

WOMEN'S UNEQUAL ACCESS IN DUAL LABOUR MARKET:
AN INTEGRATIVE VIEW OF GENDER INEQUALITY IN
CONTEMPORARY URBAN CHINA

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ABSTRACT

China has been experiencing a fast pace of development since late 1970s. Among the key transformations, industrialization, urbanization, and modernization created huge changes in occupational distributions and in women's participation in the paid labour market. However, women still experience unequal treatment. This study is conducted to find the reasons why women hold a lower status in labour markets in the context of China's fast development. Dual Labour Market Theory is used to examine gendered divisions in urban China, revealing that women are more likely to be in positions in the secondary sector with weaker status than those in the primary sector.

This study has three objectives: (1) to determine the extent to which distributions across primary and secondary sectors characterize the labour market for contemporary urban workers in China; (2) if a dual labour market applies, to examine how it relates to gender inequality in contemporary urban China, and provide evidence of the major factors that affect gender inequality in the Chinese dual labour market; and (3) to identify the major factors that contribute to women's limited access to positions associated with the primary labour market.

Quantitative methods are applied to fulfill objectives (1) and (2). Data from the China General Social Surveys of 2003 and 2005 are used. The results show that women are under-represented in the primary sector, and that gender inequality is more prevalent in the secondary sector than that in the primary sector. Qualitative methods are applied to address objective (3). Through interviews and an examination of existing laws and policies, I find that cultural and institutional factors affect women's status in the dual labour markets. Cultural factors include traditional ideology and strong gender stereotype. Institutional factors include government public policies and local gender norms and practices in employment and managerial process.

In the end, I suggest that government should amend policy to improve prospects for women's equal rights, intensify supervision of gender-related policy implementation, encourage academic research into gender equality, and build effective social welfare systems to relieve women from household works and subordinate position in both family and paid-labour market.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Women have experienced lower status both inside and outside the family structure throughout the long history of Chinese society. Traditionally, Confucian thoughts have produced unequal gender norms and created a gender-based hierarchy system in China. In much literature on women in China, they are described as *nei ren*, or “inside people,” noting their limited functions, activities, and boundaries in daily life with regard to what they should and should not do (Andors, 1983; Bauer, Wang, Riley, & Zhao., 1992; Cohen, 2004; Croll, 1985). According to these statements, women should function primarily as homemakers; in such literature it is deemed inappropriate for women to communicate with strangers, conduct business, and make family decisions. Even when women participate in the labour force, most of them work indoors such as spinning, planting, and caring for silk worms.¹ In this society, women are subordinate to men and occupy the lower position of the gender hierarchy (Bauer, Wang, Riley, & Zhao., 1992, p. 333).

In recent decades, after the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in 1949, the Communist government of China has undertaken great efforts to challenge the traditional gender hierarchy. The Party has executed a series of initiatives regarding women’s roles in society in order to raise women’s status, believing that the entry of women into the labour force is key to the liberation of women and is important to promoting economic productivity (Landes, 1989). As a result, research reveals that by the 1990s, women’s participation rate in the paid labour force was higher than in most other modern societies (Bauer, Wang, Riley, & Zhao, 1992. p. 334). However, these efforts and relative

¹ There are some exceptions; wealthy families could afford multiple long-term labourers or servants to keep their own women from working.

changes in women's status do not necessarily indicate the disappearance of gender inequality in China.

This study uses dual-labour market theory to examine women's status in the labour market in contemporary urban China and provides evidence of persistent gender discrimination among urban workers with urban identities (urban residents with rural identities are not included in this study); furthermore, this study addresses research questions regarding why women remain in a disadvantaged position in the labour market despite fast-paced economic and social development. In the analysis, all urban labourers are distributed into primary and secondary sectors using comprehensive and integrative indicators; the results show that women are more likely to stay in the secondary sector of the dual labour market with less earnings, fewer benefits, and limited access to power and resources. The primary labour market contains less gender inequality because this sector emphasizes workers' credentials, qualifications, and fair competition. The results imply that women's equal access into the primary labour market is an important factor for reducing gender inequality. Cultural and institutional factors are applied to explain women's persistently disadvantaged position in the dual labour market from a macro-level perspective. This study contributes to existing literature by adopting the Western dual labour market theory for contemporary urban China, analyzing detailed gender inequality in each segment of the dual labour market and conducting macro-level explanations of why and how gender inequality persists in labour market in urban China.

Contradiction between National Development And the Persistence of Gender Inequality

In early period of People's Republic of China's establishment (1949–1976), the government advocated obligation and opportunity for all women to contribute to society, using typical slogans such as “*Women hold up half the sky*” and “*Time has changed. Whatever men comrades can do, women comrades can do.*” Government also implemented related policy objectives to encourage women to join the paid labour force. Men and women were assigned in equal numbers to work units (*danwei*) to build the socialist homeland; at that time, national plans and policies did not allow work units to create obstacles for women to participate in the labour force. As a result, a large number of women in urban China—from those completing full-time education to those entering retirement—entered the labour force and became members of urban work units (New China News Analysis, 1959).

The Chinese Communist Party extended its commitment to gender equality beyond labour force participation, implementing policies related to family lives, marriage, and other aspects of women's lives. A significant example is the implementation of the 1950 Marriage Law of China; the law abolished the “feudal marriage” and “marriage by purchase” to establish and improve women's awareness of independence and freedom of choice (Croll, 1976; Johnson, 1983). The law also enhanced Chinese Communist Party's attempt to promote harmonious relationship between equal partners and the intent to draw married women and men into “the more encompassing intimate community of the socialist nation” (Friedman, 2005. p. 313).

In the 1949–1976 period there were three important improvements in women's status: women's participation rate in the full-time labour force was high, women's labour was

regarded as an integral part of the state development strategy, and paid employment became a standard feature of urban women's lives (Davis, 1976. p. 163). However, significant gender inequality still existed; women were underrepresented in the relatively advantaged, state-owned sectors of industry and were overrepresented in the disadvantaged collective sectors. Collective sectors were at a disadvantage because, on average, they were smaller and less able to provide services and benefits on the scale that state sectors could provide. Even worse, in times of economic retrenchment, women were placed in temporary roles as a source of surplus labour rather than as a significant component of socialist construction (Andors, 1983; Bauer, Wang, Riley, & Zhao, 1992). At the concrete policy level, the state-mandated retirement age for men (sixty) was higher than that for women (fifty-five). Men also tended to be more politically active and hold a greater proportion of leadership opportunities within sectors. There continued to be negative social attitudes toward women in leadership, while women's greater responsibility in household tasks drew them away from political meetings outside of working hours (Andors, 1983; Wang, 2003).

As the state sought to promote gender equality, the norms of success and achievement in both work and politics were expressed through "male" standards (Honig & Hershatter, 1988). For example, the norm in the urban dress code, or the regulation of appropriate clothing was the cadre suit, which hardly showed feminine characteristics (Finnane, 2003). The suits signified that men were the norm in revolutionary models, while women had to exhibit sufficient revolutionary zeal to be considered role models (Chen, 2005). This approach of addressing gender differences encouraged women to pursue all aspects of work and life like a man, neglecting the specificities of women's bodies and their social

experiences as daughters and wives, and further restricted women's voice regarding gender inequality in their daily lives.

Entering into the reform period (from 1978), the absolute numbers of women employed in state and collective enterprises increased, as women comprised slightly more than one-third of the nonagricultural workforce by the mid-1980s (Robinson 1985, p. 35), but women continued to be clustered in the relatively weaker sectors rather than in state-owned sectors. Women thus occupied positions of lower pay and were concentrated in employment related to domestic work, including catering, textiles, health, and early childhood education (Bian, Logan, & Shu, 2000; Robinson, 1985). Women's domestic obligations also partially led to job discrimination because these obligations were believed to make women less productive (Honig & Hershatter, 1988; Riley, 1996; Robinson, 1985). Gender inequality is also evident in horizontally occupational structures; a study based on the 1987 One Percent Population Survey found that urban women were underrepresented in more powerful positions in the same occupation, even when their education and experience were similar to those of men (Bauer, Wang, Riley, & Zhao, 1992).

Many studies of gender disparities in the urban labour force have been conducted to investigate why women hold fewer labour market opportunities than men. The increased labour force needs and occupational distribution caused by investment growth and internationalization of trade revealed two main viewpoints regarding the impact of economic reform on gender inequality. The first viewpoint emphasized the positive effects of reform on decreasing gender inequality (Fields, 1985; Galenson, 1992; Krueger, 1983; Lim, 1990; Wood, 1990; 1994). Scholars of this perspective argued that the newly launched market

mechanisms led to economic growth and increased opportunities in paid employment for women; for example, those jobs that produced exports for international markets created new opportunities and increased the demand for female labour, thus increasing women's participation rate in the labour market. These results in turn reduced gender inequality. As shown in table 1.1, there is a significant increase in women's participation in the labour force. In addition, the socialist redistributive economy during the pre-reform period benefited only those with positional power and political capital; after the reform, the market economy's efficiency and productivity led to a shift of control of resources from political disposition to market institutions (Nee, 1996; Nee and Matthews, 1996); therefore, women were able to access more resources and opportunities because they were more likely to stay in the market settings highlighting free-competition.

The second viewpoint argued that the market system in China enlarged gender inequality in the labour market because women tend to be concentrated in the periphery and semi-periphery industries and occupations with a large proportion of them as low-skilled and unskilled workers; for example in the manufacturing sectors or service sectors (Bird, Litt, & Wang, 2004; Cao & Hu, 2007; Gustafsson & Li, 2000; Liu, Meng & Zhang, 2000). Table 1.1 provides evidence that women were overrepresented in sales and commerce work and services work. Moreover, market transition implied a shift of power and changed the state's role from distributor to market participant; therefore, profit-driven firm managers had greater incentives to reduce labour costs and thus had more authority to adjust hiring, job assignments, and wage assignments (Honig & Hershatter, 1988; Lee, 1995; Ran, 1998; Wu, 1995). As a result, in response to management pressure in the 1990s, employers asked an

increasing number of women to retire early or stay at home with a small percentage of their base salaries; at the time, women comprised almost forty percent of the entire urban workforce, and more than sixty percent of the women workers were laid off (Bian, Logan, & Shu, 2000; Wang, 2003). Although laid-off women were still considered employees, they received dramatically reduced wages, further extending the wage gap and gender inequality.

Table 1.1 Proportions of Women in Major Occupations in China, 1982, 1990, 2000

Occupational Group	% Women		
	1982	1990	2000
1. Professional and Technical Workers	38.27	45.25	47.84
2. Cadres and Administrators	10.38	11.51	16.33
3. Clerical and Related Workers	24.47	25.66	33.13
4. Sales and Commerce Workers	45.86	46.66	52.01
5. Service Workers	47.93	51.63	51.71
6. Production, Transportation and Related Workers	35.42	35.68	34.06
7. Others	41.69	42.52	38.71
Overall	35.71	37.81	43.18

Data for 1982 and 1990 were from Hang-Yue (2002, p. 187), and data for 2000 were acquired from the National Bureau of Statistics of China, the Fifth National Census in 2000. Retrieved from: <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/nds>

Although there has been a major transformation in men's and women's relative social position during the past three decades, gender inequalities in urban China remain considerable. The patterns of gender inequality in urban China at the end of the 1970s are similar in many ways to those in capitalist and developed socialist industrial societies (for

example, women receive fewer incomes, have fewer opportunities, and do most of the housework), but there is a smaller gender wage gap in urban China, gender inequality is least pronounced among the younger age groups, and, most importantly, women seem to have “an unusually high degree of control over family funds” (Whyte & Parish, 1984, p. 237). These realities make Chinese women feel satisfied within family and pay less attention to unfairness in labour market; this has weakened women’s motivation to fight against inequality.

