8 | 879.9 | 1061.3 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 1.0 | 10.8 | 10.7 | 7.7 | 6.3 | 9.7 | 8.7 | 7.7 | 6.3 |
| 8.8 | 7.9 | 7.2 | 6.0 | 72.5 | 77.2 | 11.1 | 17.50 | 15.6 | 21.2 | 19.6 | 7.2 | 7.9 | 10.3 | 11 | 907.7 | 1210.2 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0.7 | 0.2 | 9.9 | 10.2 | 7.2 | 6.0 | 8.8 | 8.0 | 7.2 | 6.0 |
| 9.2 | 7.8 | 7.1 | 5.6 | 70.2 | 73.6 | 26.8 | 23.40 | 20.7 | 29.2 | 26.1 | 6.5 | 7.4 | 7.1 | 8.7 | 1073.6 | 1442.6 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 1.5 | 10.4 | 10.4 | 7.1 | 5.6 | 9.4 | 7.5 | 7.1 | 5.6 |
| 9.0 | 7.9 | 7.4 | 6.1 | 70.3 | 75.1 | 17.7 | 21.70 | 19.3 | 28.1 | 25.8 | 5.4 | 6.4 | 6.9 | 8.3 | 884.3 | 1177.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.2 | 0.6 | 9.8 | 9.8 | 7.4 | 6.1 | 9.3 | 8.3 | 7.4 | 6.1 |
| 9.7 | 8.4 | 7.5 | 6.0 | 68.4 | 69.3 | 31.4 | 23.20 | 21.9 | 32.3 | 27.8 | 5.8 | 6.7 | 6.4 | 8.4 | 1220.8 | 1789.7 | 0.3 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 10.6 | 10.1 | 7.5 | 6.0 | 9.7 | 8.2 | 7.5 | 6.0 |
| 9.4 | 8.2 | 7.5 | 6.1 | 71.7 | 76.3 | 13.5 | 20.00 | 17.9 | 23.7 | 21.4 | 6 | 7.4 | 8.1 | 9.9 | 1037.7 | 1253.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 1.2 | 10.5 | 10.3 | 7.5 | 6.1 | 10.0 | 9.0 | 7.5 | 6.1 |
| 9.6 | 8.7 | 7.8 | 6.7 | 69.7 | 73.4 | 17.7 | 23.60 | 20.5 | 28.7 | 26.1 | 5.3 | 6.3 | 6.6 | 8.5 | 1125.6 | 1560.9 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 10.7 | 10.4 | 7.8 | 6.7 | 10.1 | 9.0 | 7.8 | 6.7 |
| 9.7 | 8.5 | 7.3 | 5.9 | 69.3 | 73.0 | 17.2 | 21.90 | 19.3 | 28.5 | 26.4 | 5.5 | 6.3 | 6.8 | 8 | 896.0 | 1269.5 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 11.2 | 10.8 | 7.3 | 5.9 | 9.7 | 8.5 | 7.3 | 5.9 |
| 9.7 | 8.9 | 7.5 | 6.5 | 69.1 | 72.5 | 24.5 | 20.00 | 18.6 | 25.4 | 24.1 | 6.2 | 6.8 | 7.9 | 9.5 | 1009.8 | 1407.3 | 0.3 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.3 | 10.9 | 11.0 | 7.5 | 6.5 | 10.2 | 8.9 | 7.5 | 6.5 |
| 9.2 | 8.3 | 7.6 | 6.4 | 70.8 | 75.9 | 13.2 | 21.80 | 17.9 | 32.3 | 28.5 | 4.6 | 5.5 | 7.1 | 9.4 | 801.9 | 1224.5 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 9.8 | 9.7 | 7.6 | 6.4 | 9.6 | 8.8 | 7.6 | 6.4 |
| 9.4 | 8.5 | 7.5 | 6.5 | 69.1 | 73.8 | 23.0 | 22.90 | 19.9 | 29.8 | 28.5 | 5.8 | 7.2 | 6.5 | 8.9 | 1141.6 | 1755.0 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 0.3 | 1.4 | 10.0 | 10.1 | 7.5 | 6.5 | 9.7 | 8.6 | 7.5 | 6.5 |
| 9.5 | 8.0 | 7.6 | 6.0 | 70.7 | 75.3 | 17.4 | 32.8 | 26.70 | 23.1 | 30.3 | 31.5 | 5.3 | 6.7 | 6.8 | 8.3 | 1225.4 | 1843.7 | 0.4 | 1.9 | 1.6 | 2.7 | 10.0 | 9.8 | 7.6 | 6.0 | 10.1 | 8.4 | 7.6 | 6.0 |
| 9.2 | 8.4 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 69.8 | 73.9 | 21.6 | 22.0 | 19.00 | 17.2 | 26.3 | 25.9 | 7.4 | 9.1 | 8.5 | 9.5 | 975.0 | 1486.0 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 10.7 | 10.7 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 9.6 | 8.4 | 6.8 | 5.7 |
| 9.3 | 8.4 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 69.3 | 73.4 | 21.1 | 22.1 | 19.40 | 17.6 | 26.7 | 25.1 | 6.7 | 7.5 | 7.9 | 8.8 | 988.7 | 1361.4 | 0.3 | 0.5 | 4.0 | 6.1 | 10.6 | 10.8 | 6.8 | 5.7 | 9.8 | 8.7 | 6.8 | 5.7 |
| 8.8 | 7.7 | 6.3 | 4.3 | 64.5 | 67.6 | 58.0 | 74.9 | 25.50 | 22.8 | 32.9 | 31.3 | 5.3 | 6.2 | 5.5 | 6.5 | 1549.2 | 2419.5 | 0.8 | 1.5 | 3.5 | 15.4 | 9.6 | 9.4 | 6.3 | 4.3 | 8.8 | 7.2 | 6.3 | 4.3 |
| 8.9 | 7.9 | 6.4 | 5.0 | 64.2 | 66.9 | 61.8 | 79.7 | 20.10 | 20 | 29 | 28.3 | 5.1 | 6.4 | 5.7 | 7.2 | 1292.4 | 2008.3 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 2.9 | 8.0 | 9.4 | 9.3 | 6.4 | 5.0 | 8.7 | 7.7 | 6.4 | 5.0 |
| 7.5 | 5.7 | 3.3 | 2.1 | 62.5 | 66.2 | 43.7 | 42.3 | 16.60 | 24.9 | 33.4 | 31.1 | 0.5 | 5.2 | 4.2 | 6.8 | 1036.0 | 2118.3 | | | 45.0 | 55.0 | 8.5 | 8.7 | 3.3 | 2.1 | 7.3 | 6.1 | 3.3 | 2.1 |
| 9.9 | 8.9 | 7.3 | 6.2 | 68.9 | 71.3 | 26.6 | 41.0 | 22.20 | 20.2 | 28.3 | 26.9 | 6.1 | 6.4 | 6.5 | 6.8 | 958.5 | 1240.9 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 11.1 | 10.3 | 7.3 | 6.2 | 10.4 | 9.2 | 7.3 | 6.2 |
| 9.7 | 8.6 | 6.5 | 4.8 | 66.8 | 68.3 | 45.1 | 62.1 | 20.20 | 20.6 | 29.6 | 28.9 | 5.4 | 4.9 | 5.2 | 5.8 | 1056.8 | 1426.1 | 0.0 | 0.5 | 6.7 | 13.7 | 10.6 | 10.8 | 6.5 | 4.8 | 9.3 | 8.3 | 6.5 | 4.8 |
| 9.1 | 7.8 | 5.8 | 3.9 | 64.6 | 67.7 | 49.1 | 52.2 | 22.90 | 22.7 | 31.3 | 30.1 | 5.9 | 4.3 | 3.7 | 5.2 | 1112.7 | 1734.7 | 9.2 | 13.9 | 16.9 | 28.6 | 9.8 | 9.1 | 5.8 | 3.9 | 8.9 | 6.7 | 5.8 | 3.9 |
| 9.4 | 8.8 | 6.8 | 5.2 | 68.7 | 71.8 | 27.7 | 27.0 | 23.30 | 21.3 | 30 | 30.7 | 4.9 | 3.9 | 5.2 | 3.8 | 1157.1 | 1965.2 | 48.1 | 58.7 | 6.6 | 11.9 | 10.0 | 11.3 | 6.8 | 5.2 | 8.4 | 8.2 | 6.8 | 5.2 |
| 9.7 | 9.1 | 7.1 | 6.6 | 66.0 | 69.1 | 42.4 | 37.6 | 20.40 | 22.7 | 30.7 | 31 | 4.9 | 3.9 | 5.2 | 4.6 | 1131.4 | 1730.7 | 1.6 | 5.7 | 1.5 | 1.9 | 10.4 | 9.7 | 7.1 | 6.6 | 9.0 | 8.0 | 7.1 | 6.6 |

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# Sub-Report Two

# Gender and Poverty Reduction in China:
## Quantitative Analysis

**October 2006**

The objective of this note is to describe several facts related with the effect of gender on the elasticity of poverty to growth in China. Since the beginning of the 80's China has experience a large, although uneven temporally and geographically, reduction in poverty. The speed of this reduction is determined by the growth rate of the economy and the level of inequality. However, the effect of growth on poverty reduction depends on the sectors that drive the development process.

In this note we consider the elasticity of poverty to growth using new data on the Chinese economy at the provincial level. As argued before we separate the effect of the three basic sectors (primary, secondary and tertiary) since it is reasonable to expect that their effect on poverty is different. As in Ravallion and Datt (2002) we include also a temporal trend and the inflation since they show that these two variables are important in the specification of the poverty equation. Therefore, the basic specification is

$$\ln P_{it} = \beta_1 \ln AGRI_{it} + \beta_2 \ln IND_{it} + \beta_3 \ln SERV_{it} + \gamma INF_i + \delta t + a, + \zeta_{it} \qquad (1)$$

where P is the headcount poverty index, AGRI is the ouput per hectare in the primary sector, IND is the output per capita in the secondary sector, SERV is the output per capita in the tertiary sector, INF is inflation and t is a time trend. Since we have provincial data we use a state specific dummy variable.

As in Ravallion and Datt (2002) the elasticity of poverty to output in some of the sectors is different depending on the state. In the case of China we can reject the null hypothesis that the coefficient of the primary sector is not province-specific. This means that each province has a particular elasticity of poverty with respect to the output of the primary sector as reflected in the following specification.

$$\ln P_{it} = \beta_{i1} \ln AGRI_{it} + \beta_2 \ln IND_{it} + \beta_3 \ln SERV_{it} + \gamma INF_i + \delta t + \alpha_i + \zeta_{it} \qquad (2)$$

Ravallion and Datt (2002) argue that the inter-state differences in the elasticity of poverty to output in India can be explained by the initial level and inequality of some variables. They use, among others, the female literacy rate, the infant mortality rate or consumption disparity between rural and urban areas. We could rewrite specification (2) as

$$\ln P_{it} = (\beta_1 + \sum \delta_j X82_j) \ln AGRI_{it} + \beta_2 \ln IND_{it} + \beta_3 \ln SERV_{it} + \gamma INF_i + \delta t + \alpha_i + \zeta_{it} \qquad (3)$$

where the X82's represent the initial conditions that explain inter-province differences in the elasticity of poverty to output in the primary sector. Table 1 contains a summary of the variables that are available (together with the Gini indices and the mean income that are not included) to capture the initial conditions. They are

classified in four blocs (education, health, labor market and demography) and break down (in most of the cases) by gender and location.

**Table 1. Variables and categories available for the initial conditions (1982 Census)**

| | Male | Female | Urban | Rural |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Education** | | | | |
| Illiteracy rate | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Years of schooling | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Undergraduates sex ratio | | | √ | |
| College graduates (per 10000) | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| High school graduates per 10000) | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Drop out rate (primary) | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Drop out rate (secondary) | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Primary school enrolment | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| **Health** | | | | |
| IMR | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Life expectancy at birth | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Fertility rate | | | √ | √ |
| **Labor market** | | | | |
| Employment rate | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Unemployment rate | √ | √ | √ | |
| **Demographic** | | | | |
| Pop 0-14 | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Pop over 65 | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Il. Rate pop 16-24 | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Years of schooling pop 16-24 | √ | √ | √ | √ |

Table 2 shows the variability across provinces of some of these indicators.

**Table 2. Initial conditions (1982).**

| Province | Average years of education of rural females | Infant mortality rate of females in rural areas | Drop out rate of primary education of female in rural areas | Drop out rate of secondary education of female in rural areas | rate of females in rural areas |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| BEIJING | 5.5 | 21.1 | . | . | 36.0 |
| TIANJIN | 4.7 | 21.6 | . | . | 42.3 |
| HEBEI | 4.3 | 20.5 | 20.2 | 5.8 | 49.4 |
| SHANXI | 4.9 | 32.5 | 16.2 | 3.7 | 40.7 |
| INNER MONGOLIA | 3.7 | 44.0 | 8.5 | 10.6 | 54.9 |
| LIAONING | 5.1 | 22.6 | 16.1 | 2.7 | 31.8 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| JILIN | 4.6 | 20.1 | 10.3 | 4.3 | 39.3 |
| HEILONGJIANG | 4.6 | 35.5 | 7.8 | 6.1 | 41.6 |
| SHANGHAI | 5.2 | 21.7 | . | . | 38.9 |
| JIANGSU | 3.5 | 36.3 | 22.7 | 10.9 | 60.2 |
| ZHEJIANG | 3.9 | 40.3 | 20.7 | 6.0 | 52.0 |
| ANHUI | 2.3 | 33.2 | 14.3 | 36.4 | 74.4 |
| FUJIAN | 2.7 | 22.9 | 13.5 | 31.4 | 67.5 |
| JIANGXI | 3.2 | 47.5 | 13.2 | 20.0 | 58.3 |
| SHANGDONG | 3.4 | 21.8 | 20.7 | 14.9 | 60.5 |
| HENAN | 3.6 | 21.0 | 18.0 | 16.3 | 59.7 |
| HUBEI | 3.8 | 40.0 | 17.6 | 8.8 | 55.3 |
| HUNAN | 4.4 | 50.3 | 16.0 | 5.8 | 42.4 |
| GUANGDONG | 4.2 | 19.8 | 19.8 | 10.5 | 43.2 |
| GUANGXI | 4.1 | 33.0 | 16.6 | 12.0 | 44.1 |
| SICHUAN | 3.6 | 60.0 | 15.3 | 13.4 | 53.7 |
| GUIZHOU | 1.9 | 69.3 | 12.8 | 44.8 | 76.8 |
| YUNNAN | 2.1 | 76.7 | 12.8 | 42.5 | 73.2 |
| SHAANXI | 3.9 | 49.8 | 13.6 | 15.7 | 54.5 |
| GANSU | 2.2 | 37.9 | 10.2 | 43.7 | 76.2 |
| QINGHAI | 2.2 | 86.7 | 7.3 | 44.6 | 76.6 |
| NINGXIA | 2.4 | 57.5 | 6.6 | 43.2 | 73.0 |
| XINJIANG | 4.3 | 115.6 | 8.7 | 12.4 | 45.4 |

Since there are many possible initial conditions it is important to select a set of them that may be relevant. For this choice we take into account the results in Ravallion and Datt (2002) as well as the correlation between these variables. We consider one variable from the set of education variables and one from the set of health variables. The demographic variables and the labor market are less interesting.

The question with the education and labor variables is their high degree of correlation across variables inside each group.

Table **3** shows that all the variables are highly correlated with the exception of college graduation and drop out rates in primary education.

Another important issue is the high degree of correlation of the variables for the initial conditions between male and female. Table 4 shows that, for instance, the initial infant mortality rate of males and females have a correlation of 0.98.

**Table 3. Correlation matrix between the initial conditions related with education.**

| | Illiteracy rate | Years of schooling | College graduation | High school grad | Drop out primary | Drop out secondary | Primary school going |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Illiteracy rate | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| Years of schooling | -0.98 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| College graduation | -0.42 | 0.37 | 1.00 | | | | |
| High school grad | -0.79 | 0.80 | 0.53 | 1.00 | | | |
| Drop out primary | -0.26 | 0.30 | -0.19 | -0.04 | 1.00 | | |
| Drop out secondary | 0.92 | -0.95 | -0.26 | -0.72 | -0.46 | 1.00 | |
| Primary school going | -0.86 | 0.84 | 0.23 | 0.58 | 0.50 | -0.91 | 1.00 |

Something very similar happen with the illiteracy rate of males and females (correlation of 0.96).

**Table 4. Correlation of initial conditions between males and females.**

| | IMR (rural, female) | ILLRATE (rural, female) | IMR (rural, male) | ILLRATE (rural, male) | Fertility rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| IMR(rural, female) | 1 | | | | |
| ILLRATE(rural, female) | -0.9146 | 1 | | | |
| IMR(rural, male) | 0.9899 | -0.9251 | 1 | | |
| ILLRATE(rural, male) | -0.9266 | 0.9654 | -0.9247 | 1 | |
| Fertility rate | 0.6447 | -0.5584 | 0.6757 | -0.6011 | 1 |

Obviously this high degree of correlation has a very important effect on the results of the regressions. The most relevant variable for the initial conditions are infant mortality rates and illiteracy rates. Column 1 in table 5 shows that a higher infant mortality rate of girls implies a reduction in the absolute value of the elasticity of poverty with respect to primary output. This means that the higher is the level of infant mortality of females the less is poverty reduced for the same change in primary output. The illiteracy rate of females has a barely significant effect.

It is not surprising to find in column (2) that the same result is obtained if instead of the infant mortality rate of females we use the infant mortality rate of males since the correlation between both variables is very high. In fact both variables have a very similar coefficient. None of the results is affected by the inclusion of the initial level of average income in rural and urban areas.

In order to further investigate the effect of gender and location difference in the elasticity of poverty to primary output we run the previous regressions but using the difference in IMR and illiteracy rates between males and females as well as between rural and urban areas. In column (1) we present the benchmark regression where we

**Table 5. Elasticity of poverty and initial conditions (1982).**

| Variables | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ln AGRI | -2.06 | -4.74 | 0.30 | -1.87 |
| | (-1.28) | (-4.28) | (0.05) | (-0.32) |
| Ln AGRI* Infant mortality rate of females | 1.20 | | 1.19 | |
| | (5.22) | | (5.54) | |
| Ln AGRI* Illiteracy rate of females | -0.80 | | -0.04 | |
| | (-1.96) | | (-0.08) | |
| Ln AGRI* Infant mortality rate of males | | 1.17 | | 1.38 |
| | | (4.94) | | (3.53) |
| Ln AGRI* Illiteracy rate of males | | -0.13 | | 0.35 |
| | | (-0.40) | | (0.94) |
| Ln AGRI* ln(mean income rural) | | | 1.19 | 1.23 |
| | | | (1.81) | (2.21) |
| Ln AGRI* ln(mean income urban) | | | -2.06 | -1.92 |
| | | | (-1.89) | (1.99) |
| Ln IND | -1.55 | -1.50 | -1.46 | -1.29 |
| | (-8.08) | (-8.08) | (-8.16) | (-6.39) |
| Ln SERV | 0.02 | -0.04 | -0.05 | -0.14 |
| | (0.08) | (-0.18) | (-0.22) | (-0.53) |
| WFLATION | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 |
| | (8.07) | (8.01) | (8.03) | (7.86) |
| TREND | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.11 |
| | (4.95) | (4.96) | (4.65) | (4.29) |
| N | 286 | 286 | 286 | 286 |
| R2 | 0.87 | 0.87 | 0.87 | 0.86 |

Coefficient of provinces' dummies not shown.

consider the income as the relevant level variable and the Gini index as the relevant inequality variable. Column (I) shows that the higher is urban inequality the smaller is the (absolute) elasticity of poverty to change in primary output. In column (2) we substitute income inequality by gender inequality and location inequality in terms of education and health indicators. Column (2) shows that the difference between male and female infant mortality rate has no statistical effect on the elasticity of poverty (as expected from the results in the previous table). This result changes when we include inequality between rural and urban areas as well as average income. Column (3) shows that the (absolute) elasticity is higher when the mean rural income is higher. Additionally more gender-unequal infant mortality rate and location-unequal illiteracy rates implies a smaller (absolute value) elasticity of poverty. Finally, column (3) shows the effect of using inequality in life expectancy instead of infant mortality rate as the health indicator. It shows that more unequal difference in life expectancy between male and female and rural and urban areas is negative for poverty reduction.

**Table 6. Elasticity of poverty and different indicators of inequality**

| Variables | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ln AGRI | -15.89 | 0.16 | 3.04 | -6.26 |
| | (-2.20) | (0.33) | (0.44) | (-0.96) |
| Ln GINI(rural)* Ln AGRI(1983) | 0.90 | | | |
| | (1.31) | | | |
| Ln GINI(urban)*ln AGRI (1983) | 1.37 | | | |
| | (2.47) | | | |
| Ln MeanInc(rural)* Ln AGRI (1983) | -0.41 | | -1.58 | -0.56 |
| | (-0.82) | | (-2.26) | (-0.99) |
| Ln MeanInc(urban)* Ln AGRI (1983) | 1.57 | | 1.15 | 1.39 |
| | (1.56) | | (1.01) | (1.41) |
| Dif. Urban-Rural IMR* Ln AGRI (1983) | | | -0.93 | |
| | | | (-1.59) | |
| Dif. Male-Female IMR* Ln AGRI (1983) | | 1.66 | 3.76 | |
| | | (1.42) | (2.37) | |
| Dif. Urban-Rural ILLrate* Ln AGRI (1983) | | | 3.56 | 3.13 |
| | | | (4.04) | (4.09) |
| Dif. Male-Female ILLrate* Ln AGRI (1983) | | 1.97 | 0.77 | -2.51 |
| | | (3.41) | (1.19) | (-2.79) |
| Dif. Urban-Rural LIFEX* Ln AGRI (1983) | | | | 15.95 |
| | | | | (4.20) |
| Dif. Male-Female LIFEX* Ln AGRI (1983) | | | | 35.92 |
| | | | | (2.89) |
| Ln IND | -1.47 | -1.11 | -1.44 | -1.46 |
| | (-7.70) | (-4.59) | (-6.40) | (-7.03) |
| INFLATION | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.02 |
| | (7.94) | (7.52) | (7.55) | (8.12) |
| TREND | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.11 | 0.11 |
| | (6.34) | (4.74) | (4.89) | (5.26) |
| N | 285 | 286 | 275 | 275 |
| R2 | 0.85 | 0.86 | 0.85 | 0.85 |

Coefficient of provinces' dummies not shown. Diff is the log of the ratio.

## Conclusions:

a. A higher level of infant mortality rate reduces the (absolute) elasticity of poverty with respect to primary output per capita. This result holds for males and females.

b. Health differences between male and females do not have a robust effect on the elasticity of poverty with respect to primary output.

# Sub-Report Three

# Gender and Poverty in China:

## Qualitative Analysis

**October 2006**

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# Acknowledgements

This research program is funded by the World Bank Office Beijing and carried out by a research team from College of Humanities and Development, China Agricultural University led by Dr. Li Xiaoyun, Dean of College of Humanities and Development led the research.

The research report attempts to unveil the relationship between gender inequality and poverty in the fields of political power, employment, education, health, access to assets and labor division. The research mainly used approaches such as focus group interviews, individual interviews, case studies and surveys. The following poor areas were selected as the research sites: Cangxi County of Sichuan province; Xiushui County of Jiangxi province; Maijishan District in Tianshui of Gansu province; Pucheng County of Shaanxi and Dawukou District in Shizuishan City of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

The research was conducted by the task team of the College of Humanities and Development (COHD), China Agricultural University, and the field surveys were carried out by graduate students from Center for Integrated Agricultural Development (CIAD) and the college. We would like to express our appreciation to their hard work during the field surveys. The task team would like to sincerely thank the agencies that have provided support and help to this research—the World Bank, the State Statistical Bureau; Plan International; Gansu and Jiangxi PADO; Sichuan Rural Water Bureau; Shizuishan Civil Affairs Bureau of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. In particular, the team also benefited greatly from all the poor farmers from the ten villages. Their assistance and participation in this research is very much appreciated.

Special thanks are to Mr. Wang Chaogang from the World Bank for his strong support to the study.

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# Abbreviations and Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| WB | World Bank |
| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| DFID | Department for International Department |
| CIAD | Center for Integrated Agricultural Development |
| NBS | National Bureau of Statistics |
| PADO | Poverty Alleviation and Development Office |

# Executive Summary

Jointly initiated by the World Bank (WB) and Asian Development Bank (ADB), this study is part of the research on gender equality in China. It is a qualitative study of gender inequality in the poor rural areas of China based on the macro-quantitative studies of this field. Its content includes gender inequality in certain aspects such as political power, assets possession and distribution, job opportunities and payment, education, health, and labor division. A task team from CIAD and College of Humanity and Development of the China Agricultural University has been undertaking this study. The study covers ten villages from Sichuan, Gansu, Jiangxi, Shaanxi and Ningxia. The research work began on June 1st, 2005 and was completed by June 30th, 2005. The task team expresses heartfelt thanks to the World Bank, the National Statistic Bureau, the poverty alleviation departments of the four provinces and autonomous regions and especially, to all the farmers of the ten villages who participated in this study for their great support and assistance.

In the poverty-stricken areas, men and women are quite unequal in political rights. This kind of gender inequality mainly manifests in their participation in the villager autonomy election, the gender proportion of the candidates for village leadership and their different performance in the administration and decision-making of community affairs. In fact, poor women are generally less involved in the villager autonomy election, and account for only a low percentage in the village committee. Those rare female cadres merely do some assistant work in the committee. Moreover, the role played by women in the administration and decision-making of community affairs is generally marginalized. The comparatively lack of education of women is the major reason for the situation mentioned above and leads to their inability to acquire fair rights in political affairs. Meanwhile, the traditional form of labor division hinders women from playing an active role outside their households in society. Such a male-dominant system of political power in the poverty-stricken areas greatly affects women's social status and hampers the obtainment of their social needs. The gender inequality in political rights intensifies women's poverty. Due to their inactivity in community affairs, women's actual needs are usually not taken into consideration in the decision-making process of community affairs. At the same time, women's inadequate status of education, health, and their access to basic facilities and public services restricts the enhancement of their political rights. In short, in the poor areas of China, there is a complex relationship between gender inequality in political rights and poverty.

As assets are usually owned and distributed on a household basis in China, the gender inequality that specifically exists in assets possession is, to a great extent, obscured. The gender difference in assets possession within a household implies the essential factors of inequality. Meanwhile, the unequal mode of assets possession appears as unequal assets distribution at community level. In the poverty- stricken areas of China, only men can become the legal contractor of land. According to the traditional marital form in Chinese society, the wife is to live with the husband's family after the marriage, but her original share of land cannot be brought with her. Therefore, the

wife will become a land loser if she gets married outside her own village and does not gain any land otherwise. Although there is no gender inequality in the policy of land distribution, women's rights and interests associated with land are still not assured in reality. In fact, male dominance exists not only in land contracting right, but also in decision-making of land transfer and land contract, which reflects a male-dominant mode of land contract and management. In the poverty-stricken areas, male family members are entitled to be the legal owner of the house sites. Objectively speaking, with such a male dominant mode of ownership, women are always in a comparatively unfavorable status as far as the basic livelihood is concerned. The gender inequality in assets possession affects women's lives in many ways. Firstly, women are rather weak in their assurance ability to tangibly enrich their social capital. Secondly, as women's rights and interests in assets possession do not enjoy effective legal protection yet, women are more likely to stand in a disadvantaged position when any dispute arises. In most circumstances, women's poverty derives from the legal fuzziness in the case of assets possession. In a word, the typically male-dominant gender inequality obviously exists in assets possession and distribution in China's rural areas.

Gender inequality in China's rural education is of much importance and concern. This study covers the various aspects, such as the conditions and facilities of schools, the gender proportion of the students who continue to study at school, the gender proportion of the students who discontinue their schooling and the relationship between gender inequality in education and poverty. As the school system in the poverty-stricken areas of China is not gender sensitive, girls have real difficulty in going to school. Due to the long distance of several kilometers between home and school, many parents discontinue their daughters' studies for the reason of safety. Objectively, there is an obvious increase in the rate of school attendance both for boys and for girls, owing to the enhancement of the educational investment and the continuous implementation of the family planning policy in the past several years. According to some statistics, however, boys' high enrollment and attendance rate versus girls' high dropout rate are still a common phenomenon in the poverty-stricken areas of China. As far as adults are concerned, the illiteracy rate of women is much higher than that of men, and the average schooling years for women is far less than those for men. These two instances demonstrate that the gender inequality in education is still a prominent problem in the poverty-stricken areas of China either from a historical point of view or from a realistic point of view. In addition to the traditional conception, the traditional mode of labor division and the lack of social security system, poverty is an important factor contributing to gender inequality in education. A girl's opportunity to go to school is often sacrificed to the whole family's interest when her family is short of natural capital, physical capital and financial capital in particular. It is a very common phenomenon that men have an absolute priority over women in receiving education in the poverty-stricken rural areas of China. Because of such an educational mode, girls are far less educated than boys. Thus, poor education prevents girls to obtain fair opportunities to take part in political affairs and to acquire information and technology in their adulthood. The result is that women are still in poverty due to their lack of education.

Gender inequality in health is a major concern in gender study and a distinct problem in the poverty-stricken rural areas of China. The female prevalence of illness rate is much higher than that of males. According to some statistics, more than 60% of women in the poverty-stricken areas suffer from long-term sickness and more than 70% of the women have gynecological diseases. Moreover, sick women go to hospital far less often than the sick men; in other words, sick women are more likely to delay their medical treatment than the sick men. Furthermore, the gender insensitiveness in public medical service, the insufficient gynecological knowledge of the medical staff in a community of whom male doctors take up a majority and other cultural factors restrict the hospitalization of the sick women. At the same time, the male members have priority in the nutrition distribution inside a family in the poverty-stricken areas. Such a distribution pattern of nourishment harms the health of the female members inside a family. The gender inequality is even more obvious in the aspects of childbearing and birth control in the poverty-stricken areas. Only women will choose to carry out birth control that has an objective negative effect on their health. This study clearly shows that the gender inequality in health problems intensifies the poverty of the family and its female members. Also due to their poor health, women are unable to do heavy work in agricultural production or to work out of their homes, thus decreasing their economic contribution to the whole family. Women's poor health also affects their participation in social activities and social affairs. Moreover, it is evident that poverty aggravates gender inequality in the field of health. The shortage of drinking water adds to women's difficulty in fetching water, which also worsens their health. The inefficient traffic and communication means prevent women from getting enough knowledge and information so as to improve their health. The burdensome housework and farming work harm women's health after the male members of a family go out to work as migrant workers. This study shows that there is a close connection between gender inequality in the field of health and poverty. This is another good example of the gender inequality in the poverty-stricken areas of China.

Employment is an important aspect in which gender inequality exists primarily. The gender inequality in employment is a relatively complex problem because obtaining a job and terms of employment are actually beyond the domain of a family and a community. The gender problem in employment is interwoven with other factors like education, health and political power. This study is mainly concerned about the gender inequality in the agricultural and non-agricultural spheres and the relationship between gender inequality and poverty. In the case of a fully-employed circumstance, male dominance is still the basic mode of agricultural labor division between two genders in the poverty-stricken areas of China. Actually, gender inequality is mainly manifested in men's legal right of contract as well as the decision- making in the choice of planting manner. **As** women's initiative is neglected in the process of decision-making, women decline to be simple laborers. Thus, men's dominant role in decision- making is further strengthened while female labor force is repulsed out of consideration. Agricultural informal employment is a common phenomenon in the vast poor areas of China. It includes exchanged labor, helper and hired labor and so on. On the basis of some surveys, these opportunities of employment are mainly occupied by men. Even if women can have a share of these informal jobs, they are

less paid than men under the same condition. Informal employment is not only an important means to obtain actual income but also an effective method to conduct social communication, to build up mutual trust and to increase the employees' social capital. Considering the fact that this kind of social capital can only be obtained by men in informal jobs that are beyond women's reach, men's economic earnings and social profit are thus increased to some extent. The male-dominant mode of employment also exists in the non-agricultural field in the poverty-stricken areas. As far as the nearby non-agricultural productive activities are concerned, women are dismissed as inferior labor force since the non-agricultural productive work such as the manufacturing of elementary products, mining, transportation and processing all require much physical strength. Even in the field of employment that requires a higher cultural degree, women are also at a disadvantaged position because of men's superiority to them in education. As for going out to work, it is up to men's decision. In fact, men far exceed women both in the number of people who go out to work and in the pay of the jobs. The study shows that the gender inequality in the field of employment is closely related to poverty. For the reason of poverty, women can not get fair opportunities of employment and higher pay. Burdened with heavy housework, poor education and poor health, women are unable to fairly compete with men in employment. The gender inequality in employment also affects women's health, education and involvement in community affairs and as a result, worsens women's poverty. While the husband goes out to work, the wife is responsible for all the housework and farming work at home village. By fulfilling these duties, the wife appears to boost her position in the family to some extents. However, it is hard to say that wife's status in the family has been actually improved especially with regard to the fact that the husband can provide the family with much cash. The gender inequality in the field of employment widens the economic gap between men and women, weakens women's economic status and results in women's poverty. The increasingly obvious gender inequality in employment is the important reflection of the gender relationship in the process of China's agricultural transitian.

Labor division is another aspect in which gender inequality exists in China's poverty-stricken areas. Labor division between men and women has much to do with other aspects of employment. This study focuses on the status of labor division between men and women, the gender difference in labor intensity, the intent-based judgment on labor value and the relationship between unequal labor division and poverty. In China's poverty-stricken areas, the traditional basic mode that "men take charge of external affairs and women take charge of internal affairs" still applies to the division of labor inside a family., In other words, men are engaged in outdoor productive activities with the assistance of women while women are in charge of the indoor housework with the assistance of men. As for the division of agricultural labor, men play the major role of labor in the fields with the assistance of women while women play a leading role in stock-raising. Under this division of labor, women's working time is generally longer than men's; in other words, women have less free time than men. Gender inequality not only exists in the length of working time, but also and more evidently, in the intensity of labor. We always take it for granted that men undertake heavier and more bothering work than women in the countryside. But actually, this is not true, because women not only do "men's work" when they are at

homc, but also do "women's work" when they are out of home. The fact that women actually do more work than men in both labor content and labor intensity proves that typical gender inequality does exist in the division of labor. In consequence of this mode of labor division, women suffer much from high-intensified labor and long-time fatigue, psychologically and physically. Therefore, they are restrained to obtain well-paid jobs and participate in the administration and decision-making of community affairs. This mode of labor division between men and women strengthens the domination of men's economic contribution and thc concealment of women's labor and thus weakens women's social and economic position.

Thanks to Chinese government's active advocacy and implementation of the basic national policy of gender equality, the status of gender inequality in both the urban and the rural areas is better than that in othcr dcveloping countries. However, whether under the condition of a traditionally agricultural economic mode in the past, or a non-agricultural economic mode in the near future, or a transitional mode from agricultural to non-agricultural economy at present, gender inequality still commonly and apparently exists in almost all the social aspects, including employment, assets possession, health, education, labor division and so on. Such situation tends to intensify gender inequality and the poverty of women. Eliminating gender inequality in the poor rural areas of China, therefore, should become an important task of the Chinese government in its implementation of social development strategy on gender equality.

# Preface

Gender equality is one of the main trends in the field of international development since the 20th century. The shift from women in development to gender and development has taken almost 30 years which makes gender equality an important policy approach in international development. Since the 21st century, the development strategy of gender equality has been evolved to concrete actions seeking for gender mainstreaming. Gender mainstreaming represents an attempt by gender advocates to build on the successes of the past and address some of the challenges. It attempts to combine the strengths of the efficiency and empowerment approaches within the context of mainstream development. Mainstreaming gender equality is a commitment to ensure that women's as well as men's concerns and experiences are integral to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of *all* legislation, policies and programmes so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is integral to all development decisions and interventions; it concerns the staffing, procedures and culture of development organizations as well as their programmes; and it forms part of the responsibility of all staff. Gender mainstreaming does not preclude women only projects. It shifts their focus from women as a target group, to gender equality as a goal. It supports Women-only (or men-only) projects designed as strategic interventions to address aspects of gender inequality and promote greater equality. The World Bank (WB), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and other international agencies have all adopted the gender mainstreaming as a main content in pursuing world and regional development. In 1998, ADB adopted gender mainstreaming as a main policy in its actions related to macro economy, sectoral development plan and technical assistance. In 2001, WB also adopted gender mainstreaming as a main content in its world development policy.

The Chinese Government has been following a basic national policy of equality between men and women and actively pushing for gender equality in participation in deliberating and administration of state affairs, employment, health care and education to ensure equitable benefit among men and women. Thanks to this policy, we have seen a favorable situation in China with equally benefited by men and women in social and economic development. Since this century, guided by the concept of establishing a harmonious society and pursuing scientific development, each agency in social and economic development has effectively implemented gender equality. In 2001, the Chinese Government promulgated "Development Outline for Chinese Women (2001 – 2010)" with an aim to push forward gender equality in China. All in all, various policies and measures have greatly promoted the social awareness on gender equality.

However, due to the protracted backward social structure and influence from the conventional mindset on job divisions between men and women and constantly prompted by the market economy, the situation of gender equality has new characteristics under the new historical circumstances. The social phenomena of gender inequality are now faced with new challenges under the new social, economic

and cultural environment. The inequality of social gender has its divergent and complicated expressions in developed cities and backward rural areas, in developed rural areas and backward cities and among different employment groups. The contemporary gender relationships are characterized by such a diversity of gender inequality in different regions, different departments and different groups. The research and study on gender inequality in China are very broad, which mainly focus on women's status in acquiring and sharing political power, gender inequality in employment, education and gender discrimination in health care as well as in agriculture, environment and resources management. The research that systematically focused on gender inequality in China is mainly conducted by international agencies. In 1998, ADB published "Women Issues in the PRC"; in 2002, WB completed a research on "Review on National Gender of China" and DFID completed a research on "Gender Equality and Poverty Alleviation in China" in 2003. It is fair to say that both the large amount of systematic research by domestic institutions and thematic research by the international agencies have provided detailed information helping to understand contemporary gender issues in China. All this research has shown that Chinese economic and social development in its transitional period has provided women with a broad range of actual benefits. The research, at the same time, has also revealed that the market oriented reform and development has resulted in gender inequality.

The research conducted by WB has found out that the gender inequality in labor market has its main expressions in income gap, gender discrimination in recruitment and dismissal, unequal access to credit support and negative social and economic influence on women. In the meantime, the WB research has revealed that emigration of laborers and feminization in agricultural production has aggravated gender inequality between rural and urban areas. At the same time, such gender inequality in rural areas is prominently characterized by women's inability to get benefited from education, health care and other social services in an equal way. The research of DIFTD has found out that feminization of poverty is intensifying gender inequality. The typical expression is the ever evident inequality in their access to resources and development opportunities. In those extremely poor rural areas, women are in a very disadvantaged position in obtaining education and health resources.

Although the above-mentioned research has demonstrated that gender inequality is common in China, this research is relatively sporadic. At the same time, except for a large number of case studies based on special cases from different departments, the majority of the research is normative study. Some research is not able to adduce different changing cases, thus the conclusions are still quite controversial. How gender inequality impacts on poverty, what influence such inequality may have on poverty, at the same time how poverty accelerates the gender inequality, answers to these questions require qualitative and quantitative research. In 2004, WB, ADB and DFID jointly mobilized a systematic research on China national gender assessment. This research aimed at a comprehensive assessment of current gender inequality status in China, then provided a systematic explanation to the relationship between gender inequality and poverty. The ultimate purposes of the research were to (1) provide a basis for channeling the issue to high-level dialogue; (2) provide a gender

sensitive development strategy for the development assistance activities supported by ABD and WB in China; and (3) assist various Chinese government agencies with implementing gender sensitive policies and strategies in poverty alleviation, economic development, social welfare and other fields.

As one of the components in the research, this study is a qualitative survey and analysis. The purpose is to understand status of the gender inequality in political power, employment, education, health, acquisition of assets and labor division. This study intends to reveal gender inequality in the above-mentioned fields and their relationships with poverty through a series of qualitative research methods, including interview with focus groups of different genders, individual interview, case study, and surveys.

The sites for this study are poor areas in China, Cangxi County of Sichuan; Xiushui County of Jiangxi; Maiji District of Tianshui City in Gansu; Pucheng County of Shaanxi and Dawukou District of Shizuishan City in Ningxia[1]. Two villages are selected in each county. All of those above-mentioned counties are key nationally-designated poor counties except Dawukou District of Shizuishan in Ningxia. And all the villages, except the two in Dawukou District are key poverty villages.

The study team consists of Professor Li Xiaoyun (team leader), Associate Professor Zhang Keyun, Liu Xiaoqian, Luo Pan, Zhang Xuemei, Dong Qiang, Wang Dongmei, Li Linyi, Guo Zhanfeng, Luo Rumin, Yang Hongping, Wu Jie and Ma Zhiguo. The study started on June 1st and was completed on June 30th.

[1] The choice of the two villages from Dawukou District of Shizuishan City in Ningxia is based on the assumption that the gender situation might be different between wealthy villages and poverty villages. So the researchers think it is necessary to analyze the relativity of gender inequality and poverty between wealthy villages and poverty villages.

# 1 Gender Inequality in Political Rights and Poverty

*Unequal rights and poor socio-economic status relative to men Limit their ability to influence decision in their communities and at the national level.*

*The World Bank 2002*

Since1989, the most important political revolution initiated by the Chinese government may be the village level election that allows men and women to take part at their own will (Thurston 1998). The elected village committee is always constituted of a director, a vice-director of the village and two to four committee members. Some village committees (not all) have women members and they are normally representatives of the Women's Federation. However, a survey in some villages in Shandong province in 1999 showed that the proportion of women at leadership level declined a lot (UN Task Force on Gender, 1999).

Based on a survey in underdeveloped areas, Li Weining and Yi Yi (2004) have found out that village women's participation is clearly characterized by marginalization which is expressed in three ways: 1) weak awareness of political participation and poor sense of political efficacy; 2) women are always in an inferior position in village committee election. Women candidates in some rural communities account for a very small proportion or there are even no women candidates. Meanwhile, due to the lack of opportunities in political development and political resources, some capable women candidates' abilities are not easily recognized by villagers, and this leads to their failure in the election against men candidates; **3)** women are in a subordinate position in the elected village committee.

Song Wei and Li Jing(2004) have analyzed four main reasons on how women have been affected in their becoming village committee members from the policy of holding intersecting positions, that is, each elected person simultaneously holds two or more positions in two committees in the process of villagers' self-government. They are: 1) the county and township intervene too much in village committee election and ignore election of women cadres; 2) the policy of holding consecutive positions and reducing the number of cadres squeezes women out of potential opportunities to be elected; **3)** the consecutive position demands women cadres with higher qualities which has also increased the difficulty for women to be elected; 4) the consecutive position has made votes carry more weight; therefore, voters would not vote women easily.

In addition, according to Li Xiaoyun (2002), not enough attention is paid to gender issues in the villagers' self-government election. Though women and men have the same opportunities in election, it is an indisputable fact that most village cadres are men. The survey results show that: firstly, the number of women who are actively involved in election is fewer than that of men; secondly, social and cultural condition and relevant mechanism at township and village level are lacking to encourage women involve in election; thirdly, even if women take part in the election, they tend to lose easily. This phenomenon is mainly caused by the mindset of manus. In rural

areas of China, the concept of the authority of husband, that men have a leading role in affairs outside family and women for affairs inside family, is an obstacle preventing women from taking part in political affairs. We should also take note of the fact that under the long-term influence from the concept that men have a leading role on issues outside family and women on issues inside family, women have few training opportunities and few opportunities to go outside to broaden their horizon and to acquire new information-- this has influenced women's confidence and abilities in actively taking part in political affairs.

Gender inequality in political affairs is an important part of gender inequality. Talking about China's reality, gender inequality in villages is mainly reflected in villagers' level of participation in self-government election and in decision making on community management. This study mainly takes a qualitative look at the two issues aforementioned. It has revealed that gender inequality is related with poverty.

## *1.1 Women's participation in election in poor areas has clear characteristic of marginalization*

According to the research made in ten villages of five provinces, in poverty-striken areas, obvious marginalization has appeared in women villagers' participation in villagers' self-government election, in cadres' election and the proportion of women cadres, which is typically reflected in the following three areas.

### 1.1.1 The low level of women's participation in election

Whether it is in underdeveloped villages or in relatively developed1 suburbs, women are unaware of their political rights and interests, knowing little about the rules and programs related to villagers self-government. They also lack the awareness and enthusiasm to actively take part in the election.

***Case I--I*** *(Panzhuang village of Shaanxi): Each family had only one vote for the five candidates during the village committee election, asking the whole family to agree on the vote, but in fact it was always voted by men. Women could vote unless their husbands were not at home.*

***Case1--2*** *(Lihua village of Sichuan): Normally men and women could take part in community election, but women just participated in their village election and did not participate in other village affairs. Therefore, women lacked the opportunities to muke decisions, they just took part in the implementation, for example, road construction etc. Meanwhile, women also acknowledged that there were only a few village political affairs, seven to eight meetings were held every year, most of which were technical trainings. 15 Yuan would be deducted each time they did not take part in the training; furthermore, it does not look suitable if the leaders had asked to attend the training even though no money was deducted. In addition, some meetings are about voluntary labour, for a family with three members, there should be nine voluntary laborers attending meetings each year, otherwise, the family would be fined. Such a compulsory measure sometimes resulted in reverse reaction among the women and they were more reluctant to take part in the*

*meeting.*

The survey in Shaanxi and Sichuan province showed that though all women thought they could take part in the election of village committee and have the rights and opportunities to vote, they wouldn't vote if their husbands were at home, unless there are some compulsory measures in the village.

Similarly, most men in rural areas go out to work and do not have time to vote; even though women vote, it is just a symbolic vote, since most of them vote according to the men's decision.

***Casel--3*** *(Xinming village of Ningxia): Most of the men were involved in transportation work which did not allow time for them to vote. Women always agreed with men on voting for whom; therefore, more women went to vote instead of their husbands.*

***Casel---4*** *(Chaohu village of Ningxia): For middle-aged women, most of them discussed the vote with their husbands, but they took men's ideas as their main reference on the community election. For those women who have just married for a short time, their husbands chose the candidates, since most of the men were native village residents and they* ***knew*** *the candidates well.*

In addition, blindness on gender is also one reason attributing to the low women participation in the election process. Opportunities for rural women to be elected in village community are very dim and there were even no women candidates in some communities.

***Case1---5*** *(Xinming village of Ningxia): A male village thought "Women can't be leaders due to their weak thinking capacity and physical conditions. More important is that women were not nominated in the election process."*

***Case 1---6*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): The present three committee members are all males. The leaders of the 24 village groups were all males, too. Moreover, the residents live far away from one other; and this reduced women's opportunities to take part in community election and village affairs.*

***Case 1--7*** *(Xiaowang village of Jiangxi): The election of new term of village committee was held in March, 2005, no villagers' meeting was held and only a Communist Party meeting was organized instead for the election among 21 Communist Party members with only one woman member:*

The above-mentioned cases have shown women's low level of participation in villagers' self-government election. There are three main reasons: 1) women participate in the election symbolically and echo men's decision on election; 2) villagers know little about relevant election laws, regulations and procedures, especially they knew so little about explicit written regulations on the numbers of women cadres; **3)** male villagers discriminate against women's participation in election, and that has led to gender blindness in some village committees.

### 1.1.2 Disadvantaged position in running for villager cadres

In the process of villagers' self-government, the policy of holding intersectant positions in two committees is the main reason that prevents women from being elected to village committee. There are four expressions of this problem: the county and township intervened too much in village committee election and ignored women cadres' election; the policy of holding consecutive position and reducing the number of cadres squeezes women out of potential opportunities to be elected; the consecutive position demanded women cadres with better qualities which also increased the difficulty for women to be elected; the consecutive position has made votes carry more weight; therefore, voters would not vote women easily (Song Wei, Li Jing, 2004.).

According to the survey, rural women candidates account for a very small proportion or there are even no women candidates in some villages, as shown in case 1-7 and 1-8.

*Case 1-8 (Chaohu village Ningxia): A male vice-village director also thought "It is reasonable that women cadres account for a small proportion, for things in villages are all very complicated and disordered, women cadres can not handle these detailed matters easily with their physical and thinking abilities." When we talked to native women, most of them thought "It is not necessary to have more women cadres as long as women's affairs have been looked after."*

In addition, some capable women candidate's capabilities are not easily recognized by villagers. Since these women candidates lack work experience, political development and political resources, they often fail in the election against men candidates. Even some women candidates used to hold a position in the village, most of them were in a subordinate status to help other cadres or do jobs related to women or repetitive tasks which cannot demonstrate their capabilities.

*Case 1-9 (Wujia village Shanxi province): One female candidate finally lost her election because her work was related to women affairs and birth control, and she was not involved in making some important decisions; furthermore, lack of experience and courage made it hard for her to obtaint villagers'support.*

It is not hard to notice that in rural communities dominated by men, women members in village committee have a very weak decision making power, because traditionally villagers believe women can not make big decisions. This prejudice has put women in a relatively disadvantaged situation which lead to a very low proportion of women candidates and much lower opportunity to be elected.

### 1.1.3 Women cadres are in a subordinate position in village committees

Li Weining and Yin Yi (2004) hold the view that the positions occupied by women among village committee members are of absolutely small number, many of them are in deputy or symbolic positions, and few of them holding top or powerful positions. A

very small proportion of women being elected as village director or vice-director, even in the village representatives meeting, meeting of group heads, the financial monitoring group, women account for a very small proportion and the their positions are humble. There are even some "Dual-None villages" (have no female committee members and female representatives). Women actually do not have much power in village organizations and are not able to express the real wills of women group in various village administrative affairs.

According to the survey, (see Table 1-1), the two surveyed villages in Gansu province (Xiaowang Village and Dujia Village) and Taizhuang village in Jiangxi province are typical "dual none villages", there are no female cadres in two communities (the village party committee and the village committee). In Xiaowang village of Gansu province, they had a election of new term of cadres in March 2005, and did not vote at all. There had been no elections from 1990 to 2005 in the village. No villager meeting was organized and only the Communist Party members in the village were involved in the change of new term of cadres. Twenty-one Communist Party members took part in the vote with only one woman who was more than fifty years old. There are five members in the party committee, three members in the village committee, two of them are part-time, and the other six are all male. There are no female cadres who specifically are responsible for protecting the legal rights of women. The same situation occurred in the two small villages in Jiangxi province, not only the number of the village committee members is quite small, but also there are no female cadres, so work related with women was undertaken by male cadres.

**Table 1-1 The distribution of the number of male and female cadres in the village committee and village branch of Communist Party among surveyed villages**

| *Village* | | *Committee* | *Male number* | *Female number* | *Femal e(%)* | *Remarks* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ningxi a | Xingming | 7 | 5 | 2 | 28% | 1 women director<br>1 accountant |
| | Chaohu | 5 | 4 | 1 | 20% | 1 women director |
| Shanxi | Wujia | 8 | 7 | 1 | 13% | 1 woman vice-director, to deals with women's business. |
| | Panzhuang | 8 | 7 | 1 | 13% | 1 woman vice-director |
| Jiangxi | Taizhang | 3 | **3** | 0 | 0% | No women director |
| | Xiaoshank ou | 4 | 3 | 1 | 25% | 1 women director, 22 years in this position |
| Sichua n | Lihua | 8 | 7 | 1 | 13% | 1 women director |
| | Houhe | 7 | 6 | 1 | 14% | 1 women director |
| Gansu | Xiaowang | 6 | 6 | 0 | 0% | No women director |
| | Dujia | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0% | No women director |
| Total | | 64 | 56 | 8 | | |

From Table 1-1, we can see that there is at least one female cadre in the two committees of the seven surveyed villages, but these women are mostly engaged in the women's federation work, except the two women cadres in Xinming village in Ningxia province, and one of them is an accountant. According to the statistics, there are 64 rural cadres in the village committee and village party committee of the ten surveyed villages, among them, there are 56 male members, accounting for 87.5% of the total number of village rural cadres. There are only eight female members, accounting for 12.5% of the total number. Therefore, we can see from the above table that the proportion of women cadres is very small in the underdeveloped regions.

Two reasons have resulted in this situation 1) Under many circumstances, the gender equality is a basic state policy, although the 48th item in the *Constitution* says: "Women share equal rights to men in political, economic, cultural, social and family affairs in People's Republic of China." The *Protection Law on Women's Rights* stipulates that "Women are entitled to taking part in the management of state affairs, the economic, social and cultural affairs through various means." Current *Village Committee Organizational Law of People's Republic of China also* makes relevant regulations to guarantee women's participation in political affairs in rural communities. The 9th regulation says: "The village committee is constituted by the director, vice-director totalling three to seven members, and women members should have an appropriate quota in the committee." But in reality, there is no request on the proportion between male and female members, so in most circumstances, there is only one female cadre who is mainly responsible for the works related to women, such as women's federation affairs and birth control etc.; 2) This is very obvious on cultural level, that community affairs being dominated by male is the basic mode of the traditional Chinese society; consequently, the convention still prevails and has a very big influence on today's society. This prejudice in social and cultural environment presents an invisible obstacle to women's participate in political affairs, and keeps women away from political affairs to some extents. Therefore, in poor areas, the gender inequality of political rights still exits.

## *1.2 Gender inequality in the involvement of community administration and decision-making*

Just as mentioned above, inequality in political affairs experienced by rural women in villagers' self-government process, such as low level of participation, small percentage of election and inferior position in decision-making in village committee organizations have influenced women's participation in community administration to some extents.

### 1.2.1 Abscncc of women representatives in the community administration influences the realization of women's interests.

***Case 1--10*** *(Xiaowang village Gansu province): Tap water was connected in 2003, and villagers established the water management union under the support of the township government. Four persons took charge of water management and collecting fees, all of whom were male. Because more than half of men go out to work, it is mainly women who*

*are engaged in doing farm work and looking after the family, women are the main water users, however, no women is involved in water resources management. For instance, running water only lasts for two hours in the afternoon, and this period of time is not convenient for women.*

As for this kind of community issues, even though they arc closely related to women's personal interests, there are no female members in the water management union; therefore, decision made under such a circumstance has resulted in inconvenience for women to get water. But women are used to the mode of decisions being made by men apparently, and do not feel like changing the decision on water supplying schedule, not to mention the idea of getting involved in administration.

### 1.2.2 The level of education affects the extent of women's participation in community affairs

According to the survey, in some underdeveloped regions, most of the elderly women have few opportunities to participate in community affairs due to the following reasons: on the one hand, most women in these areas have low level of education; second, these women also do a great deal of household chores, such as cooking, feeding pigs, washing and looking after kids everyday etc., so they have little time to participate in community affairs; furthermore, even those young women with comparatively higher education have less opportunities to participate in community affairs because almost all of them work outside.

***Case 1--11*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): Zhu Rongshan, male, 75 years old, the head of the family, and his wife, ZhenYangfen, 73 years old, both of them are illiterate. Zhu Lifu and his wife Wang Yumei, are both 43 years old and have primary school education. They have two daughters aged 23 and 21 respectively and one son, both of the two daughters were educated to Grade Five in the primary school. The 17 year-old son has graduated from middle school.*

*Zhu Rongshan is an elderly Party member in the village, he used to be a group leader, village director and a team head, his older granddaughter works in Zhejiangprovince. He believes that the main functions of women at home are to take care of children and do housework. Furthermore, he thinks if there is no family planning policy, he wants more children and, men have the final say on child bearing.*

***Case* 1--12** *(Xiaowang village of Gansu): It is common to hear women saying, "We can't get involved in village affairs since we are illiterate, men will go to attend a meeting if there is something in the village, for they can understand and we can't understand." "Some village cadres think that women do not have education and it is hard for them to understand and they cannot make decision for the whole family; therefore men are informed when something need to be discussed, women are asked to join unless men were out". "In a recent family planning meeting, most of the participants were men".*

In some poor areas where various resources are in severe scarcity, men are even reluctant to take part in community affairs, not to mention women. Therefore, the low level of women's education further restricts women's participation in political affairs

to a certain extent, and this has gradually caused the self-exclusion of women's political involvement.

### 1.2.3 The state of living far away from one another is also a factor that reduces women's opportunities in political involvement

***Case 1--13*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): It takes 40 minutes to have a bus ride from one borderline to the other in the village, walking takes several more times longer than the bus ride.*

***Case 1--14*** *(Lihua village of Sichuan): to the village locates in the Qinba mountainous area. Villagers built houses on flat areas. The road to the village committee is hard and long, and it takes 40 minutes to attend a meeting, since they live far away from each other and always keep one member at home to watch their houses; therefore, few women attend meetings. But it takes only ten more minutes to attend a group meeting, so most of the young women can carry their children to the meeting, thus there are more women attending the small-scale meetings.*

In some remote mountainous areas, villagers are living very far away from each other, long distance between each village and each household and the road condition is bad - these have affected women's participation in community administration to a certain extent.

### 1.2.4 The mode of household labor division affects women's participation in political affairs

Traditionally, men make making big decisions in a family. Therefore, women become dependent believing that community affairs do not have much to do with their family. They do not take part in the meetings whenever impossible.

***Case 1--15*** *(Panhuang village of Shaanxi): During the interviews, women shared a general view: "women only care about ploughing their fields well and doing not need to care about things that has nothing to do with their own interest"*

***Case 1--16*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): The women take on the main housework, they have to cook, feed pigs, wash clothes and take care of children, and that has restricted theirparticipation in village affairs.*

In fact, in the community management structure mostly predominated by male, many decisions lack gender sensitivity. Meanwhile, the traditional family gender division has affected women's participation in community affairs.

In addition, the traditional mode of labor division lacks attention to women's benefits, mainly in the area of health care, medical treatment and nutrition. If the community affairs are concerned with women's interests, they will participate very actively.

***Case 1--17*** *(Chaohu village of Ningxia): Women will show their interest in the health check-up, though they have to pay 2 or 5 Yuan for the examination.*

But in some special circumstances, such as when husbands go out to work, women

will take up the responsibilities that their husbands used to have for the family and community. The fact that husband goes out to do odd jobs has brought about changes to the household labor division and increased opportunities for women to get involved in community affairs.

***Case 1--18*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): Chen Meirong, 36 years old, with a primary school education, her husband goes out to work because there are too many children to support. The school tuition a years is almost 2500 Yuan. In her family, woman's income is mainly used for household expenditure, while man's income is mainly used for children's schoolings. She goes to fairs to buy daily necessities for the family.*

*Her husband used to be the group leader and was involved in all affairs. Now her husband has left home to do odd jobs, she becomes the group leader and starts to get involved in village affairs and shows more interest in community affairs than other women.*

In other circumstances, some women lost their husbands in their middle age; therefore, they have to take up family responsibilities, and the family responsibility has made them gradually willing to participate in village management affairs; but usually there is a lack of such opportunities in the male dominated rural communities.

***Case 1--19*** *(Jiangxi province): Zhu Qiuxiang, female, 42 years old, with primary school education, her husband died in 2004 and left her two daughters and one son. The elder daughter, 22 years old, stopped going to school at grade 2 of her middle school to help her mother while the younger daughter is in grade 1of her middle school. Her 19 year-old son is now studying at a university in Gansu province. There are three mu of farmlands and Zhu Qiuxiang pays 400 Yuan to hire others to help her with planting, for she is not good at it. The main income of her family is from keeping silkworm. They keep 8 sheets of silkworm for three quarters, each quarter can gain 4000 Yuan, so their annual income from keeping silkworm is about 10,000 Yuan. Zhu Qiuxiang used to work as shoe-maker in Qiushui County for a year with a monthly salary of 500---600 Yuan. In addition, she raises two pigs at home.*

*June, August and September are the busiest months in a year Zhu Qiuxiang felt it was very tiring to collect the silkworms, to tidy up the silkworm muck and sell out these silkworms. She had to carry the silkworm to the county to sell until someone comes to collect the silkworm at home this year*

*Her husband took care of the whole family affairs when he was alive, and now she took them instead; however, she is not willing and used to making decisions but she has no other options. She has almost never involved in the discussion of big village affairs before; now she starts to feel concerned about her family's interests and is willing to participate in community affairs. But there lacks such opportunities.*

### 1.2.5 Thematic analysis: Gender inequality in the participatory village-level poverty reduction and development program

The biggest change we have seen in the poverty reduction in China of the new century is the shift of targeting from county level to village level, which is realized

through identifying key poverty reduction villages nation wide and formulating participatory village-level poverty reduction and development program. The former top-down approach for poverty reduction and development deprived the poor of the right to know the inside story and to participate. The current approaches and extents involving the poor in poverty reduction activities are more extensive than those in the past. The main means of participation among the poor in the poverty reduction is their involvement in formulation and implementation of the participatory village-level poverty reduction and development program.

The survey conducted by the Humanitarian and Development Institute of the Agricultural University among 48 villages in 12 counties of 6 provinces reveals that people who had participated in the process of formulating the village-level poverty reduction and development program in the surveyed villages were mainly ordinary villagers, cadres at village, township and county level. The main role of the township and county cadres were to publicize relevant policies, facilitate with villagers' meeting; guide villagers in properly formulating the poverty reduction program and providing policy guidance. The role of the villagers and village cadres were to elect members of the village-level poverty reduction planning 'committee and take part in discussing on, revising and identifying projects. Members of the village-level poverty reduction planning committee were conducted were elected in different ways: some of them were elected directly by villagers; some elected by villager representatives among nominees elected by villager groups. The village-level poverty reduction planning committee normally consists of 5-8 members; although the survey has revealed that the majority of the members is cadres and only 1-3 of them are ordinary villagers, the fact that ordinary villagers are involved in identifying projects through elections and villager meetings and their participation was documented as village-level poverty reduction planning archive which would be used as first-hand reference in allocating poverty reduction resources has proved that participation of the poor group is improved. The participation has partially made the poor group's right to know respected and realized.

As described above, the participatory village-level poverty reduction policy carried out by the government has indeed to some extents ensured the poor group with opportunities to participate in formulation, implementation and monitoring of the poverty reduction program and seen some impacts on alleviating poverty among the poor, but poor women as a special disadvantaged group among the poor has been neglected to certain extents in term of their interests being recognized by their communities or their role being played. Especially during the village-level poverty reduction planning, gender sensitive issues have not attracted attention from relevant departments and the relations between gender inequality and poverty has not yet become one of the important contents in China's rural poverty reduction policies. More important is that the current operation of the village-level poverty reduction program lacks of obvious gender-sensitive principle and framework, and this will restrict to some extent the national poverty reduction program. Half of the target group of the national poverty reduction program is poor women and it is very important to properly handle the relations between gender inequality and poverty.

The participation of villagers, especially women in the participatory village-level program is even lower and many villages still follow administrative planning. Generally speaking, participation of villagers is low and participation of women is even lower. In many villages, village-level program is mainly done by village cadres and many of them are male, participation of other villagers is rather low. Participation of villagers is only in writing, for instance many village-level planning document stated villagers' participation, but many villagers were not sure about planned projects and annual plan in the village.

Just as indicated in Table 1-2, among 492 people surveyed, 51% of them knew about village-level poverty reduction program, only 33% participated in the planning, 28% involved in the implementation and 7.6% took part in monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the village-level poverty reduction program. The 33% participation of villagers in the village-level poverty reduction planning is just an average of many villages, actually, except a higher participation of villagers in demonstration or model villages, the participation of villagers in many other villages is very low. This has told us that if the participatory poverty reduction program is to be expanded, a lot more efforts are needed. One of the main reasons for a low participation of poor groups is that quite a lot of poverty reduction projects were contracted to construction teams outside the villages, this has shown that it will require a lot of efforts to allow staffs in poverty reduction system genuinely understand the meaning of the participatory poverty reduction and master the theories and methods of the participatory poverty reduction.

The poverty reduction monitoring information has revealed that more than half of the rural households know about projects in their villages. In villages with external development projects, 65.4% of the rural households knew projects in their village, 58.5% knew if their village had new projects or fund, 53.8% understood project contents and they got these project information through open and public channels as opposed those informal means in the past. The open and public channels are villager meeting, villager representative meeting, village group meeting and public posters and notices. According to the poverty reduction monitoring, now 33.8% of rural households get to know about project contents through these means. The main reason for much lower participation in monitoring of the poverty reduction program monitoring is that monitoring techniques and capacity at various levels is badly insufficient. The monitoring and evaluation of the poverty reduction and development program is entirely different from the usual poverty reduction project inspection and acceptance, which is a systematic and complicated engineering that needs to establish an M&E indicator system in line with poverty reduction objectives and clearly identify indicator sources and regularly collect information for these indicators. Many problems emerged from poor village identification; village-level poverty reduction program formulation and implementation have directly affected the role played by the participatory village-level poverty reduction program on the poverty reduction in China (Li Xiaoyun etc. 2003).

**Table 1-2 Villagers' participation in Village-level poverty reduction planning**

(Unit: person, %)

| | Total | Yes (%) | Male | Yes (%) | Female | Yes (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Do you know about village level poverty reduction program? | 492 | 51.42 | 289 | 69.90 | 203 | 25.12 |
| Did you involved in the program formulation? | 492 | 33.13 | 289 | 51.56 | 203 | 6.90 |
| Did you raise suggestions to village public affairs? | 492 | 32.32 | 289 | 50.17 | 203 | 6.90 |
| Have your suggestions been adopted? | 419 | 29.59 | 242 | 47.11 | 177 | 5.65 |
| Are you involved in the program implementation? | 492 | 28.05 | 289 | 42.91 | 203 | 6.90 |
| Are you involved in M&E of the program? | 490 | 7.55 | 287 | 11.15 | 203 | 2.46 |
| Do you know the contents of the village poverty reduction projects? | 494 | 68.83 | 292 | 82.19 | 202 | 49.50 |

Source: DFID Operation of fiscal poverty reduction fund in China of new century: Analysis on targeting and deviation

The survey (Table 1-1) has also revealed that among the 10 villages surveyed, 64 are village cadres (village committee and village party committee) and 56 of them are male accounting for 87.5% of the total number of rural cadres and only 8 are female accounting for 12.5% of the total. Therefore, the proportion of rural female cadre is very small. The scarcity of rural women cadres in number is one of the direct reasons affecting women's participation in the village-level planning. In the economically underdeveloped areas, women cadres normally received a bit more years of education than other rural women, they are playing a leading and demonstrating role to certain extent and other women tend to follow. The low participation of rural women cadres means lower participation of other rural women, much lower than men's participation which is not at a low level: among 203 women, 25% of the knew about village-level poverty reduction program, 7% involved in formulating the program, 7% took part in its implementation and 7% raised suggestions on village public issues. The lower women's participation has pointed to the scarcity of gender sensitivity in the participatory poverty reduction activities and lack of correct understanding and due respect to women's rights and their roles.