Research Question and Chapter Organization

In the past few decades, globalization has contributed to increasing integration and interconnection across the planet. Advanced transportation, technology, and communication industries made possible amazing progress in many aspects of development of economic, political and cultural activities. With goods, products, services, capital and investment being widely shared, developing countries are playing more significant roles in the world. Great prosperity became evident in various regions of the world, but this has also been accompanied by increasing polarization in incomes and wealth in many nations. At the same time, with the economic reform that began in 1978, the communist government of China became dedicated to consolidating its regime by promoting economic and social development. Under government’s efforts and the effect of globalization, the new society brought opportunities for women along with fast-paced economic development: urbanization expanded urban populations and urban areas; industrialization contributed to more complex distributions of occupations with expanded demands of specialized labour; and modernization changed people’s lifestyles. These factors significantly increased the number of women in the labour market, even in some high-technology industries. Meanwhile, globalization not only

brought economic but also cultural prosperity. Cultural communication, ideological exchange and human migration provided opportunities for different countries to know and share value, views and perspectives, including gender equality and women's rights. Global-wide feminist movements also greatly influenced Chinese women; Chinese women made some changes in their attitudes and awareness regarding women's roles and showed their capacity to participate in all aspects of China's development; they were honored "holding up half the sky".

Table 1.2 Top Ten Occupations for Women and Men in 1982

Women	Number Employed	% of Women In Labour Force	% of Women In Occupation
1. Sales Workers	3,516,765	6.76	59.55
2. Elementary School Teachers	2,431,076	4.67	41.50
3. Financial and Accounting Workers	2,097,899	4.03	41.00
4. Embroidery Workers	1,979,261	3.80	99.51
5. Sewing Machine Operators	1,897,784	3.65	78.98
6. Metal-Cutting Machine Operators	1,540,486	2.96	44.25
7. Storage Workers	1,501,285	2.89	41.44
8. Textile and Garment Workers	1,436,325	2.76	86.95
9. Cleaners and Charworkers	1,277,387	2.45	35.94
10. Cooks	1,185,559	2.28	38.85
Men	Number Employed	% of Men In Labour Force	% of Men In Occupation
1. Managers in Enterprises	6,739,746	7.07	92.66
2. Carpenters, Wooden Furniture Makers	4,314,860	4.53	96.83
3. Tile Setters and Plasters	4,001,224	4.20	94.96
4. Elementary School Teachers	3,427,140	3.59	58.50
5. Miners	3,214,698	3.37	94.41
6. Financial and Account Workers	3,018,891	3.17	59.00
7. Mechanics and Mechanical Engineers	2,928,544	3.07	89.07
8. Drivers	2,394,021	2.51	96.89
9. Sales Workers	2,388,352	2.50	40.45
10. Electrical Technicians	2,302,693	2.41	86.32

Source: Hang-Yue (2002, p. 189)

Despite improved development and opportunities in China, little change was observed in the structure and conditions of female employment, as shown in tables 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5. Women found jobs in those sectors where many women were already employed; they were still overrepresented in lower-skilled and lower-paid jobs; were less likely to enter state-owned and government agencies; were also less likely to be represented in leadership positions; and therefore, they had limited career and incomes prospects than men did.

Table 1.3 Top Ten Occupations for Women and Men in 1990

Women	Number Employed	% of Women In Labour Force	% of Women In Occupation
1. Sales Workers	6,151,489	8.57	63.09
2. Financial and Accounting Workers	4,330,048	6.03	59.18
3. Sewing Machine Operators	2,896,620	4.04	81.68
4. Elementary School Teachers	2,770,223	3.86	46.80
5. Storage Workers	2,502,019	3.49	52.96
6. Textile and Garment Workers	2,131,124	2.97	91.10
7. Miscellaneous Sales Workers	1,980,002	2.76	44.49
8. Cleaners and Charworkers	1,868,630	2.60	40.71
9. Knitting Machine Operators	1,484,042	2.07	91.44
10. Metal-Cutting Machine Operators	1,473,793	2.05	41.89
Men	Number Employed	% of Men In Labour Force	% of Men In Occupation
1. Managers in Enterprises	6,576,252	5.61	89.84
2. Tile Setters and Plasters	5,298,301	4.52	97.10
3. Drivers	5,134,819	4.38	96.85
4. Carpenters, Wooden Furniture Makers	4,363,752	3.72	96.61
5. Purchasers	3,793,293	3.23	83.51
6. Sales Workers	3,599,404	3.07	36.91
7. Mechanics and Mechanical Engineers	3,501,367	2.98	90.62
8. Miners	3,339,768	2.85	94.50
9. Elementary School Teachers	3,148,958	2.68	53.20
10. Electrical Technicians	3,026,790	2.58	84.94

Source: Hang-Yue (2002, p. 190)

The gender-based labour market division is associated with forms of labour market discrimination against women. The discrimination and related devaluation of women's work allow unequal treatment of women workers and prevent direct competition between women and men; therefore, women have very limited opportunity for career development compared to men. Gender inequality is not only the result of labour market or economic distribution, but also the result of various deep-rooted values and activities, and the result of hierarchical assignment of women and men throughout society.

Table 1.4 Top Ten Occupations for Women and Men in 2000

Women	Number Employed	% of Women In Labour Force	% of Women In Occupation
1. Sales Workers	921,008	15.65	50.45
2. Plant Workers	913,765	15.53	50.69
3. Financial and Accounting Workers	429,556	7.30	73.83
4. Cadres and Administrators	328,270	5.58	38.93
5. Elementary School Teachers	282,219	4.80	62.56
6. Metal-Cutting Machine Operators	248,378	4.22	73.77
7. Social Service Workers	228,827	3.89	53.00
8. Restaurant Servers	208,529	3.54	51.71
9. Public Health Workers	187,827	3.19	67.80
10. Textile and Garment Workers	173,091	2.94	79.28
Men	Number Employed	% of Men In Labour Force	% of Men In Occupation
1. Sales Workers	904,613	11.68	49.55
2. Plant Workers	888,970	11.48	49.13
3. Transportation Workers	661,027	8.54	91.43
4. Mechanics and Mechanical Engineers	521,392	6.73	77.69
5. Cadres and Administrators	514,840	6.65	61.06
6. Construction Workers	388,861	5.02	89.56
7. Managers in Enterprises	342,824	4.40	81.09
8. Social Security Workers	290,454	3.75	87.23
9. High-Technique Engineers	248,610	3.21	74.51
10. Electrical Technicians	212,088	2.74	80.66

Source: Data calculated from the database of National Bureau of Statistics of China, the Fifth National Census in 2000. Retrieved from: <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj>

Table 1.5 Numbers of Workers in Government Agencies and State-Owned Units by Gender

Years	Male	Female
1996	7,830,000	2,250,000
1998	8,070,000	2,420,000
2000	8,970,000	2,570,000
2002	8,920,000	2,650,000
2003	8,700,000	2,660,000
2005	9,070,000	2,780,000

Source: Data calculated from the database of National Bureau of Statistics of China, the Fifth National Census in 2000. Retrieved from: <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj>

This study's main purpose is to adopt an analytical frame (dual labour market) to explain gender inequality in labour market and answer the following research question: "Why do women persistently remain in a disadvantaged position compared to men in contemporary labour markets in urban China in the context of highly-paced social and economic development?" A review of women's positions and status in the Chinese dual labour market provides insights into the relationship between social and economic development and gender inequality in the context of Harmonious Society, one of the Chinese government's most prominent national development slogans in the past decade. Insights into these issues are particularly important for policy makers to create balance between profit and equity in the labour market and to promote real liberation of women and human development.

Using dual labour market theory as the framework, this study will identify an advantaged primary sector and a disadvantaged secondary sector of labour market to address gender divisions. The study has seven chapters. Chapter one has introduced the study, with a brief summary of gender inequality in China in recent decades and discussion of the research question. Chapter two presents literature review and theoretical framework, reviewing existing factors affecting women's status including human capital accumulation, occupational

and industrial placement, and unpaid household duties. I have adopted dual labour market theory in order to examine gender inequality in urban China. Chapter three is the statement of methodology containing detailed research objectives, research design, and the use of data. China General Social Survey are used to conduct statistical analysis to examine dual labour market in contemporary urban China. Interviews are conducted as the qualitative method to gather people's experiences, feelings, and thoughts regarding gender inequality. Chapter four conducts a quantitative analysis to examine detailed gender inequality in the labour market. The results show the existence of gender division in the labour market and detailed information about women's disadvantages—women are less likely to be in the primary labour market, and gender inequality is more observed in the secondary labour market than that in the primary labour market. Chapter five provides an explanation of cultural factors that contribute to women's disadvantaged positions in the labour market. Deeply rooted adherence to Confucian Philosophy is one of the most important factors that contribute to men's status of supremacy over women; women tend to have a weak self-identity and voluntarily accept a role of subordination both inside and outside of families. Chapter six provides an institutional explanation on women's disadvantages in labour market. At the national level, the state's policies and related management process present insufficient gender awareness and implementation supervision regarding gender equality; at the local level, employers make use of workplace authority to unfairly treat women employees; even worse, employers hire women only for a show of "fairness." Chapter seven presents an overview of research findings and conclusions, and outlines some recommendations for actions that government, policy makers, and academics might undertake to improve women's equal rights.

Chapter Summary

Gender inequality has existed throughout the nation's long history and persists in contemporary China. Traditionally, women are defined in relations to responsibilities associated with the internal part of family structures, playing secondary roles in work, public life, and other social activities. Confucian thoughts restricted women's role in the labour force and made women focus mostly on domestic roles as homemakers.

In the middle stage of the 20th century, when the People's Republic of China was founded, leaders of Chinese Communist Party expressed their commitment to women's emancipation and encouraged women to work as men did. As a precondition to women's liberation, women's participation in the labour force sought to enable women to overthrow feudal oppression through improved material conditions, and to attain equal status with men in domestic and public spheres. Furthermore, the introduction of marriage law in this period was a national endeavor to promote women's rights. Nevertheless, the problem remained that standards and practices associated with men were deemed the only norm for the whole nation; the cadre uniform standard, for example, ignored the needs and characteristics of women. In this and many other aspects, women were still subordinate to men.

Starting from the late 1970s, the Chinese government launched a new phase of economic and political reform. Rapid development of the national economy created more complex labour distribution and more job opportunities for women as well as for men. However, labour market research shows that these new opportunities for women are mostly in the collective sectors and in periphery industries; these opportunities through horizontal segmentation tend to be in much weaker positions than state-owned sectors because

collective sectors and periphery industries can hardly provide competitive income, benefits, security, status, and autonomy as state sector does; there is also vertical segmentation because men tend to occupy most of the well-paid, respectful, better-secured and higher-level positions. However, although gender inequality continues in China, women have relative independence, especially in the labour market.

To sum up, existing research has shown that China has had some success in moving toward gender equality (Andors, 1983; Bauer, Wang, Riley, & Zhao, 1992; Croll, 1985). The Communist government has taken important steps in legislating gender equality, mobilizing women in areas of production and expanding the awareness that women are equal to men. Although significant social and economic development has been achieved in China, women are still overrepresented in less-skilled, lower-paying, and unsecured jobs; the gendered labour division consistently privileges men. In this context, this study seeks to create an analytical frame to explain gendered labour divisions and to examine why women persistently remain in disadvantaged positions relative to those of men in the contemporary labour market in urban China despite the highly paced social and economic development.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter first reviews existing research on gender inequality in labour market segregation and in dual labour market; then it defines and develops the theory of dual labour market, summarizing explanations for gender inequality in labour market. After describing the limitations of existing research, this study introduces the dual labour market theoretical framework as a means to analyze specific conditions within the labour force in contemporary urban China, and then explains why and how gender inequality persists in the dual labour market based on cultural and institutional factors.