The missing data on gender in village-level poverty reduction planning has resulted in insufficient gender sensitivity in poverty reduction projects. In the census of poor people, normally no analysis is made on gender discrepancies and poor population is verified using household as a unit in China, therefore, poor women is all covered in poor population. It needs to stress that even though women may come from same household or same community and belong to poor population, they suffer more from the poverty than men especially in relation to their education, nutrition and healthcare, and they receive less impact from poverty reduction interventions. The Table 1-3 tells us that although trainings for poor groups have not covered the majority of poor population, they are increased substantially. Training opportunities for women are rather few and this has shown that poverty reduction training activities lack of gender

sensitivity. An indirect judgment can be made, that is since 2001 the poverty reduction and development has seen positive impact on improving human capital of the poor population, but the problem of how to ensure poor groups with more equitable benefits still remains.

**Table 1-3 Change of human capital owned by poor groups**

| | Total number of households | Change of human capital(%) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Reduced | Increased | No |
| Number of trainings attended by male villagers | 348 | 4.89 | 42.24 | 52.87 |
| Number of training attended by female villagers | 349 | 2.87 | 15.76 | 81.38 |
| Number of illiteracy activities attended by male villagers | 350 | 3.14 | 2.29 | 94.57 |
| Number of illiteracy activities attended by female villagers | 349 | 4.01 | 4.30 | 91.69 |

Source: DFID Operation of fiscal poverty reduction fund in China of new century: Analysis on targeting and deviation

In reality, even in villages that have relatively better implemented the participatory poverty reduction planning, the proportion of poor women being covered by projects is still very low. Table 1-4 is a survey result among 34 male villagers and 28 female villagers in a village with better implemented participatory poverty reduction planning. This table shows that 84% of the surveyed people know about village-level poverty reduction program and households of 61% surveyed people have received poverty reduction projects. Compared with past implementation of village-level poverty reduction program, the percentage of villagers knowing about and obtaining the projects is higher now, this is a expression of villager-oriented village democratic progress. However, we need to notice: 1) only 42% of the surveyed villagers involved in the formulation of village-level program and 21% of surveyed women thought that they had been involved in the formulation of the village-level program, we can see from comparing villages with the participatory poverty reduction program that women's participation ratio in village-level planning is equally low. Statistics have shown that only 10% villagers believe that the projects have been identified by themselves and none of surveyed villagers understand the approval procedures. This shows that even though many poor groups have received projects and benefited to some extents from these projects, they have not been genuinely involved in project decision-making. 2) Only 18% of the surveyed villagers thought the majority of the project households poor households. This shows that poverty reduction project covers very low percentage of poor groups and benefits more rich people in the village. 11% felt that projects meet their needs and this shows project deviate from practical needs of villagers. As women accounts for almost half of the poor group, low project coverage rate of poor households means very low coverage rate of poor women. In addition, only 14% of women thought that projects meet their needs, so we can see that poverty reduction projects greatly deviate from what women actually need. Furthermore, this explains that current poverty reduction system is not reflecting

women's practical needs and their wills for development.

**Table 1-4 Participation of poor groups in poverty reduction decision-making in XX village**

| | People say yes | Yes (%) | Male says yes | Yes (%) | Female says yes | Yes (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Do you know village-level poverty reduction program? | 52 | 83.9 | 30 | 88.2 | 22 | 78.6 |
| Do you think those projects are decided by villagers? | 6 | 9.7 | 5 | 14.7 | 1 | 3.6 |
| Do you know how projects are approved? | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Were you involved in formulating the village-level poverty reduction program? | 26 | 41.9 | 20 | *58.8* | 6 | 21.4 |
| Have you got a project? | 38 | 61.3 | 21 | 61.8 | 17 | 60.7 |
| Does the project meet your needs? | 7 | 11.3 | 3 | 8.8 | 4 | 14.3 |
| Are most of the project households poor households? | 11 | 17.7 | 5 | 14.7 | 6 | *21.4* |

Source: DFJD Operation of fiscal poverty reduction fund in China of new century: **Analysis** on targeting and deviation

Internationally speaking, participation advocated by developing countries in poverty reduction policies and practices is based on the understanding and respect of poor people's (including women) experience, capacity and potentials as well as the re-establishment of equitable participation and sharing among each interest groups in a community including concept and mechanism of social gender equality so as to achieve community sustainable development. Therefore, participation is a process and principle of value other than just a method or tool. Judging from the above mentioned materials, understanding on participation in current thoughts and policies of poverty reduction and development is incomplete and there are also some misunderstandings in practice. From the angle of social gender, since male and female have different social roles and labor divisions in the existing social structure and different power of property ownership, therefore vulnerability for male and female varies and their experience and suffering from poverty are different. To pay attention to these differences and to recognize the disadvantaged situation of women is the first and foremost step to formulate social gender sensitive poverty reduction policies (Wang Zuofang etc. 2003).

Therefore, mechanism and procedures to express self-interest of poor women need to be explored in the process of participatory poverty reduction planning; more attention should be given to the process of participation. The concept of and research on relations between gender inequality and poverty started many years ago and have been subject to full-blown discussions internationally. In recent years, focus of

poverty alleviation in China started shifting to poor women's plight but not yet sufficient. More study and research are needed to explore the in-depth relations between gender inequality and poverty so as to ensure poor women's rights, improve government's capacity in working out gender-sensitive policies and program and to achieve fundamental impacts from China's poverty reduction strategy.

## *1.3 Relationship between gender inequality in political rights and poverty*

Even theoretically,. the relations between gender inequality and poverty are very complicated. The absence of women's participation in decision making can to a certain extent affect the degree of realizing women's interests. The water management union case in Gansu province has shown that the absence of decision making by women representativeshas already changed women's labor input. Men usually cannot see from women's perspectives, and that has affected women ability to obtain opportunities in health, medical treatment, and nutrition etc. The influences in these aspects is even more complicated in reality.

### 1.3.1 The impact of gender inequality in political rights on poverty.

It is very difficult to understand the impact of the gender inequality in political rights on poverty, whether through a qualitative or a quantitative research. This survey has designed "the self-evaluation system among rural households on the poverty type" (see Annex 1, end of chapter 1) in the questionnaire. According to livelihood capital owned by rural households, twelve indices are listed. Two indices, "lack of opportunity to participate in the discussion of great village affairs" and "lack of ability to manage village affairs[7]" are used to inquire the relations between gender inequality in political affairs and poverty. The survey has found out that it is not clearly stated whether the gender inequality in political affairs influence poverty or not, but due to the limitation in the research design, the research results cannot explain the quantitative relations between the two. In fact, we can easily find out from the interviews with women that due to restrictions to women's participation, it is very hard for women to incorporate their interests in community administration and decision making; they can only express their wishes in involvement in political rights.

Analysis of the survey data in ten villages has revealed that the majority of rural women believe that "land shortage", "lack of saving" and "water shortage" are the most important factors causing their family poverty. However, only a small number of women mentioned the "lack of opportunities and abilities to participate in the village affairs" as a factor affecting the family poverty. The survey has found out that "in the five factors that influence family poverty", only a few number of villagers attribute the "lack of opportunity to discuss big village affairs" and "lack of capacity to manage village affairs" to family poverty. There are also variations between different areas and certainly between different genders.

In the eight poor villages of four provinces (Shaanxi, Sichuan, Gansu and Jiangxi)

covered by the survey, 141 women and 72 men are involved. We can see from Table 1-5 that in women's answers, 126 persons believe that "lack of opportunities to discuss big village affairs" will not affect family's poverty, accounting for 84.9%; and 15 persons, accounting for 10.6% think it would affect family poverty. We can also see from Table 1-6 that 134 persons, accounting for 96%, do not think that "lack of capacity to manage village affairs" will affect family poverty, only 7 persons, accounting for 5% agree that it will affect family poverty.

**Tablel-5 Lack of opportunity to discuss important village affairs (decision-making, management, monitoring etc.)**

| | Male group in four provinces | | Female group in four provinces | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | person times | Percentage | person times | Percentage |
| No effect | 61 | 84.7 | 126 | 89.4 |
| Very little effect | 5 | 6.9 | 12 | 8.5 |
| Little effect | 3 | 4.2 | 3 | 2.1 |
| General effect | 1 | 1.4 | 0 | 0 |
| Big effect | I | 1.4 | 0 | 0 |
| Great effect | 1 | 1.4 | 0 | 0 |
| Aggregate | 72 | 100 | 141 | 100 |

**Table1-6 Lack of capacity to manage public affairs (such as forestland, water surface, wasteland etc.) inside the village**

| | Male group in four provinces | | Female group in four provinces | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Person Times | Percentage | Person Times | Percentage |
| No effect | 65 | 90.3 | 134 | 95.0 |
| Very little effect | 7 | 9.7 | 6 | 4.3 |
| Little effect | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.7 |
| General effect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Big effect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Great effect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Aggregate | 72 | 100 | 141 | 100 |

Among the 72 male villagers in the four provinces, we can see from Table 1-5 that 61 persons, accounting for 84.7%, do not think that "lack of opportunities to discuss big village affairs" will affect family poverty and 11 persons, accounting for 15.3% think

that it will. We can also see from Table 1-6 that 65 persons, accounting for 90.3%, do not think that "lack of capacities to manage village affairs" will affect the family, and only 7, accounting for 9.7% think that it will.

The surveyed villages (Xinming and Chaohu village) in Ningxia are close to cities, having rich energies (coal) and relatively developed enterprises of heavy industry; hence local villagers have much more employment opportunities and they normally have better economic situation. Since the surveyed villages are located in a relatively developed area, we collected statistics from each of the two villages separately in order to find the special features of the gender disparities in participating in village affairs in relatively wealthy region. 42 women and 22 men have participated in the surcey. Seeing from the Table 1-7, among 42 women, 23 persons accounting for 54.8% do not think that "lack of opportunities to discuss big village affairs" will affect family poverty, and only 19 persons, accounting for 45.2% think it will affect. From Table 1-8, it is found out that 30 persons, accounting for 71.4% do not think that "lack of capacities to manage village affairs" will affect families, while 12 person accounting for 28.6% think it will.

**Tablel-7 Lack of opportunity to discuss important village affairs (decision-making, management, monitoring etc.)**

| | Male group in Ningxia | | Female group in Ningxia | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Person times | Percentage | Person times | Percentage |
| No effect | 13 | 59.0 | 23 | 54.8 |
| Very little effect | 5 | 23.0 | 9 | 21.4 |
| Little effect | 3 | 14.0 | 8 | 19.0 |
| General effect | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4.8 |
| Big effect | 1 | 4.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Great effect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Aggregate | 22 | 100 | 42 | 100 |

**Tablel-8 Lack of capacity to manage the village public affairs (such as forestland, water surface, wasteland etc.)**

| | Male group in Ningxia | | Female group in Ningxia | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Person times | Percentage | Person times | Percentage |
| No effect | 16 | 73.0 | 30 | 71.4 |
| Very little effect | 6 | 27.0 | 10 | 23.8 |
| Little effect | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.4 |
| General effect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Big effect | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2.4 |
| Great effect | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Aggregate | 22 | 100 | 42 | 100 |

Statistics from male groups in Ningxia (Table 1-7 and Table 1-8) show that 22 men participated in ranking, among them 13 persons, accounting for 59% do not think that lack of opportunity to discuss village affairs will affect family poverty, while 9 persons accounting for 38% think that it will. Similarly we can see that 16 persons accounting for 73% do not think that lack of capacity to manage village affairs will influence family, while only 6 persons accounting for 27% acknowledge that it will.

To sum up the above analysis, we can find out that the number of women in the poor areas who think that "lack of opportunity to discuss village affairs" and "lack of capacity to manage village affairs" will influence family poverty accounts for 10.6% and 5% respectively. While the corresponding percentage among local male villagers is 15.3% and 9.7%, the proportions are relatively higher. This shows that in the poor areas male villagers have relatively more understanding of the impact on family livelihood from participating in village affairs. On the contrary, villagers in the two relatively developed suburban villages in Ningxia have more profound understanding. The number of the women who think that "lack of opportunity to discuss village affairs" and "lack of capacity to manage village affairs" will influence family poverty accounts for 45.2% and 28.6% respectively, while the corresponding percentage among local male villagers is 38.0% and 27%.

Therefore, we can conclude that compared to farmers in undeveloped areas, suburban farmers in developed area, no matter male or female, have much bigger demand on " the opportunity and capacity to participation in the community affairs", and this may be that the improvement of household economic income will naturally increase their participation in village affairs, and then further realize their optimal livelihood standard.

During the interview with women groups, many women opined that gender inequality of political rights does not have inevitable connection with poverty.

***Case 1--20*** *(Ningxia): Women think that "It makes no difference to us whoever is the cadre in the village, and the number of female cadre is not important to us. What is important to us is that they can think for women and do things well."*

Certainly, considerable number of women have already realized their inferior status in both the village committee election and organization. Like the case of "water management union" in Gansu province, since there is no female representative in union, so women's benefits can not be expressed. Consequently, women's burden has increased, but women seldom oppose such a management system, because they are used to accepting the decisions that ignore women's benefits.

### 1.3.2 The impact of poverty on gender inequality in political rights

The survey has revealed that generally speaking poverty has limited women's opportunity and the degree in participating in the election and community management. Poverty, to some extent, influences women's participation in politics, and the influence is multi-dimensional.

(1) The low family income influences women's participation in political affairs. In families with low income, women devote all their time to production and household chores. In order to increase household income, they may have a lot of living strategies that may consume their energy and physical strength, and reduce their opportunity to participate in political affairs.

***Case 1--21*** *(XiaoWang village of Gansu): Some women expressed that "We do not feel like geting involved in great village affairs because of our poverty. We can not sleep well at night".*

***Case 1--22*** *(Xinmin village of Ningxia): Women working in the vegetable greenhouse said "it is very costly to support my children to go to school, I spend all day long in the field (to plant the wheat), then work in the greenhouse and busy with housework (feed pigs and sheep) when I come back home. How can I find time to participate in village's affairs?*

(2) Women's low level of education reduces their opportunity to participate in political affairs. In Case 1-12 (XiaoWang village of Gansu), quite a few women said "I can not participate in discussing village affairs because I am illiterate. Normally men are involved, they can understand and we do not understand." "Some village cadres think that women do not have education and hard to understand and can't make decision for the whole family; therefore men are informed when something need to be discussed, and women are asked to join unless men were out". "In a recent family planning meeting, most of the participants were men". This has demonstrated that the low level of women's education further restricts women's participation in political affairs.

(3) The poor village infrastructure also negatively influences women's participation in political affairs. In some remote mountainous areas, the villagers live very far away from one another. The long distance between each village and each household and the bad road condition to a certain extent have affected women's participation in community administration. Case 1-13 (Taizhuang village in Jiangxi) shows that it takes 40 minutes to have a bus ride from one borderline to the other borderline of the village, walking takes several times longer than the bus ride. In Case 1-14, Lihua village of Sichuan locates in Qinba mountainous area. Villagers built houses on flat areas. The road to the village committee is hard and long, and it will take 40 minutes to attend a meeting, since they live far away from each other and always keep one member at home to watch their houses, therefore, few women attend meetings. But it takes only ten more minutes to attend a group meeting, so most of the young women can carry their child to the meeting, thus there are more women attending the small-scale meetings.

(4) The male laborers going out to work has provided women with more opportunities to participate in political affairs. Currently, the majority of rural emigrant laborers are male, so women have to look after plantation and do house work. That increases women's labor input, and the traditional work division mode between male and female has been changed. Women do not only need to do housework, but also take

part in agricultural production. More important is that they have to get involved in village affairs in person, which has increased women's opportunity to participate in political affairs.

In conclusion, the impact of gender inequality in political rights on family poverty is very abstract and complicated, but the impact of the family poverty on the gender inequality in political participation cannot be neglected. The majority of women have already realized this point, but communities are lacking of incentive mechanism to encourage women to participate in village administration on an equal footing. Therefore, we should consciously eliminate prejudice against women's participation in village administration, and try to change the traditional concepts that men are strong and dominant and women are weak and subordinate. It is also very necessary to create a cultural and social environment beneficial to the development of rural women and their active involvement in rural community administration.

**Appendix 1: Farmers' self-evaluation on their poverty type**

| Six main kinds of capital | Index | Ranking (to choose the five most important factors) |
|---|---|---|
| Natural capital | 1. Lack of land | |
| | 2. Water shortage (for drinking and/or for irrigation) | |
| Physical capital | 3. Poor Housing | |
| | 4. Bad road | |
| Human capital | 5. Lack of labor force ( the family mcmbcrs are sick or of small quantities) | |
| | 6. Labor of low education | |
| Financial capital | 7. No savings | |
| | 8. Unable to get loans | |
| Social capital | 9. Lack of information (on living, production and employment) | |
| | 10. No help and loans in busy seasons | |
| Political capital (Participation, discrimination, exclusion, and deprivation) | 11. Lack of chances to participate in village affairs (making decision, taking up management, or monitoring etc.) | |
| | 12. Lack of ability to manage public affairs in the village (such as forestland, water surface, wasteland...etc.) | |

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# 2 Gender Inequality in Assets Possession and Poverty

*Gender inequalities in access to and control of such productive assets as land, information, technology, and financial capital hinder women's ability to participation in and take advantage of the opportunities afforded by development.*

*The World Bank 2002*

For most farmers, land is their life line and the most important asset to gain their income among all other assets. In China, there is little research on the issues of land allocation and gender equality in rural areas. In Ms. Zhu Ling's opinion (2000), the gender equality of land allocation in rural areas is guaranteed by laws and economic systems, but the flaws of these laws and systems have made divorced women lack security in land rights. Those moved women through marriage and their children do not have land temporarily if they miss out the chance of land allocation adjustment in their villages. Facts have proved that for all the rural population to be assumed to be getting land allotments on an equal footing does not mean that equality is accomplished in rural communities, because an acknowledgement to the unequal gender structure is missing in the normative analytical framework.

As a disadvantaged group, rural women also bear the gender inequality on possession and obtainment of other assets such as financial assets and natural assets other than land. Gender inequality in assets possession usually can reflect gender inequality in a focal and direct way. However, the assets possession among farmers has long been taking household as a unit, and it is supposed that assets can be distributed averagely among family members; therefore, the gender inequality on possession of family assets is ignored. In this study, we mainly record and analyze the information on household assets allocation, possession and controlling between female and male members in households. It is found that gender inequality of different extents exist in assets ascription and decision making. The family members who possess fewer assets are made even more vulnerable. It should be specially noted that this kind of gender inequality disguised in family and marriage is usually ignored by farmers themselves (be it male of female).

In this chapter, we classify the assets that can focally reflect gender inequality into three categories: physical assets (including land, houses, transportation, and durable goods); financial assets (including deposits and loans) and natural resaurces (including water, forest and etc). Gender inequality is analyzed from the perspective of assets obtainment and controlling. And the gender inequality related with other important assets such as human resources (education), social capital, social welfare (health) and others are respectively described in other chapters.

## *2.1 Gender inequality in possession of physical assets*

Farmers' physical assets are the basic production and living facilities and the

necessary production materials for livelihood. They are divided into six categories which include land, safe houses, communicational facilities and tools, household durable goods, sufficient clean drinking water and information channels. The survey result is summarized and analyzed as follows:

### 2.1.1 Gender inequality in possession and control of land

In the five surveyed provinces, agriculture is the main means of livelihood. Land is the fundamental resource farmers live on. So the possession and control of land is playing a decisive role in farmers' livelihood. The gender inequality will be analyzed from the following aspects of land allocating system, ownership of contractual land certificate, farmland worker and decision maker and contract and transfer of land.

**(1)The gender inequality in land allocation system**

Under the guidance of the national policy that land is allotted prorata according to the number of people (be they male and female), the situation in different provinces may vary. The investigation has found out that land is allotted prorata among people registered in Hukou (Residence permit) in Jiangxi and Gansu and the amount of land is decreased when women are mamed out and then increased when women are married in. However in Sichuan and Shaanxi, a policy of "fixed amount of land regardless of changed family members" is carried out. In Wujia Village, Shaanxi, all women aged above 40 whose Hukou have been transferred to the village have their own land, while children under 11 years old do not have.

The situation is special in Ningxia. The two villages in Ningxia have already completed the second round of land contract. Because the economic situation is good in these two villages, there are many sons-in-law[2], so a local practice is adopted to only register their Hukou but to not allot land to them. As a result, in many families with sons-in-law, men do not have land and women and children do.

***Case** 2-1 (Xingmin Village of Ningxia): One Village Director said: we can register Hukou for sons in law with the preconditions that they can not participate in the land allocation in the village. An agreement will he reached before their Hukou is registered.*

The above survey has shown that the land allocation, apart from gender equality is still influenced deeply by the male-dominant attitudes and marriage system in many areas. Giving birth to a girl means to lose the land, while giving birth to a boy means to gain the land in a household. Women are still the vulnerable side in land allocation. Cases in the relatively better-off villages in Ningxia have showed positive influence from a better economic situation on women's possession of land.

**(2)Gender inequality in the ownership of land contract certificate**

During the survey, we asked all interviewees about their impressions on obtaining of er

[2] There are many sons-in-law (an unusual circumstance in most villages) is because poorer man or men from poorer villages have married into their wife's family which is probably much better off than his natal family and his natal village.

land. We can see from the data in Table 2-1 that most villagers think land is family asset and therefore is owned by both men and women. Some women think that no land is allotted to them after their marriage and the land belongs to men. No one believes that land belongs to women. Although most people think that both men and women own the land together, survey has found out that land contract certificates are all signed by men in all surveyed areas. This has in fact affirmed men's ownership of the land in a legal sense. That means that if women get divorced, they may have no land.

**Table 2-1 Opinions among interviewees on obtainment of land in the five provinces**

| Province | Gender | Number of interviewees | Obtainment of land | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Male | Female | Both Male and female |
| Sichuan | Female | 34 | 0 | 0 | 34 |
| | Male | 21 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| Shaanxi | Female | 40 | 1 (3%) | 0 | 39 |
| | Male | 20 | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| Gansu | Female | 38 | 2 (5%) | 0 | 36 |
| | Male | 19 | 0 | 0 | 19 |
| Ningxia | Female | 42 | 0 | 0 | 42 |
| | Male | 22 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| Jiangxi | Female | 29 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| | Male | 16 | 0 | 0 | 16 |

**(3) Gender inequality in land farming and operating determinations.**

The investigation (refer to Table 2-2) has found out that according to the interview with women groups in Jiangxi, men make decisions on crop types in 27 families accounting for 93%; women make decisions in 1 family accounting for 3.5% and men and women make decisions together in 1 family accounting for 3.5% . However, according to the interview with men group, 15 families accounting for 94% have decisions made by men and only 1 family accounting for 6% has decisions made by both men and women together. In the women group of Shaanxi, 11 women think that decision is made only by men, accounting for 28%. In the women group of Gansu, 12 families accounting for 43% have decisions made by men and 16 families accounting for 57% by women. In the men group of Gansu, 4 families accounting for 21% have decisions made by men. Sichuan and Ningxia groups all think that decisions are made by men and women together.

Ploughing the field as a main source for farmers is the traditional responsibilities for men. Men are the primary labor in planting. So men, to a great extent are able to decide on the types of plant, uses of pesticide and fertilizer, irrigation and relevant techniques. However women only play their roles when there is a shortage of male labors during seasons of rice seedlings transplantation and harvest. As a direct consequence, women are weaker in their knowledge and skills on ploughing and have fewer rights to speak on land.

***Case 2-2 (Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi): One woman, after the death of her husband has to hire others to manage her land for lack of land knowledge. But there are obvious changes in the families with male members doing odd jobs outside. In such families, women have to take up farming and operating responsibilities for lack of male labors.***

**Table 2-2 Labor division between genders in ploughing and decision on land operation in the five provinces**

| Province | Gender | Number of people interviewed | Farmland Ploughing | | Decision on land operation | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Types of Plants | | | Uses of pesticide and fertilizer | | |
| | | | Mainly by men | Mainly by women | Male | Female | Both | Male | Female | Both |
| Sichuan | Female | 34 | 45 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 25 | 0 | 9 |
| | Male | 21 | | | 0 | 0 | 21 | 14 | 0 | 7 |
| Shaanxi | Female | 40 | 58 | 2 | 11 | 0 | 29 | 29 | 0 | 11 |
| | Male | 20 | | | 0 | 0 | 20 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Gansu | Female | 38 | None | None | 12 | 16 | 10 | 38 | 0 | 0 |
| | Male | 19 | | | 4 | 0 | 15 | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| Ningxia | Female | 42 | 24 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 42 |
| | Male | 22 | | | 0 | 0 | 22 | 22 | 0 | 0 |
| Jiangxi | Female | 29 | 37 | 8 | 27 | 1 | 1 | 27 | 0 | 0 |
| | Male | 16 | | | 15 | 0 | 1 | 16 | 0 | 0 |

Note: The "none" in the above form means no data was collected from the interviews.

**(4) Gender inequality in land contracting and transferring rights.**

The survey has uncovered that issues of contracting and transfemng land need to be negotiated by the members who have more social contacts and "insight"; therefore, decision making power is always on men's side. This survey tells us that 7 persons in the women group of Sichuan think the decisions are made by men.

There are lands sub-contracted and transferred in the village in Shaanxi and decisions are made by men. 12 persons in the women group of Gansu think that men make such

decision and 9 persons think that women make decisions. 15 persons in the women group of Jiangxi said that men made decisions and 5 persons said both men and women made decisions together. In the men group of Jiangxi province, 16 persons said that men make decisions and no one thinks that decisions are made by women or jointly. As for the men and women groups of Ningxia, they all think that men and women decide on the land contract and transfer together.

The absolute leading role played by men in land contract and transfer has a close relationship with their possession of land, their bigger social capital and concepts of "Men taking charge of external affairs while women taking charge of the internal affairs". Similarly, such a phenomenon is greatly changed in the families with male members doing odd jobs outside. The cases in Jiangxi have shown that women become the main responsible persons of land when the men leave home to do odd job, so they often make decisions on how to use land according to their own needs.

**Table 2-3 Gender inequality in the decision making on contracting and transferring land among interviewees in the five provinces.**

| Province | Gender | Number of people interviewed | Decision making on contracting and transferring of land | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Male | Female | Both |
| Sichuan | Female | 34 | 7 | * | 9 |
| | Male | 21 | * | * | 11 |
| Shaanxi | Female | 40 | 20 | * | * |
| | Male | 20 | 10 | * | * |
| Gansu | Female | 38 | 12 | 9 | * |
| | Male | 19 | * | * | * |
| Ningxia | Female | 42 | * | * | 42 |
| | Male | 22 | * | * | 22 |
| Jiangxi | Female | 29 | 15 | 0 | 5 |
| | Male | 16 | 16 | * | * |

Note: the "*" in the above form means that no valid data has collected in the survey.

### 2.1.2 Gender inequality in ownership of family housing land and houses

**(1) The gender inequality in ownership of family housing land**

Survey has shown that family housing land is mainly owned by men in Sichuan, Gansu, Shaanxi and Jiangxi. There is no gender disparity in Ningxia. All family housing land are under husband's name not wife's name in surveyed villages in Sichuan. If changes occur, decisions will be made according to law rather than husbands. In Gansu, family housing land is usually given to men because women will be married to other places and not live in the original villages. Husbands who live

with their wives' family will also get land; all head of the households are male.

In the surveyed villages in Shaanxi, each family has family housing land of 0.2 to 0.4 mu. The elder residents in the village have relatively bigger houses. Land is allotted for building new houses up to a standard. The possession and uses of family housing land is under the name of head of the household and takes individual family as a unit.

The family housing land in Jiangxi is also under the name of head of the household.

***Case 2-3*** *(Xiaoshangkou village of Jiangxi): You Qiusheng, 40 years old, graduated from primary school. His family has six members. His wife Yu Xiaolan is 40 years old and graduated from junior middle school. He has three daughters. The oldest daughter has graduated from vocational technical school and is working in a shoes factory as a clerk in Shenzhen. The second oldest daughter is aged 19 and graduated from junior middle school. She is now working as a sales promoter in a supermarket. The third daughter graduated from junior middle school and used to work as sales promoter of beer. Mr. You has an old grandfather aged over 80. He is the head of the household and the family housing land is under his name.*

In Ningxia, there is no gender disparity between men and women in obtaining family housing land. In the Chaohu village surveyed, there are **3%** to 5% of female head of the households and they all have obtained their family housing land. In the villager group discussions, they all agree that family housing land should be shared by both men and women.

**(2) The gender inequality in possession of house**

Serious gender inequality exists in the use, construction, capital resources and distribution of houses. The villagers of Panzhuang village in Shaanxi said that usually they would consider building new houses in two situations. The first is that the current house is too old to live in. And the other case is that they want to get ready for their sons' marriage.

In rural areas of Ningxia, men are usually required to have new houses before their marriage. Men make decisions on the building of new houses. Building of new houses needs a lot of money. This survey has found out that most of the villagers who build new houses are emigrant laborers, most of whom are men. A survey in Gansu has also revealed that men make decisions on building of new houses. In Jiangxi, design and distribution of houses are all men centered because of the long-time tradition of ''women follow men in their marriage''.

Illustrated in Table 2-4, there is no gender inequality as for whether to build houses or not in Sichuan and Shaanxi. But differences exist in Gansu and Jiangxi. Some families have men decide on whether to build houses. There are 29 such families in Gansu (29%) and 11 families in Jiangxi (24%). Gender inequality is obvious in making decisions on investment for house construction. Among the men group in

**Table 2-4 The gender inequality in making decisions on houses construction among the interviewees of the five provinces**

| Province | Gender | Number of interviewees | The gender inequality in making decisions on houses construction | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Whether to build houses or not | | | Investment in house construction | | |
| | | | Male | Female | Both | Male | Female | Both |
| Sichuan | Female | 34 | 0 | 0 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 34 |
| | Male | 21 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| Shaanxi | Female | 40 | 0 | 0 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 40 |
| | Male | 20 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| Gansu | Female | 38 | 21 | 0 | 17 | 21 | 0 | 17 |
| | Male | 19 | 8 | 0 | II | 8 | 0 | II |
| Ningxia | Female | 42 | 42 | 0 | 0 | 42 | 0 | 0 |
| | Male | 22 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 0 | 0 |
| Jiangxi | Female | 29 | 5 | 5 | 19 | 14 | 5 | 10 |
| | Male | 16 | 6 | 0 | 10 | 6 | 0 | 10 |

Shaanxi province, 10 persons (50%) think that men make decisions. 21 women (55%) among women group and 8 men (42%) among men group in Gansu respectively think that men make decisions. Among the women group of Jiangxi, 14 persons (48%) think that men make decisions while 5 persons (17%) think that women make decisions. At the same time, 6 persons (38%) in the men group think that men make decisions.

The gender inequality in the possession of family housing land and house property makes women's vulnerability conspicuous when the family crisis arises.

*Case **2-4** (Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi): In this village, a woman received half of the family savings after she got divorced. Since their house could not be divided, she had to move to her parents'home.*

### 2.1.3 The gender inequality in access to public transports and communication tools

The survey has revealed that inconvenient roads bring about more difficulties to women. According to the survey in Gansu, it takes a long time for male and female villagers to go to town. In Sichuan, local villagers live dispersedly and the road to the county town is poor. Villagers told us during the survey in Jiangxi that women have fewer chances than men to go to the county town because they have no transport and they are physically weak.

***Case 2-5 (Jiangxi): One woman villager said: Men go to the town when they have urgent matters to deal with. We ask them to bring back things we need. Considering the transportation conditions and expenses (we have to pay 6 Yuan for transportation to go to town each time), sometimes we do not go to town to see doctor when we are ill.***

Inconvenient transportation plus high transportation cost has restricted women's activities more. Some rural households have motorcycles or minibuses, but they all used by men. Since they have more needs to communicate with outside world. As for transportation business, men are more competent because of the advantages with their physical forces.

### 2.1.4 The gender inequality in making decisions on household durable goods and their possessions

**Table 2-5 Gender inequality in making decisions on household durable goods and their possessions among the interviewees in the five provinces and regions**

| Province and region | Gender | Number of interviewees | Decision making on purchases of durable goods | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Male | Female | Both |
| Sichuan | Female | 34 | 0 | 0 | 34 |
| | Male | 21 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| Shaanxi | Female | 40 | 0 | 0 | 40 |
| | Male | 20 | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| Gansu | Female | 38 | 6 (16%) | 0 | 32 (84%) |
| | Male | 19 | 0 | 0 | 19 |
| Ningxia | Female | 42 | 0 | 0 | 42 |
| | Male | 22 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| Jiangxi | Female | 29 | 1 (3%) | 3 (10%) | 25 (87%) |
| | Male | 16 | 2 (13%) | 1 (6%) | 13 (81%) |

Judging from decisions made on purchases of durable goods, there is not big the gender disparity (refer to Table 2-5). Most of the interviewees think that the decisions are jointly made by men and women. Only 6 persons (16%) in the women group of Gansu think that men make decisions.