Dual Labour Market Theory and Research on Gender Issues in Dual Labour Market

There is abundant research on women's disadvantaged position in many labour markets. Gender-based labour market segregation is analyzed extensively by early researchers to explain women's status and opportunities relative to those of men. Among these studies, part-time work status and occupational segmentation are the two main perspectives adopted to analyze women's disadvantages (Anker, 1998; Baunach, 2002; Blackburn, Jarman, & Siltanen, 1993; Brooks, Jarman, & Blackburn 2003; Class & Riley, 1998; Charles, 2000; Hanna, 1971; Jacobs & Lim, 1995; Kreimer, 2004; Tjidsens, 2002; Weeden, 1998). The results show that female-dominated occupations tend to have lower salaries, fewer opportunities for upward mobility, less skill development, and more unstable working status than male-dominated occupations. However, these standards for labour market segregation are based on relatively simple indicators; they are meaningful but insufficient for providing integrative and comprehensive standards. Dual labour market analysis (Doeringer

& Piore, 1971) provides integrative and comprehensive perspectives in the examination of labour market segregation, emphasizing its segmented structure based on hierarchy and vertically shaped division into two main components (O'Donnell 1984, p. 153).

The dual system asserts the existence of two separately functioning labour markets, a primary and a secondary sector. The primary sector generally refers to high-productivity jobs that offer relatively high wages, job security, potentials for advancement, good working conditions, high status, and good fringe benefits. Employees are expected to exhibit good work habits and long tenure, and individuals' productivity has positive effects on earnings (education, normal labour force placement). The secondary sector generally refers to labour with low average productivity, relatively low wages, little or no fringe benefits, limited opportunity for advancement in position or pay scale, and poor physical and psychological working conditions. Typically, employers in the secondary sector are far more tolerant of poor work habits and short tenure on the job. Furthermore, the improvement of individual productivity does not significantly affect earnings (Doeringer & Piore, 1971; O'Donnell 1984).

Researchers have demonstrated that women are indeed more likely to encounter inequality in a segregated labour market. They are likely to hold a disadvantaged position in the secondary labour markets, working on lower-paid and part-time jobs and in highly feminized occupations (Bevelander, 2005; Bevelander & Groeneveld, 2010; Boston, 1990; Buchmann, Kriesi, & Sacchi, 2010; Cormier & Craypo, 2000; Dobbs, 2007; Fried, 1988; Friedberg, Long, & Dickens., 1988; James, 2008; O'Donnell, 1984; Steinmetz, 2012). A number of these research in this area did not directly use the term dual labour market or

address direct relationship between dual labour market and gender inequality; instead, they examined various descriptive patterns of gender segregation (Catanzarite, 2003; Cotter, Hermsen, & Vanneman, 2003; Dobbs, 2007; Huffman, 2004; James, 2008; Penner, 2008), the changing trend of the gender segregation over time (Baunach, 2002; Brooks, Jarman, & Blackburn 2003; Glass, 2004; Reid & Rubin, 2003; Watts, 2003; Weeden, 1998) and across various locations (Anker, 1998; Blackburn, Jarman, & Brooks, 2000; Cohen & Huffman, 2003; Jacobs & Lim, 1995; Petti & Hook, 2005; Warren, 2001). They argued that the reasons for the trends of gender segregation in the labour market included social environment, cultural diversity, policy implementation, and historical events. A number of related studies also used ethnic identities to imply segmented labour market and women's lower status within the process of migration and immigration (Bevelander, 2005; Bevelander & Groeneveld, 2010; Dale, Lindley, & Dex, 2006; Foroutan, 2008; Glass & Nath, 2006; Pessar & Mahler, 2003; Read, 2006; Schoeni, 1998;). These research argued that women were segmented in labour markets; women with ethnic minority identities were even worse in obtaining social status as they were mostly enrolled in part-time works and insecure jobs, and were more like to be affected by parenthood; they suffered dual burdens as both women and minority.

Some other researchers addressed reasons for gender segregation and then focused on providing policy analysis and advices (Glass, 2004; Lewis & Campbell, 2008; Lewis & Giullari, 2005; Tjzens, 2002; Kreimer, 2004; Petti & Hook, 2005; Ryu, 2010). For example, Tjzens (2002) predicted the likelihood of a woman working part-time in Europe, listing three factors: (a) doing part-time work was the result of women being secondary earners and

having children at home; (b) part time-work was primarily seen as the firms' response to workers' demands for fewer working hours (c) part-time work represented poor wages, job insecurity, and poor working conditions, which could be perceived as secondary labour market characteristics and used to predict whether women will work part- or full-time. Also, Kreimer (2004) studied labour market segregation and the gender-based division of labour in Australia based on data from the 1990s; the results showed that labour market segregation by sex was a transformation and continuation of the asymmetrical gender relation in the family to the labour market; the roots of gender segregation came from the assignment of men to the market area and women to the reproduction area. Kreimer's (2004) study focused on suggestions to policy makers, but the analysis did not deeply explore how this gender relation in the family contributed to the labour market segregation. Furthermore, the researcher addressed no other reasons for gender discrimination in the labour market.

Some researchers have analyzed directly the dual structure of the labour market, but they did not address gender gap or gender-based differences in the analysis; for example, Nicholas and Doeringer (1973) argued that workers in the primary sector were likely to earn less than advanced workers, but that the income differences between the two groups might widen with age or labour market experience because of different amounts of on-the-job training received. This research compared group differences but did not look at gender. Dickens and Lang (1985) employed a quantitative approach to identifying the dual structure of labour markets. They contended a subordinate nature of women in the labour market by choosing not to cover female respondents in their sample data. Rather, they used the human capital theory to explain variations in male data in the labour market without analyzing

variations in women's earnings. Later on, Ghilarducci and Lee (2005) and Meyer and Mukerjee (2007) developed Long and Dickens's switching regression model and added female data into the analysis. The former study showed clearly that a dual labour market model existed in both male and female groups, especially when work benefits were added (health insurance and pension). The latter study also tested dual labour market using female sample and examined women's credentials in low wage and high sectors. However, they did not address any comparison between men and women as the analysis was conducted separately in male or female groups. The only study addressing gender difference in each sector was Sousa-Poza's (2000) unpublished paper. This research examined the gender wage gap in the primary and secondary sectors; the results were biased because the way the author divided dual labour market into primary and secondary sectors was based on employers' subjective judgments.

Furthermore, those existing research that clearly mentioned gender inequality in the dual labour market have seldom fully explained how and why a dual labour market has affected gender inequality in the ways that it has. Most of such research merely indirectly related to the effects, with causal factors only briefly and descriptively mentioned. For example, in Fried's research (1988) on the parental leave policy in Philadelphia, he found that women's earnings tested consistently less than those of men in the 1980s and that educated white men earned more than every group, but black women with college degrees earned about the same as white men with high school diplomas. However, he only briefly mentioned that secondary jobs did not pay for education and were filled mostly by female workers, especially black women; primary jobs, in which male workers were predominant, were more

likely to pay for workers' education. No further analysis was conducted. Similarly, Friedberg, Long and Dickens (1988) argued that American women in the 1970s and 1980s were paid less than men with the same education because they were consistently employed in lower-paid secondary occupations and industries than men were. These results demonstrate the existence of segmentation but they do not provide a direct, deep analysis of how the segmentation influenced equality or why such segmentation persisted. Boston (1990) was one of the few researchers who tested the effect of dual labour market segmentation on women's earnings. He used an endogeneity test to compare the earnings of white men and women and also black men and black women. He found support for the hypothesis that dual labour markets explained earnings differences for each race and sex group. However, he used simple indicators to divide labour market segmentation; thus, his research might contain inaccurate results. In addition, some other studies merely mentioned in their analysis that women had disadvantaged position in labour market and most likely stayed in secondary labour market; but they did not provide further explanations (Bevelander & Groeneveld, 2010; Buchmann, Kriesi, & Sacchi, 2010; Steinmetz, 2012).

Most of the dual labour market research focused on group differences between primary and secondary sectors and between male workers and female workers, rarely had studies considered gender differences in each sector. As the dual labour market theory assumes, there are different mechanisms at play in the two sectors. For example, there is a different rate of earning returns at each level of education; thus, checking the gender gap in each sector may provide us with more accurate details of how the dual labour market influences gender inequality.

Dual labour market research conducted in China used three perspectives in identifying primary and secondary sectors. The first perspective was based on the China Household Registration System,² which differentiated between urban and rural areas rather than vertical hierarchies. Researchers argued that the urban-rural dual structure had blocked rural citizens from equal access in resources, opportunities, national benefits and priorities—further creating inequality for women in rural areas (Meng, 2000; Yao, Qiao, & Qian, 2009; Zhang, 2003). The second perspective was based on the segmentation associated with different kinds of ownership of Chinese enterprises (Hu & Yang, 2001; Liu, Meng, & Zhang, 2000). State-owned enterprises were seen in the primary part of the labour market; this sector had more power to absorb resources and labour force; non-state-owned enterprises were seen in the secondary part of the labour market. The third perspective was called formal and informal segregation (Cai & Wang, 2004; Chen & Hamori, 2008; International Labour Organization, 2002; Wu & Li, 2006) and used the term “informal sector” as the segregation including jobs with short-term contracts, nonunion-protected, and no access to enterprise benefits. Although these three perspectives have contributed to the research on gender inequality in Chinese labour market, the household registration segregation is not appropriate in this study because of the focus on urban workers; the other two types of segregations use simple indicators, which may cause bias in the research.

² The Family register system was officially promulgated by the Chinese government in 1958. The system was to control the movement of people between urban and rural areas. Individuals were broadly categorized as “rural” or “urban.” A worker with a rural identity would have to apply for permission to work outside the authorized domain.

Explanations of Gender Inequality in Labour Market

Within existing research, direct analysis of gender inequality in the dual labour market is rare. However, gender inequality, especially gender earnings gaps in the overall labour market, has drawn much attention. The dual structure of the labour market represents a vertical hierarchy that divides male and female wage earners into different groups, showing unequal treatment of women; therefore, women's disadvantaged position within the dual labour markets and gender earning differences may share the same explanations. In general, explanations regarding gender inequality, especially earnings gaps, are addressed from three perspectives: human capital accumulation, occupational and industrial placement, and disproportionate household work (family structure).

Human Capital Accumulation

Widely used in economic studies, human capital theory refers to the ability to create economic value (Hatch & Dyer, 2004; Katz & Papoport, 2005; Meckl & Zink, 2000; Mincer, 1989; Weisbrod, 1962). In academia, human capital accumulation particularly refers to the stock of competences, knowledge, and personality attributes held by each labour force participant. Education, work experience, and training are the primary indicators. This viewpoint assumes that the labour market and employers maximize profits by allocating workers to appropriate jobs and positions based on their ability. Employers pay much attention to how workers perform on the job and what they can bring to the enterprise. The kind of jobs, positions, and earnings a worker receives depend on the worker's level of productivity, which can be represented by the function of their years of schooling, familiarity with the jobs, and on-the-job training.

In sociology, researchers argue that women's fewer accumulation of human capital accounts for their persistently lower status and earnings (Filippin & Ichino, 2005; Garcia-Aracil, 2007; Meng, 2004; Rapaport, 1995; Rutkowski, 1996). The reasons for women's lower human capital accumulation vary. For example, due to different social, economic, and personal contexts, women may choose to invest in different types and levels of education (O'Donnell, 1984, p. 148). Strong evidence has been found in the studies of Japan. Brinton (1988) argued that Japanese women were widely expected and willing to become full-time housewives after a few years of paid work; this further influenced their daughters to choose different academic programs and separated careers different from young men to get ready for becoming housewives. Employers therefore had negative attitudes regarding hiring women workers, judging that the women would soon commit to family rather than to career contributions.

The relationship between educational attainment and earnings is demonstrated differently in many developed countries; higher levels of education allow women greater earnings, but these earnings are still far lower than the wages of men. Women are now more likely to complete a bachelor degree than men are, but this does not mean that women will necessarily earn higher wages. Women's educational attainment has remarkably increased compared to that of men from 1990 to the first decade of the 21st century, especially at the postsecondary and university levels. The newest data show that women in the United States and Canada have a higher average educational attainment but lower average income than men do (U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics; Statistics Canada, 2012). Women and men do not gain the same returns in wages through higher education.

Work experience is another important indicator that has been actively associated with earnings. Individuals who do not work or who work part-time will accumulate less work experience and will be less competitive than those employed continuously in full-time positions. Also, compared to full-time work, part-time employment offers less related training and fewer higher education opportunities, both of which could contribute to promotion and wage growth. Therefore, as an important component of nonworking and part-time workers, women are more likely to be affected by work experience accumulation (Coverman, 1983). Related sociological research concludes that domestic household burdens are one of the primary issues causing women's disadvantages in work experience accumulation; the movement of women from domestic work to the paid labour market can be a driving force for decreasing gender inequality (Budig & England, 2001; Cohen, 2004; Cohen & Huffman, 2003; Waldfogel, 1997).

Women's lesser human capital accumulation is sometimes compelled but in other cases is voluntary. Japan again offers examples showing a comprehensive acceptance of women's interrupted accumulation of human capital. First, there are obvious sex differences in educational attainment in Japan (Levey & Silver, 2006; Silver, 2002; Struch & Schwartz, 2002). Japanese women do not usually possess as much education as men do; even when females complete university degrees, they do not always pursue a career because of family responsibilities (Abe, Hamamoto, & Tanaka 2003). Second, Japanese women display intermittent labour force participation (Levey & Silver, 2006; Silver, 2002; Struch & Schwartz, 2002); therefore, their work experiences do not accumulate with age to the same extent as men's do. As a result, earnings of women fall increasingly behind men's earnings as

workers become older (le Grand & Tsukaguchi-le Grand 2003). Third, Aiba and Wharton (2001, p. 75) find that women receive less on-the-job-training than men, and also less return from that training because men may receive higher wages as soon as they complete the training, while women tend may not.

Voices of criticism on human capital explanations also exist. Researchers argue that human capital variables do not completely explain the gender earnings gap in the general population. For example, studies show that in the United States, measures of human capital have explained between 3% and 44% of the gender difference in gender income gap in the labour force (Reskin & Padavic, 1994; Tomaskovie-Devey, 1993; Treiman & Hartmann, 1981). A further problem is that, with the assumption that human capital accumulation is based on individualistic or ‘voluntary’ choices rather than structural factors and constraints, human capital explanations do not explain why women have lower earnings even when their accumulation of human capital is similar to that of men.

Human capital accumulations have also contributed to the literature on gender inequality in urban China over the past 30 years. Gender inequality became a hot research topic after the establishment of the People’s Republic of China in the middle 20th century; the central government implemented initiatives for women’s equal rights in education and work opportunities (Ashton, Piazza & Zeitz, 1984; Johnson, 1983; Meisner, 1999; Ting, 2004). After much effort, gender differences in education have declined consistently since the 1990s, but women still fall behind men in average years of schooling and in the number of bachelor’s degrees received, especially in the fields of high technologies (Liu & Carpenter, 2005; Singh, Allen, Scheckler & Darlington, 2007; Yan, 2006). Differences in work

experience also contribute to women's lower earnings in China. Given that women are more likely to be affected by the growing unemployment rate in the crowded labour market (Bian, Logan and Shu, 2000; Bird, Litt & Wang, 2004; Blayo, 1992; Cao & Hu, 2007) and by state policy requiring working women to retire five years earlier than men,³ gender differences in work experience accumulation increase as workers' age increases; therefore women tend to earn much less than men.

Industrial and Occupational Placement

Industrial and occupational placement also affects gender inequality. It has been most commonly argued that women earn less than men in part because of women's disproportional distribution in well-paid industries and occupations (Jacobs & Lim, 1995). For example, Treiman and Hartmann (1981) estimated in the 1970s that, in the United States, 35–39% of the gender gap in earnings was caused by the sex segregation of industries and occupations. Sorensen (1989) later found a similar result in the United States, saying that twenty percent of the earnings gap could be attributable to gender segregation in occupation.

Several related studies have also focused on industrial and occupational placement in developing countries in Pacific and Asia areas (Baunach, 2002; Deere & Leon, 1987; Lele, 1986; Nash & Gernandez-Kelly, 1983; Smith, Collins, Hopkins, & Muhammad, 1988). For example, women took transitory jobs in young age, low-wage, female-dominated industries such as textiles and electronics in countries like Philippines, South Korea, and Singapore. These researchers highlighted the invisibility of much of women's work, the substantial economic contributions women made, and the terrible conditions in which women usually

³ Because work experience is positively associated with salary increase, women are also largely excluded from salary increase beyond age 50.

worked.

Gender inequality in industrial and occupational placement is attributed to combined effects of economic development, devaluation of female work, and male domination. When the labour market within a certain industry or occupation initially takes place, a pattern of employment by sex is formed according to the industry or occupation's position in the competitive market, labour market intensity, the available supply of female and male workers, and these workers' relative costs. While the industry or occupation develops, additional factors including employers' choice of a labour force under actual political and social contexts and employers' preferences for male workers create challenges for female workers. Women are devaluated during the hiring and evaluation process, which are usually created by males holding consistent cultural stereotypes (Steinberg,1990). After the pattern of employment by sex is established in the occupation or industry, change is difficult, especially when existing patterns are reinforced through harsh market competition, endless pursuit of economic profits, and reserved weights of tradition.

Gender-based wage levels vary across industries and occupations in China too. From 1949 to 1978, Communist central government ran the economic operation called planned economy; at that time, China was characterized by a lack of occupational labour markets. During that period, an earnings gap was fostered by workers' administrative ranks, differences in hierarchical structures of work organization from central to local levels, and the appointed strategic importance of certain industries or occupations in the state planning. Compared with men in the same position, Chinese women shared relatively equal opportunities and earned average levels of incomes in the assignment of jobs (Bian & Logan,

1996; Gustafsson & Li, 2000; Lin & Bian, 1991; Liu, Meng, & Zhang, 2000).

After 1978, market economy became the main approach of economic operation. The pattern of gender segregation in industrial and occupational placement changed from ranking segments to categorical segments. Job assignments made by the state's strategic planning were gradually eliminated, and unemployment rose as employers took over, pushing workers to relocate in different jobs within the emergent labour market. Furthermore, modern labour markets generally favor men over women, providing men with greater flexibility to make job changes, accumulate experiences, and make adjustments to a dynamic economic environment (Chen, 2005; Gustafsson & Li, 2000; Liu, Meng, & Zhang, 2000; Wu, 2006). Therefore, men's advantages in industrial and occupational placement enlarged the gender earning gap. On the whole, women were underrepresented in high-wage industries and higher level positions related to occupations such as managers and party and government officers (China State Statistical Bureau, 2005).

Disproportionate Household Work (Family Structure)

The third perspective defines gender roles within the household (Batalova and Cohen, 2002; Budig and England, 2001; Cohen, 2004; Eagly, 1987; Eccles, Freedman, & Frome, 2000). Arguments from this perspective claim that the consistent gender gap in earnings and labour market opportunities is the result of gender roles that justify and legitimize female responsibilities for home keeping and child-care. Arguments for this perspective assume that working effort and earnings (or status) are usually positively correlated; when extensive household work, duties and responsibilities are assigned to women, either on a forced or voluntary basis, women are likely to have limited energy and time to engage in paid work in

the labour market; meanwhile, some part-time jobs and those with lower returns, which require fewer qualifications and pay a lower salary, comprise the woman's choices and realities of employment. As a result, women are segregated into low-paid, boring, monotonous, and routine jobs.

There are three detailed arguments regarding this perspective: (a) the first says that paid work roles and unpaid family work roles affect each other. Women usually conduct both of the roles, having difficulties in making choice between labour market jobs and family responsibilities at the same time (Adams, 1984; Cohen, 1998; 2004; Mattingly, 2003; O'Leary, 1977; Pleck, 1985). (b) the second argument says that women's concentration on family roles, and especially responsibilities related to childbirth and childrearing, may increase a woman's time spent out of the market labour force and cause an intermittent pattern in a woman's employment career (Blau & Robins, 1998; Kimmel, 1995; Lokshin, 2003; Tekin, 2007). (c) the third argument says that when women are socialized into voluntarily performing domestic responsibilities consistent with traditional gender roles, household work is feminized gradually and persists in later generations (Bianchi, Melissa, Liana, & Robinson, 2000; Coltrane 2000; Geib & Lueptow, 1996; Milkman, 1983).

Empirically, researchers have consistently shown that women do the lion's share of unpaid household labour (Budig, 2003; Fermlee, 1995; Wenk & Rosenfeld, 1992). For example, Kwan (1999) used data from the American state of Ohio showing that women encountered higher levels of daytime fixity constraint,⁴ which made them more likely to work part-time than men, regardless of their employment status. Such constraint was reduced

⁴ Fixity constraint was measured by two observed variables in the study: the number of spatially fixed activities and number of temporally fixed activities.

when other adults in the household shared some of the domestic responsibilities, allowing women more opportunity to find a better job. Zhang, Hannum, and Wang (2008) described three stages in work-family patterns for Chinese females burdened by household work. After marriage, Chinese women took on more household responsibilities than their husbands did. After becoming parents, Chinese women had additional responsibilities, such as the child's education and family management. After their children completed education, Chinese women even took over complicated issues such as the child's employment and marriage. These unbalanced responsibilities occupied women's time, energy, and investment, limiting human capital accumulation for their own jobs.

Feminists criticized the unequal household duties among women and men.

Employing Marxist-feminism, Gimenez (1975, 1991) argued that under the realities, women workers were ideologically distinguished from their male counterparts; women were viewed not as workers but as performers of wifely and motherly tasks. As a result, unequal status between men and women was understood as an institutional expression of the ideology of gender roles. Liberal Feminist Folbre (1987, 2001) claimed that gender socialization of children, along with women's primary responsibility in household works, were two sources of gender inequality. Standpoint Feminist DeVault (1999) argued that the burdens associated with housework contributed to the neglect of women's perspectives and experiences in the production of knowledge and the invisibility of women's cultural production, serving as major barriers to higher pay and better status. As support for empirical research advocating balanced responsibilities for housework, feminists also argued that men should take on more household work to improve women's accumulation of human capital so they could have a

better job (Folber, 2001).

Accordingly, some processes related to household work, such as marriage, childbirth, and childrearing, significantly affects women's earnings and employment. Research also indicated that in most industrial societies, labour force participation rates for married women are lower than those for single women, and married women with children tend to have lower participation rates than those without (Brewster & Rindfuss, 2000; Van der Lippe & Van Dijk, 2002). Thus, the family structure can increase or decrease women's human capital accumulation and related opportunities. Marriage status, age of children, and number of family members are important indicators in determining women's energy and time in the labour markets.

The household workload is a heavy burden among Chinese women too. Research reported an increasing gender inequality regarding household work. Gustafsson and Li's time use study (2000) showed that in the 1990s, urban males spent half an hour longer on paid work than females on weekdays. This was contrasted by women spending two hours longer on housework. Another qualitative study of 39 couples in Beijing in 1998 found that the division of housework remained unequal among couples, even though most people considered it fair (Zuo, 2003). In another multicity study in China, Cao and Hu (2007) showed that married urban women were more likely to face job termination and more likely to change jobs for family reasons.