In the women group of Jiangxi, 1 person (3%) agrees that men make decisions. 3 persons (10%) agree that women make decisions. In the men group of Jiangxi, 2 persons (13%) agree that men make decision. Only 1 person (6%) in this group agrees that women make decision. However materials from interviews have revealed that there is a huge gender disparity on the uses of family durable goods.

In Lihua village of Sichuan, 1 family owes a motorcycle and 5 families owe bicycles. However only one woman is able to ride bicycle among the 18 interviewed women. Most of them go to market on foot. In Houhe village, only 1 family has a motorcycle

and it is used only by men. In Wujia village of Shaanxi, a few families have motorcycles and most of them have bicycles. They usually go to town by bike. The motorcycles are all used by men and the bicycles are used by both men and women. A few families have telephone and they are used by both men and women. There are several cell phones in the village and they are all used by men. Most of families in Panzhuang Village have telephones and a few have cell phones. Some families have motorcycles. The cell phones are all used by men and most of motorcycles are used by men as well. A few women are able to use motorcycles. It is only when sons get married, color TVs and refrigerator are then bought for them, and bride's family will not buy these items.

The survey has showed that men have the priority in using high-class transportation and communication goods such as cell phones and motorcycles. In rural families, cell phones are bought and used by men. Motorcycles are used by both men and women.

***Case 2-6*** *(Chaohu Village of Ningxia): One middle-aged woman said that men had been using cell phones for almost ten years but women have just started to use them receni'ly.*

***Case 2-7*** *(Xiaowang Village of Gansu): From interviews with women, we have learnt that 2 families have cell phones, 4 families have tricycles and* **3** *families have motorcycles. They are all used by men.*

The limited household income leads to the limited purchase of durable goods. The traditional work division in rural households makes men have more communications with outside world than women. They are more in need of some durable goods such as motorcycles and cell phones. Thus they have the priority in using these consumable goods.

***Case 2-8*** *(Sichuan): Women of Lihua village mentioned that one family has motorcycle and five families have bicycles. However only one woman is able to use bicycle among the 18 interviewed women. Most of them go to market on foot. In Houhe village, only one family has a motorcycle and it is used by men..*

Besides, there is a big degree of gender inequality with daily consumption.
***Case 2-9*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): The Zhang Housheng's family ranked the expenses of family members in 2004 from more to less, and ranking list reads like his son, Mr. Zhang, his daughter, his wife and his mother:*

### 2.1.5 Gender inequality in obtainment and possession of sustainable drinking water

The survey in Jiangxi has found out that when there is a water shortage, female suffers more from illness caused by poor hygiene because they are responsible for child delivery and birth control. More dissatisfaction on water condition is expressed

by women group than by men group.

Women share more responsibilities related with water such as fetching water, washing clothes, cooking, breeding livestock and etc. However women seldom participate in the construction and maintenance of water supply projects, which has hampered the realization of women's interests.

***Case 2-10*** *(Xiaowang village of Gansu): Tap water was connected since 2003. Villagers set up a Tap Water Management Association with the help from township government. 4 members are responsible for managing tap water and collecting water rates. They are all men. Because more than half of men go out to work, it is women who mainly take up farming work and take care of families, they are primary users of water resource but no woman is involved in water management. For instance, running water only lasts for two hours every afternoon, this is not the most convenient time for women.*

### 2.1.6 Obtainment of information

The survey has found out that villagers get information mainly from TV, radio, visiting technicians, market, neighbors, friends, relatives and others. So the obtainment of information is much related to time they spend on watching TV, times they go to town and participate in trainings and so on. At the same time, the gender disparity on basic education has restricted a large number of women in their communication with outside world.

***Case 2-11*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): Women of this village mentioned that more women than men in the village are unable to speak mandarin. So purchase, trading and negotiation in market have to be done by men. Table 2-6 indicates the gender disparity on obtainment of information among surveyed villagers.*

**Table 2-6 Survey of gender disparity on obtainment of information in Taizhuang village of Jiangxi**

| Means to obtain information | Mainly by men | Mainly by women | Both |
|---|---|---|---|
| Watching TV | ◆ | | |
| Going to city | ◆ | | |
| Visiting friends and relatives | ◆ | | |
| Receiving training | ◆ | | |

Because women have received less education than men, men have more advantages in getting information from outside. This creates a cycle in which the less information women have got, the more unwilling they are to go out. So there is a gender inequality in obtainment of information.

## *2.2 Gender inequality in possession of financial assets*

### 2.2.1 Gender inequality in ownership of family savings

According to survey results, villagers in all other provinces except those in Ningxia said that they have little or no savings and hardly deal with banks. If they do have savings, they would save it under men's name, because men are head of the households. But women manage the money.

***Case 2-12*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): Zhang Guoping (male, aged 41) graduated from junior middle school. His wife is named Ping Yanmei and is 41 years old, graduated from primary school. Both of them stay at home without going out to work. There are six members in their family. They have an old mother aged over 70, two sons and one daughter: The oldest son is 20 years old and is a college student. The daughter is 17 years old and is a senior high school student in Grade Two. The youngest son is 14 years old and is studying in Grade Two of junior middle school. The Zhang's has no savings. Mr. Zhang said if they would have savings it must be in men's name because men are the head of the household.*

According to the survey, most of bank books are in men's name, since the head of the households are usually men. Traditionally speaking, family assets are all under name of the head of the household.

***Case 2-13*** *(Taizhuang village of Jiangxi): Zhang Housheng, male, 42 years old, graduatedji-om junior middle school. His wife is named Ping Weihua (42 years' old, graduatedji-om Grade Five ofprimary school). The couple has been working in Tonghai, Guangdong for ten years. There are Jive people in the family. The old mother is 82 years old. The son is aged 21 and is working outside now. The daughter is aged 19 and is at home between the jobs now Both the son and the daughter are graduated from junior middle school. All their bankbooks are in men's name.*

However, according to the survey of Xingmin village in Ningxia, some women in newly-married families write their names when they deposit money.

***Case 2-14*** *(Xingmin village of Ningxia): One newly married woman said: It is the same to write my name or my husband's name. The one who goes to deposit money may write his or her name.*

Men use much more savings than women. This is also related to the local economic development. Local development of coal, petrol-chemistry and other industries needs many workers of transportation and construction and men are more suitable to do this kind of work. Men use deposit to earn more money to support their families and women are more involved in housework at home.

### 2.2.2 The gender inequality in getting credit loan

In poor areas, annual income of farmers is not enough to maintain their livelihood. This has to be supplemented by loan. They need loans to pay for investment on agricultural production, children's education, building houses, and children's marriage. Some families even need loans to buy food. So what about the situation in a family of ''whom to loan from'', ''who to loan'' and ''decision on lending money to others''? Table 2-7 indicates the gender disparity in decision making related to loan in Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu and Jiangxi.

**Table 2-7 Gender disparity in decision making related to loan among interviewees in each province/ region**

| Province and region | Gender | Number of interviewees | The gender disparity in decision making related to "borrow money" | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | from whom to borrow | | | Who goes to borrow on behalf of the family | | | Whether to lend money to others | | |
| | | | Male | Female | Both | Male | Female | Both | Male | Female | Both |
| Sichuan | Female | 34 | 3 | 11 | 20 | 3 | 11 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 34 |
| | Male | 21 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 10 | 0 | 11 |
| Shaanxi | Female | 40 | 0 | 0 | 40 | 21 | 0 | 19 | 0 | 10 | 30 |
| | Male | 20 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| Gansu | Female | 38 | 16 | 7 | 15 | 4 | 7 | 27 | 17 | 3 | 18 |
| | Male | 19 | 1 | 0 | 18 | 1 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 0 | 19 |
| Ningxia | Female | 42 | 0 | 0 | 42 | 20 | 22 | 42 | 22 | 0 | 20 |
| | Male | 22 | 0 | 0 | 22 | 10 | 12 | 22 | 10 | 0 | 12 |
| Jiangxi | Female | 29 | 22 | 0 | 7 | 22 | 0 | 7 | 19 | 0 | 10 |
| | Male | 16 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 16 |

Just as indicated by Table 2-7, the gender inequality is quite obvious in relation to loan. As for ''whom to loan from'', Gansu and Jiangxi have the most obvious gender disparity. 17 (30%) and 22 families (50%) respectively have men make the decision. Sichuan is more obvious with **3** persons (5.5%) thinking that men make the decision and 11 persons (20%) thinking that women make the decision in 7 families, it happens only when men go out to work then women make decisions. There is no gender disparity in Shaanxi.

When decision is made as for ''who to loan'', there is a gender inequality in every

province. Jiangxi is the most obvious. Only men in 22 families (49%) go to borrow or loan. Shaanxi is the second most obvious with 21 persons (35%) thinking only men go to borrow or loan. In Sichuan, 3 persons (5.5%) think that men go to borrow and 11 persons (20%) think that women go to borrow (including the 7 families with the men going out to work). In Gansu, 5 persons (8.7%) think that men go to borrow and 7 persons (12%) think that women go to borrow.

In Ningxia, there is no gender inequality on "who to borronr and loan". It is decided by both men and women. But banks may treat men and women differently. They usually provide loan to head of the households. And they provide different loan amount to female head of the households and male head of the households.

***Case** 2-65 (Xingmin village of Ningxia): Women hold the view that banks only recognize head of the households. Female head of the households get less amount of loan than male head of the households.*

As for whether to lend money to others, gender inequality exists mainly in Gansu and Jiangxi. In Gansu, 17 families (30%) have men make decisions and 3 families (5%) have only women make decisions. In Jiangxi, 19 families (42%) think that only men make decisions. Women can not involve in decision making.

Because family income is hard to maintain family livelihood, they need to borrow or loan money. Banks take a family as a unit to provide loans and require head of the households to get the loan. When banks seek guarantors, they also require head of the households' signature. Therefore, when rural households need to loan money, it is usually head of the households who go to bank to loan. This to certain extent improves men's decision making power on credit loans.

### 2.2.3 Ideas on of influences from different assets on poverty among genders

Interviews with male villager group and female villager group have found out that there are similarities and very fine differences on their perceptions of influencing factors on poverty as indicated in the following Table 2-8.

**Table 2-8 Male and female perceptions of influences from different assets on poverty**

| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Men group | Lack of water | Poor road | Poor housing | No access to loan money | No savings |
| Women group | Lack of water | No savings | Poor housing | Lack of land | Poor road |

In this survey, elements attributing to poverty are also provided, they are: lack of laborers, lack of education, lack of information, no helpers in busy season or unable to borrow money, lack of participation in discussion on village affairs etc. Both men and women chose water, house, road, deposit and financial assets in their prioritized

list. To some extent, this shows that the possession of these assets is closely related to poverty according to both men and women villagers.

On the other hand, it has indicated that men and women have different recognitions and needs on different assets. Women have prominent needs on savings and land while men have prioritized needs on road and loan. The different needs of assets indicate the differences on their recognition and expectation on survival and development between men and women.

## *2.3 Relationship between gender inequality in possession of assets and poverty*

As above-mentioned, gender inequality in possession of assets usually can reflect gender inequality in a focal and direct way. However the assets possession among farmers has long been using individual household as a unit, and it is assumed that assets are distributed averagely among family members. Thus the gender inequality of the farmers' assets possession is ignored. The survey has found that gender inequality of different extent exists on the assets ascription and decision. Such a phenomenon will make the family members whom possess less assets more vulnerable.

### 2.3.1 Impact of poverty on gender inequality in possession of assets

**(1) Scarcity of assets often makes the side of disadvantaged gender suffer from more serious poverty and illness.**

***Case 2-16*** *(Xingmin village of Ningxia): Kou Lijun, female, 39 years old, has an educational level of primary school. There are four members in her family and she has two sons. Her husbandgoes out to work. According to her, due to family poverty, she was not cared well by her husband during her lying-in period. So she is now suffering from rheumatism, which has made her family fail to contract vegetable greenhouse.*

In addition, poverty makes men have the priority to use durable goods as against women in families. And lack of water and road had brought about more inconveniences to women as indicated in Cases 2-6, 2-7 and 2-8.

**(2) Under the influence from assets scarcity and traditional farming styles, men show more gender advantages, as they play more important role in the livelihood activities.**

**(3) In the economically more developed areas, women's possession of assets is evidently improved especially when men go out to do odd jobs.**

***Case 2-17*** *(Chaohu village of Ningxia): A woman said: "he (her husband) is driving outside for others and I plough the land and take care of her children at home. I usually ride the motor bike of our family for convenience".*

It seems that more possession of assets by women plays an active role in improving

women's status.

### 2.3.2 Impact of gender inequality in assets possession on poverty

(1) Zhong Zhangbao and Di Jinhua (2005) hold the view that contractual right of rural land, house property right and others all follow head of the households and head of the households are usually male. Thus theses assets are owned by male at least in writing words. When a couple divorces, women usually choose to go back to their parents' homes due to some established practices or lack of legal knowledge, and they are not able to get land and houses. This will lead to women's poverty and vulnerability.

*As indicated by Case 2-4 this woman could not get land and house when she got divorced with her husband. She only got half of their savings. Since she does not have basic housing, her livelihood is made even more vulnerable.*

(2) Gender inequality in the access to public facilities, roads, water and others has shown that women usually suffer from more serious poverty and misery when confronted with similar property situation. Such kind of inequality usually will lead to the lack of women's participation and gender ignorance, thus failing to maximize the benefits from those services, resources and facilities.

**(3)** Gender inequality in possession of assets leads to the fact that persons who have more assets will possess even more assets while people with fewer assets will become even more disadvantaged. As a consequence, the extreme situation of polarization appears. For example, the more financial assets owned by men actually come from the more opportunities they have to possess more physical and social assets. Gender inequality in the possession of assets has therefore limited women from obtaining more resources. This will have a negative impact on rural household's capacity as a whole in possessing the largest possible assets.

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# 3 Gender Inequality in Education and Poverty

*Families often prefer to invest in education for boys because the perceived returns from their market activity are higher than those for girls.*

*Rachel Masika and Susan Joekes 1996*

Gender inequality in education and poverty is a very important aspect in gender issues. The inequality in education has its main expression of gender inequality in allocating educational resources with females being in a disadvantaged position in acquiring educational resources, thus resulting in high female illiteracy rate and school drop-out rate.

Many scholars have studied the gender inequality in education from different perspectives with their main focus on drop-out reasons among school girls. Zheng Anyun and Jin Liandong (2004) raised three reasons from the perspective of social gender: firstly, the connotative gender discrimination in the general social environment during the transitional period goes against female filtration mechanism and makes rural girls ignored in household investment on education. Rural girls are sometimes in a disadvantaged position in competing for educating opportunities; secondly, inequality mentality among family members are common; thirdly, the unconscious inferiority complex among females themselves makes them incompetent to compete for resources and opportunities. From the perspective of rural household scale, Gong Jihong, Zhong Zhangbao (2005) and Zheng Zhenzhen (2002) have discovered that gender structure of children in rural households has some impacts on household direct investment in education and additional investment. It will also exert negative impacts on girls' schooling. From the perspective of household educational resources, Ding Yueya (2004) believed that differentiation in allocating internal household educational resources is the main reason to school girls' drop-out. Such a differentiation is seen in locating humanitarian resources such as educational investment and other materials, parents' expectations for their children's education and their attitude in supporting their children's schooling. Zoe Oxaal pointed out that poverty and gender interact with each other, resulting in low school enrollment among girls: first, girls from poor households have high opportunity cost for their schooling (Going to school will reduce the time for agricultural production or income generation among women); secondly, as a result of the influence from the stereotyped role model that men and women are paid differently and the married women have to leave their parents' home or girls need to spend most of their time at home, there is very low economic returns from girls' schooling to their families; thirdly, it is the consideration of safety of girls in their puberty when they go to school. Poor households need and can use the full-time labor of their children, both boys and girls (1997). In fact the opportunity cost is high for the family in the short run for both boys and girls, if they go to school. The difference is that the family is making a long-term calculation by sending sons to school—that the short-term loss of the boy's labor now will be more than compensated for by the long-term gains for his natal

family from his education.

However, the survey conducted in Gansu, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Jiangxi and Ningxia has revealed that gender inequality has its divergent expressions in the field of education: gender awareness is absent in the selection of school sites and sex ratio among teachers; parents' attitude towards their children's schooling; sex ratio among students in school; school drop-out; time for study after school and period of their education. These inequalities are intertwined with poverty and resulted in complicated relations. Economically developed areas have relatively satisfactory gender equality and backward areas are seen changed equality with girls being disadvantaged.

In order to fully understand the relationship between gender inequality in the field of education and poverty, this study, based on the information collected from field survey in poor rural communities, has made a systematic qualitative research on the status of gender inequality in education, the relationship between the gender inequality in and poverty from the perspective of households.

### *3.1 Gender inequality in education*

About education, be it in urban or rural area, Chinese population's education level has been improved continuously. Although there is still some gaps between males and females in illiteracy rate, education years, school enrollment rate and drop-out rate, but the gaps are reducing to a comparatively low extent (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005). However, the survey and analysis on the male and female education among 10 villages in 5 provinces have found out that the gender inequality in the field of education in rural areas is very evident and has a complicated diversity.

#### 3.1.1 Gender awareness absent in school location

The survey has shown that in rural areas, schools are far away from village, no consideration is given to safety of school girls and gender awareness is lacking in provision of public services of education.

For example, the primary school in Xiao Wang Village of Gansu only has 4 grades. Pupils from this school have to study their $5^{th}$ grade and middle school in township 5 kilometers away from their village. It takes them 40 minutes to go back home for lunch and then go back to school immediately after lunch. In winter, they have to bring their own lunch and cannot make a return trip home. Two villages in Sichuan do not have primary schools and middle schools; the closest school to Lihua Village, one of the two villages in Huishui Township is 7 kilometers away. It takes one hour to go to school and parents need to pick up their 7-11 years old children every day. And they do not have motor bikes.

The number of male and female teachers has a very clear economic correlation; the gender disparity among school teachers reduces gradually along with economic development. Village primary schools in poor villages have more male teachers. All

teachers from village schools in Xiaowang Village of Gansu, Houhe Village of Sichuan and Xitaizhuang Village of Jiangxi are males. Whereas, male and female teachers in village schools in economically better-off villages are roughly divided.

**Table 3-1 Number of male and female teachers**

| | Xiaowang Village, Gansu | Houhe Village, Sichuan | Taizhuang Village, Jiangxi | Xiaoshankou Village, Jiangxi | Dujiaping Village, Gansu | Panzhuang Village, Shaanxi | Wujia Village, Shaanxi |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of male teachers | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 |
| No. of female teachers | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

The information on school locations and sex ratio of male and female teachers in areas with different degree of poverty has shown that school education in poor areas lacks consideration on gender issues. Due to the vulnerability characterized by girls, they are more sensitive to location of schools, especially during bad weather or when parents cannot pick them up from schools. In the meantime, possible threat from male teachers instead of household financial reasons has made school girls feel insecure and decide to drop out. For instance, more than a dozen of girl students in Xiaowang Village of Gansu dropped out in their 5th Grade, whereas boy students tend to drop out after primary school graduation.

### 3.1.2 Parents are adopting an equal attitude towards their children's education, but they have higher expectation on boys' education than girls' and they tend to give preferential treatment to boys when educational resources are scarce.

The survey has found out that villagers all pay attention to primary education for their children and adopt an equal attitude towards the education among their children. With regard to decision-making on children's education, villagers tend to ask their children's opinions and let them decide. Such a phenomenon is more evident in Ningxia, a relatively better-off region. Villagers mentioned that they would "do their best to support their children to go to school" disregarding whether their children are boys or girls. The sex ratio among students in schools in each of the village primary schools is almost the same as the sex ratio of school-aged children in the village--- that means opportunity for girls and boys to go to school becomes equal gradually.

**Table 3-2 Number of school-aged children and number of boy and girl pupils**

| | Xiaowang Village, Gansu | Houhe Village, Sichuan | Dujiaping Village, Gansu | Panzhuang Village, Shaanxi |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of school aged children | 84 | 104 | 132 | 450 |
| School-aged boys | 44 | 34 | 54 | 270 |
| School-aged girls | 40 | 67 | 78 | 180 |
| Boy students | 20 | 14 | 65 | 156 |
| Girl students | 19 | 9 | 91 | 104 |

However, there is differentiation in parents' expectations on how much education boys and girls should receive; parents expect boys to have higher education than girls.

***Case 3-1*** *(Xiaowang Village, Gansu)Wang Baogui, male, 54 years old, vocational high school graduate. His wife Liu Caifen received no education. They have* **3** *children. Eldest daughter is 30 years old and her father discontinued her education when she was in the* $4^{th}$ *Grade. The reasons for stopping her education were that at the time land was not contracted to individual household and Wang's family was in need of laborer and economically worse-off; The father felt that a 4-year education was enough for his daughter to find toilet when she was outside to do odd jobs (That means if she was totally illiterate, she might not differentiate women's toilet from men's once she left the village since she couldn't read the signs herself, That indicates the father's attitude toward his daughter's education.) . The second daughter is 17 years old and is now studying her* $3^{rd}$ *grade in middle school and the 15-year-old youngest son is in his* $1^{st}$ *grade of middle school. The father wants to discontinue his second daughterb education after her graduation from middle school and let her do oddjobs. If the son does well in school, he will continue his education in high school.*

The community survey has also found out that boys and girls stop their education and return home at different time, normally girls are back home earlier to help with family chores.

***Case 3-2*** *During the survey, we lived with a rural household. This household has one daughter and one son and they are all studying their* $1^{st}$ *grade in middle school in the same classroom. We noticed that each day the daughter came back home earlier after school than the son did. We then asked the daughter why she did not come back with her brother The daughter told us that her brother had something to do at school or her brother was having fun. Once the daughter was back home, she would help her mother with cooking, washing or cleaning the house. After lunch, the son finished his homework and came back home for a nap. The daughter had to rush back to school to do her homework without any rest.*

Doing home chores has taken up a lot of studying time for girl students. Boy students' help with farm work is only seasonal and the busy agricultural season is normally during school vocation; therefore there is little influence on their study. Household labor requirement for girl students will cause conflict between working time and studying time--this not only affects their time to do homework, but also results in lack of concentration in classes and poor academic performance-- eventually they will be tired of going to school and some of them choose to drop out.

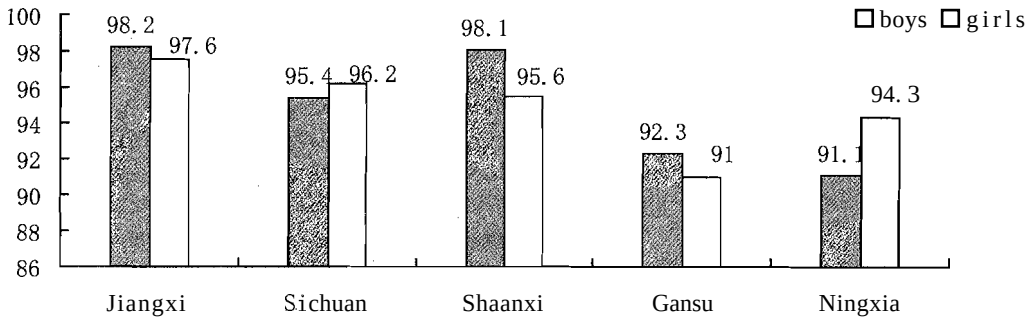
It has demonstrated that even though rural households have accepted the concept of equal schooling opportunity for boys and girls, their expectation for their children's future is biased by genders. When educational resources are scarce, boys come first.

### 3.1.3 Different proportion between boy and girl students

According to the data analysis done by National Bureau of Statistics of China (see Figure 3-1), school enrollment rates are different between boys and girls among the five surveyed areas, especially in Ningxia Autonomous Region, Shaanxi Province and

Gansu Province.

**Figure 3-1: School enrollment rate of 7-14 years old children in 2000, divided by province and gender (%)**




Through the comparison of the different number of boy students and girl student of different grades in different regions, we found there are more boy students than girl students in the same grade in Xiaowang Village and Dujiaping village in Gansu, Lihua Village in Sichuan, Taizhuang village and Xiaoshankou Village in Jiangxi. In poverty-stricken areas, higher grade implies higher tuition fee. Therefore, for a poor family, boys are always their first consideration to receive education if they have to make choice between boys and girls. (unless the boys themselves don't want to go to schools, the girls may get the chance). So the number of girls students is smaller than that of boys.

**Table 3-3 Proportion of boy and girl students**

| | XiaoWang Village, Gansu | Lihua Village, Sichuan | Dujiaping Village, Gansu | Taiping Village, Jiangxi | Xiaoshankou Village, Jiangxi | Panzhuang Village, Shaanxi |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of school-aged boys / girls | 11/10 | | 55/78 | 9/7 | 27/38 | 6/4 |
| No. of primary school boys / girls | 20119 | 17/7 | 65191 | 57/26 | 38/27 | 5/5 |
| No. of middle school boys / girls | 9/2 | 17/3 | | | | 6/4 |

The statistics has shown that the proportion of primary school girls is lower than that of the school-aged girls(6-7-year-old girls) in the villages we surveyed. The ratio between school-aged boys and girls is about 1 to 1, while the number of primary school boys is twice than that of school girls. It is very likely that some of the girls did not have the opportunities to go to school. In the relatively poor areas, Xiaowang Village in Gansu and Lihua Village in Sichuan, the number of middle school girls is smaller than that of primary school girls, and number of boy students is also reduced but accounts for a bigger proportion. This means that in poor areas, one will find school drop-out both in boys and girls, but there are more school drop-out girls (see Diagram 3-2).

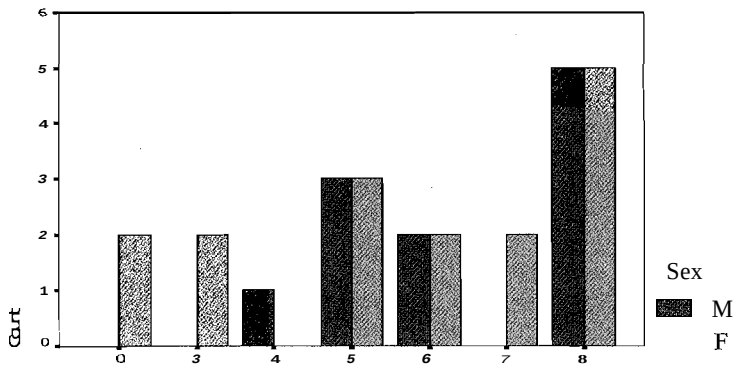



**Diagram 3-2 School drop-outs in interviewed households**

(Source: Field survey data from Gansu, Jiangxi and Sichuan)

We have learnt that not only more girls did not complete the nine-year compulsory education but also they discontinued their studying earlier than boys. 11 boys and 16 girls discontinued their studying, among them 4 girls did not finish their 4th grade as opposed to only 1 boy. But there is one common phenomenon among boys and girls: most of the school drop-outs happened during Grade 5 and 6 in primary school and Grade 2 in middle school. This has a lot to do with local policies on higher education and location of schools.

Among the villages surveyed in Gansu, Sichuan and Jiangxi, a lot of girls dropped out from schools, but situation in Panzhuang Village of Shaanxi is different. The proportion of school boys and girls in primary school is 6 to 4, 5 to 5 in middle school, and 1 to 3 in high school. The statistics has shown that there are more school drop-out boys than girls, but there are no boys who have never been to school. This may have something to do with the great emphasis paid to education in Shaanxi. In the villages surveyed, boys and girls can basically finish the middle school education. If boys in middle school find it hard to cope with the study, they normally will not spend one more year to get ready for the high school entrance examination. Whereas girls in tend to study very hard and their families would generally fully support their study in high school if they can pass the entrance examination. It is totally up to the children to decide if they want to study or not, relative gender equity is seen in children's education, this relates with local concept on education. Therefore, we can see that publicity on appropriate concept on education can reduce gender disparity in the field of education.

### 3.1.4 Big disparity in number of years of education among men and women

Poverty has made education a very scarce resource. When selection is made between men and women, priority is given to men. The limited resources have resulted in inequality of education between men and women with its main expression of unbalanced level of education. The study by National Bureau of Statistics of China *(2005)* showed that in the investigated areas, illiterate rate of females is apparently higher than that of males. And females' share in those with middle and higher education is even lower. See Table 4.

**Table** 3-4 **Education level of population ages 6 and older in 2000, divided by province%**

| Province/region | Males | | | | Females | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Illiterate | Primary | Middle | Senior | Illiterate | Primary | Middle | Senior |
| Jiangxi | 2.70 | 39.17 | 54.34 | 3.78 | 9.09 | 49.69 | 39.41 | 1.81 |
| Sichuan | 4.88 | 47.73 | 44.12 | 3.26 | 12.71 | 49.58 | 35.66 | 2.05 |
| Shaanxi | 4.71 | 36.52 | 53.40 | 5.38 | 11.69 | 41.10 | 43.65 | 3.56 |
| Gansu | 10.56 | 42.03 | 43.72 | 3.69 | 23.59 | 44.53 | 29.77 | 2.10 |
| Ningxia | 8.28 | 38.16 | 48.70 | 4.86 | 18.71 | 40.64 | 37.34 | 3.32 |

Sources: Report on Chinese Gender Disparity, National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005

**Table 3- 5 Average years of education and illiteracy rate among people aged 29 to 65 in the ten villages of five provinces**

| Province | Gender | No. of people | No. of illiterate | Illiteracy rate | Mean period of education |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gansu, Sichuan Jiangxi | male | 60 | 6 | 10% | 5.82 |
| | female | 104 | 49 | 47% | 2.62 |
| Ningxia | male | 23 | 3 | 13% | 7.43 |
| | female | 27 | 6 | 22% | 7 |
| Shaanxi | male | 20 | 1 | 5% | 8.25 |
| | female | 40 | 5 | 13% | 7.03 |

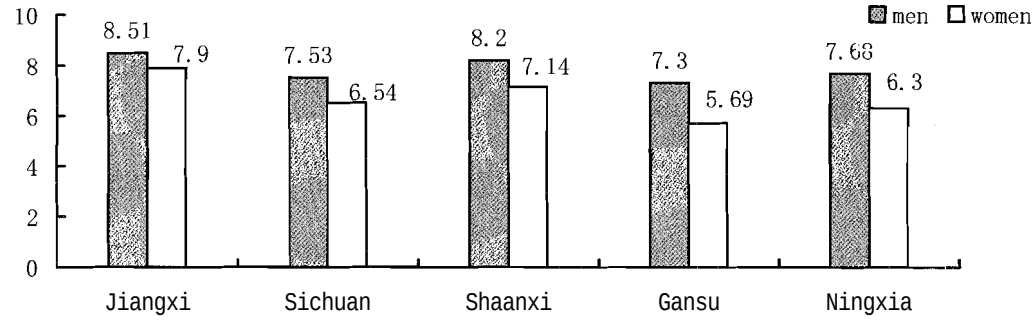
Sources: field survey

Statistic has shown that disparity between male and female education carries a great economic correlation. In those economically better-off areas such as the two villages in Ningxia, the gap in years of education and illiteracy between male and female is gradually shrinking. While in those mountainous areas of the three poor provinces, almost half of them are illiterate and the average years of education received among women is as low as 2.62 years.

The disparity between male and female education does not only have something to do with economic factors, but also with local educational concept and culture. Great attention is paid to education in Shaanxi and Shaanxi people enjoy higher level of education. The average number of years of education among Shaanxi people is longer

than that in Ningxia by a half year (See Table 3-3 in "Gender Disparity in China: facts and data"), there is also a high school in the town where these two villages are situated and the education of this high school is of high standard. Great attention paid to education and qualified teachers have prompted parents to invest on their children's education. In the meantime, we have discovered that even in Shaanxi where great attention is paid to education; there is still a disparity in education for boys and girls. Females are disadvantaged in acquiring educational resources. The average number of educating years for men is longer by 1.22 years than that for women. Since local people pay attention to education, therefore girls have the opportunities to compete for educational resources through their own efforts. As in the above-mentioned survey villages, girls are more industrious than boys, thus obtaining opportunities for continuous study.

**Figure 3-3 Average education level of the population ages 6 and older in 2000, divided by province**




Sources: Report on Chinese Gender Disparity, National Bureau of Statistics of China

## *3.2 Relationship between gender inequality in education andpoverty*

To sum up, gender has its complicated and diversified expressions in the field of education and forms anfractuous relationships with the natural environment, communication, economic situation, concept on education and social culture in rural areas.

### 3.2.1 Scarcity of natural capital and physical capital intensifies gender inequality in education.

The survey has found out that compared with Ningxia, the natural capital and physical capital in Gansu, Sichuan, Jiangxi and Shaanxi are scarcer, and this has intensified gender inequality in the field of education.

First of all, with regard to agricultural production materials, arable land. in mountainous areas is on slopes and far away from village. All cultivation depends on human and animals. Due to the high labor intensity, there is a big demand for male laborers and male laborers are scarce resources in many villages. Their contributions

to household agricultural production and economic income are greater and their position at home is prominent. Therefore, when resources including educational resources are allocated, there will be obvious unequal allocation biased towards female members.