Theoretical Framework

Limitations of Existing Related Research

On the whole, existing related research focusing on segmented labour market and gender segregation use relationships between full-time and part-time work, between workers with stable contract and those with temporary contracts, between male-dominated and female-dominated occupations, between local and ethnic minority identity, and between formal and informal/casual types of jobs, to explain women's disadvantaged position in the labour market (Anker, 1998; Bauuach, 2002; Bevelander, 2005; Bevelander & Groeneveld, 2010; Blackburn, Jarman, & Brooks, 2000; Brooks, Jarman, & Blackburn 2003; Buchmann, Kriesi, & Sacchi, 2010; Chen & Hamori, 2008; Cormier and Craypo, 2000; Dale, Lindley, & Dex, 2006; Kreimer, 2004; Wu & Li, 2006; Yao, Qiao, & Qian, 2009). These studies made significant contributions in defining various patterns of gender segregation in certain labour market, the changing trends of gender segmentation over time and across various locations, and analyzing women's dual disadvantages under gender and ethnic backgrounds. Among this research, neither the reasons for labour market segregation nor any comprehensive and integrative analyses of how and why segregation persists have been examined. Although some researchers briefly mentioned some reasons, such as the natural labour division and breadwinner model, they used such reasons to provide descriptive analysis and introduce policy recommendations rather than to provide deep explanations; A similarity of these studies was the usage of different conceptions regarding labour market (e.g. occupational segmentation, gender-based segregation or segmented labour market) segmentation other than the theory of dual labour market.

Some researchers have used dual labour market theory directly, but three limitations exist. First, earlier research tried to find appropriate indicators to identify the dual structure of primary and secondary sectors; their main purpose was not to uncover gender-related issues. Some of the studies did not even include female samples in the database (Baffoe-Bonnie, 2003; Dickens & Long, 1985; 1988; 1992). Second, researchers mentioning gender inequality in the dual labour market merely descriptively stated women's status in secondary labour market without sufficient explanation of why and how the inequality persists (Bevelander & Groeneveld, 2010; Boston, 1990; Buchmann, Kriesi, & Sacchi, 2010; Hudson, 2007; Fried, 1988; Friedberg, Long, & Dickens, 1988; Steinmetz, 2012). Third, there are rare direct measurements on gender inequality/difference in each segment. Dickens and Long (1985) addressed different wage mechanisms in the primary and secondary sectors, but they did not examine gender inequality. Ghilarducci and Lee (2005) conducted a similar study to test dual labour market for female workers; but their study merely address advantages and disadvantages between the two sectors, not between men and women. Similarly, Meyer and Mukerjee (2007) specifically tested dual labour market theory using female samples. The results indicated two mechanisms in the economic return between primary and secondary sectors; but the two mechanisms and related credentials had implication for women only.

Two limitations in existing Chinese studies relate to gender inequality in the dual labour market. First, urban-rural segregation has been thoroughly used as the frame of segregation in the dual structure analysis. The urban-rural dual structure is significant to the issues related to China's development, but urban production has become the most important strength in advancing the nation's economy; it is important to examine inequality in urban

areas. Therefore, the traditional division of the dual labour market in China is not suitable in this study. Second, other approaches used different indicators, including state- and non-state sectors and formal and informal jobs. These indicators are too simplistic in their capacity to divide the labour market into two segments; the results are usually biased. For example, some researchers defined self-employment as informal jobs, or secondary sector jobs, because self-employment jobs include less access to social benefits, resources, or security of permanent employment (Cai & Wang, 2004; Chen & Hamori, 2008; Wu & Li, 2006); however, many self-employed owners have huge financial returns and related privileges due to strong social networks, which should be grouped with the primary sector characteristics.

Furthermore, many gender studies are well organized and applied, but a large number of Chinese domestic studies are not convincing for several reasons. The first is the superficial application of theories and the lack of linkage between theoretical analysis and reality. Most of the existing research merely lists human capital theory, gender role theory, and some feminist theory but does not implement them in the analyses. These studies present the three theories in the background and introduction, but no related combination of theories or related facts and available data is provided to support the theories. Because the theories are separated from other aspects of the study, they are not perceived as valuable as they should be. The second reason relates to the limited use of data. Descriptive analyses occupy most of the research. Far more comprehensive analysis of data by both quantitative and qualitative methods should be applied to delve more deeply into the issue. The third reason is the absence of the inequality's analysis of research conclusions and, therefore, the insignificance of the policy suggestions. It seems that a number of the studies relating to gender inequality

in China attempted to accommodate the needs of the policy makers and the party leadership because a large percentage of the papers includes a policy suggestion at the end. However, due to the first and the second reasons mentioned above, few convincing results have originated from their research; thus, the policy suggestions are not as meaningful as they should be.

Existing research regarding gender inequality generally provides three reasons for women's disadvantaged position in the workplace: human capital accumulation, occupational and industrial placement, and heavy burden of household work. These reasons are significant but not sufficient to explain contemporary China's situation. First, human capital accumulation has not been an absolute disadvantage in urban China, especially in terms of education obtained; a direct proof of this is the years of education obtained in General Social Survey 2003 (as shown in chapter 4) that women have more education on average than men. Second, occupational and industrial placement is still an important factor in explaining gender inequality. However, as with other researches in labour market segregation (as shown in former pages), descriptive numbers are the primary indicator shown in the researches; further explanations of why and how such situations persist need to be addressed. Third, the heavy burden of household work is not as serious as it was before in urban China. An important reason is the implementation of the one-child policy in the last 30 years. Most urban families have only one child today, so women have relatively fewer burdens in childcare duties.

This study draws on these orientations to provide an integrated analysis of the impact of a dual labour market on gender inequality in contemporary urban China. It uses a

comprehensive approach to identify primary and secondary labour market and then draws on an analysis of detailed gender inequality in each sector. Finally, it presents an integrative explanation of why and how gender inequality persists in the dual labour market by using cultural and institutional factors to represent the effect of macro-level social contexts. Furthermore, embeddedness is used in this study to help construct the framework for exploring dual labour markets and women's status in China.

Embeddedness

Industrialization strongly associated with a world of rationality in modern societies. Individuals are presumed to be rational decision makers. However, as social actors, individuals are not fully able to choose the most rational approaches to achieve objectives because of contextual norms created by cultural, cognitional, institutional, and political factors; these norms are underlying action rationality and deeply internalized in social practice. Embeddedness points out that these underlying norms exist behind rational social actions; “embeddedness expresses the notion that social actors can be understood and interpreted only within relational, institutional, and cultural contexts” (Ghezzi & Mingione, 2007, p. 11).

Embeddedness affects social and economic activity by reducing rational practices in social actions. Four kinds of embeddedness are identified: structural, cognitional, cultural, and political mechanisms (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990). Structural embeddedness focuses on ties and links between social actors; the ties and links comprise a wide variety of social network arrangements and provide opportunities for interconnected actors in social and economic activities. Empirically, a number of research studies on this topic focus on the

position occupied by an actor in the network, and on how the position affects the actor's actions and opportunities (Burt, 1992; Davis, 1991; Gulati, 1998; Hargadon & Sutton, 1997). Cognitive embeddedness concerns how "symbolic representations" and "frameworks of meaning" affect social actors in seeking rationality; in this sense, cognitive embeddedness emphasizes the ways in which "structured regularities of mental processes limit the exercise of social and economic reasoning" (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990, p. 15–16). Cultural embeddedness usually refers to the latent norms created by shared understanding and meanings in social and economic activity and process (Dacin, Ventresca, & Beal, 1999). Culturally embedded models of authority, identity, control, hierarchy, and expertise are typical examples. Political embeddedness draws attention to how social and economic actions are shaped by norms created through political authorities, legal systems, and state rulers (Zukin & DiMaggio, 1990). Political embeddedness also focuses on how social actions embodied in authoritative categories and classification systems create contextual norms in organizational and managerial processes (Walsh, 1995).

Using the concept of embeddedness, this study develops a theoretical framework in two ways. The first is that it examines latent rules within the operation of Chinese markets to find particular indicators and to understand the labour market in relation to two sectors (primary and secondary sectors). Under state socialism, while simultaneously undergoing profound economic reform, Chinese markets have embraced capitalism while maintaining unique characteristics associated with profit distribution and power redistribution. Therefore, structural and political embeddedness are combined to identify specific indicators of these rules in the Chinese context. Second, this study focuses on gender inequality based on

women's limited access to positions within the primary labour market. As stated in previous sections, cultural and institutional factors (the macro-level social and historical context) will be used to explain women's disadvantaged positions. Special gender norms, rules, and practices are created within China's social and historical context. In this sense, cultural embeddedness and cognitive embeddedness can be used together to examine factors affecting rational actions in creating cultural barriers; structural embeddedness and political embeddedness can be used together to examine factors affecting rational actions in creating institutional barriers.

China's Special Context in Identifying Dual Labour Market

China has made significant achievements in marketization since the 1978 economic reforms. Although China has adopted a capitalist economic market, it has retained socialist political control; as a result, China's capitalist market contains unique rules and norms (for example, state economy resource monopoly, government-centered redistribution power, and social networks required to obtain jobs in state-owned institutions) deeply embedded in its market system as well as in related social interaction and activities. Empirically and normally, government makes policies to directly create rules and competition for the formation of a market (Dacin, Ventresca, & Beal, 1999); equal competitions based on fair rules are the foundation of prosperity of a market and the precondition for an individual to obtain social status. However, these special rules and norms in Chinese market break the fair market operations to some extent and create contextual marketing results that can rank an individual's social status differently from those in Western market system. Therefore, it is important to identify those unique rules and norms embedded in China.

The theory of market transition is one of the major attempts to explain the features of a new market and the resulting income inequality. Beginning in 1949, there are two fundamentally different lines of logic regarding market resource allocation: state socialism and markets redistribution (Nee, 1989; 1991; 1992; 1996). State socialism dominated China's pre-reform market rules (1949–1978); subsequent market reforms introduced market mechanisms that have often interrupted and undermined the planned economy.

A series of studies of income distribution in China, Nee (1989; 1991; 1992; and 1996) argued that the market reforms brought free competition and led to the increasing role of human capital in returns within labour markets. As traditional redistributive power became less significant as in the pre-reform period, political elites with positional priority were presumed to gain less. Other researchers found opposite results regarding the market transition theory (Bian & Logan, 1996; Xie & Hannum, 1996). Instead of emphasizing the mechanism of free market competition, researchers emphasized the increasing role of local government (Walder, 1995), the conversion of political power to economic resources (Rona-Tas, 1994), changes in “political markets” (Parish & Michelson, 1996), institutional reconfiguration (Stark 1996), and the institutional arrangements of work organizations (Zhou, Tuma, & Moen, 1997). These researchers highlighted the persistence of political power (Bian & Logan, 1996), saying that traditional redistributive power did not disappear but changed in nature, transforming from political into economic issues (Zhou, 2000). Redistributive powers were strengthened during the market reform because party members, workers in state sectors, and workers holding jobs close to redistributive power have more opportunities to increase

income and other profits (for example, benefits) than other workers (Bian & Logan, 1996; Wu, 2002). As a result, the introduction of the market economy/mechanisms had not decreased redistributive power.