Secondly, since the primary school or middle school is far away from villages, poor road conditions have very big impact on children especially girls. One the one hand, children in these places start their schooling at an older age. For instance, those primary schools we surveyed in Gansu only recruit children over 8 years old for fearing accidents on their way to school. The vulnerability of girls has made them go to school at an older age. For example, we found in Dujiaping Village of Gansu cases of elder sister and younger brother or younger sister and elder sister in one class. On the other hand, the very limited transportation means have been made even scarcer, and the gender inequality is seen in allocating transportation means.

***Case* 3-3** *(Xiaowang Village in Gansu)Wang Baogu's second daughter of 17 year-old is in Grade 3 of middle school and the 15 year-old youngest son is in Grade 1 of middle school. Both of them are studying in Phoenix Middle School 5 kilometers away from their village. The year before last when the son went to middle school, the brother-in-law gave his old bike to the son instead of the second daughter*

### 3.2.2 Gender inequality in allocating the scarce financial capital

When the scarcity of human capital and financial capital are not extremely severe, investments made by villagers on education for boys and girls is almost the same. But when the provision of financial capital becomes scarce due to the fact that household income is disrupted or household expenditure increases, gender inequality would occur in allocating educational resources in families with a few children in school at the same time.

For poor households with annual per capita income of 800 Yuan, education expenditure is undoubtedly a luxurious item and educational cost will quickly increase as students move to higher grade. In Shaanxi, for instance, the tuition for primary school is around 80 Yuan, 300 Yuan for middle school and 500 Yuan for high school, therefore the educational burden for poor households is getting heavier and heavier. Poor families with a few children in school at the same time usually have to make decision on educational investment for boys and girls: one decision is to ensure schooling for boys. Such kind of decision is based on parents' expectation on their sons and daughters. Since daughters have higher educational cost and family benefits will spill over when their daughters get married, their rate of returns is then lower than that of sons, therefore discontinuation of daughters' education will unavoidably be a main means to evade risks. Boys occupy more educational resources and will have more opportunities for development and boys' success will in turn intensify the thinking of "boys come first".

***Case 3-4*** A daughter gives up schooling in order to save money for her father to see doctor

*Ren Fenghuang in Dujianping Village of Gansu aged 42 and has received no education.*

*He has three children including two sons and one daughter. The 21 years old eldest son graduated from middle school and went out to do odd job. The youngest son is in high school. His daughter is 23 years old. When she was in Grade I of middle school, her father contracted TB and stopped working. Money was needed for father to see doctor and the family could no longer support three children to go to school. In order to save money, the daughter stopped her schooling.*

Another choice is to ensure the well-performed child to go to school regardless of genders. Such a choice seems to be fair, but as discussed above, since those girls who have to do family chores will neither have enough spare time after school nor maintain their attentiveness in the class, their academic performance is affected. Therefore, either choice will make girls, especially eldest girls, the vulnerable groups in families with a few children in school at the time, even though such families are not in poor villages.

***Case 3-5*** *Paying attention to education, but boys come first*
*Wang Xiulian in Ningxia, illiterate female aged 42, Gong Funing is her husband aged 47 with high school education. Their daughter is 19 years old graduated from agricultural school, she is now a causal laborer in Dawukou District Greening Team. Their son is 18 years old, a graduate from architectural institute. The family has 2 vegetable green houses of 1.56 mu and 9.44 mu of wheat and cornfields. In 2004, they raised 20 goats and 2 pigs. Expenditures on education: one year 10,000 Yuan for son and 1400 Yuan for daughter to study correspondence course.*

*Now, the daughter has finished her correspondence course, but cannot pay for the graduation certificate. The son will graduate in another half a year and needs 300 Yuan as living expenses each month. Wang Xiulian said that first of all to support her son to finish his technical schooling and to go to work, then find other ways to support her daughter.*

### 3.2.3 The shortage of laborers has made girls drop out from school earlier than boys

The survey has found out that girls in rural households tend to do more chores when they were young, such as carrying water, cooking and looking after younger brothers and sisters, they are very helpful to family chores. Therefore, when girls go to school, time for family chores will be reduced. In families with a shortage of laborers, especially family chores cannot be managed, girls tend to drop out from school earlier than boys thus resulting in a phenomenon in which "girls have a later start of schooling and an earlier drop-out".

***Case 3-6*** *(Gansu)A teacher mentioned that one girl from her class dropped out in her 2nd grade, because she had to look after her younger brother while her parents were busy with farm work. Although she resumed her schooling a year Intel; she did not continue after her graduation from primary school.*

***Case 3-7*** *(Xiaowang Village in Gansu) Wengouwa's family can narrowly make their own living from tilling their farmland. A few years ago, the grandfather contracted chest thrombus and had to lie in bed. It needed money for his medical treatment as well as someone to look after him. The eldest daughter who was just graduated from her primary*

*school was then asked to look after the grandfather; and as a result she was not able to continue her middle school. The grandfather passed away the year before last and the eldest daughter was out to do odd job and their family life started to become better. Since Wengouwa has to look after the young and the old and to plough the fields, she could no longer stand physically. A health check detected that she suffered from bad tracheitis and cervical disease. She could no longer do heavy work. Her medical treatment exhausted all money earned by her husband from doing odd jobs and she owed some debts. It was not possible to support three children to go to school and the second daughter had to drop out even though she hadpassed her high school entrance examination.*

Ding Yueya pointed out in the article Case Study of household Education that female laborers are more valuable than male laborers in household production; while this viewpoint is again verified in this survey. It is fair to say that it is just the important role played by girls in household production that has caused high opportunity cost of girl education and subsequently more school drop-out girls.

### 3.2.4 Mothers with lower level of education have higher expectation for their children

Zheng Zhenzhen pointed out that in poor rural areas, most of the mothers are illiterate and only few of them have received middle school education; they do not have any positions at home and can hardly gain any opportunities for their daughters to go to school. In fact, the survey has revealed that some of the illiterate mothers have changed their expectations for their sons and daughters-- they hope that their sons and daughters can go to school and become talented people and they pay more attention to their daughters' education.

*Case 3-8 Wang Xiuyun, aged 33, is illiterate. When she was young, people believed that girls would eventually be married to husband family and any investment on girls' education only help her husband's family to earn money. Therefore, only boys and no girls went to school in her village. Xiuyun was not in school for a single day and knows nothing, and she feels very sorry for herself. She does not know anything when she goes out and even does not know what she bought. She hates her father who did not send her to school and she can not even sign her name. She said that should she have read some books, she would have led a better life. Since she has never studied in school, she expects her daughters and sons to learn and supports her daughter to study like she would support her son. Once her daughter asked her, "if I pass the university examination as elder brother does, whom will you support?" Xiuyun answered, "I support you both, even if I will have to beg."*

Reasons for such kind of changes may be that in the past the gender inequality in the field of education deprived women of educational opportunities and that illiteracy has caused them so much inconvenience to their life and production. Personal experiences of illiterate women have made people pay attention to girl education; hence the gender disparity in educational investment reduced, and relative equity becomes apparent.

### 3.2.5 Educated women tend to improve household livelihood more easily

Field survey and case study have shown that families with big gender disparity in education tend to suffer some negative impacts on their household livelihood. Educated women can initiate improvement of household livelihood; on the contrary, less educated women may not contribute to their household economic development.

The analysis on number of educating years among men and women has revealed that in Category 3 villages, average level of education among men is primary school and almost half of women are illiterate. These women want to go out to do odd jobs, but their low education has made it difficult to go outside to work-- they can not even find a toilet, let alone taking cars. Therefore, they have to stay in the village to do farm work and family chores. Illiteracy also has adverse influence on agricultural production. In the villages of Gansu, it is found that women could not figure out the dosage of pesticide they applied. One of them mistook herbicide as pesticide and killed all her crops after application.

The low level of education does not only restrict female laborers' migration but also male emigrant laborers' working time. In the 3rd category villages, the labor intensity is so heavy that female was not able to take on all the agricultural production vvork; there is a great demand of male laborers. Male laborers cannot do odd jobs outside all year round and therefore, their income as main source of household revenue is then reduced.

Educated women are different-- they have realized from their own personal difficult situations that there are ways to change the situation. In Dujiaping of Gansu, two educated women have become rich from specialized businesses. One of them ran a small shop in her village and later on, she bought a milling machine with the money she earned and started a mill. She then encouraged her husband to contract 100 mu of barren mountains to plant fruit trees. Another woman took the initiative and joined the labor export to Beijing which was organized by Women's Federation. Even though she had to come back home to look after a sick family member, she helped her daughter to go to Beijing through the contacts she established the previous time. Now her life has improved a lot.

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# 4 Gender Inequality in Health and Poverty

*The constraints of poverty andgender mean that it is poor women (and girls) who are least likely to have access to appropriate care and to seek adequate treatment. The range of factors which limit access for poor women include time constraints, intra-household resource allocation and decision-making relating to health care, and legal and socio-culture constraints.*

*Zoe Oxaal and Sarah Cook1998*

Gender inequality in health is part of social gender inequality. It is primarily reflected in several aspects, such as medical care, nutrition distribution, childbearing, and so on. According to the quantitative study (2005) by National Bureau of Statistics of China., the average expected life span of both males and females are on the increase. However, in the 1990s, Chinese infant mortality rate has increased. Abnormal phenomenon appeared in both rural and urban area that female infant mortality rate was higher than that of male, which has become a "normal" phenomenon in some areas. So, female infants' living condition is not optimistic.

There are a number of reasons for the health inequality between men and women. Two reasons stand out. First, due to the fact that women play the role of childbearing, it is more essential for them (as well as their children) to obtain health care and medical service as compared with men. However, in poverty-stricken areas, people are not conscious to this point, and moreover, the obtaining of medical service depends greatly on women's income level. When the cost of medical service exceeds a woman's capacity of payment, her possibility of being treated may naturally be affected (UNDP, 1997b). Secondly, influenced by the traditional concept that "men are superior to women", rural families are inclined to apply limited medical resource to men and boys other than women and girls (Zia, 2000; Pearson, 1995).

The poor health of women restricts the development of families, negatively affects women's selection on means of livelihood, and reduces the possibilities to acquire information on development outside of their living areas. Multi-deliveries arising from the lack of freedom for childbearing increase the expenses to bring up children. Birth control measures mainly undertaken by women may cause physical illness, disenable them to go in for heavy physical labor, and therefore increase poverty in their families. And vice versa, poverty in various kinds like natural capital and physical capital etc., further worsens this gender inequality, thus making health inequality interlaced with poverty.

By means of qualitative methods, such as group interviews and case study, etc., this study investigates the status of gender inequality in health and the relationship between gender inequality in health and poverty, mainly covering the following four points: I. The status of health and health care of women in poverty-stricken areas; II.

The gender inequality-of nutriment distribution in families; III. The gender inequality in childbearing and birth control; and IV. The relationship between gender inequality in health and poverty.

## *4.1 The disadvantaged status of health and health care of women*

### 4.1.1 The morbidity rate of women is higher than that of men

Some studies show that the morbidity rate of women aged between 25 to 64 years old in poverty-stricken areas is 2-5 % higher than that of men (1990). The following circumstances are found out during the group interviews and case studies in five provinces: In Xiaowang Village of Gansu Province, 50% women suffered from gynecopathy; In Dujiaping Village of the same province, 60% women suffered from long-time illness, and almost all women who are more than 30 years old suffered from gynecopathy; In Houhe Village of Sichuan Province, more than 70% women suffered from gynecopathies, such as hysteritis, pelvic inflammation and cervical erosion etc.; During the group interviews in Jiangxi Province, the women interviewed emphasized that the disease incidence rate of women had been higher than that of men, with the major disease of gynecopathy; In Shaanxi Province, approximate 50% women suffered from gynecopathy.

Giddens (1995)pointed out that women's high morbidity rate could attribute to the fact that the multi-roles played by women, including occupational duties, household work and the education of children etc. had increased pressure on women, and the best explanation of women's health and disease types could be found in the scope of women's major activities -- such as occupational work, household work, childbearing, child-raising and birth control etc., which constituted their life. He also pointed out that the accumulated results of these activities have become the major decisive factors of women's health (Lesley Doyal, 1995). With regard to the poverty-stricken villages investigated this time, women's morbidity rate is higher than men's, of which the two major reasons are as follows: 1) Over-intensified labor which exceeds the tolerances of women's physiological health. For example, in Houhe Village of Sichuan Province, there is a distance of 2 km from farmers' homes to their cultivated land, and it takes 30 minutes to get to the land from their homes by taking mountain road. Generally, it is comparative for a man to carry something of approximate 75 kg on his back and for a woman approximate 60 kg while climbing a mountain. If she carries water up the mountain, it will take her 1 – 2 hours to- and-fro and she can only carry twice a day. In Xiaowang Village of Gansu Province, women go to work in the fields at daytime, and fetch water from water ditch in the evening. If they are engaged in sheep- and cow- breeding, they can not have a rest even in their menstrual period. All these heavy burdens break their back. 2) Women's childbearing and some inadequate measures of birth control. Due to the poor conditions of health care in poverty-stricken areas, women are short of nutrition before and during delivery, and after delivery, they fully shoulder the responsibility of contraception. They have no time to rest after being inserted with conceptive ring. And they have to touch cold water in their work. Under these circumstances, they suffer from more and severer

gynecopathies.

Women's high morbidity rate shows that women's health status is, as a whole, poorer than that of men. Because of playing the role of childbearing, women are easier to suffer from diseases, and if the diseases are not treated in time, they will have to live and work in spite of illness for a long time, thus making their health at risk.

### 4.1.2 Time spend with doctors by female patients are less than that of male patients, and females delay medical treatment more seriously than males.

It was said in the group interviews that family fund for medical expenses was expended according to the principle of "treating any in the family who gets ill", "treating major illness, and delaying the treatment for minor illness" and "giving priority to the aged and children". But it was found in in-depth group interviews and case analyses that the altitudes of men and women upon their own health varied greatly, doctor-seeing times of female patients were less than that of male patients, and females delayed medical treatment more seriously than males.

In poverty-stricken villages of Shaanxi Province, women's usual illnesses are the aching in the loins and legs and gynecopathy. Women usually do not know they have a sickness, and even if they know about it, they will not go to hospital for treatment unless they are unable to work. When they are examined in a hospital, it is found out that the illness has come to its later period. Just because of this reason, some women at the ages over 30 years old died of hysteritis in Panzhuang Village of Shaanxi Province. According to the reflection of the Taizhuang village in Jiangxi Province, the morbidity rate of women is higher than that of men, but among the patients who went to village clinic for medical treatment, more men than women. The women group members of Gansu Province deemed that, in the families with men as the major labor force, priority for medical treatment should be given to men if men and women got the same disease.

***Case 4-1****(Xiaowang Village of Gansu): Wang Xiuyun, 33 years old, illiterate. Her husband, 34 years old, is a junior high school graduate. They have a son at 1st grade of junior high school and a daughter at primary School. In April of 1999, her husband and husband's younger brother worked as migrant workers outside of her home village, and she herself worked at the village together with her father-in-law and mother-in law. The father-in-law herded sheep. In order to fill sheepfold with earth, she transported earth with a rack truck. Howevel; the rope of the truck was broken suddenly, and she fell onto the ground with the head down, immediately, blood came out of her nose and mouth. With the help of a village doctol; the bleeding stopped, and she came home herself. After that, she went on with her work without taking a rest until September when she felt a severe headache. She was then examined in a big hospital and found to have cerebral concussion. A doctor in the hospital said that things could have been much better if she had been treated in time. In February of the next yeal; her headache came again, and in this time, blood clots were found in her head by CT examination carried out in the hospital.*

*Last year, Xiuyun's younger brothel; who lives in Beijing, invited her to go to Beijing for relaxation, and this trip was agreed by her husband. But she herself cannot afford just*

*losing money instead of earning money in Beijing, so she asked her younger brother to find a job in a restaurant and worked there for 6 months, earning 2000 Yuan RMB in all. She worked from dawn to night, and fell ill twice in a month. When she could no longer continue her work, her husband went to Beijing and brought her home. Her health has not been recovered since 1999, and she has lied in bed for 4 years. She was much better this year,.but is still possible to fall ill once every half a month, and to have shock for one or two days. When a shock takes place, oxygen therapy is needed. And now she can only maintain her life with medicine costing RMB 5 – 6 per day.*

***Case 4-2*** *(Xingmin Village of Ningxia): Kou Lijun, 39 years old, graduated from primary school, with 4 persons in her family including 2 sons. Her husband worked out of home with a yearly income of RMB 5000-8000. When talking about seeing a doctor, she said she endured any pain if she caught a slight cold. Only when she felt too painful to endure because of the attack of rheumatism, would she buy some medicine to take. Although her husband persuaded her to buy medicine, she could not accept spending money for the treatment against minor disease. She was reluctant to spend any money whenever she thought of the situation that her family had little money, even if her illness could be cured through several periods of treatment. However, when men in her family got ill, they would go to the local health center. For that reason, her family once owed the center andprivate clinics some money. In the last years, she was not in good health, and often caught cold. This year, she bought some medicine when she was short of blood in the cardiac muscle, and got transfusion when the disease became severe.*

***Case 4-3*** *(Panzhuang Village of Shaanxi): Jia Xuelan is 51 years old, illiterate. Her family had land for 5 persons, which was mainly ploughed by her and her husband. To her mind, women could nearly do everything except plowing, sowing and harvesting which are carried out by machines and grain-loading which needed men's assistance. This year, she had to spend RMB 120 on examination in a township hospital because of long-time menstrual dischavge. She felt very distressed for the expenditure. When the result of the examination came that it was only benign tumor, other than an incurable disease, she went back home immediately. After that, she did not take medicine any more; neither did she go to hospital for further examination.*

The aforesaid cases show that women in poverty-stricken areas do not attach importance to their own hearth. In their minds, it is her husbands, not themselves are important in their families because their husbands are the main labor force. Therefore, they give priority to the health of their husbands and children, and often sacrifice their own health to maintain normal life of their families when they have no sufficient money for medical care. Consequently, their originally curable diseases are not treated in time, and change from acute diseases into chronic diseases which disenable them to regain health for a long time.

#### 4.1.3 Little gender sensitivity is manifested in public medical facilities and medical service, and women's health care is not assured.

It is found in the investigation that, in China's rural areas, there are few local female doctors in township-run health care centers, and even fewer local female doctors in village clinics. Table 4-1 shows the basic medical facilities and the number of female doctors in the above-mentioned 10 villages of 5 provinces and autonomous regions.

**Table 4-1 Basic medical facilities and the number of female doctors in 10 villages of 5 provinces / regions**

| Name of village | Number of clinics in the village | Number of qualified village doctors | Number of qualified village medical orderly | Number of female village doctor in village clinic |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Xiaowang of Gansu | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Houhe of Sichuan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lihua of Sichuan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Dujiaping of Gansu | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Xiaoshankou of Jiangxi | | 4 | | 0 |
| Taizhuang of Jiangxi | 1 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Wujia of Shaanxi | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Panzhuang of Shaanxi | 2 | 2 | 3 | 1 |
| Xingmin of Ningxia | 4 | 15 | 7 | 4 |
| Chaohu of Ningxia | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 |

From the above table, it may be seen that in the poorest areas, the number of clinics;. village doctor, qualified medical orderly in the village clinics is zero or nearly zero; hence, the medical care conditions in these villages can be labeled as "three- nil". In other villages with better economic conditions, the medical facilities and the number of doctors are close to or exceed the standards set by WTO(According to WTO standard, medical requirement can be met so long as 2 doctors are available for every thousand people): In Panzhuang Village of Shaanxi Province, 1.74 doctors and medical orderlies are available for one thousand people in average; In Dujiaping Village of Gansu Province, Taizhuang Village of Jiangxi Province and Chaohu Village of Ningxia Autonornous Region, over 2 doctors and medical orderlies are available for one thousand people; And in Xingmin Village of Ningxia Autonomous Region, over 4 doctors and medical orderlies are available for one thousand people. Although the conditions of medical facilities and services in these areas are close to the average level of the world as a whole, yet the number of female doctors and medical orderlies is very small.

Because of the shortage of female doctors in community clinics, gynecologic examination can not be carried out for women in poor villages. Only examination for birth control is carried out each year in the townships to which the poor villages belong. However, birth control examination is usually a single program by which the aim of women's health care can not be achieved. For example, gynecologic examination is carried out once a year for women in the Hospital of Lingjiang Township to which Lihua Village of Sichuan Province belongs to, however, only B-ultrasonic examination is made for women in order to find out if they are pregnant and the situation about conceptive ring. Only severe gynaecological inflammation is informed of to the examinee, if it is found in the examination. The price of one box of

medicine supplied in hospital is several Yuan higher than that sold in a pharmacy. The women in the two villages of Shaanxi have never had gynaecological examination, neither have they taken part in Cooperative Medical Care System.

Community clinics are not able to make regular gynaecological examinations for local women, neither can they provide timely treatments to female patients, e.g., there is a township clinic in Gansu Province, in which there are 3 male doctors and 1 female doctor. But the doctors are poorly skilled in medical service, and the medical equipment is inefficient, even ordinary rheum can not be properly treated there, let alone gynecopathy; In two village clinics and one township clinic of Ningxia Region, there are female doctors and special medicines for treating gynecopathy, but there is no special gynecologist or special examination instrument. Therefore, patients of gynecopathy have to go to Shizuishan, a nearby city for treatment.

Public medical facilities and medical service are short of gender sensitivity, which affects women's utilization of health services for childbearing and birth control. From the viewpoint of social gender, China's medical care system is still one dominated by men. Although World Women's Federation (WWF) has advocated that the concept of gender equality should be brought into the mainstream of government policy and plan, and WWF conference has adopted Action Outlines which definitely stated the setup and functions of national organization, yet up to now, there are still many problems that hinder the effective operation of national organization, and the shortage of adequate gender-based expertise, social gender training and supporting fund etc. still exist. All these problems have inhibited to mainstream social gender concept in medical service, making women at disadvantage.

## *4.2 The gender inequality in nutrition distribution within a family*

### 4.2.1 Women stick to the traditional concept that priority should be given to the aged, children and husband.

The distribution of nutrition in a poverty-stricken family looks diversified. During the period when the society was extremely short of nutriment, people bought very little nutriment, and therefore, there were little gender gaps upon the nutriment distribution. But just as found in group and case interviews, inequality of nutriment distribution does exist in families when economic conditions in the families became better, and their life improved. Keeping the traditional concept of putting the aged, children and husband first, women naturally give priority to the aged, children and husband, and make themselves the last when distributing nutriment.

*Case 4-4 (Xiaowang Village of Gansu): Guo Ju, 55years old, with no education background. There are 6 people in her family, and her husband is 8 years older than her. Because that her son worked out of home, and her husband was rather old, she became the major labor force of the family. She worked in the fields at day time. After she came back home, she did cooking, fed domestic animals, warm the kang and took care of children. Due to the heavy work and the lack of nutriment, she got hypoglycemia, and*

*often felt dizzy. A doctor advised her to have CT examination. But she did not take the advice because of the shortage of money. She said: "The doctor advised me to take milk, because I was short of nutrition. Howevel; my family has no money to buy milk powder: We even have to sell eggs which are laid by domestic hens, so that we can buy daily necessities. If I cook two eggs for meals, one is for my husband and the other for my child. As for myself, I only take some pickle. My husband is more important than myself; he has to do heavy work; if fall ill, no body in the family can do his work. "*

***Cased-5*** *(Xingmin Village of Ningxia): Kou Lijun, 39 years old, graduated from primary school, with 4 persons in her family including 2 sons. Her husband worked out of home with yearly income of RMB 5000-8000. She said, my husbandspend more money than me. He smokes everyday. But I am reluctant to spend money. Sometimes, my husband plays mah-jongg, and has dinner with his friends. Money should be spent according to plan of the family, and I generally dare not spend money. Yesterday, at noon, I intended to buy a watermelon; however, the price was too expensive to me. 0.8yuan / jin, one watermelon would cost 8-10 Yuan. When thought that this money could be used for buying vegetable or stationery for my children, I decided not to buy the watermelon.*

### 4.2.2 Sometimes, the deprivation of nutriment from women may harm the health of next generation

Poverty results in inequality in distribution. During the period of extreme shortage of nutriment, women and girls were deprived of nutrition under the traditional concept of "valuing men and belittling women". In 1993, All-China Women's Federation made an investigation on 105 confinement women in the rural areas of Shanxi Province under the project of "Research on the health of childbearing women". The result of the investigation shows that among the confinement women who gave birth to boys, 30% of them were munificently treated during the month of confinement after giving birth while among the confinement women who gave birth to girls, only 2% of them were munificently treated during the month of confinement after giving birth (Tao Chunfang, 1995).

Data from National Bureau of Statistics of China indicates that the situation that the mortality rate of baby girls is higher than that of baby-boys is abnormal. However, this situation exists not only in rural areas, but also in town. In 2000, the morality rate of baby-girls in Jiangxi, Gansu, and Shanxi respectively are: 78.50%, 62.13% and 41.01%, much higher than that of Ningxia's and Sichuan's.

**Diagram the baby mortality rate in China in 2000, divided by province** (‰)

| provinces | Baby Mortality Rate | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | total | Baby-boys | Baby-girls |
| Jiangxi | 52.46 | 31.36 | 78.50 |
| Shanxi | 33.04 | 26.62 | 41.01 |
| Gansu | 52.98 | 45.11 | 62.13 |
| Ningxia | 27.33 | 27.67 | 26.95 |
| Sichuan | 21.57 | 21.12 | 22.09 |

Sources: Report on Chinese Gender Disparity, National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005

It was also found in the investigation, in Xiaowang Village and Dujiaping Village of Gansu Province, many women had no enough nutrition after their children were born, and this affected the health not only of the mothers, but also of their children, especially girls. In these two villages, quite a few schoolgirls had difficulties in their studies, and failed to go up to the next grades because of health problem. For example, some schoolgirls were at the age of 13 years old, but still were studying at the fourth grade of primary school. Some women said, when their first child was born, and it turned out to be a girl, their mother-in-law did not allow them to feed the baby girls with their milk, because their moth-in-law wanted them to be pregnant again as soon as possible so that the family could have the change to get a boy. For this reason, some girls had been in poor health since when they were born, and had difficulties in their studies.

The shortage of nutriment has bad impact on both men and women, especially on women. Women's innutrition before and after delivery is liable to catch hypoglycemia and anemia etc.; and these diseases may disenable women to work when turning from bad to worse. As a result, the family will become poorer.

## *4.3 Gender inequality in childbearing and birth control*

### 4.3.1 Inequality in gender selection

In the countryside, the preference to son is so generalized to a surprising extent. In many Asian countries, the traditional concept of "raising sons to support one in one's old age" makes people prefer a son to a daughter. Another reason for people to make this choice is that they need labor force for farm work. When there is no comprehensively implemented welfare mechanism, this is no doubt a realistic selection (CGR country gender review of China, 2002). According to the official statistics, since the early of 1980s, the infant gender ratio is gradually out off balanced. The infant gender ratio is continuously increasing, becoming higher and higher, and is comparatively high at large (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2005).

Villagers in Xiaowang Village of Gansu Province attach great importance to boys. When a newly born boy becomes one month old, the family will invite relatives and friends to dinner to celebrate; however, if gets a girl, the family will not do so. If a midwife delivers a boy, she will get more payment, e.g., 60 Yuan or more; however, if she delivers a girl, she can only get 50 Yuan (According to the local practice, 50 Yuan is minimum). According to what learned during group interviews in Jiangxi Province, parents there normally have a bottom line for childbearing, i.e., at least having one boy. They will not stop childbearing, until one boy is born. Among all the ten villages, only one village stated "It is the same to get a boy or a girl". All the other villages expressed their preference to sons. We got to know later that, "Birth control policy was implemented too strictly" in that village, if one extra child is born in a family, the family would be fined 10,000 Yuan. Therefore, the villagers dare not to give birth to any extra child, otherwise, they said, "It is better to have another boy". As for gender

selection, the existence of the traditional concept of "valuing men and belittling women" showed that serious gender discrimination still existed in the countryside of poverty-stricken areas, and this also answered the questions why gender imbalance of infants still existed in China, and why the mortality of female children were higher than that of male children.

***Case 4-6*** *(Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi Province): You Qiusheng, male, 40 years old, graduated from a primary school. There were 6 people in his family. His wife Yu Xiaolan, 40 years old, graduated from a junior middle school, working out of home. He had three daughters, and his father above 80 years old. Mr. You believed that education had not much to do with the economic conditions of a family. He said, childbearing would have been kept on and on until a boy had been born if there had not been birth control policy. He deemed that the decrease of education cost might arouse farmers to give birth to more children.*

***Case 4-7*** *(Xiaowang Village of Gansu Province): Wang Baogui, Male, 54 years old, graduated form vocational senior middle school. His wife Liu Caifeng is 53 years old, with no education background. As regards the attitude towards childbearing, Mr. Wang deemed, this was a matter for men to make decision, and a family must have a boy, because female could not become the main labor force and could not do heavy farm work. In his family therefore, there was a difference of educational input for boy and girl. He did not allow his elder daughter to go on study when she completed her course of the fourth grade of primary school. His second daughter was then studied at grade three of junior middle school; he would not support her further study after her graduation from junior middle school. He only gave consent to his son-- who was the youngest among the three children-- to continue study until the kid graduated from senior middle school.*

**Inequality in birth control**

Women are the main part of procreation, but their opinion upon childbearing are often neglected. In the poor rural areas, women still do not have adequate right for birth control. Women's childbearing time, interval and action sometimes do not reflect women's wish, but reflect the wishes of their husbands or their elders.

Through extensive conversations with a number of elderly women during the investigation, we found that the sexual life of a considerable part of them was decided by their husbands other than themselves. Men did not always think of women's physiologic tendency and special conditions; hence, there was no satisfied and safe sexual life. Under these circumstances, it was men who decided childbearing and the number of children wanted, and it was difficult for women to decide the number of children and the interval of children's birth. One woman complained before us, "I did not want to give birth to so many children. It is okay to have one boy and one girl. The more children we have, the more things we have to worry about. But my husband did not care about these things. He did not take into consideration the burdens deriving from newly born children. In his mind, there was no need to control the number of children. Because the birth control policy was not yet implemented at that time, four children were born in our family. I had to carry the older child on my back, and the younger one in arms. I suffered a lot for this."

***Case 4-8****(Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi Province): Zhu Rongshan, male, 75 years old, head of the family. His wife Zhen Yangfeng is 73 years old. Both of them had no education background. They lived with their son Zhu Lifu. Zhu Lifu had one son and two daughters. The elder daughter Zhu Meifang was 23 years old, the second daughter Zhu Meihua was 21 years old. The two sisters only completed grade fifth of primary school. The son Zhu Huaping was 17 years old, graduated from junior middle school. Zhu Rongfu said, so far as childbearing was concerned, it was men who had the final say, and if there had been no birth controlpolicy, the family would give further birth to children.*

Women do not have decision-making power for childbearing that prevent them to have other powers, just as Nairobi Strategy pointed out, "Women's control of their own fecundity is the principal precondition for them to enjoy other rights"(U.N.,1985). Women without decision-making power are unlikely to assure their own health.

**Gender inequality in contraceptive operation**

The task of birth control is mainly on the burden of women. They play greater role in population control as compared with men. Looking from the contraception and birth control measures taken by the couples at child-bearing age in our country in 1999, among all couples taking various kinds of birth control measures, women accounted for 85%, while men only 15 % (State Family Planning Commission, 1999). Therefore, a great deal of attention should be paid to women's reproductive health. However, in real life, women's contribution on childbearing and population control are sometimes made at the cost of their health; they often can not get the necessary knowledge and service of healthcare.

In the investigated 10 villages in 5 provinces, almost all the birth control measures were taken by women. Among the over 90 women of childbearing age in Lihua Village of Sichuan Province, only one woman did not take operation for conceptive ring. Why are the birth control measures taken mainly by women? There are the following reasons: 1) the restriction of birth control methods. Most existing contraception methods are those for women, and there are fewer ones for men. Common method for men is to use condom, but this method needs sufficient fund which farmers in poverty-stricken areas could not afford. 2) The altitude of men toward contraception and birth control. To men's mind, it would be a fun to villagers if they took birth control operation. Men also worried about being given nickname by other villagers if taking the operation. Therefore, those who took birth control operations in the ten villages were all women. Most men said they were "unaccustomed" to use condom. **3)** The intervention of government policy. Village women directors told us, six months after a woman gave birth to her first child, the local government asked them to take contraception methods. In addition to the restriction of the existing contraception measures, the government also took into consideration the affect of birth control operations on male labor force. This showed that, in a society, in which the political right, the distribution of economic resource and social value were all unequal, the state power was in essence men-oriented, it attached importance to the development of production and economy, but neglected

the problem of reproduction, thus playing the role of intensifying inequality between men and women. From this we could see, the problem of birth control operation mainly taken by women reflected gender inequality arising from the old custom and the intervention of government policy.

### *4.4 The relationship between health gender inequality andpoverty*

**Impact of gender inequality in health on poverty**

**The fact that women's health is worse than men in the poor areas restricts the selection on means of livelihood for their families.** Women's morbidity rate is by far higher than men's in the poor areas; women could hardly have their disease treated, and have to live with disease at their bodies. Under these conditions, they still have to go in for light physical labor and household work. Many are weighed down with their labor and life, having no energy and physical strength to increase agricultural production, or go on for livestock breeding, side line or tertiary industry, thus restricting the implementation of living strategy, disenabling their families to get rid of poverty.

*Case **4-9**(Xingmin Village of Ningxia): Kou Lijun, 39 years old, graduated from primary school. There are 4 persons in her family. Her son gotpneumonia on the 56th day (Dec. 9, 1992) after he was born, and was in hospital for half a month. It snowed heavily at that time; and she had to go to water house to fetch water by herself. As there was a rather long distance between her living house and the water house, she had to take diapers to the water house and wash there. She rinsed the diapers with cold water by hands. As it was her period of lying abed after childbirth, and she used cold water to wash diaper, she got rheumatism. She said, if her husband had helped her do the washing, she would have not got the disease. At that time, there was no heated kang in the family, it was very windy, sometimes there was power failure, the kang was cold, her hands and feet ached very much, so, the disease became severer. Her husband had no skills, therefore, could only do physical labor, and was not paid wages every month. Her husband intended to keep hens, and discussed this with her, but they had no money to build hen house; futhermore, she was in poor health, therefore, it was hard to carry out the plan.*

***Case4-10** (Lihua Village of Sichuan): Qian Zonglian, male, 53 years old, graduated form primary school. His wife zhao Xueju is 52 years old, illiterate. Qian's wife suffered form anemia and hypoglycemia, and often felt dizzy. She also suffered from hyperthyroidism which was found in Langzhong hospital in 1997. After that, she was operated in Chengdu, and got her disease recovered one year later. She could only do ordinary light physical labor, could not do most of farm work. Therefore, Qian was the only labor force in the family, and had to ask other farmers for help during busy season. He hired 17 or 18 man-days each year, expending over 500 Yuan. The couple admired some other fanners for their livestock breeding business. He intended to raise 30 pigs, or if not possible to do so, to raise hens, ducks or rabbits. While due to her poor health, they accomplished nothing.*

**Poor health of women in poverty-stricken areas reduced the opportunities for**

**women to participate in community affairs and social communication. The narrow channel to acquire development information, the fewer the opportunity to achieve economic development.** Due to their poor health, women in poverty-stricken areas were unwilling to participate in the decision-making and management on village affairs, even unwilling to participate in various kinds of technical training at village level. *70%* women in Houhe Village of Sichuan Province suffered from gynecopathy. Generally, *50%* participants in the technical trainings for livestock breeding were women, and the other *50%* were men, representatives of the men's families. But the male participants did not teach women the technologies they learnt in the trainings, therefore, women in those families complained that they could get rich through livestock breeding. Women in poor health seldom visited their relatives and friends, and the times in which they went to nearby market were even fewer. As a result, they were unable to acquire more information about development, having no experience to get rich and lacking external help. It was hard for them to get rich.

***Case4-11*** *(Houhe Village of Sichuan Pro.): Zhu Xianghua is 35 years old, illiterate. She have two children going to school. Her husband worked as a migrant worker in Ganluo Lead Ore Mine. He only stayed at home for several days during the Spring Festival. Zhu Xianghua worked very hard, because she had to do farming for 5 mu of land, raise 2 pigs, and look after the aged and children. After she got conceptive ring fixed, she felt great pain in the loin. And in addition, she had suffered from gastralgia for more than 10 years. But still, she had to work in the fields every day. She seldom attended meeting in the village, only participated in technical training once or twice, knowing little about the policies of the village and the township. She seldom visited her neighbors, only did so when weddings and funerals taking place. Her relatives looked down upon her village, hence seldom visited her. She went to market once or twice a year. There was no TV or telephone in her home, thus lacking necessary outside information. This constituted one of the factors causingpoverty in her family.*

***Case 4-12*** *(Xingmin Village of Ningxia): Wang Xiulia is 42 years old, illiterate. She had two daughters and a son. Her family had 2 vegetable greenhouses, growing 9.44 mu of wheat and maize, and raising 20 sheep and 2 pigs. She suffered from asthma and she has taken medicine for a long time, and received transfusion when the disease became serious. She spent on this approx. 1500 Yuan a year. As it was hot in the greenhouses, she often caught cold and this decrease her resistance against disease. Her family installed a telephone in April 2005 and bought a second-hand TV at 150 Yuan. She was busy all day long, and sometimes felt uncomfortable; hence, seldom participated in village affairs, and knowing little about the outside world. Going to the greenhouses – back home for lunch – housework – working in the greenhouses – back home was her daily routine, thus having little time to acquire outside information. As the information about market condition was closely related to the price of vegetables, she suffered a lot, such as missing the chance to develop livestock breeding, for having little information concerned.*

**The gender preference on boys increased birth number of children and the cost to bring up children.** It is impossible to have gender preference in areas where birth control policy is strictly implemented. But it is found during the interviews that most of the families in the poverty-stricken areas have 2 or **3** children, and the phenomenon of multi-birth appears as a result of seeking a boy. They expressed to support their

children, nor matter a boy or a girl, to go to school. If they could not pay the cost, they would borrow money from bank. High education cost often makes those fainilies debt-ridden.

***Case 4-13*** *(Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi): Chen Meirong, 36 years old, with education background of grade 4 ofprimary school. Her husband is a carpenter. They want to get a boy, but failed. They have 4 daughters 3 of them are at school. The tuition per year for the second daughter at senior middle school, third daughter at junior middle school and the fourth daughter at primary school is 1600 Yuan, 500 Yuan and 300 Yuan respectively. In order to support children to go to school, her husband has been working out of home since 1995. All the earnings from the work are used for the education of the children. As she had to look after the children and the aged, she stayed at home, did farming for 5 mu of land and raised 2 pigs, earning money for domestic expenditure. Children' tuition incidental expenses are the heavy burden of the family, and the burden is becoming heavier and heavier to them, so they might have to borrow money one or two years later:*

***Case 4-14*** *(Dujiaping Village of Gansu): Cao Lingmei is 40 years old, primary school graduate. There are 5 people with 3 children at the age of 15, 13 and 12 respectively. It was the parents'desire to get a boy that they gave birth to three daughters. Her husband worked outside as a hammal, earning more 2000 Yuan a year: She stayed at home and raised pigs, earning 400-500 Yuan if the pigs were sold. Children b tuition and the expenses for medical care, ranging from 1000 Yuan to 2000 Yuan, constituted the major part of the familyb expenditure. Each year when money was badly needed and her husband was not at home, she had to borrow money, and at last the debt amounted to 1200 Yuan. Since the couple had no son, they tried their best to have their daughters well-educated. The elder daughter insisted in stopping study at school when she was at grade 2 of junior middle school. So they placed hope on the second and third daughters. However, the tuition was so high that they might have to borrow money. The family members lived in a earth-based house. They had no transportation means, including rack truck.*

**Birth control operations totally taken by women worsened the health of some women, making them suffering from disease at home and disenabling them to participate in heavy labor.** More than 50% women in two villages of Gansu Province suffered from gynecopathy. According to what gynaecological expert said, those with gynecopathy could not be protected with conceptive ring. But in these two villages, 40% women were operated to fix conceptive ring. After the operation, they had no time to rest, had to touch cold water during work and felt vague aching in the loins and backs. Their original diseases such as gynecopathy, hysteritis and pelvic inflammation etc., became worse after the operation. The percentage of suffering from gynecopathy because of birth control operation varied from village to village: some villages amounted to 100%, while the other was about 30%. According to a sample survey carried out in a village, all the interviewed 18 women were operated for birth control of whom 13 women were considered that the operations resulted in gynecopathy, and partially, their families' poverty that took place afterwards. Only 5 women believed that the poverty of their families had nothing to do with the operations.

Birth control operations might also cause disability, death and long-term diseases to women and disenable women to labor. In Houhe Village of Sichuan Province, a woman

had massive haemorrhage after the operation for fixing conceptive ring, and died later because she could not afford the cost for medical treatment. Another woman spent over 5000 Yuan to treat gynecopathy after the same operation, but still was not recovered.

***Case 4-15*** *(Xiaowang Village of Gansu): Wen Gouwa, 43 years old, illiterate. After she got conceptive ring fixed, she suffered from cervical erosion andpersistent leucorrhea. At first she did not pay attention to the diseases, and as usual, she did farming, looked after father–in–law lying in bed with paralysis, as well as 4 children. But last year; she felt bad, sometimes could not stand by herself. She was examined in hospital, and found to have serious tracheitis and cervical erosion. From then on, she could no longer do heavy work. For the medical treatment, she spent all the money her husband had earned as a migrant worker, and was in debt.*

**Impact of poverty on gender inequality**

**The poverty of natural capital led to women's disadvantaged and passive status in health, nutrition, and birth control.** Land and water resources are the lifeline of agricultural production. The shortage of land and water resources meant that people have to struggle with extremely inclement natural environment to make themselves alive. Houhe Village of Sichuan is located at a place over 800 meters above sea level. In average, each person had only 0.5 mu of land. Mixed with sand and stone, the earth there is infertile, impossible to be ploughed with the aid of farm cattle. People could only uses hoes to do the farming. The shortest distance from farmers' homes to their contracted land takes one hour to walk, and the longest 2-3 hours. Fertilizer and dejecta are transported to the field, by carrying on the back. It is extremely short of water. In order to provide drinking water, farmers had to carry water on the back. Usually, water is carried twice a day with each time taking 1 hour. One time carrying amount of water is consumed by people and livestock within a day. In drought season, farmers have to carry water (on shoulder) to irrigate the crops. Such kind of heavy labor normally is done by men, and thus making men be put in the dominant status in agricultural production. And in turn, this dominant status caused the gender inequality within a family on the aspects of nutrition, birth control operation etc.

***Case 4-16*** *(Houhe Village of Sichuan): He Youqiang, male, 42 years old, primary school graduate. He had a yearly earning of 8000 Yuan, while his wife 3000 Yuan. Only men had the say on domestic affairs. He did all the heavy work in the family. During the period between April to June each year; he carried water to irrigate the fields. When doing ordinary farm work, his wife cut grass, he carried grass; his wife applied fertilizer; he ploughed the land. After they were back home, he carriedpig feed, his wife fed pigs. In addition to farming crops, they raised 9 pigs and 40 rabbits. They worked in great labor intensity. In order to keep fit and to fulfill daily work, he often took some nutriment, spending more than 400 Yuan on buying some soy milk powder; glucose and gen-seng and so on. The expenses on buying wine and tobacco also amounted to 2,000 Yuan each year: His wife never took any nutriment. She endured the pain when had stomach-ache. Once, her stomach ached so much that she could not endure any longer; he took her to a township medical center for treatment, spending less than 100 Yuan. She spent less than 400 Yuan a year on clothes and medical service, but he spent more than 5,500 Yuan on nutriment, wine and tobacco, mobile telephone and dinner with friends, etc.*

**The poverty in physical capital resulted in women's lack of channel to contact the outside world, facilities of communication and transportation, necessary information, the knowledge about women's and children's health care, and the awareness of their own rights and interests.** It is found in the interviews carried out in the 10 villages of 5 provinces that, the poorer an area is, the worse its communication and transportation conditions are. And this has great impacts on women's health, which mainly manifested in the following: 1) It is difficult to treat gynecopathy. The more convenient the communication and transportation conditions were, the lower the morbidity rate of gynecopathy would become. In Caohu Village of Ningxia, the communication and transportation are convenient. Women patients are able to get to the city hospital in 15 minutes. While the villages with poorest economic conditions, like Xiaowang of Gansu, Houhe of Sichuan and Lihua of Sichuan etc., are more than 20 kilometer away from their county towns, and 5 kilometers away from their nearest townships. Nearly all these villages have no clinic, village doctor, qualified medical orderly. There is no special gynecologist even in the townships. To go to county town for medical treatment needs a lot of money. (Only to-and-back tickets would cost tens of Yuan). We learned in the interviews, many women had never been to county town. The extremely inconvenient traffic conditions and extremely backward medical service make gynecopathy impossible to be treated in time. 2) The hospitalized women delivery rate in extremely poor areas is very low. It is shown in the following table: The hospitalized women delivery rate in villages of Xiaowang of Gansu and Houhe of Sichuan is 1% and 0% respectively. In Xiaowang Village of Gansu, the midwifery is generally done by male health worker when a woman is giving birth to a child. After a child was born, some women even could not afford to use toilet paper, and sanitation was not guaranteed when there was a shortage of water; In Houhe Village of Sichuan, delivery work is normally done by puerperant's mother-in-law only preparing tampon and ethanol for the delivery. As the sanitary conditions for puerperant are not guaranteed before and after delivery, women's health is greatly affected.

Table 4-2 Women's hospitalized delivery rate in individual villages

| | Xiaowang Gansu | Houhe Sichuan | Lihua Sichuan | Xiaoshankou Jiangxi | Taizhuang Jiangxi | Dujiaping Gansu | Wujia Shaanxi | Pangzhuang Shaanxi | Xingmin Ningxia | Chaohu Ningxia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | 1 | 0 | 100 | 100 | 99 | 90 | 80 | 95 | 100 | 100 |
| (2) | 2000 | 1600-3000 | 4000 | 400-500 | 200-2000 | 2000 | 500 | 800 | 2000 | 2000 |

Note: (1) Women's hospitalized delivery rate (%)
(2) Cost of women's hospitalized delivery (Yuan/time)

***Case 4-17 (Houhe Village of Sichuan): He Yousong, 32 years old, primary school graduate. He is the major labor force in his family, having loin-ache for 3 to 4 years. His father is 70 years old and has been suffered from eyes disease for 3 years; his mother often feels dizzy, unable to work. Farmers'houses in Houhe Village are not close to each othev. And he lives furthest to the highway. It took him more than 2 hours to get to Team Leader's home, and could only visit 3 neighbors a day. He went to the village once a year. There was an extreme shortage of information. His wife suffered from long-term***

*gynecopathy; however; she could not find a medical center for treatment due to the shortage of necessary information. And because of the same reason, they could not go in for livestock-breeding. They could only do some farming. They were extremely poor:*

**The poverty of human capital made women's health worse.** Because of the shortage of natural and physical capital, farmers went out their living villages to work as migrant workers, and the male laborers who worked as migrant workers for more half a year, accounted for 30% to 50% of the total male laborers. The decrease of domestic laborers meant the increase of the labor intensity of women, because when the men left home for work, the women had to shoulder all domestic burdens, including production labor and household work. Women worked very hard, but their health became worse and worse.

***Case 4-18*** *(Houhe Village of Sichuan): Zhu Guiren, female, 46 years old, illiterate. There are 3 people in the family. All of them are labor force. The husband and the son were not at home. The economic condition of the family was estimated at the middle level of all the villagers. The husband worked in Shandong Province, the son worked as a railway constructor also in Shandong Province. In 2003, there was a great drought; the family suffered from poor harvest; due to little income, the men had to work outside of village. At that time, the son was already 18 years old, and it was the time for him to Iook for a girl friend. According to the common practice in the village, it was necessary to prepare 20,000 to 30,000 Yuan for the son to get married. For this purpose, the husband worked out of home. Then, only the wife stayed at home. She did all the domestic work, including some heavy work, e.g., carrying water; night soil and fertilizer on the back, even during the period of menstruation, she had to enter water with hands and feet. This kind of labor intensity made her health become worse than before.*

***Case 4-19*** *(Panzhuang of Shaanxi): Yan Hongli, female, 32 years old, primary school graduate. Yan's husband worked out of home, his work including ditch-building, baking of brick, road construction and coal-digging, etc. The father-in-law was in poor health, once fell in a faint in past two years. The mother-in-law helped her Iook after children and did a little housework. The family had land for 6 persons, growing 11 mu of wheat and 4 mu of cotton. Yan did all the work in the cotton field alone. Some work, e.g., chemical spraying, which could be finished within one day by other laborer; would take her two, or sometimes even three days. It was necessary to spray chemicals for cotton 12 – 13 times each year. Each time when she finished her work, she felt vague aching in the loins and backs.*

In one word, the poverty of natural, physical and human capital intensified inequality between men and women on aspects of nutriment distribution, physical and mental health and birth control. When poverty is reduced, the gender inequality on these aspects would also be less serious.

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# 5 Gender Inequality in Employment and Poverty

*Because women are constrained by the juggling of paid and unpaid work, this may limit their choices about where they work and the hours they work. Once they enter the work force they frequently encounter assumptions about the effect of domestic responsibilities on their commitment to paid work which further limit their opportunities.*

*Stevi Jackson and Sue Scott 2002*

Employment always highly reflects the gender inequality. Sally Baden and Kirsty Milward (1997) believe that the labor market is the best field to study the gender and poverty problems besides family. However, the traditional labor market is inclined to stay gender blind. There is a certain restriction in the process of defining the poor. Therefore, we are expected to find out other indices.

The inequality between men and women in employment is mainly reflected in the different opportunities of acquiring jobs and discriminated remuneration in employment. The studies in this aspect are abundant in the literature. Xia Guomei (2001) analyzes the reasons that women have a lower economic status from the view of functionalism. From the point of labor demand, although men and women have the same productivity, men earn higher income than women. This is the discrimination in the aspect of demand. From the point of labor supply, the discrimination against women in education and women's family factors restrain their development. This results in the discrimination against them in employment. Li Shi (2001) pointed out that women labor force spends more time on housework. Due to the restriction of housework, their economic activities are mainly involved with agriculture. In non-agricultural employment, women labor force has comparatively less opportunity. On one hand, it is because of the division of work inside the family; on the other hand, it relates to the social factors outside the family. Women's education level and economic development status of their habitation significantly influence women labor force's participation into the non-agricultural business. In the non-agricultural economic field, the average income of women labor force is remarkably lower than that of men labor force.

The quantitative analysis by National Bureau of Statistics of China (2005) shows that gender inequality exists in employment rate, unemployment rate, employment structure, and occupational structure.

As to the employment rate, from 1982 to 2000, employment rates in China decreased for both male and female laborers, each decreased 4-5%. In China, the employment rate of male laborers is always higher than that of females by approximately 8%. Males and females have substantial discrepancies in their employment age structure. The discrepancies are as follows: 1) for the younger aged group of 15-20 years old, the employment rate of females is higher than that of males, which means that females are at a disadvantageous position on education; 2) After age 22, when males

start being employed on large scale, the employment rate of females is always lower than that of male; **3)** Gender disparity in employment is also dominantly expressed in the different employment rates of middle aged labor in towns.

As for the industry structure, male and female laborers are employed differently. Female laborers are more engaged in agriculture. Female laborers' employment rate in agriculture is 8% higher than male. Meanwhile, male laborers are more engaged in construction, Party and government organizations and mass organizations, transportation & storage and postal & electronic industries. Among the above industries, the proportions of male laborers are higher than those of female laborers by 4%, 2% and 2% respectively.

As for the occupational structure, gender disparity also exists. Males are more likely to be cadres in Party and government organizations and enterprises, and the workers of production and transportation; while females are more likely to take up jobs in agriculture, trade and service industry, etc.

As for the unemployment rate, due to the statistic methods, the unemployment rate of rural China from census is always in a low level, and the gender disparity is comparatively small. China's unemployment rate is mainly represented in urban areas. Judging from all previous census results, the unemployment rate of females is slightly higher than that of males. Gender disparities of unemployment are shown as follows: 1) in the early years of entering labor market, the unemployment rate of males is higher than that of females, probably due to males' captious selectivity of their jobs; 2) From age 25 to 45, the unemployment rate of females is higher than that of males; **3)** After the age of 45, again the unemployment rate of males is higher than that of females. At this stage, some unemployed females give up trying to get re-employed; this leads to the decrease of unemployment rate.

In fact, gender inequality in employment is reflected in both agricultural and non-agricultural economic fields. We conducted a survey in 5 provinces of Gansu, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Jiangxi and Ningxia, which indicates that the rural labor force is of gender difference remarkably in employment opportunity, number of people for employment outside, income, occupation distribution and working duration in both the agricultural and non-agricultural fields. Inequality between men and women is a general phenomenon in the aspects of employment decision, market entry, remuneration distribution etc. And this is resulted from some sophisticated factors such as countrymen's gender consciousness, difference of labor force quality between men and women, gender sensitivity of the labor force market etc. Different gender inequality phenomena are reflected in various employments and have sophisticated interactions with poverty. Poverty weakens the rural labor force's employment ability, especially the women's.

In order to better understand the relationship between gender inequality and poverty in employment, we will not study the relationship between gender and employment from the aspect of the labor force market in this report, but analyze the gender inequality in employment, based on the rural community survey data in the

poverty-stricken area from three aspects: I) gender inequality in agricultural employment; 2) gender inequality in non-agricultural employment; **3)** gender inequality in employment outside.

## *5.1 Gender inequality in agricultural employment*

Gender inequality in agricultural employment is reflected in formal and informal employment separately. The formal employment in agriculture refers to individual farmer being employed in crop production, livestock breeding, forestry and fishery. The informal employment refers to the labor force exchange or mutually employment between farmers due to the fact that crop production, forestry and livestock breeding require more labor force than the family can provide during the busy seasons.

### 5.1.1 Gender inequality in formal employment

Based on our country's land distribution policy, that is the household contract responsibility system, land is contracted to individual farmers. Therefore, the agricultural employment is based on individual farmer household. This employment is established on the hypothesis that resource can be distributed equally among family members. This inevitably disregards the gender inequality in employment due to family members' gender difference and consequently will influence gender and means of livelihood.

It is found in the survey that among various agricultural activities, both men and women villagers emphasize the importance of crop production to their livelihood. Perhaps people are influenced for generations by the traditional view on crop production, taking food as their prime want. Although it may neither bring cash income, nor be sufficient for the family's grain ration for a year (e.g. each villager has an average cropland of 0.6 mu in the surveyed village in Sichuan, and 0.3 mu of cropland in the surveyed village of Jiangxi), crop production is deemed as "the essential labor and the foundation for the household's living", said by a Jiangxi farmer in an interview. The work like cultivating crops, planting trees or chopping wood requires a better physical strength of the labor force. In addition, it is influenced by the traditional thinking of labor division between genders. Therefore, in the surveyed communities, the productive labor of crop production and forestry is mainly involved with men, and women take a secondary position. Usually women participate into such labor not as a leading role. Some women seldom do the crop production work. They only join into it when men go out for employment or during the busy seasons, like spring plowing and autumn harvest. In the survey of Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi Province, it is found that women think they are lack of knowledge and skills on crop production. Therefore, men are fully responsible for selecting crop species, using pesticide and fertilizer, weeding and irrigating.

In most communities surveyed, livestock breeding is in a small scale. Usually a household has one or two pigs or cows, or some poultry. Livestock breeding requires no higher physical strength and takes only a small part in farmers' family income; therefore, it is generally cared by women. In some villages, the income from livestock

breeding is the only money able to be spent by women. But it is not the major income of the family.

Most of the communities surveyed are in underdeveloped poverty-stricken area with mainly the extensive agricultural production at a low level. The limited cropland area and shortage of capital force the farmers to take the hoe, plow and cattle etc. as their major production tools. With such tools, farmers have to invest a large amount of physical strength. This increases the necessity of men labor force and the exclusion of women labor force. Poverty results in the primitive production tools which affect the investment of women labor force in the agricultural production.

Farmers in most of the communities surveyed have only 1 to 2 mu of cropland on average, and they think they need many agricultural facilities, but they can not afford them. This affects the participation of women labor force as well as men and women's labor strength to a large extent.

***Case 5-1*** *(Gansu): There is a kind of walking tractor sold in the market, which can plow land and is easy to handle. But we can not afford it. So men labor force is indispensable in plowing land. When harvesting the crops, it is mainly done by women. If there is a combine, it will be much helpful to reduce the labor of women. But we can not afford it either: What we can afford is weed killer: But many of them are of poor quality.*

***Case 5-2*** *(Gansu): In recent years, the plastic filmed corn before shooting has been extended broadly due to its high productivity. At the time of mulching film, we hove to seek 4 to 5 neighbors to do it. It will be much helpful if there is a film mulching machine. One can finish all the work very soon. It will not be a problem whether men are at home or not.*

It is for the reason that men are the major labor force in crop production, and their labor is deemed indispensable, so men take a dominant position in the family, especially in the farmer families that both men and women are engaged in crop production. Men dominate the family in household production, livelihood decision and money spending.

### 5.1.2 Gender inequality in informal employment

Among all kinds of rural people's employment, labor exchange or labor hiring is the only employment containing the complete processes of negotiation, transaction, investment and payment between villagers within the community. Such employment happened periodically, usually in the busy seasons. The transaction is achieved through unofficial negotiation between farmers, but more relies on the trust between each other. It makes such employment look like "help" to one anther. The labor exchange is not for the purpose of earning money, but for the requirement of labor force investment in the agricultural production. However, from its organizing process, such employment can reflect the different status and social capital owned by men and women.

It is found in the survey that in rural communities, men take a dominant position in

crop production and they have more extensive communications than women; therefore, most of the organizers are men. Women are expected to participate in the process only when men are out. The social capital, economic status and labor force owned by a family will influence such employment to some extent. It is indicated in the survey that economic status and the ownership of social capital have a positive influence on agricultural labor hiring. The stronger the economic strength and the more the social capital one owns, the easier to organize such employment Judging from either their family status or their social status, men have the advantage to organize such labor hiring.

***Case 5-3*** *(Sichuan): During the busy season, it costs 30 Yuan to hire a laborer a day, or 50 Yuan to hire a laborer and his water buffalo, with free meals. When turning up the soil or repairing the house, we need to hire labor force, but generally not. There are only 8 families that hired labor force before, two or three times one year and generally about 10 days once. They are all well-to-do families. Only the secretary of the village hires labor force for more than three months with dailypayment of 20 Yuan.*

Such employment is paid or not paid. Even it is paid, the payment is low and takes only a minor part in the family income. But it is indicated in the surveyed communities that the payment for men is a bit higher than that for women. Sometimes though the payment is same, men labor force is preferred. They have more opportunities than women in employment.

***Case 5-4*** *(Sichuan): Labor hiring is common in Lihua Village. Usually they employ men for harrowing land and women for transplanting rice seedlings. Women are paid same with men. During rice or corn harvesting, if there is not sufficient labor force, we have to hire laborers. Payment is 30 Yuan per day. There is not much labor exchange. They will hire both men and women labors, but usually men are preferred.*

***Case 5-5*** *(Gansu): There is rarely labor hiring. One reason is that it is expensive, the other is that it is hard to hire laborers, because people have to rush to do the work during the busy seasons. For example, when harvesting the rapeseed, it must be done in a few days; otherwise the seeds will get rotten in land. Therefore, they would rather finish their own work than earn other's money to avoid losing over one thousand Yuan. If hiring labor, the payment is at least 30 to 50 Yuan per day for a man and 15 to 20 Yuan per day for a woman.*

Today, there are less public activities in rural communities. The labor exchange and hiring among farmers become major social contact methods within the community. Often it is men who participate in this process. This offers them a good opportunity to stabilize and increase their social capital. In the rural communities surveyed, the payment difference between genders reflects farmers' traditional view on the working capacity of men and women in agricultural production.

It is also found in the survey that due to men's employment outside, they leave the crop production to women. Women have no option but to take the position. To some extent, this makes women increase their social contacts and extend their communication scope.

## *5.2 Gender inequality in local non-agricultural employment*

In the surveyed communities, there are mainly three non-agricultural employments. First is the employment in the small enterprises and plants near the community. The employed farmers can get paid every month. This employment is common. It can offer jobs to a comparatively large amount of people for a long period. Second.is the public labor in the village, such as building bridge or road, usually in a short period. Third is self-employment such as running a shop, being a bricklayer or a teacher, or taking other non-agricultural employment locally.

It is found in the survey that in the first non-agricultural employment, the gender selection depends on the requirement of the occupation. The equality between genders is not considered. In fact, most of the enterprises in the surveyed communities are mainly engaged with the production of raw products, such as mining, transportation, cement production and quarrying etc., which have a higher requirement for labor force's physical strength than their skills. Women are excluded from such employment naturally. There are only a few occupations suitable for women. This is indicated in the following two cases.

***Case** 5-6 (Shaanxi): There is no township enterprise in Wujia Village, but there are some cement mills and quarries in the neighboring villages. Villagers can find a job there. In Panzhuang Village, there are 2 cement mills (50 to 60 workers in each mill), one carton plant (40 to 50 workers) and two rubble quarries (5 to 6 workers in each). Only men can do the work in these mills orplants.*

***Case** 5-7 (Jiangxi): Some business people from other places are interested in a wild herb named Shanlu Herb, which grows near Taizhuang Village. They decided to build a canning plant in the village to can the product for export. They employed 30 to 40 local women laborers and trained them, because the employer think women will be more suitable for the processing andpackaging work which require fine workmanship.*

The second form of community non-agricultural employment comes, in most circumstances, from the poverty alleviation projects. Farmers input working hours and labor and are paid accordingly. Such employment requires higher physical strength, so men are preferred. Usually women are selected when men are out. In most circumstances, men and women get same payment. But some cases indicate that because of the different labor strength between men and women, men can get more remuneration.

***Case** 5-8 (Ningxia): In Chaohu Village, there is not much public work. Most are voluntary labors, like voluntary tree-planting and ditch cleaning. But there are some working opportunities with payment, for instance, building road', traffic transportation and others like rebuilding the canal landslide. Such working opportunities are offered by the village management to those villagers who have no specialty and have to sell labor to make a living. Of course there is some work that can be done by either men or women. Under*

*such circumstance, men's wage is higher: The wage is calculated by day. The village cadres said the main reason for the difference of wages between men and women is according to the difference of labor strength of their jobs.*

*"For the public labor in the village, like building road, planting tree, building bay and so on, if men are at home, we will ask them to do. Women are asked to do such work only when men are out. During the busy seasons, most men labors are at home, so there are more men to do these jobs. During the slack seasons, most men are out, there will be more women to do these jobs," said by a village cadre.*

The third form of community non-agricultural employments are mostly for those villagers who have specialties. It is found in the survey that men are the major participants in such employments. For example, in two villages of Jiangxi, there are eight teachers, only one is woman, and only one among seven village doctors is woman. Villagers think it is the poverty and underdeveloped status, poor medical conditions and inconvenient traffic restrain many women teachers working there. If running a shop or doing traffic transportation business, education or specialty is required. Usually men are more qualified than women. A surveyed community of Gansu is 2.5 kilometers fiom the township. There are more than 20 people doing businesses like wholesales; running restaurant, selling clothes and construction materials in the town. Most of the businesses are operated by men.

## *5.3 Gender inequality in outside employment*

In this study, employment outside refers to the non-agricultural employment in which people leave their community for cities and are employed in the construction industry, traffic transportation, service business, contracted projects, or operating a shop by themselves, etc. The earnings fiom outside employment account for a large part of household income. Such employment makes a big influence on the family's livelihood; therefore, it becomes a key point in this study. Employment outside involves some linkages from family's decision to market acceptance. During the survey we find that gender inequality in employment outside is reflected in the fact that in most cases, men have the right to make decision; that there are more men for employment outside than women; that men have more income from such employment than women. Meanwhile, gender inequality in outside employment brings a series of changes in family livelihood, poverty level, division of labor between men and women.

We are going to analyze the gender inequality in this employment fiom three aspects. 1) gender inequality in decision making;2) gender inequality in employment outside;3) gender inequality in income earned from such employment.

### 5.3.1 Gender inequality in decision making

In the underdeveloped and poverty-stricken areas, employment outside is the best way to maintain the livelihood. Most farmers in the surveyed communities think it is

necessary to go out for employment. Because they have limited crop land, even if they have the best harvest, they can not earn sufficient income, let alone the disastrous climate. Usually the income from crops can only balance the expenditure for seeds and fertilizers. Only going out for employment can they earn enough money to pay their children's schooling, to build house and to satisfy their daily expenses. Therefore, choosing to have employment outside is an important decision in the family.

Among the farmers interviewed, on the issues like whether or not to work outside, who will go out for employment about 80% people decide by men and women together. About 20% people make the decision by men themselves. Few women decide by themselves. See Table 5-1.

**Table 5-1 Who will make the decision**

| Village | Decision by men | Decision by women | Decision by men and women together |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dujiaping Village of Gansu | 14 | 0 | 15 |
| Xiaowang Village of Gansu | 0 | 0 | 28 |
| Lihua Village of Sichuan | 8 | 0 | 20 |
| Houhe Village of Sichuan | 0 | 0 | 27 |
| Taizhuang Village of Jiangxi | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi | 0 | 1 | 17 |
| Panzhuang Village of Shaanxi | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| Wujia Village of Shaanxi | 0 | 0 | 20 |
| Total | 32 | 1 | 155 |

Although the decision made by men and women together takes the majority, we can not conclude gender equality in making decision of employment outside based on these figures. In fact, like other important decisions in the family, men have the right of decision-making, though they will talk with their wife. It is found in the survey that most women are inclined to go out for employment, but they have to get the permission of the men. In most of the conditions, men do not permit their wives to go out for employment, unless they themselves can not go out due to their age or illness.

***Case 5-9 (Sichuan): "My wife wants to go out for employment, but I don't agree. There are too many household affairs for me to do. I myself go out for employment only during the slack seasons".***

All the interviewees in Shaanxi Province make the decision by men and women together. And usually the result is that men will go out for employment. But they will

come back home to help their family during the busy seasons. Women will stay at home to take care of children, do housekeeping and farm work. Both men and women believe that women can not earn as much money as men if they go out for employment.