Before the transition, under the Communist Party's management, the state sector provided salaries and in-kind goods and services to employees as material supplements (Walder, 1986). Other benefits and services were also distributed in accordance with workers' rank. Because the state sector created life-long employment (Naughton, 1995), it was called the "iron-rice bowl." Starting in the late 1970s, one of the objectives of market reform was to restructure enterprises in state sectors to motivate greater economic competitiveness. One change was to allow enterprises to decide their own types of bonus and welfare distribution. The state sector thus was able to generate additional revenues for its employees (for example, pay fees for employees' children's education, communication costs and traffic expenses), and employees within the state sector tried to use their positions and resources to transform their activities from "rank-seeking under the old redistributive system to rent-seeking during the reform era" (Lu, 1999, p. 365). Xie & Wu (2008, p. 6) observed that "It has been estimated that such irregular earnings accounted for about thirty to forty percent of workers' total income in the 1980s and overtook normal salaries in the middle 1990s". On the other side, a new sector was created in the same time: the market sector. Self-employed enterprises, foreign firms, hybrid firms with mixed property rights, and joint ventures firms were included in the sector. Workers in this sector did not receive any redistributive benefits or bonus. They were the least protected and also the least constrained by state institutions and state policies with regard to production, resource allocation, and job security (Xie & Wu, 2008).

As a result, as state-sector employers operated and acted through unique rules beyond the principle of open and fair competition, most Chinese workers were willing to be employed in the state sector. This willingness was possible among Chinese workers because they believed that they were able to be close to redistributive power and acquire easier lives, respect and higher social status. In this sense, both the unique rules of state-sector operation and Chinese workers' cognitive knowledge of being employed by state-sectors were embedded in political and wide network contexts under profit distribution and invisible power redistribution. China's market was not regulated in the same way that Western markets were. Existing research on dual labour markets has focused on Western countries, where mature market mechanisms have been established. It is meaningful to test whether Western economic theories of dual labour market fit the Chinese market context. Before this, special characteristics related to profit distribution and power redistribution that are embedded in Chinese market will be identified as indicators, dividing the labour market into two sectors.

Macro-Level Social Context as Explanatory Factors for Gender Inequality in the Chinese Dual Labour Market

This study focuses on gender inequality in contemporary Chinese labour markets. The first part of this chapter has introduced the theoretical elements relevant for determining the possible existence of a Chinese dual labour market. In describing whether there is a distribution based on gender, three main explanations are identified in the literature. In addition, the macro-level social context is in need of addressing. The context includes cultural and institutional factors embedded in social interaction and activities in the labour market.

Cultural factors

Cultural factors include traditional values, stereotypes, and gender ideologies. These cognitive forms were created through China's long cultural and historical development and are embedded in labour market activities and related social interactions along with normal market rules. For example, women's primary roles within the family, supported by a male wage, are maintained generation after generation throughout the development of economy and society.

Since ancient times, Confucianism was regarded as the preeminent basis for Chinese ideology; the system of Confucianism had emphasized hierarchical structure based on loyalty. Under the philosophy of Confucianism, females were considered to be subservient, domestic, and loyal to men in a world controlled by males. In empirical China, totalitarianism and polygyny best exhibited the status of males compared to females (Granrose, 2005). Although the values, stereotypes, and ideologies that foster women's secondary status have been partly diminished by modern policies and social practices since the 1950s, those traditional values, stereotypes, and ideologies have existed for thousands of years along with the Confucianism philosophical and ethical standards; even today, China still respects Confucianism as the most superior philosophy, as this theory teaches how to behave in daily life; therefore people judge and evaluate women's actions through cultural standards embedded in general market rules (for example, women are thought of as "inefficient" in working even though they hold same or more human capital accumulation than men do).

Institutional factors

Institutional factors include gender-based policies, practices, and norms; they exist at both formal and informal levels. At the formal level, these factors include governmental policies, while at the informal level, they refer to social activities including value preferences, media performance, and specific workplace norms. Political power, positional priority, and managerial authority are utilized by power holders (employers or work leaders) to create latent norms existing beyond general market policies and rules and embedded inside of labour market activities. These latent norms create barriers against women in sharing equal opportunities with men (for example, in practices that identify gender preference in employment postings).

When China was founded in 1949 under the ideology of Communism, the central government executed many policies to improve women's status. For example, the National People's Congress passed a law called the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Women on April 3, 1992. The aim of the law was to provide a legal basis for women's awareness of their rights, operation of organizations, and social efforts in this regard (Jiang, 1997).

However, women's position and income levels were still lower than those of men. Market economy reforms have given existing enterprises more freedom in their autonomy to hire workers (Cooke, 2001). Employers usually preferred to hire men rather than women. At the formal level, studies found that government action sometimes caused problems along with solving them (Beijing Review, 1995). In one instance, government created re-employment opportunities for laid-off workers; but the government also forced re-employed workers to accept "special difficulty certificates" in order to make extra profits: but the re-employed workers had to pay the administration fees (extra burden) to obtain the

certificates (South China Morning Post, 1997).

To sum up, formal institutions of government management and policies and informal institutions of employment norms, rules, and practices create gender-based barriers embedded into market behaviors.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has introduced the widely recognized concepts associated with dual labour market theory, which emphasize the division of the market into primary and secondary sectors. The former sector represents well-paid jobs which have good benefits, excellent working conditions, advanced promotion opportunities, and so forth. The latter sector represents job conditions characterized by a lack of all of these benefits.

Insufficient research has been conducted directly on gender inequality in dual labour markets. Related research focusing on labour market segregation used full-time and part-time employment and male-dominated and female-dominated occupations as indicators, analyzing the patterns of labour market segmentation, changing trends of gender differences over time and across various locations. However, many existing research was descriptive, simply providing numbers and lists associated with earnings inequalities without probing deeper to discover why and how gender inequalities persisted. Research using dual labour market theory did not directly examine gender inequality in the primary and secondary sector but rather used simple indicators to identify the dual division. Such indicators were insufficient to accurately test the dual labour market. A comprehensive and integrative approach needed to be adopted.

China did not have a capitalist economic market until the reforms of the late 1970s.

After a few decades, the market took steps toward better development but retained unique characteristics; redistributive power and positional priority differentiated the Chinese labour market from Western capitalist markets. It would be significant to learn whether the dual labour market theory can be applied to Chinese labour markets.

This chapter has also reviewed existing literature on explanations for gender inequality, especially aspects such as earnings and opportunities. Human capital accumulation, labour market placement, and household duties are all important factors influencing women's earnings, status, and opportunities for employment in the primary labour market. However, additional factors should be included in a deep analysis—factors such as culture and institutions from macro-level social context—to explore reasons for women's disadvantaged position in the labour market.

To sum up, theoretically, the dual labour market theory and embeddedness are used as the framework. In the modern industrialized world, individual rational actions are affected by cultural, cognitive, political, and structural norms existing beyond general market rules and are deeply embedded in the labour market activities. These norms create gender-based inequality in the labour market.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA

To answer the research question, this chapter first introduces three research objectives, three steps to conduct the research, and information on statistical data; then provides quantitative methods and variable information for the first two steps; and in the end provides a qualitative method and interview information for the third step.

Research Objectives and Introduction of Datasets

This thesis has three primary research objectives:

1. Determine the extent to which distributions across primary and secondary sectors characterize the labour market for contemporary urban workers in China;
2. If a dual labour market applies, examine how it relates to gender inequality in contemporary urban China, and provide evidence of the major factors that affect gender inequality in Chinese dual labour market; and
3. Identify the major factors that contribute to women's limited access to positions associated with the primary labour market.

The study addresses these questions in three stages. First, it introduces a statistical model to test the possible existence of and factors associated with a dual labour market. Second, this study employs descriptive and regression analysis to examine gender inequality in the context of dual labour market. In the third step this study analyzes information gathered through interviews and secondary data to collect views, opinions, experiences, and feelings related to cultural and institutional factors associated with gender inequality in the dual labour market. Quantitative methods are applied in the first two steps, and a qualitative analysis is used in the final step.

This study draws upon publically available data from the China General Social Survey for the quantitative analysis. The Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS, 2003; 2005) is a large research program conducted by the department of sociology by Renmin University and the Survey Research Center at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. This study used comparisons of the datasets of years 2003 and 2005 to provide convincing results: dual labour markets exist and affect gender inequality in a similar manner in the two years. Using these datasets, I omitted all of the rural samples including urban residences with rural identity and missing values because the study focused only on the urban labour force. Furthermore, only those respondents with earnings were selected: employed workers, part-time workers, and temporary employees. Within the urban sample, those with the status of studying (or studying abroad), unemployed, retired, engaged in full-time-homecare, receiving zero (and negative) income, and enrolled in the military were eliminated because the purpose of this analysis was to examine issues in the labour market. After omitting these cases, the 2003 dataset contained 2485 respondents, and the 2005 dataset contained 2191 respondents.

Quantitative Part I: Measuring Labour Market Dichotomization

Limitations of Existing Measurement

There are several difficulties associated with the development of empirical measures of labour market dichotomization and identification of discrete labour market segments (Althausser & Kalleberg, 1981; Boston, 1990; Bulow & Summers, 1986). Earlier attempts to measure labour market dichotomization and identify labour market segments met a number of obstacles. For example, the shortage of multivariate job quality data forced many of the

researchers of labour market dichotomization to rely on a single job quality indicator, such as earnings, industry, or occupation, to represent specific labour market segments. The result has been a confounding of cause and effect (Hodson & Kaufman, 1982) and a source of possible estimation bias (Dickens & Lang, 1985) because any error in classification will lead to inaccurate distributions between the two sectors and wrong estimations of actual differences. For example, we cannot simply say that commercial service industries belong to the secondary labour market on the basis of industrial characteristics, because many higher-level managers and even the owners of some stores have characteristics of primary labour market members.

Nevertheless, despite limitations and challenges, the dual labour market theory has produced a large and informative body of research on the nature and workings of labour markets, especially in the United States. Researchers have used a wide variety of variables to represent labour market segments, including those single indicator such as industry (Beck Horan, & Tolbert, 1978; Hodson, 1978); occupation (Andrisani, 1973; Osterman, 1975); a combination of industries and occupations (Bibb & Form, 1977; Rumberger & Carnoy, 1980); and some other combined indicators, such as race and sex of workers (Bergman, 1974; Wilson, 1978), occupation skills (Boston, 1990), and job characteristics (Bluestone William, & Stevenson, 1973; Gordon, Edwards, & Reich, 1982). Others have identified the labour market dichotomization based on different returns to investments in human capital (Bluestone William, & Stevenson, 1973; Osterman, 1975; Rebitzer & Robinson, 1991).

Many criticisms of the dual labour market approaches exist. Some researchers argued that the criteria used to identify labour market segments was often highly subjective

and arbitrary (Boston, 1990; Graham & Shakow, 1990), because studies had found considerable variation in job quality within specific occupations and industries (Baron & Bielby, 1980; Hodson, 1984). Others argued that the definition of labour market segments were made by wage differences between primary and secondary workers (Cain, 1976; Kruse, 1977). Much of the previous research on labour market dichotomization found that the mobility between segments was restricted (Field, 2006). However, critics argued that secondary workers who increased their accumulation of human capital in areas such as level of education were still capable of obtaining better jobs and achieving upward social mobility (Boston, 1990; Griffin, Kalleberg, & Alexander, 1981; Osterman, 1975). Other researchers pointed out that not all groups of workers had equal opportunity to move upward; in the United States, for example, black workers were less likely to move from secondary to primary jobs than their white counterparts (Freedman, 1976; Rosenberg, 1980).

As a result, those approaches of demarcation mentioned above are criticized on the grounds of their potential bias to select variables (Baffore-Bonnie, 2003; Cain, 1976; Dickson & Lang, 1985; 1988). Therefore, Dickson and Lang (1985; 1988; 1992) conducted endogenous switching regression to make the distribution of wages and workers' attributes to determine workers' segments by assuming a normal distribution of the error terms. Ghilarducci and Lee (2005), Meyer and Mukerjee (2007) also used same approach to test the existence of dual labour market theory. However, these studies did not provide gender-based comparison because some of them had no female samples and others conducted analysis in male and female groups separately.