Who make the decision reflects the gender inequality. It is found in the survey that if there is any conflict, both men and women leave the right of decision to men. Although men and women will have same opinion to many things in their long time bed and board, for instance, their agreement on who will be more suitable for employment outside, it is not sufficient to demonstrate the justification of men's decision on this problem or gender equality.

It is found in the survey that if they do not consider the demand of the family, most families are inclined to agree that both husband and wife go out for employment. That women staying at home are not mainly required by crop production, but for the purpose of taking care of the old and young, and to avoid the risk that women will face if they go out for employment, (for instance, the economic burden due to unemployment). Farmers who go out for employment are of low education level in general. The work they can do is mainly those of manual labor. The market selection is not aimed at men or women, but depends on productivity of the labor force. Because men have more advantage on strength and skill, they can find the jobs with higher payment than women. This makes farmers decide to have men go out for employment.

We can not simply conclude yet that men have the priority to decide whether go out for employment or not directly results in men's domination in this behavior and accelerates the progress of women's domination in agricultural production. Some people think, by either men or women, the decision shall be made to optimally allocating the resources of the family. Others think if women can participate in decision-making, there will be more space for the family's employment and income. For example, there is a woman in Sichuan who said if she could go out for employment, the economic status of her family will be improved, because her husband is too old to find a job.

### 5.3.2 Gender inequality in employment outside

**(1). Gender difference in the number of people going out for employment**

The survey in 10 communities indicates that in general, there are by far more men than women who go out for employment. For example, in Houhe Village of Sichuan, of 40 people that go out for employment, there are only 3 women. In Dujiaping Village of Gansu, 90% of the surveyed families have men go out for employment. In Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi, 70% of the people go out for employments are men.

***Case 5-10** (Xingmin **Village of** Ningxia): **Women only take 1% of the people going out for employment. Most of them are unmarried. They go out for employment because they have relatives where they are employed. The main jobs of those being employed in the neighboring places are to** cultivate flowers **in greenhouse and harvest corn, etc. They are paid 20 to 25 Yuan per day and work for 6 to 8 hours every day.***

It is found in the survey that among the married villagers, mostly it is men who go out for employment. If there is not much burden of the old and young, the husband and wife will go out for employment together. In Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi, there are about 400 people from 200 families going out for employment. About 100 families have both the husband and wife go out for employment. For the other 100 families, most have the men go out for employment. Most of these families have the crop land cultivated by their parents. There are about 20 families who have their land subleased to others.

In some communities surveyed, there are families that have women go out for employment and men stay at home, but only taking a small percentage. And in most of these circumstances, there are specific reasons, for example, the husband is ill or aged. In Lihua Village, Cangxi County of Sichuan, we have a survey on 15 married women who go out for employment. 9 of them have to do so, because of their husbands' illness, etc.

*Case 5-11 (Sichuan): Li. Her mother is 73 years old, and her daughter is in high school. She has no ancestral estate. This family used to be the poorest. They just borrowed 30 thousand Yuan but are pressed to pay back now. Her husband suffers from rhinitis and fester, and can not go out for employment. She has to go out to find a job.*

*Wang. Both her parents are still alive and about 70 years old. She has one daughter who is employed outside. At first, her husband went out for employment. But now he suffers ji-om feet atrophy and can not stand. He is not able to go out for employment any more, even to cultivate crop. Now it is her 70-year-old father who cultivates the crop. She has to go out to find a job.*

*Chen. Her family is pool: They have an adobe house and borrowed 18 thousand Yuan. Her husband suffers ji-om tuberculosis. Though she herself suffers ji-om serious rheumatism herself, she has to go out to find a job.*

*Wan. There are 3 people in her family. Her mother had been ill for years and died last yeal: She borrowed 11 thousand Yuan to cure her mother. She has a son in junior high school. She spends 6 thousand Yuan on her son's schooling. Now the boy has discontinued his study. They have the past tax and fee debt of over 2,000 Yuan. Her husband is mentally handicapped. He is able to do some crop production, but can not catch the season. He will be still irrigating the land at the time to transplanting the seedlings. The only way is she goes out to find jobs.*

*Wu. Her mother died last year at the age of 72. There is a debt of 9,000 Yuan. Her father is 76 years old. She borrowed 43 thousand Yuan to open a winery but made no profit and lost her capital. She has a daughter who is in high school. Her husband is lazy and abandons himself in smoking, drinking and gambling. Wu does not want her husband to go out, because he will spend more than he earns.*

*Li. There are 3 people in her family. Her husband suffers from rheumatism and swollen abdomen and legs. Her son is in college. She has a debt of 25 thousand Yuan.*

*Liang. There are* **3** *people in her family. Her husband is deaf. Her son discontinued study due to poverty and go to work. She borrowed 15 thousand Yuan to cure her husband.*

*Chen. There are* **3** *people in her family. Her husband is constantly ill and suffers from rheumatism and swollen legs. Her daughter discontinued study. She borrowed 7 thousand Yuan to cure her husband.*

*Fang. Her mother-in-law and her parents are both supported by her family. Her husband looks after the children. She had a traffic accident, but has to go out to find a job even she has not had the steel plate on her leg removed.*

In recent years, the number of women in Lihua Village that go out for employment has increased, but it has not exceeded the number of men. Most of these women go out for employment because of their husband's illness and the heavy family burden. There are not many cases that women go out for employment on their own initiative.

Comparing with crop production and housekeeping, employment outside is undoubtedly a more promising option for the farmers. When these opportunities are limited, they will be given to men with priority. Either married or unmarried, men have a basically steady position in the migration; they are always the majority or leading roles. But for women, they become the supporting role after they get married. Their husbands' development is the prerequisite to their own development. Only when there are some causes to prevent their husbands from taking the main task of the family, the wives will rise to the leading position as the substitute.

It is found in the survey that men and women in rural communities have a unanimous opinion toward the traditional division of labor between genders. During the survey in Jiangxi, almost all the villagers have the same answer to the question about what roles shall be taken by men and women in life. They think if men do not go out for employment, they shall be responsible for the labor about crop production. Women shall be responsible for the labor with the household, including small-scale livestock breeding (usually feeding 1 to 2 pigs or some chickens), taking care of the old and young and housekeeping. This traditional recognition toward the division of labor between genders also includes that men are the bread earner of the family livelihood; the family income shall rely on men. Women shall give their priority to the family life.

The above traditional recognition toward the division of labor between genders further restrains women laborers' mobility. When there must be someone staying at home, women usually become the one.

During the survey in 10 villages, it is found that among the men and women of same age, men have a higher education than women. We did not get a definite conclusion in the survey that to how much extent the education difference influences gender inequality in employment. However, the villagers said lack of knowledge would be an obvious obstacle for women to go out for employment. But men will make up this

shortcoming with their advantages on skill and strength. Most villagers think that men have better education and strength than women, and this is the main reason why men can find a job more easily than women. The low education put more restrict to women in their way of employment outside.

***Case 5-12*** *(Gansu): Among the 10 men villagers interviewed, 4 have junior high school education and 7 have primary school education. And all the other 20 women villagers interviewed have very low educations, 17 of them are illiterate. Both men and women villagers think that due to women's low education, they can not even do the crop production well, for example, they don't know the correct dosage of the chemical, and once there was a woman who took the herbicide as chemical and killed the crops, let alone out for employment. Maybe they can not find the toilet if they go out.*

It is found in the survey that most of the women interviewed would like to go out for employment, but they think it is better if they stay at home and their husbands go out for employment. It is for the reason that women must stay at home to take care of the family, also because men's employment outside can only do the jobs required strength due to their low education, sometimes the payment they get can not even support themselves. Therefore, if women go out, they will face more challenges. It is hard for women themselves to go out for employment unless they are supported and organized by someone else. Only a few elder women think if they go out, they will find a job more easily than their husband.

The lack of education and training are the reasons that prevent women from going out for employment.

**(2). Gender inequality in occupation, time and location in employment**

It is found in the survey that women usually go out for employment before they get married or after their children finishing the high school education. But if men go out for employment, they have no such time limitation. There is certainly some difference among farmer households. But the villagers usually think this is a comparatively reasonable arrangement.

It is found in the survey that women will stay outside for employment for a long time before they get married and for a short period after they get married. It is indicated in the survey of Gansu and Shaanxi that married women go out for employment seasonally. Furthermore, women go out for employment under the condition that they have not much family burden. But if men go out for employment, most will stay outside for a long time, no matter whether they are married or not.

***Case 5-13*** *(Shaanxi): If they only plant wheat but no cotton, beans or sweat potato, and they have no child to look after, or theirparents can take care of the children, women can go out for employment. Usually women go out for employment seasonally. For example, every September they may go out to find the job ofpicking cotton for about 30 days. Every August they may be employed to pickpepper for 30 days. But all these depend on whether there is the employment or not, whether they are invited by the organizer, and whether their family conditions allow them to be out for such a long period.*

On the selection of employment location, men villagers in the surveyed poverty-stricken villages usually go to some places far from their home. There is a large optional margin for them. They usually go back home during the busy seasons and in Spring Festival. The peasants in the surveyed community of Gansu will go to wherever there is the opportunity of employment. But most of them will go back home during the busy seasons. Otherwise it is impossible to cultivate the land or harvest the crop due to the fact that women are not strong enough to handle the wheel barrow.

Generally, women have limited options in choosing employment locations, because in most circumstances, women, especially the married women, go out for employment through organizations, for instance, to pick cotton in Xinjiang or to do house keeping in Beijing. They can not find jobs everywhere like men. In some well-off villages, because of the comparatively developed economy and sufficient job opportunities, men and women villagers can find jobs nearby, some can go out for employment and home between city and countryside every day (for example in the surveyed communities of Ningxia).

Men will have more opportunities if they go out for employment. There is some work that has requirement for strength and can not be done by women. This provides much larger space for men. Usually men go out to choose jobs requiring skills (like to be a carpenter) and strength (like to be employed in construction or transportation company). Some lucky men will get contract or do business, while women choose to be general laborer or employed in service industry. Men usually have a higher expectation for the occupation and payment than women. Therefore, some villagers think women will find jobs more easily than men if they don't expect too high.

The economic status of the community has a big influence on men and women's employment. In the villages surveyed, Chaohu Village and Xingmin Village of Ningxia have a comparatively good economic status. Comparing the villagers' employments of these two villages with that of other communities, we found the following differences: First, the villagers of the two villages can choose the employment locations near their communities, so that they can take care of their family meanwhile. Second, they have more freedom and independence to decide whether to go out or not and who will go out for employment. Third, the laborers have more rights to negotiate on the payment and working hours.

The traditional division of labor between genders requires women to take up the responsibility of bringing up children and taking care of the family. Women can not choose the employment time and location like men. Their occupation scope is smaller than men's.

### 5.3.3 Gender inequality in employment payment

It is found in the survey that in most circumstances, there is difference in the payment earned by men and women. According to what the villagers said, this is main

reflected in the following aspects:

1. "Many jobs calculate payment by piece. Though men and women can be employed to do the same job, men will produce more pieces than women". This reflects that the inequality in payment is a result of the better physical strength of men.

2. "Some jobs will pay unequally for equal work between men and women, because of the different labor strength." This reflects not only the different labor capability between men and women in some work, such as canying goods, but also the prejudice toward women's labor capacity.

3. "Most of those doing the contract business are men. And the contract business is the most profitable work". Different businesses will have different profit levels. The villagers think "doing business" is the most profitable work of all kinds of employments. In the surveyed villages of Jiangxi, most of the people that built new houses with the earnings from employment outside do the "contract business". It is indicated that men will participate more often into the profitable businesses.

4. "Men go out for employment in order to maintain the family, while women go out for employment to increase the income." Because of the traditional view on the responsibility of men and women, it is found in many interviews that when men go out for employment, they will demand a better payment than women.

***Case 5-14*** *(Gansu): In Dujiaping Village, either doing the public work or going out for employment, men have more opportunities and higher income than women. If going out for employment, a man will be paid 600 to 700 Yuan per month and a woman 200 to 300 Yuan per month. In the brickyard, a man can earn 20 Yuan, while a woman earns 10 Yuan. Men can do the hard work, so it is easier for them to find a job. But there are not many opportunities for women. From last year; the local Women's Federation organizes vwomen to do household service in Beijing. Only a dozen of women went to do this.*

***Case 5-15*** *(Jiangxi): "Of course men will earn more, even if they do the same simplest work, they can earn more than women." Both Dai who is employed with her husband and does the same work in a shoe factory, but her husband earns more than herself.*

It is indicated in the cases that men can earn more money than women if they go out for employment. The main reason comes from the fact that men own more skills than women. Even if they do the same work, as long as they earn a piece rate, men will have a larger output due to their stronger physical conditions. Men can also do some heavy physical labors which can not be tried by women.

When rural labor forces of different genders enter the employment market, on one hand, the external differences in education, physical condition, skills and social capital between men and women results in the income difference based on labor force quality; on the other hand, due to the market's single purpose of profit maximization--the labor force market promotes the occupation differentiation between two genders. The gender-related occupation structure is a definite result of

the market economy. The gender preference of the labor force market brings forth the difference of labor force income between genders. Meanwhile, the traditional gender consciousness and division of labor between men and women, for example, the view that men are expected to maintain the family's livelihood, also influence men and women's initiative to gain profit in the labor force market. These facts produce the general phenomena that men can earn more income than women from employment outside.

As analyzed above, women are at an inferior position compared with men when entering the labor market. If women can not get the equal benefit from the labor market with men, they will probably slip back to their original housekeeping status. This will make the vulnerable women labor force market relapse into a "vicious circle".

Men's employment brings remarkable changes to the family structure, livelihood and division of labor. An outstanding change is the absence of men in the family due to their out for employment. In the survey, most men are responsible for crop cultivation and making important decisions. Some even have duties in the village. These tasks fall onto women after men go out for employment.

***Case 5-16*** *(Xiaoshankou Villag of Jiangxi): Ms. Chen Meirong, 36, with primary school education, has 4 daughters. In order to pay the daughters' schooling, her husband has been out for employment for 10 years and comes back home once a year. After her husband goes out, Ms. Chen takes over all the labors like crop production, livestock breeding and housekeeping etc. She also succeeds her husband as the village group leader. She said she lived a hard life and usually went to bed immediately after supper. Her husband works outside as a carpenter and can earn more than 10 thousand Yuan a year to pay their children's tuition. Her labor at home can maintain the family5 daily life. Sometimes when she does not have enough money to pay her children's school charges, she will go and borrow from others.*

The fact that men go out for employment and women stay at home naturally leads to feminization in agricultural production. However, in the circumstance that men can earn enough money from their employment to maintain the family, the phenomenon that women sub-lease their crop land to others occurs. This releases women from crop production, so they can completely devote themselves into family affairs.

***Case 5-17*** *(Taizhuang Village, Jiangxi): Ms. Zheng Shuzhen, 30, whose husband goes out for employment. They have not much crop land, about 2 to 3 mu. She has sub-leased the land to others. The family expenses depend on her husband5 earning from employment. They have a daughter. What she does everyday is to take care of her daughter and her parents.*

Subleasing land releases women from crop production and makes them back to family life. On one hand, this reduces the burden on women; on the other hand, it is possible to make women economically adhere to their husband more than before and weaken women's position in the family. It is found in the survey that subleasing land

is of no universality, because it is retrained not only by farmer's economic condition, but also by natural conditions. In those places with bad natural conditions, like the surveyed communities in Gansu, due to the extremely low productivity of the land, there is little possibility to sublease the land, although the farmers have this idea.

That men going out for employment brings different influences to women's life. After men go out, women's labors extend from housekeeping and livestock breeding to agricultural labors centered on crop production. On one hand, this increases women's labor burden and the possibility of illness due to the heavy labor. It is found in the survey that because they have the heavy burden after men go out for employment, most women become very tired and suffer from illness. But on the other hand, men's going out for employment makes the value created by women for the family become dominant, and extends women's decision-making power to a bigger scope in the family. As explained before, after men's going out, the important things will be decided only by women. It is found in the survey that after women's going out for employment; men selddm engage themselves with the household labors that were taken by women. Most of these trivial labors are taken by their aged parents. Few cases indicate that women's going out for employment increases men's labor burden. But the aged parents with women at home will have more leisure than those with women out for employment. A man's going out for employment has a sophisticated influence on women's life. We can not have more conclusions based on our survey. We think the changes of relationship between genders resulted from going out for employment has to be discovered by further studies.

That women go out for employment brings different influences to women's life. It is found in the survey that women's increased income from their employment leads to the enhancement of their position in making family decisions. Meanwhile, due to the fact that they leave their family for employment, their traditional role in family is weakened.

*Case 5-18 (Xiaoshankou Village of Jiangxi): Mr. You is 40 years old and has primary school education. Yuxiaolan, his wife, is 40 and has junior high school education. Now she is out for employment. Mr. You buys wine wholesale from Xiushui County and retails to the villagers. His wife has been out for employment from every February to December for 8 to 9 years. She works in a township shoe factory in Shenzhen and can earn an income of more than 10 thousand Yuan every year for the family. This is much more than the income You earns. In You's family, it is his wife who controls the budget and procurement. His wife purchased a piece of health insurance but You did not. Mr. You thinks his wife's contribution to the family is mainly of economic aspect, and his wife is of more experience and extensive knowledge.*

## *5.4 Relationship between poverty and gender inequality in employment*

### 5.4.1 The impact of poverty on gender inequality in employment

Men and women's labor quality has much relation to the agricultural and non-agricultural employment. Because of poverty, the children's schooling becomes

unaffordable. This results in the low education level of the labor force. Also because of poverty, many people have the poverty-related illness. This results in the low physical quality of the labor force. Both of the phenomena have much relation to men and women inequality in employment. When poverty prevents them from paying the education fees, they will give the priority to boys in most circumstances. In Xiaowang Village of Gansu, there are only three students studying at the high school in town. All are boys. There is a girl who passed the entrance examination of high school last year. But she did not go because her mother has illness and they can not afford the school expenses. From the family member's personal consumption, it is found that men family members usually have larger expenditures. Women's low education level and physical conditions due to poverty becomes the obstacle in their employment. As indicated in the analysis before, there are a large number of illiterate women in poverty-stricken areas. They are not only unable to go out for employment, but also have difficulty to find a job in non-agricultural employment within the community.

***Case** 5-19 (Gansu): Wu and her husband open a store in their village. Generally the goods procurement and selling is done by her husband himself. Sometimes her husband is involved with crop cultivating and has his hands full, he will ask her to look after the store. But because she has never been in school, she often makes the bill wrong. This affects the profit of the store. In order to run the store, her husband has to hire someone else to cultivate crops.*

The difference of social capital owned by men and women influence the opportunity of individuals' entry into the labor market. Both the formal and informal employments need social capital. Due to the traditional division of labor between genders, women are restrained within household and have limited social communications inside and outside the community. Lacking of social capital results in limited employment resource for women, which prevents them from participating into the informal employment and going out for employment. It is found in the survey that most employment opportunities are offered through relatives or friends' introduction. Because men have accumulated plenty of social capital during a long time, they are offered more opportunities of employment by this.

The poverty from lack of natural resource and physical capital also has a direct influence on gender inequality in employment. The poor natural conditions, for example, the crop lands in most surveyed poverty-stricken communities are hillside land, which restrain women's labor input in crop production. Land plowing and harvest require men labors' investment. Women can only take the secondary position. Hence, the incomplete infrastructural facilities and primitive tools also affect women's employment in agriculture. Some cases indicate that advanced production tools and complete infrastructural facilities enable women to replace the men's principle status.

***Case** 5-20 (Gansu): In Dujiaping Village, it takes the villagers more than 1 hour to walk 7.5 kilometers from home to the crop land on hill. In the past; the road was very bad. When harvesting wheat, villagers could only pull it back by wheel barrow. Usually men pulled the barrow front and women gave a hand behind. A mu of wheat needs several*

*come-and-goes. Now the road is built. If there is a farm truck, one can pull a mu of wheat back in 20 minutes. Women's burden is much reduced. Even if men are out and can not come back, women can hire a truck to carry the wheat back.*

In the poverty-stricken rural areas, if farmers go out for employment, they can earn a higher income to increase the living standard of the family. It is found in the survey that in most comparatively better-off families, both men and women are engaged with non-agricultural employment; while in the poverty-stricken families, they spend more time on crop production and livestock breeding and seldom go out for employment.

The extreme poverty will reduce men and women's opportunity and willingness to go out for employment. It is indicated in the case of Houhe Village, Cangxi County, Sichuan, that in the state of extreme poverty caused by the lack of natural and physical resources, people have reduced interest toward the outside world. Meanwhile, the labor farce's poor physical quality, extremely low education level, their ignorance and ill-informed status due to extreme poverty undoubtedly become the main obstacles for men and women to go out for employment. But even under this circumstance, due to the traditional division of labor between genders, men are of more possibilities to go out for employment than women.

Consequently, we can conclude from the above analysis that either in agricultural employment or in non-agricultural employment, poverty weakens the rural labor forces' employment capability, especially the women's.

### 5.4.2 The impact of gender inequality in employment an poverty.

The gender inequality in employment is reflected in the aspects of employment opportunity and benefit. The inequality is generally reflected in the fact that there are more restrains on women's employment opportunities and benefits. From either employment status, rural women have a limited selection in paid employment. Men take a dominant position in paid employment. Women do not have many selections in employment to change their economic status. Just like some women said in the interview, "Most of the family expenses are earned by men. The construction and transportation jobs will not consider women. There are not many jobs for women, but to pick melon seeds and cotton, etc."

As for employment, it is hard to determine whether gender inequality in employment accelerates women's poverty based on the existing data. But there are cases indicating that after going out for employment, women have helped improving the economic status of their family, expanded their communication scope and the horizon of their life, and even improved their physical conditions.

***Case 5-21*** *(Gansu): A woman became the first to participate in the labor service export to Beijing organized by the Women's Federation. Although she had to come back home midway due to her family's illness, she had her acquaintance in this opportunity to introduce her daughter to Beijing for employment. Now their life has improved quite a lot.*

***Case 5-22*** *(Gansu): I used to go out to find jobs. Because my wife did a hard work at*

***home, she suffered many illnesses. Last year someone organized an activity to pick cotton in Xinjiang. She insisted that she should go, so I let her work there for several months. When she came back, we found her physical condition better than when she stayed at home.***

From the point of agriculture, because it is mainly the men who go out for employment, a large number of women are left with crop production. Because the crop production can not bring women much cash income, it prevents women from making great contribution to improve family's economic status. It is found in the survey that in some circumstances, the feminization in agriculture results in women pauperization, especially in the families with women household head. In Xiaowang Village of Gansu, there are 4 families with women household heads (the men died of illness or the women is divorced). Because they have no other income but mainly rely on crop production, they become the poorest families. In those families that men go out for employment, as men's employment income will be partly transferred to women within the family, it is not easy to determine women's pauperization. This may probably answer for why people do not pay enough attention to women pauperization resulted from gender inequality in employment and women's inferior status in employment market.

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# 6 Gender Inequality in Labor Division and Poverty

*Both men and women play multiple (e.g., productive, reproductive, and community management) roles in society. While men are able to focus principally on their productive rob, and play their multiple robs sequentially, women, in contrast to men, play these robs simultaneously and balance simultaneous competing claims on limited for each of them.*

*C. Mark Blackden and Chitra Bhanu 1999*

The traditional division of labor between genders and gender value orientation that men are responsible for the affairs outside the household and women for the affairs inside the household is an expedient measure of a household to take the double burden of family and society. Chinese rural women, with the long time influence of the traditional ideology, take a great deal of housework, reproductive and productive labors. Generally, productive labor is associated with market and can create productive earnings. But the housework and reproductive labor are not associated with the market but performed inside a family. So this kind of work cannot make any earnings from market automatically. In the paid economic activities, men take the majority. But in the unpaid economic activities, women are the majority. Women's value is always ignored in the traditional society dominated by men. And women's participation and development are always disregarded in social development Practice (World Bank, 2002).

There is obvious gender difference in the division of work inside the family. Women spend more time on housework. Women's economic activity is mainly involved in agriculture due to the restriction of their housework. Women have more chances to participate in non-agricultural economic activities before they get married. They take comparatively less responsibility for the family during the participation and obedience to the division of labor and allocation of labor force resource inside: the family. They will take more responsibility for their family after marriage, especially after having children. For women labor force, the increase of family responsibility implies that they will face more options and probably make sacrifice in earning income (Li Shi, 2001).

Both Tong Xin and Long Yan think that women's labor became a part of rational family strategy after family-contract responsibility system is implemented. The fact that men are engaged with non-agricultural work and women are engaged with agricultural work occurs because of family benefit. So a trend of agricultural feminization becomes obvious continuously and increasingly. Gao Xiaoxian (1994) thinks that although men also pay attention to the farm's planting and harvesting, it s women who perform other management responsibilities for the farm. As long as agriculture bears the responsibility for family employment and livelihood security, women will be restricted from changing their position. This is the structural obstacle

in the transfer of female laborers. The realization of men's social value is at the sacrifice of women's individual development.

There is much valuable research about labor division between genders, and this study will focus on the gender inequality in work division and its relationship with poverty. There is significant gender inequality at labor intensity and labor hours in rural areas through our research and analysis in five provinces including Gansu, Shaanxi, Sichuan, Jiangxi and Ningxia. Women should not only take all housework but also spend much more time and more energy than men in crop production and livestock breeding. It is also found that the gender inequality in work division has a complicated relation with poverty.

There are four sections in this chapter: 1) Work division of genders; 2) Gender inequality in work division of various types of production; **3)** Gender inequality in the labor hour and labor intensity; and 4) The relation between gender inequality in labor division and poverty.

## *6.1 Work division of genders*

### 6.1.1 Work division under the traditional social gender criteria

Men work outside their homes and are described as the kind of tools according to the traditional social gender criterion. Men's time and energy should be put into the work out of family and supply economic support for their family. And women are defined as inside the family and described as the kind of sensibility. Women's time and energy should be spent on their family such as taking care of child and doing housework. According to the traditional social gender criteria, the work division has to be done between the wife and husband for maintaining the family's best status. The husband should pay more attention to the external activity such as occupational, educational and political activity so that they can maintain the connection between their family and external world. They assume the instrumental function. The wife should pay more attention to the housework for maintaining inner relation within the family. They take care of children and make them connected. The wife assumes the emotional function.

***Case 6-1*** *(Shaanxi): Wang Xiaofang, female, is **34** years old with the educational level of elementary school. Her husband, Li Chunhuai, is **33** years old with the educational level of senior middle school. Now the husband does some odd work outside. They have a daughter studying in the elementary school in the village. Wang Xiaofang is responsible for taking care of the child, housework and the farm work. Her husband does not help her in housework. He thinks that the man should do the work as a man. It is women's duty to take care of a child and do housework.*

***Case 6-2*** *(Shaanxi): Gao Guangshou, male, is **50** years old with the educational level of junior middle school. Zhang Xilian is **48** years old with the educational level of junior middle school too. Their daughter; Gaoyun, is **20** years old and studying in the university. Their son is **23** years old who works outside. Both the parents are not very healthy. They*

*do the farm work together. The wife is responsible for the 2mu of cotton area. The husband is responsible for the hard work such as carrying the dung and winnowing after harvest. The man will go to do some odd jobs outside in slack seasons for a month per year. The wife has not been to town for several years. She just went to Yichuan to help harvesting apples from October to November after planting wheat last year. She earned 15 Yuan per day. The wife could go outside to work because the employer looked for employees in their village. And their children were outside and did not need her care, so she could go out for work. During this period the man also went to work with a building team.*

Seeing from the survey in Shaanxi, it is found that women participate more in the production of cotton and vegetables. Comparing with the production of wheat, corn and fruit, more intensive labor, patience and carefulness will be needed in the labor of planting, looking after and harvesting the cotton. Women have more advantages than men in such production. It is also proved by the villagers interviewed. From the point of view of anthropology, women are evolved to pay more attention to the family's security and children. Under the circumstances of autarky, women pay more attention to the vegetables at courtyard and feeding pigs and chicken. Some difference of work division resulted from the unequal access to social chances. It is found in the survey that men are engaged more in technology oriented activities while women are engaged more in labor intensive activities. This happened because women have few chances to learn the technology and knowledge. A very obvious explanation is that all kinds of training classes are for men mainly. Women and men are not equal for getting the support from outside. It is owing to the traditional habits that a man works outside and a woman *works* inside a family. Women think generally that men should be officials or do business outside and the housework should be done by women. Men have the same social consciousness.

***Case 6-3*** *(Sichuan): The agrotechnician in the town has never been here. It's always the head of the team who disseminates agricultural techniques. If men are at home, they will go to learn because of their higher educational level and more knowledge. Men have some scientific knowledge. It will be more effective for them if men go to learn it.*

***Case 6-4*** *(Ningxia): Zhang Xiufang, female, is 50 years old without any education. There are three people in her family. They have 6mu of wheat. Her husband is Fan Jingzhu, 51 years old with the educational level of senior middle school. Now he is the team header and cashier. He has been the accountant and cashier in his village for 20 years. Her son is 24 years old and is working in Wuhan. They have 6mu of crop land. They plant wheat or corn. They do poultry raising, mainly chickens. They can raise 2000 chickens every year. The husband is responsible for watering the field. She is responsible for cutting grass. Because she is illiterate, mostly it is her husband who learns the technology knowledge. Her husband also helps her to do some poultry raising work, for example "chopping stuff", "watering the chicken", and "checking illness for the chicken" and so on*

### 6.1.2 The influence of working outside on gender work division

From Figure 6-1, we can see that among the ten villages of the five provinces surveyed, in 8 of the 10 villages, over 20% of the village labor force are long-term out-migrant workers. Most of them are men. So many men work outside to make cash income for a family, which also places all family burdens on women. Women have to do both farm work and housework as well. Besides, quite a few women also do poultry breeding.

***Case 6-5*** *(Jiangxi): Zhu Yulan, female, is 52 years old without any education. Her husband works outside. She breeds 3 pigs per year. She has 3 mu of crop land. 1 mu is in a separated place. She has to do all farm work. Her daily activity includes cooking, chopping wood and cultivating crops etc. She said that chopping wood and cultivating crop were hard for her. It is easy for her to do housework. She can chop 30 to 35 kilograms of wood by herself once.*

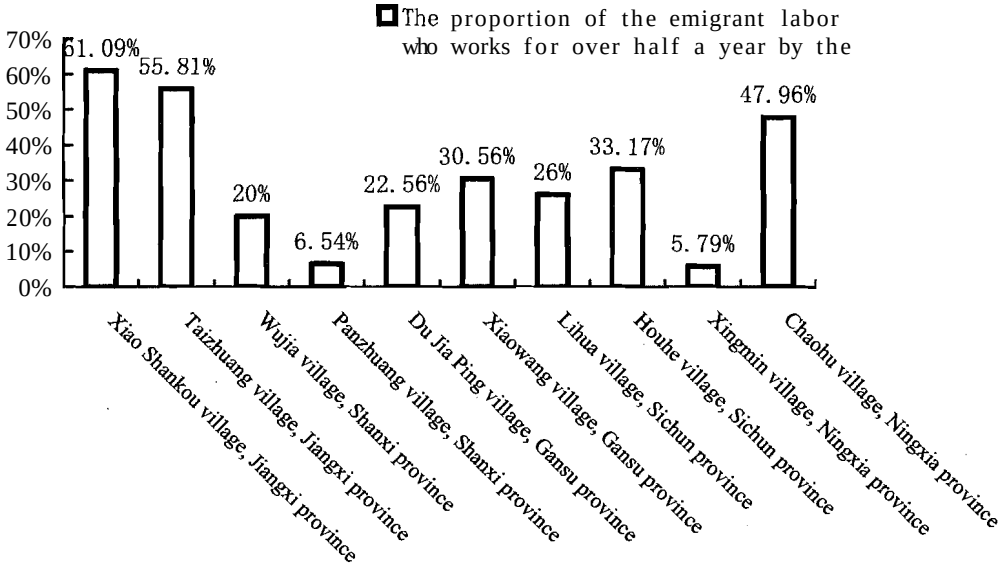


**Figure 6-1 Statistics of the labor force number in the surveyed communities**

In the areas surveyed, men working outside do not come back just for one time every year. They will come back at busy seasons of planting and harvesting to assist women to finish the hard labor.

***Case 6-6*** *(Shaanxi): Zhang Qianlao. The woman does housework and takes care of children, and does farm work at the same time. The man sometimes helps his wife do some housework, especially at the busy seasons when woman is too busy to do both housework and farm work.*

*Wang Huizhu. Woman in the family not only does housework but also breeds cattle, sheep and does farm work. All housework is done by woman. Sometimes the husband helps a bit.*

*Li Shengli. He thinks that it is too hard for the woman to harvest the wheat. If he is at home, he will help the woman with some hard work, for example, harvesting wheat and winnowing etc.*

### 6.1.3 Basically all housework is done by women

Conceptually, the purpose of housework is to maintain the basic living standard for the family members. Other activity can be done only when the basic needs of the family members are satisfied. So the housework is with externality. However, the value of housework is always ignored or debased; because the housework done by women does not enter the market for trade. The housework done by women in the family can't get compensated from the market (Li Xiaoyun, 1999).