This study uses a switching regression approach to divide the Chinese urban labour market into primary and secondary sectors, with both men and women included in the analysis. A dual system will be built first and then we can look into gender-based differences in each sector to examine gender inequality in the system. Furthermore, approaches used in the Western market cannot be fully and directly implemented into the Chinese market because of differences between the two markets: the state socialism ideology partially controls the market distribution in China and related special norms existing beyond general market rules and embedded in labour market activities. Some particular characteristics of the market should be added as indicators for the segmentation.

Special Factors in Determining Dual Structure of Chinese Labour Market

Under the leadership of the Communist Party, China has gone through a market transition in which free competition and economic efficiency are generalized. However, Chinese government and related policies play important roles in creating the rules and structures of the market. Therefore, the “free” market and “free” competition are partially controlled by the central government and local employers; redistributive power becomes a strong signal in determining people’s social status.

Monopoly attributes of enterprises/agencies and unfair allocation of benefits in these enterprises play significant roles in shaping people’s social status. Monopoly enterprises/agencies, mostly owned by the state sector, are operated exclusively by the central government; as a result, these enterprises/agencies belong to or are close to redistributive power. This is why monopoly enterprises/agencies can widen the social income gap by

offering employees higher social status; whether or not working in monopoly industry plays an important role in determining individuals' rank/status in the society.

In China, the socialist public ownership regulates that the central government controls the economic lifeline of the nation. The state usually provides infrastructure to support important natural resource industries related to coal, electricity, oil, and transportation, for example, because these are seen as investment priorities due to their long-life cycles and importance to the development of the economy. During the market transition, with a planned economy shifting to a market-oriented mechanism, these government-controlled monopoly industries built a strong connection with the central government. Primary income distribution and benefits gave monopoly enterprises huge advantages compared to other industries (Ye, 2008). Thus, monopoly enterprises sustained high profits through sole possession of critical resources or through government-granted authority to produce exclusively (Li, 2011).

Defining Monopoly Variables in Datasets

According to the information published by the State Assets Committee, forty state-owned monopoly enterprises have divided ninety-five percent of 600 billion RMB equally, equivalent to 169 central authority enterprises' profits; among them, the "top twelve rich and powerful families" (such as China Mobile Communications Corporation, China National Petroleum Corporation, China Petroleum Chemical Corporation, and China National Offshore Oil Corp.) completely swept away 78.8% of the total profits of Central authority enterprises (China State Statistical Bureau, 2005). The data also showed that in 2004, the average wage of those who worked in the electric power, telecommunications, finance,

insurance, water and power supply, and tobacco industries was two to three times more than that of people in other industries; furthermore, when compared with the off-payroll income and benefits, the real disparity gap was usually larger (China State Statistical Bureau, 2005). In their compensation systems, hidden earnings—namely employment benefits—are precisely the main form through which monopoly profits transform into personal earnings. This means that the more benefits they hold, the more advantages they have in shaping their own social status compared to those who hold fewer benefits.

Therefore, in the Chinese context of market transition, characteristics of monopoly and employee benefits are used as additional elements to examine labour market dichotomization. In integrating all these elements, switching regression is used to assign urban workers into the dual labour markets (Baffoe-Bonnie, 2003; Dickens & Lang, 1985, 1988, 1992; Gamoran & Mare, 1989; Mare & Winship, 1988). After distributing urban workers into primary and secondary sectors, gender differences and inequalities will be examined in the whole labour market and in each sector. The two sectors should show different functions in determining earnings distribution and economic returns while controlling for gender.

There are twenty-one industries in each dataset: Agriculture, Mining, Manufacture I (mechanical), Manufacture II (types other than mechanical), Power Supply (electricity, water, and gas), Construction, Soil and Water Conservancy, Transportation, Storing, Telecom, Commercial Business, Finance and Insurance, Real Estate, Social Service and Public Health, Sports, Social Well-being, Education, Culture and Arts, Broadcasting, Research and Technique, Party and Government Agencies. Of these twenty-two industries, eight have

monopoly characteristics (State Administration for Industry and Commerce of the People's Republic of China, 2009): Mining, Manufacturing I, transportation, Power Supply, Commerce, Finance, Culture, and Party and Government. Other industries that do not have monopoly characteristics are categorized as a reference group.

Seven kinds of benefits are recorded in each dataset and relate to respondents' working and housing benefits and medical insurance. Each benefit is presented as a question: "Do you have the _____ benefit?" respondents may respond with yes, no, or no response. The author combined the seven variables in the dataset to create one new numerical variable. The new variable shows each respondent's number of benefits, which can vary from zero to seven.

To sum up, the first step of the quantitative analysis of this study is to use the maximum likelihood technique to distribute urban workers into primary and secondary sectors. Switching regression (Baffoe-Bonnie, 2003; Dickens and Lang, 1985, 1988, 1992; Gamoran and Mare, 1989; Mare and Winship, 1988) is used in this step to integrate factors that can determine individuals' possibility into each of the sectors. Thus, an unobservable labour market dichotomization should be examined by invoking a normal distribution assumption for the disturbances, and by estimating the probability function for the regime specification using the maximum likelihood approach (Baffoe-Bonnie, 2003; Dickens and Lang, 1985, 1988, 1992). Studies focusing on the switching regression approach of market dichotomization have found concrete support for the dual theory (Baffoe-Bonnie, 2003).

Two data sets (CGSS 2003 and CGSS 2005) are used to build their own segmentation of dual labour market. In previous studies, human capital variables were

applied to divide the market into two sectors. This study adds two more factors in the special context: business monopoly characteristics and number of urban workers' benefits offered by employment. These factors are used as unique Chinese indicators in examining labour market dichotomization.

Quantitative Part II: Testing the Effect of the Dual Labour Market on Gender Inequality⁵

After dividing the labour market into two segments and assigning urban workers into each segment, the second step of quantitative analysis is to use multiple regression analysis and descriptive crosstabs techniques to examine gender inequality in the dual labour market in contemporary urban China. Regression equations are used in each labour market sector of each year's dataset, and existing factors in early research literature are examined in the dual labour market context. The results of the two dataset are shown together to provide concrete proof of the existence of dual labour market and its direct effect on gender inequality.

Dependent Variables

For both of the datasets, the natural logarithm of respondents' annual earnings is used as the dependent variable in the multiple regression analysis.

Independent Variables and Control Variables

Gender is used as the independent variable, and the study examines its effect on the earnings of respondents while controlling for other variables. It is dummy coded as *male=1* and *female=0*.

⁵ The dependent variable, independent variable, and control variables defined in this section are also applicable to quantitative part II.

For control variables, three measures of human capital are used in this analysis: education, work experience, and square of work experience. For education, 2003 data have 11 valid categories. I extrapolate years of schooling from levels of attained education, combining Mincer's (1974) and Xie and Hannum's (1996) methods of scales and the Chinese context (actual year of schooling in each level of education): *no education = 0, primary school = 6, junior high school = 9, senior high school = 12, technological skill school = 13, college = 15, university undergraduate degree = 16 and university graduate school = 17*. The variable in the 2005 dataset is exact years of schooling. There is no direct measurement of work experience in either of the datasets; work experience is computed as the difference between the year the survey was conducted (2002 and 2004) and the year when respondents started their first jobs. Variables called "the year of the first job" are included in both of the datasets, and the square of work experience is used as the third human capital measurement (Mincer, 1974).

Labour force placement (occupation and industrial placement) is used as another set of control variables. Occupation and industry are provided in both datasets. There are seven occupations within the datasets: (a) leaders of government agencies, party institutions and enterprises; (b) professional technicians; (c) common administrators and middle-level cadres; (d) commercial workers; (e) service workers; (f) agricultural and related production workers, and operators; and (g) labour workers. These occupations are given by a decline rank⁶ in terms of their earnings, working conditions, and social status (Lu, 2002; Sun, 2004) in the

⁶ Lu (2002) reported that China had ten main classes as a descending order. They are: leaders in government and social organizations; professional managers; leaders of middle and large-level of enterprises; technical experts; middle-level cadres; owners of personal businesses; workers in commerce and service industries; technical workers, manufacturing workers and lay-offs.

Chinese stratification (Li & Chen, 2002). Industry is recoded from 22 categories to 6 categories to maintain consistency with previous research (Shu & Bian, 2003). The six categories are (a) party and government agencies; (b) education, culture, and public health; (c) commerce, real estate, finance, and service; (d) mining, construction, and transportation; (e) manufacturing; and (f) agriculture. Occupation is recoded to six dummy variables, with Labour Workers as the reference group; industry is recoded to five dummy variables with Agriculture as the reference group.

Family structure is used as another category of control variable. Marital status and number of family members are selected in the analysis, because married women and women with a greater number of family members are assumed to have greater household responsibilities, which affects women's full-time work and earnings. For marital status, "1" is dummy coded as married (including divorcees and widows), and "0" is dummy coded as never married; the number of family members is presented in both datasets.

Qualitative Analysis on Cultural and Institutional Barriers to Gender Inequality in the Dual Labour Market

The "General Social Survey" China dataset does not include variables related to cultural and institutional information. To fulfill the research objectives and provide sufficient explanations for women's status in the dual labour market, I employed qualitative methods for this study.

I conducted interviews to collect information on cultural and institutional factors that deepen gender inequality in Chinese dual labour market. Interviews provide access to people's ideas, experiences, and memories in their own words. Targeted units of analysis are

groups within which respondents are in the dual labour market of Xi'an, a provincial capital, geographically located in the central area of China.

Interviews have a very specific purpose to provide explanations and support for quantitative analysis; a probability sampling method is not appropriate for selecting interviewees. The selection principles must ensure that interviewees have sufficient background, qualifications, and experience to provide information regarding access into the primary labour market. Therefore, great efforts have been made to select appropriate interviewees in terms of gender, age, education, occupation, level of position, experience in employment and hiring, and working sector. I employed a snowball sampling method, building from my personal network of relationships, generating 20 appropriate interviewees who could be trusted to answer questions thoroughly and honestly.

The sample of interviewees was balanced in gender composition, with ten males and ten females. I set up an age frame representing different seniorities in the labour market; the sample contained five groups: (a) below 25 years old, (b) 26–30, (c) 31–35, (d) 36–40, and (e) above 41 years old. Each age group contained four interviewees. In the sample, 15 interviewees held bachelor's degrees, and 10 interviewees held master's degrees. The interviewees' occupations included leader of state-sector enterprise, professor/associate professor of university, instructor of technical school, administrator of provincial government, sales manager of private IT company, production manager of telecommunication enterprise, administrator of state-owned electronic enterprise, client representative of a national bank, human resource assistant of a private real estate research company, design assistant of a research institution, accountant of a state-owned company, finance worker in state-owned

company, journalist in media institution, mechanic in an oil/gas industry, production worker of a state-owned enterprise, service worker of a private company, and workers doing casual housekeeping. Ten interviewees worked for state-owned work units with monopoly characteristics and a competitive number of benefits; two interviewees worked for state-owned research institutions without monopoly characteristics; another eight interviewees worked for less-secured non-state-owned companies, cultural agencies, and educational institutions. Six interviewees had higher-level positions and authority in the hiring and profits distribution processes; another fourteen interviewees had lower-level positions and status. I coded interviewees' names by numbers, following the format as "Interviewee No. 1 (gender; age)".