In the surveyed areas, both in poverty-stricken areas and well-off suburbs, basically all the housework are done by women because of the influence of traditional gender division as "men for outside work and women for home". The other reason is that men work outside and do not have time for housework.

***Case 6-7*** *(Gansu): Jia Xiaoqin is 34 years old. Her husband never helps her with housework. He thinks this is an issue of work division; it is women's responsibility to cook for the family. With regard to the equality between men and women, Xiaoqin thinks men and women should do the same work like cooking and other labors. But her husband thinks that it is very equal now that the hard work is done by men and the light work is done by women.*

***Case 6-8*** *(Ningxia): In Xingmin village, most men do the traffic transportation business. There is a clear division of work between genders. Women are at home doing housework and taking care of children. They have to weed the field periodically. Mostly a woman teaches the children. The family's earning depends on man's work. Usually men do some odd work or transportation business nearby, so women have to cook for them everyday.*

## *6.2 Gender difference in work division of the different employment styles*

In rural areas, the occupation for women is mainly in crop production, livestock breeding and emigrant work. A few women have their own enterprises. According to the survey in the crop production, men decide on the purchase of seeds, pesticide and fertilizer. Women are engaged in field management. This kind of separation between the decider and the worker is owing to non-agricultural employment absorbing and assimilation of the men's labor in rural developments. The persistence of the men's role as the decider indicates social gender characteristics that men are dominant in the traditional crop production structure. But it is not the same in livestock breeding; women play a more important role than men in all kinds of activities. Furthermore, women are at a more important position in the resource allocation in livestock breeding. At the same time, women have more opportunities to learn more knowledge. So from women's contribution to all kinds of activities about the livestock breeding and their acquisition of knowledge about the livestock breeding, we can delineate a

very clear profile of production system dominated by women, namely, women livestock breeding system. We will put the emphasis on labor division between men and women in all kinds of employments to explain women's actual contribution to different employment.

### 6.2.1 Gender difference in crop production

In the areas we surveyed, both women and men participate in the crop production. Wholly speaking, women are very important in the production of cotton. But from the specific production activities, women mainly participate in the field management and harvest. The gender division of labor and the hypothesis of gender sub-production system were proved in many African countries. There are men and women sub production systems distinct from each other because of the different labor assignment inside the family. For example, the legume and potato are female crops. Women are responsible for the whole production process from soil preparation, planting, management, harvest to market trading and they can arrange the money earned from this independently. The existence of strict sense of gender sub production system is not found in the specific case study in China (Li Xiaoyun, 1994). We will analyze men and women's labor input in the production of wheat, cotton and rice respectively and explain the gender difference in the input linkages.

**Wheat production**

According to the survey in Gansu (see Appendixl), it is found that men play a very important role in plowing and seeding during the whole production of wheat. Women play a very important role in field management and harvest. Generally speaking, plowing requires more physical strength and more technology and knowledge are needed in seeding.

**Cotton production**

According to the survey in Shaanxi (see Appendix 2), it is concluded that women play a dominant role during the cotton seeding, management and harvest. It takes more time and energy in cotton production comparing with other crops. Seeding, management to harvest is all labor intensive activity, which does not need much physical strength, but a lot of time.

**Rice production**

The main activities during rice production include buying seeds, making field, seeding, transplanting rice seedlings, weeding, killing pests pests, fertilizing, watering, harvest and preparation for next plough etc. in Taizhuang village, Donggang Xiang, Jiujiang City, Jiangxi Province(see Appendix 3). Men and women participate in the activities of transplanting rice seedlings, watering and harvest together. Other activities are finished by men of the family. Among these activities, it needs to perish the pests three times from May to June. It needs watering from making field to harvest. Men's important work is to carry the paddy from the field to home and get the rice from the paddy. Women's work is mainly to help men harvest and sun the paddy.

According to the gender analysis of work division in the above different crops

production, it is found that women participate in the main production labors of the different crops. It is just difficult for them to do hard work. Women play a very important role in the detail and particular work, i.e. the field management. Generally, women invest much time and physical energy in the crop production.

### 6.2.2 Gender difference in livestock breeding

Compared with crop production, there is distinct gender vvork division in livestock breeding. Women play a dominant role in the labor division of livestock breeding. In livestock breeding, women are responsible for breeding and disease prevention. Livestock breeding is a woman dominated activity.

In Ningxia, livestock breeding is done by women. Women feed livestock three times a day-- in the morning, at noon and in the evening. Although sometimes men are at home and have time, they seldom do the work. In Chaohu Village, in over 90% of the families, the livestock breeding is done by women according to our survey. It is indicated in the cases that women not only feed punctually, but also prepare the feedstuff. Besides, women can get the relevant technical support on livestock breeding training. From this aspect, it proves that gender sub-production system exists in livestock breeding.

***Case 6-9*** *(Ningxia): Jia Lijuan, female, is 28 years old with the educational level of junior middle school. Her husband is 30 years old with the educational level of junior middle school. They have a six years old child who is studying in the preschool. In 2004 they bought 3 cows with 300 Yuan. In 2005, they raised 120 chickens with 400 Yuan. They owned 20-30 sheep before 2004. They fed the sheep on the He Lan Shan mountain before. But they have to feed the sheep in a pen because of the government's policy of closing hillsides to facilitate afforesting. In 2004, her husband is employed as a driver and there is not enough labor in the family. So they sold 20 sheep at the price of 250yuan each. The total income is 5000 Yuan. Now there are only 4 sheep left and they are fed with the cows together in a pen. She gets up at six every morning and starts to feed chicken, sheep and cows. She feeds chickens three times every day at 7:30 am, 13:00 and at 18:00. The foodstuff is corn flavor and bran, and alfalfa sometimes. She feeds the cows twice every day in the morning and evening. Now they plant some alfalfa. She cuts the alfalfa manually by herself and she thinks it is not a hard work. She does not graze the cows because she has stocked some straw stalk for the cows last year: To save the cost, she feed the cows and sheep together with the same foodstuff. She attends all kinds of trainings organized in the village such as the training in planting, livestock breeding, special animal breeding and excellent animal breeding. She thinks it is very useful for her; especially she can combine the theory with the practice completely.*

### 6.2.3 Gender difference in emigrant labor and others

It is found in the survey that except the traditional crop production and livestock breeding, women are also involved in emigrant labor. It is indicated in the case of Jiangxi that women's labor is indispensable in housework.

***Case 6-10*** *(Jiangxi): Wan Huajin, male, is 39 years old with 5 years of elementary school education. Now he stays at home. His wife, Fan Xinghua (38 years old with 4 years of elementary school education) has been employed to make shoes in Wenzhou since 2003.*

*His first son is 18 years old this year and works in Guangzhou. His second son is 16 years old and makes shoes in Wenzhou. Wan Huajin's father is over 70 years old. There are 3 mu of cropland, 4 fen of field and 4 fen of orchard. He is also a craftsman. He does carpentry work for about 100 days every year at Zhajin. They also feed two pigs at home. His father feeds the pigs every day. Fan Xinghua leaves home early in the year and comes back at the end of the year. Wan Huajin does not go out to work so that there will be someone to take care of their cropland. The father does the housework, and sometimes Wan Huajin does a little. So their family is at more mess. Wan Huajin said their life was not comfortable.*

Some women have their own enterprises such as a store or a processing enterprise. How about the work division between men and women during the operation of the business? The case from Ningxia indicates that men usually do not support women to do business because it can bring them extra burdens. So they will restrict women's activities at capital and technology.

**Case 6-11** *(Ningxia): Tao Jinxia is 42 years old with the educational level of junior middle school. Her husband, Songfu, is 45 years old. He is an electrician in Cong Steel Factory with the educational level of senior middle school. Her first son is 22 years old and is studying at the Nanchang Science and Technology University in Jiangxi as a second year student. Their youngest son is 20 years old and has sewed in the army for two years in Tian Shui, Gansu. He will retire from the army this winter.* Tao Jinxia reports her situation as follows:

*I opened a flour mill and put it into operation in 1984. It was closed in 1996 for more than one year (Because of the programming in the village) and reopened in 1998. There is just my flour mill in Zhong Zhuang. There are flour mills in both Shang zhuang and Xizhuang. There is one in Xiazhuang and there are three in Shangzhuang. The villagers come to my flour mill to grind flour. Now, I can earn 6000 Yuan. We proposed to open this mill and my husband did not agree at the beginning because he did not want to make trouble. We will be very busy if it is put into operation. If I am involved in the flour mill, the farm work will be done by him. He has to ask leave from the factory. But at last I insisted on this enterprise and he did not oppose stubbornly. It's our first time to open a flour mill. He applied for a loan of 2,000 Yuan from a bank. In 2005, I wanted to change the grinders and he did not agree at first because he thought it would take too much money. I contacted some people to buy the machine. He helped me install the machine. We spent 16,000yuan for the machine. It is my will to open this flourmill. I will think carefully before I start to do something. Once I decide to do something, I won't be affected by him.*

## *6.3 Gender inequality in work time*

Lishi (2001) thinks that the work division between men and women in a family is mainly influenced by the function of the family members' welfare maximum. The two factors which have influenced the family's welfare are family's income and housework. The obvious gender difference exists in the work division inside a family. Women spend most of their time on the housework. Their economic activities are mainly of agriculture because of the restriction of the housework. Women spend most

of their labor time in agricultural production. The work division between men and women in a family is not by the principle of comparative benefit but by the principle of "men come first". That is to meet men's employment requirement. Women's employment is just a kind of supplement to the family.

For men and women of a family, the work division is not the same every day. And the amount of labor is not the same either. In the surveyed village in Jiangxi, we calculate that in this family the time which men and women have spent in the different work division according to the everyday work division plan filled by a villagers (see Figure 6-2). From this Figure, we can see that the man in this family spends his time mainly on the crop production (for 9 hours). But the woman spends her time on two aspects: one is on the crop production and livestock breeding (for 9.5 hours); the other is on the housework (for 2 hours). At the meantime, men have half an hour of more leisure time than women. This indicates that women bear more burdens on family production and housework. Women do no have the same amount of leisure time as men do.

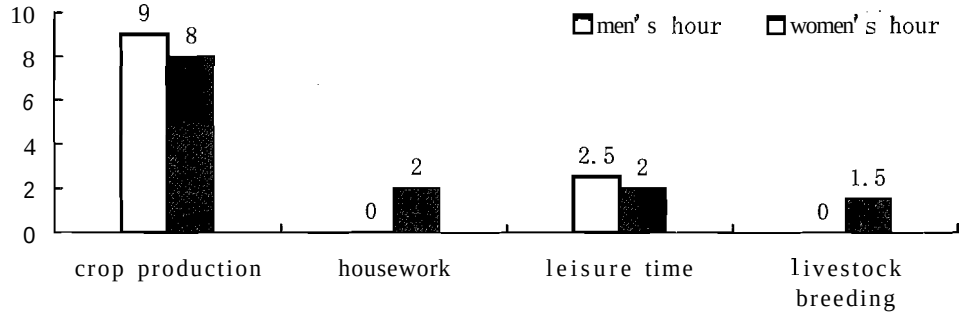


**Figure 6-2 The Figure of everyday work division between men and women (unit: hour)**

Sources: Field survey in Jiangxi

On the aspect of everyday work time and leisure time, the inequality exists between men and women. Is it same for the work division between men and women for one year? In the survey in Jiangxi, from the result of interview with men (see table 6-1), women's family burden is heavier than men's. The farm work is done by the spouses during the busy seasons. At the meantime, women have to do the housework. In the slack seasons, women also have a lot of housework to do such as washing, tidying room and treating the visitors etc. Women still have no leisure time. They will have some handwork even when they are watching TV. In this season, men usually go out to find some work of construction, woodwork or do other business etc. Or they will stay at home for some work about farm. There is much more leisure time for men. They have much more time than women to join in the entertainment. Influenced by the traditional concept, although women always complain that they bear much burden and they are so tired, they do not recognize that men can do most housework, just like women can do the farm work with men together in despite of the different roles and responsibilities between men and women. So the survey suggests that women has little time and opportunities to participate the training to improve their ability.

Table **6-1** Women's activities **in** a year in Taizhuang village, **Xiushui** City, Jiangxi Province

(the shade is women's working time)

| women's activities | Jan | Feb | Mar | APR | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raising pigs | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cooking | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Washing | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Taking care of children | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Working in the farm at busy seasons | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cleaning | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Treating visitors | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Picking tea-leaves | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chopping wood | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Note: If there is someone visiting them, usually it is women who treat visitors. Sometimes women also chop the wood but only a few times.

## *6.4 Gender inequality in the labor intension*

According to the traditional gender work division, men play a more important role in crop production. But men have to go out for work because of the poverty. The old can't do the agricultural production, so women have to do all the farm work themselves. The result is that women do both women's work inside the household and men's work outside the household. So we can see that women bear a very hard labor intention, even 2 or **3** times more than their endurance. This inevitably affects their health physically and mentally.

It is found from the survey in Shaanxi and Ningxia that women have to do the farm work although men are at home because men always go out to work. For example, women perform the management of cotton and vegetables in the greenhouse. The work of cotton planting and vegetables in the greenhouse is very petty and meticulous. So it needs women to invest much energy and physical force.

*Case 6-12 (Shaanxi): Yan Hongli, female, is 32 years old. The family's income depends on her husband's long-term emigrant labor. Her father-in-law is not very healthy andpassed out several times during the past two years. Her mother-in-law can't do the farm work because of her poor health condition. She only helps take care of the child and do a little housework. Yan Hongli has two daughters. One is studying in the forth year at the elementaty school. The other is nearly 2 years old. They own the land of six people. This*

*year they have 11 mu of wheat and 4 mu of cotton. They have to employ somebody to plough seed and harvest the wheat. She suns the wheat herself. She does all the work in the cotton field by herself. She needs 2 or 3 days to finish the work such as spouting pesticide on cotton which can be finished in one day by other families. She needs to spout the pesticide 12 or 13 times every year. She has a backache after doing this every time.*

From the comparison with various linkages in the vegetable production, we can see that women play a more important role in this than in the other crops production except in the procedure of selling. The proportion of labor is nearly the same as men in seeding, management and harvest.

*Case 6-13 (Ningxia): Wang Xiulian, female, is 42 years old without any education. Long Funing, male, is 47 years old with the educational level of senior middle school. Their daughter is 19 years old and graduated from an agriculture school. Their son is 18 years old and just graduatedfrom university. Their daughter works in the afforesting team of Dawukou District. They own 2 vegetable greenhouses and a total of 9.44 mu of wheat and corn. The greenhouses occupy 1.56 mu of land. They raised 20 sheep and 2 pigs in 2004.*

*It is warm in the greenhouses. So people are easy to get a cold if they work in the greenhouses for a long time. Her resistance to disease is reduced and is very easy to become ill because of her long-time work in the greenhouses. Wang Xiulian suffers asthma and needs the medicine all the time. She spends 1500 Yuan on this. Sometime she has to be given an injection when the illness is so heavy. Most of the work in the greenhouses is done by her: Her husband is responsible for feeding the pigs and sheep and the wheat production. After finishing the work, he will go to the greenhouses to help his wife. She said the work in greenhouses is a little lighter because her husband has to repair the dyke, herd the sheep and do some odd jobs at his free time.*

Table **6-2** Wang Xiulian and her husband's daily activities, **Xingmin** Village, Ningxia

| | Activities | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Man | Getting Up | | Breakfast | | | Herding sheep | | | | Working in greenhouse | | | lunch | Noon break | | Working in greenhouse | | | Cutting glasses | | Supper | | Feeding sheep | | Going to tied | |
| **Time** | 4 | | 5 | | 6 | 7 | **8** | 9 | 10 | 11 | | 12 | **13** | 14 | **15** | 16 | | 17 | **18** | **19** | 20 | 21 | 22 | | 23 | 24 |
| Woman | Getting Up | | Breakfast | | Feeding pigs | | | Working in greenhouse | | | Cooking and lunch | | | Noon break | | | Working in greenhouse | | | | Cooking and supper | | Feeding pigs | | Going to bed | |

For women, they don't think the gender inequality exists in the fact of finishing a large amount of labor in the farm. They have to do housework such as cooking, cleaning and washing after finishing the tired labor outside. Men can help women with the farm work, but they just enjoy the fruit of the housework. This places very heavy responsibilities on women both physically and mentally. The intensity and the contents of the labor for women are much more than men from the following cases. Women's health is damaged by this kind of inequality in work division. At the meantime, women suffer mentally because they can not get support from men.

***Case 6-14*** *(Ningxia): Wu Quanqin, is 36 years old from Xingmin village. She has a daughter and a son. She has junior middle school education and her husband has senior middle school education. They plant 10 mu of wheat. Her husband is engaged in the business of oil pressing. They own three greenhouses which occupy 2 mu of land. "Now I do all the work in the hothouses by myself. He just helps me with the hard work. The work in the greenhouses is very hard. I want to do some easy work. So we decided to open a grain and oil supply center We will close the greenhouses in two years and extend this grain and oil supply center It is very easy and clean to run this center Over the weekend, my daughter can take care of it. She can do her homework when she takes care of the center I often go to work in the hothouses during the weekend. My daughter always complains that all the young people of her age have time to play except her If I am free I try to allow her to ramble out.''*

***Case 6-15*** *(Gansu): Guoju is 55 years old and illiterate, lived in Xiaowang village. There are six people in her family. Her husband is 8 years older than her: They have four children and 11.7 mu of cropland, including 7 mu of wheat and 4 mu of rape. Her son works outside and her husbandjust herds the cows. So Guoju is the main laborer in her family. Because of the heavy work and lack of nutrition and even food, Guoju is in poor healthy. She suffers from hypoglycemia and gastric disease, and often feels dizzy. She has no extra money to see the doctor and has to suffer She has to do all housework. She doesn't go to see the doctor until she can't support herself.*

*Now Guoju has to cook, feed the livestock,* heat the *kang and take care of children after she finishes her daily farm work. Her husband never bums Kang and just has a rest, smoke and drink tea on Kang. Now Guoju is over 50 years old. All the hawesting work of rapeseeds will be done by her She quarreled with her husband during the wheat hawesting. Guoju cried to us:* "A *few days ago, the wheat was almost dry and we had to cut them immediately. I can't do it very fast by myself, so I asked him to help me. But he did not agree and said his job is just to herd the cows. I cried with anger". We asked her if her husband went to cut the wheat. She said with tears: "No, and I have to cook for him. The work is too hard for women to do. It needs men." Guoju expects her husband to help her when she is too busy. But her husband never does housework. So Guoju thinks that it is not good to be a woman and she would become a man if she could be born again.*

**Table 6-3 The daily activities of a household for case (a man and a woman)**

| | Activities(busy seasons) | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Husband** | Getting up, drinking tea | Going to the field, herding cows | | Lunch | Noon break | Going to the field, herding cows | | Supper and Watching TV | Going to bed |
| **Time** | 4-5 | 7-10 | 11 | 12 | 13-14 | 15-19 | 20 | 21 | 22-4 |
| **Wife** | Getting up, cleaning, milling reaphook, feeding pigs | Farm work | Cooking, Lunch Feeding pigs, washing | Noon break | Going to the field | Cooking, feeding pigs | | Supper, Washing bowls, Watching TV | Going to bed |

| | Activities(Slack seasons) | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Husband** | Getting up &Drinking tea | Having breakfast, Herding caws | Playing mah-jongg, fertilizing crop | | Having supper | Watching TV; Having rest | | |
| **Time** | 8 | 9-10 | 11-17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22-8 |
| **Wife** | Getting up &cleaning Cooking | Having breakfast, Washing bowls, Feeding pigs, Burning Kang | Carrying dung, making shoes, weaving sweater, having a nap when tired | Cooking, burning Kang | Having supper, Washing bowls, Feeding pigs | Having a nap | Watchin g TV | Going to bed |

## *6.5 The relationship between gender inequality in work division and poverty*

### 6.5.1 The impact of gender inequality in work division on poverty

In the gender work division, the strategy for most families is that men go out to work to earn cash income. Women maintain the harvest of the cropland and ensure the supply of provisions for themselves. They also need to do the housework well. Under this kind of work division, it is considered that men work so hard and have much responsibility. But in fact women do women's work inside the household and do men's work outside the household. Both women's labor content and labor intensity is much more than men's. It is the typical phenomenon of gender inequality in work division. The influence of work division between genders is that women have to bear a long period of tiresome and hard work. It has a negative influence on women both psychologically and physically. It also reduces women's employment chances to gain cash income and prevents women from participating in the management and decision-making for the community affairs. This kind of work division strengthens men's dominance on economy and weakens women's influence to some extent. So it influenced women's economic status externally.

The case from Sichuan indicates that women are busy with the farm work and the housework after their husband works outside. So they have little time to communicate with their relatives and friends. And they have no energy to take care of the community affairs. So their social relations can't be maintained. In the meantime, women are prevented from acquiring new information and knowledge. All of these inevitably affect women's economic contribution to their family.

***Case 6-16*** *(Sichuan): Zhu Guiren, female, is 46 years old without any education from Houhe village. There are three people in her family. All of them work. Her husband works in Shandong. Her son builds railway in Shandong.*

*"After the men go out for work, I have to do farm work at home. I have no time to make*

*social communications. How can I have time? For example, if I return to my mother's home, I have to go in the morning and come back in the afternoon. Because only I stay at home,I have to feed the pigs etc. But it is 15 kilograms from my house to my mother's house. It is so far: So I seldom go. I just visit my mother once a year. I visited her 6 or 7 times a year before.*

The case from Gansu indicates that women take the double burden of field work and housework because of men working outside. This inevitably affects women's health. Although men can earn money outside, women's illness also weakens the family's benefit to some extent. And it probably exacerbates the poverty of the family.

***Case 6-17** (Gansu): Wen Gouwa, female, is 43 years old without any education. There are 7 people in her family. They have four children and theirparents. They own 10 mu of cropland. Her husband works outside a whole year: He just comes back during the busy seasons. Wen Gouwa's family economic status is just fair to middling with her farm work and her husband's emigrant labor income. But a few years ago the child's grandfather got brain thrombus and stayed on the bed with paralysis. They spent a lot of money on treatment. Nobody takes care of him, so her first daughter who just graduated from the elementary school had to give up her middle school education and take care of the grandfather Two years ago, the grandfather died and their first daughter went out to work. Their living standard became better But it was not expected that Weng Gouwab health became very bad because of the long time heavy burdens of taking care of the young and old and doing the farm work. She got tracheitis and cervicitis after being inspected in the hospital. So she could not do hard work any more. She had spent all the money her husband earned and is in debt now because of her illness. And her second daughterpassed the test for entering the senior middle school. But they can not afford the tuition for three daughters. So their second daughter had to give up the opportunity to study in the senior middle school.*

### 6.5.2 The impact of poverty on gender inequality in work division

The inequality of work division resulted from the lack of natural resource. Men and women's work division are not the same in the poverty-stricken areas owing to the lack of natural resources. Women bear much housework such as feeding pigs, cooking, taking care of children and cleaning. They also involve themselves in the occasional affairs such as treating visitors, picking tea-leaves and chopping wood. But the value of this kind of work is invisible. It can't be recognized by men. Even women themselves do not think this is their contribution.

It is found in the survey of Shaanxi that the grain output is very limited because of lack of water. In order to ensure the grain rations of the family, they seldom change the crop. Last year the price of cotton is very high, so some villagers decided to plant cotton. Each family has 1 to 2 mu. Because of the limit of natural conditions, the villagers planted different crops according to 'the price adjustment of market in order to optimize the income from farm. At the same time this kind of change also increased women's burden. Women are responsible for all the work in the field management of cotton production. The case from Sichuan indicates that the lack of water also increases women's burdens.

***Case** 6-18 (Sichuan): Yan Zhongying, female, graduated from the elementary school. She is from Lihua village, Sichuan. There are 4 people in her family. Her son and his wife work outside. She planned to raise more pigs. But there is not enough water. Generally, whoever is free has to carry the water. "Usually I carry the water because my husband has done much work already. But I do not like carrying water because it is too hard to do".*

The lack of physical capital also increases women's burden. In the two surveyed villages in Gansu, the villagers can not afford a farmer tricycle, so they only can use wheel barrow to carry the wheat and rapeseeds. The cropland is far from home, it is even 7.5 kilomaters away and there is some slope road, and this brings much burden to women. During busy season, men have to come back to help women harvest crops.

The case from Gansu indicates that women have to take all the production labor because men work outside and women cannot afford the tools of production due to poverty. The intension of the labor is a very strict threat to women's physical and mental health. It worsens the poverty of the family.

***Case 6-19**(Gansu): Wang Xiuyun is 33 years old without any education. Her husband is 34 years old with the educational level of junior middle school. They have a son and a daughter. In April, 1999, her husband and his brother went out to do some oddjobs. Her parents-in-law are at home. Xiuyun worked with her parents-in-law together. They raised some sheep. She used the wheel barrow to carry the soil for the sheep pen with her father-in-law. She pulled the barrow by herself because she thought her father is too old. In the village, usually it's men who pull the barrow. But her husband worked outside and she had to do by herself. The rope on the barrow was broken suddenly; Xiuyun fell with her head knocking onto the ground. Her nose and mouth bled. The village doctor helped her stop the blood and she went back home and continued to do the hard work. In September, she felt a serious headache. She got a serious cerebral concussion after being inspected in a big hospital. Her health has deteriorated and she has to take medicine now.*

The cases aforementioned suggest that there is a mutual influence between the inequality in work division and the poverty. Simultaneous interference in both of them can help us to achieve the goal of gender equality and poverty reduction more easily.

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**Appendix 1 Work division in wheat production in Dujiaping village, Gansu**

| | Solar calendar / Activities | Jan | | Feb | | Mar | | APR | | May | | Jun | | Jul | | Aug | | Sep | | Oct | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | |
| 1 | Plowing land | | | | | | | | | | | | | √ | √ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Fertilizing | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | √× | √× | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Seeding | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | √× | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Fertilizing | | | | √× | √× | √× | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Weeding | | | | √× | √× | √× | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | Spout pesticide | | | | | | | × | | × | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Harvesting | | | | | | | | | | | √× | √× | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Note: "√" indicates the work done by men; "×" indicates the work done by women.

**Appendix 2 Work division in cotton production in Wujia village, Shaanxi Province**

| Activities \ Solar calendar | | Jan | | Feb | | Mar | | Apr | | May | | Jun | | Jul | | Aug | | Sep | | Oct | | Nov | | Dec | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 1 | Plowing by machine | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Seeding | | | | | | √ × | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Field Management | | | | | | | | | × | × | × | × | × | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Picking up and peeling the cotton | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | √ × | √ × | √ × | | | | | | |
| 5 | Pulling the stem | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | √ | | | |

Note: "√" indicates the work done by men; "×" indicates the work done by women.

**Appendix 2 Work division in cotton production in Wujia village, Shaanxi Province**

| Activities \ Solar calendar | | Jan | | Feb | | Mar | | Apr | | May | | Jun | | Jul | | Aug | | Sep | | Oct | | Nov | | Dec | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
| 1 | Plowing by machine | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Seeding | | | | | | √ × | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Field Management | | | | | | | | | × | × | × | × | × | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Picking up and peeling the cotton | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | √ × | √ × | √ × | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Pulling the stem | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | √ | | | |

Note: "√" indicates the work done by men; "×" indicates the work done by women.

# 7 Policy Recommendations

China has achieved a great deal with its efforts on implementing the basic state policy of equality between men and women in social economy and political affairs. Even in poor communities, the basic state policy of gender equality has made evident progress in autonomous elections among villagers, grass roots women organizations, community participation, training, family planning, prevention of domestic violence, health and education. In poor areas, compared with the past, greater progress has been made for boys and girls in receiving equal education. However, the gender inequality is still very common in poor rural areas and there is a complicated inherent connection between gender inequality and poverty. Such phenomena are an important aspect of contemporary inequality of social gender in China. This basic special feature should be considered by the Chinese Government as an important policy area in developing a harmonious society. At the same time, it should be one of the important areas for international donor agencies in their China strategies and interventions.

The research has found out that in poor areas, serious situation of inequality between men and women prevails in political rights, acquisition of assets, employment, health, education and labor division. The Chinese government should take the gender inequality in the above-mentioned areas as its main policy and intervention areas in developing a harmonious society, in carrying out the strategic plan of the women and children development guideline and in its actions to reach the Millennium Development Goals. In the meantime, rural areas especially poor areas should be regarded as key points from a more strategic viewpoint. All China Women's Federation and the Women and Children Working Commission of the State Council should adopt such a special feature as one of their main bases in formulating their policy recommendations and development plans.

In China, working affairs concerning, political rights, health, education, assets acquisition and birth control fall into different departments. The Ministry of Civil Affairs is responsible for autonomous election among villagers; Ministry of Education for education and Family Planning Commission for family planning. These ministries do not have a close connection with the All China Women's Federation and the Women and Children Working Commission of the State Council at micro level. Gender inequality in the process of autonomous election among villagers is very serious, and women account for a very low proportion in village committees. The gender imbalance in birth control in poor areas is also very prominent. There is also a very serious gender inequality among educated children. Planned policy intervention to these phenomena is absent at the level of community. Therefore, these departments should give full attention to the concept of gender equality and how to implement such a concept in their grass-roots work. At the same time, it is foremost important for the All China Women's Federation to set up inter-departmental capacity building projects. It is suggested that during the process of autonomous election among villagers, a capacity building program should be initiated to encourage women to get

involved in election. Consideration should be given to increasing room and board allowance for girls. Considering health situation of women in poor areas, it is recommended to build village clinics into a comprehensive service station with effective health care for women and children. It is also proposed that in the training programs for emigrant laborers organized by agricultural departments, more consideration should be given to the number of women trainees as well as training contents.

The Chinese govemment is now implementing its ambitious program of poverty reduction in poor areas. Under the unified coordination and planning of the State Council Leading Group, this program is being carried out in 592 poor counties all over China. This program is aimed at 100 million poor people, half of which are women. The poor areas have received great financial support through poverty reduction funds, work for food funds and credit loans. However, distinct gender-sensitive principles and framework are absent from the operating process of such support. The relationship between gender inequality and poverty is not made one of the main parts in China's rural poverty reduction policies. This has failed to ensure women, the poorest of the poor, to eventually benefit from the poverty reduction. The poverty alleviation system lacks capacity to formulate gender sensitive policy and plans. It is then proposed to carry out capacity building within China's poverty alleviation system on gender mainstreaming and gender budget. It is proposed to implement a poverty reduction plan aimed at promoting gender equality jointly organized by the State Council Poverty Alleviation Leading Group and All China Women's Federation. It is recommended that international donor agencies provide technical assistance to such a plan.

i. Various Chinese governmental departments in charge of civil affairs, education, health, and land administration are all implementing various developmenit plans in rural areas in China. These development plans normally focus more on principle of general benefit and lack gender sensitive awareness and approaches, thus reinforcing or resulting in gender inequality among beneficiaries. Though the poor areas are receiving constant supports from those departments, situation of gender inequality has not received satisfactory improvement. Therefore, it is imperative to implement a capacity building scheme of gender mainstreaming policy and planning among the above-mentioned departments. This will be helpful in carrying out the basic concept of a harmonious society in national development plan, and obtaining equitable social benefits from these development plans as well. It is recommended that in the development cooperation between international donor agencies and various Chinese departments, priority should be given to the strategic policies of gender equality and these departments should be assisted in capacity building.

The World Bank and ADB are providing a broad range of development assistance in China. These development projects touch upon all fields in rural development especially rural poverty alleviation. Rural areas and rural poor are dealt with even in the cooperation in urban areas and environment and resources consenration. Therefore, the relative influence between gender inequality and poverty in poor areas

should be one of the basic policies in carrying out their development assistance in China. However, in many intervention practices, the gender equality oriented framework is still a principle and lacks operating concepts and means. It is recommended that a gender sensitive planning guideline should be developed by WB and ADB for each department. Such a planning guideline should include women's participation in community affairs, educational project planning, health project planning and gender program in employment. It is proposed that WB and ADB adopt women's involvement in community affairs, equal access to education and health care between men and women as well as equal employment as the main contents in their China gender mainstreaming strategy.

ii. The relationship between gender inequality and poverty has not attracted sufficient attention from the Chinese government and international donor agencies. It is obvious that effective policy intervention for gender equality will greatly alleviate poverty. In the meantime, effective intervention of poverty reduction will also be helpful for improving gender equality, especially if the poverty reduction interventions are gender sensitive ones. This should be the core guideline for international donor agencies in providing their assistance in poverty reduction. A comprehensive gender equality program should be implemented among various poverty reduction programs funded by WB and ADB. This program will help women to become more involved in the whole process of poverty reduction planning, implementation and monitoring.

All in all, the gender mainstreaming strategy promoted by WB and ADB is in line with the basic state policy of gender equality of the Chinese government. In order to better coordinate the cooperation between international agencies and the Chinese Government, it is necessary to establish a dialogue and consultation mechanism at various levels. Such a consultation mechanism should include: research on policy, policy dialogue, and promotion of gender sensitive work in intervention projects. It is suggested that a consultation commission is set up to include members from Women and Children Working Commission of the State Council, All China Women's Federation and international agencies. And a gender mainstreaming fund should be established to push forward effective policies, strategies and capacity building activities regarding gender inequality and poverty.

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