Table 3.1 Summary of Main Sample Characteristics

Characteristics	Number of Interviewees in Each Category	
Gender	Female: 10	Male: 10
Age	Younger than 25 years old: 4 31-35 years old: 4 Older than 41 years old: 4	25-30 years old: 4 36-40 years old: 4
Education	Bachelor: 15	Master: 10
Jobs	State owned work units with monopoly characteristics: 10 State owned research institutions without monopoly characteristics: 2 Non-stated owned companies, cultural and educational institutions: 8	
Level of Positions	Higher –level positions with authorities and priorities in resource allocation: 6 Normal and lower-level positions: 14	

The interviews were conducted in a private location arranged by myself. Each interviewee was encouraged to speak gradually at his or her own pace in responding to questions concerning self-image, relationships of importance, education and learning,

real-life decision making and moral dilemmas, accounts of personal change and growth, perceived catalysts for change and impediments to growth, and visions for the future.

Interviews were held after business hours and with an average length of 1.5 hours each, with the longest one lasting 3 hours. Contents of conversation including interviewees' emotion and body language were recorded and organized; these materials were used in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 to provide cultural and institutional explanations on why and how women persisted in disadvantaged positions in dual labour markets.

There are two possible limitations of the sample selection. First, Xi'an is a city that hardly completely represents individuals' experience and ideology throughout all other cities in mainland China. Second, the sample selection consists of individuals from a single network; individuals with the same or related networks may share similar characteristics, qualifications, experiences, and related ideas, which may generate biased results. However, all of the qualitative data collected provided typical reasons for gender inequality in the dual labour market; the information is valuable.

I also collected other information to support the results of the research. I examined government publications such as national papers, magazines, and website newsletters to find barriers for women at the policy level. I visited the largest labour market center of Northwest China (located in Xi'an) and observed all the media tools and advertisements within the center.

Specifically, the following framework of questions guided interviews with female respondents:

What is your opinion about your own status in the labour market?

What do you think about the status of both women and men in the home and in the workplace?

Have you ever encountered discrimination or experienced unfair treatment because of gender?

Where, when, and in what situations have you encountered discrimination or unfairness?

Has the discrimination or unfairness ever caused you to have a lower status at home or in the workplace?

What do you think about your current job and income compared to that of a man?

What are your thoughts on your working conditions and future opportunities?

Have you ever encountered obstacles while seeking job promotion or increased income? What were these obstacles?

Have you ever tried to fight against discrimination or unfairness? What happened?

How do you view gender roles in both family and the workplace?

How much do you contribute to family duties? Is culture an important factor affecting your career opportunity? Are you willing to accept it?

Have you ever encountered particular rules or norms regarding women's opportunities in the labour market, especially at higher-level positions?

How do you view the fact that women have a lower status in the labour market?

The following framework of questions guided interviews with male respondents:

What is your opinion about your own status in labour market?

How do you view the status of both women and men in the home and in the

workplace?

Have you ever done anything that was considered discriminatory to women?

Where, when, and in what situations did you do it?

Has your behavior ever resulted in a woman having a weaker status at home or in the workplace?

What are your comments on your work conditions and future opportunities?

How do you view your current job and income compared to that of a woman?

Have you ever encountered obstacles while seeking job promotion or increased income? What obstacles did you encounter?

Have you ever experienced or witnessed a woman attempting to fight against discrimination or unfairness? What happened?

How do you view gender roles in both the family and the workplace?

How much do you contribute to family duties? Is culture an important factor affecting women's career opportunity? Should women accept it?

Have you ever seen or made particular rules or norms regarding women's opportunities in the labour market, especially at higher-level positions?

Why do you think men have a higher status in the labour market?

Chapter Summary

This chapter introduces research design and datasets employed to collect data to address my main research questions. Using the China General Social Survey Data, this study first examines the existence and actual conditions of gender inequality in contemporary urban China and addresses three research objectives: (a) to determine whether and to what extent

the Chinese dual labour market reveals a dual structure, (b) to test how a dual labour market affects gender inequality, and (c) to explain why women have a lower status in labour market (or why they are more likely to stay in the secondary labour market).

To fulfill the first objective, I use switching regression. Existing research shows that reliance on a simple and single indicator is the main problem in most attempts to compare divisions within a dual labour market; some other studies use multiple indicators but exclude women from the analysis. Switching regression presents its availability in identifying the dual labour market divisions (Dickens & Long, 1985; 1988; 1992). Adopting statistical approaches directly from Western labour market analyses may distort results, so two Chinese characteristics (monopoly characteristics and number of benefits from employment) will be added as indicators so that the switching regression could explain the Chinese context more accurately.

I use multiple regression in the second step of statistical analysis to test how dual labour markets affect women in contemporary urban China.

To complete the third research objective, I use qualitative analysis, interviewing 20 participants from Xi'an, a provincial capital in central China. Their ideas, experiences, and feelings are recorded and organized in later chapters as proofs and explanations on why women have a lower status and limited access to the primary labour market in contemporary urban China.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS OF STATISTICAL DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter provides a quantitative analysis of gender inequality in the dual labour market. There are three sections in this chapter: (a) general description of national gender earnings gap in 2003 and 2005; (b) division of the urban labour market into primary and secondary sectors, examining various characteristics introduced through the division; and (c) regression in each sector using two datasets to examine how gender inequality is characterized in the dual structure.

General Description of Gender Gap in China Using Two Datasets

As previous chapters emphasize, gender inequality has a long and continuous history in China. Although the country has undergone a series of political and economic reforms, gender inequality persists.

Table 4.1 and table 4.2 present gender differences in annual earnings by level of education, status of employment, and type of geographical region in 2003 and 2005, respectively. Overall, women earned 80.3% of men's earnings in 2003, compared to 75.0% in 2005. The gender earnings gap remained stable and had even increased (consistent with Shu and Bian's (2003) research: women earned 83.9% of men's earnings in 1988 and 83.8% of men's earnings in 1995). Other related research generated similar results (Bian, Logan, & Shu, 2000; Zhou, 2000), noting that, the gender gap remained the same despite a 2.27 times increase in earnings between 1988 and 1995.

Table 4.1 Gender Difference in Annual Earnings (Unit: RMB) by Education, Employment Status, and Region in China in 2003

	Male			Female			Gap
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	Female Earnings as % of Male Earnings
Total Earnings	13,700.00	13,748.98	1,499	11,000.00	10,876.93	986	80.29
Earnings by Education							
No education	9,443.05	13,091.72	82	6,100.56	4,426.36	56	64.60
Primary school	11,100.00	14,270.36	443	7,746.82	7,492.02	238	69.79
Junior high	12,300.00	9,891.74	300	9,303.34	9,053.99	210	75.64
Senior high	12,200.00	7,621.03	80	7,393.32	3,829.30	36	60.60
Skill school	14,000.00	9,295.54	320	12,000.00	9,806.68	264	85.71
College	17,400.00	18,171.41	167	13,900.00	16,172.45	116	79.89
University	26,000.00	19,238.01	107	24,900.00	21,014.71	66	95.77
Earnings by Employment Status							
Permanent & long-term contract	14,100.00	13,832.12	1383	11,500.00	10,892.63	882	81.56
Short-term contract	9,119.42	11,848.87	116	6,390.89	9,632.86	104	70.08
Earnings by Regions							
Coastal	16,300.00	16,809.17	758	12,900.00	11,910.63	536	79.14
Inland	11,000.00	8,904.85	741	8,657.99	8,977.74	450	78.71

Table 4.2 Gender Difference in Annual Earnings (Unit: RMB) by Education, Employment Status, and Region in China in 2005

	Male			Female			Gap
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N	Female Earnings as % of Male Earnings
Total Earnings	17,540.00	17,081.17	1,234	13,154.00	13,222.07	957	74.99
Earnings by Education							
No education	17,668.00	26,106.44	10	3,754.60	2,681.47	12	21.25
Primary school	11,619.00	7,306.31	69	8,498.90	6,749.15	62	73.15
Junior high	13,388.00	12,806.74	346	9,302.90	8,578.35	269	69.49
Senior high	17,547.00	20,263.43	294	11,608.00	7,408.18	237	63.08
Skill school	16,761.00	13,566.11	172	13,270.00	9,426.51	125	79.17
College	22,522.00	18,269.83	206	17,998.00	15,776.95	165	79.91
University	24,475.00	19,758.81	137	26,060.00	25,122.80	87	106.48
Earnings by Employment Status							
Permanent & long-term contract	18,389.00	17,657.68	1,082	14,166.00	13,809.21	808	77.04
Short-term contract	15,111.00	10,434.50	152	7,663.10	7,313.83	149	66.57
Earnings by Regions							
Coastal	22,267.00	20,408.85	480	16,241.00	17,659.54	364	72.94
Inland	14,534.00	13,769.08	754	11,255.99	9,024.28	593	77.44

In terms of years of education, table 4.1 shows a positive effect on earnings for both men and women in 2003, except the fourth level of education (senior high school). Respondents with senior high school earned less than those with only junior high school. In all the educational levels, women earned less than men did. In 2003, women with primary education earned only 69.8% of their male counterparts' earnings, and this percentage raised to 75.6% for those with junior high school education, 85.7% for those with skilled school education, and 95.8% for those with university or higher education. Among those who held a junior high school education, women made only 60.6% of men's earnings. Therefore table 4.1 reveals a trend that the higher the education, the smaller the gender earning gap. Table 4.2 shows a similar situation in 2005. In all the educational categories, women earned less than men did. The biggest earning gap was among those who had no formal education experience; in this category, women earned about 25.2% of men's income. For those with high school, women earned less than 70% of men's income. However, women with a university or higher degree earned more than men did, about 1.06 times more, as shown in the table. The data also reveal a remarkable gender gap by employment status. Among permanent workers and workers on long-term contracts, women's earnings were 81.6% of men's earnings in 2003 and 77.0% of men's earnings in 2005; among short-term workers, women earned only 70.1% of men's earnings in 2003 and 66.6% in 2005. These results indicate that even women working in permanent or long-term positions earned less than men in jobs with short-term contracts, whereas there is a significant gap in the earnings of women in jobs that had relatively poor working conditions compared to those of men working in permanent positions with long-term security. Next, while controlling for regions, we can see an unbalanced

development in terms of region in contemporary China. Both men and women in the coastal region earned more than their counterparts in inland region did. Among coastal residents, women earned 79.1% of men's earnings in 2003 and 72.9% of men's earnings in 2005; in the inland area, women earned 78.7% of men's earnings in 2003 and 77.4% of men's earnings in 2005. The results show that the gender gap was larger in underdeveloped regions in 2003 and the situation changed by 2005.

Table 4.3 and table 4.4 show the general gender difference in human capital, labour force placement, and family structure in 2003 and 2005 respectively. These categories are the independent and control variables used in the regression steps. As a result of a significant increase in women's education in China during the past decade (Shu & Bian, 2003), women had a similar level of education in both of the years (mean of 11.89 years for men and 11.94 years for women in 2003; mean of 11.99 years for men and 11.69 years for women in 2005). Also, women had fewer years of work experience in both of the years. Women's mean education level was observed to have dropped between 2003 and 2005; one of the reasons could be the implementation of an educational policy to enlarge number of college students recruited starting from 1999. In the first four years of policy implementation, the number of college students in China had been increased from 3.41 million to 9.03 million and reached 10 million in 2003.⁷ As a result, after completing a three- or four-year-cycle college education, 2002 and 2003 graduates encountered much more serious employment competition than those who graduated before; fewer college graduates could find satisfactory jobs while more stayed unemployed for a long time. This might be a reason why women

⁷ Data was referred from internet news (in Chinese). Retrieved from <http://www.thebeijingnews.com/news/reform30/2009/01-05/039@080308.htm>

completed less education in 2005 than those of 2003.

Table 4.3 Means, Standard Deviations and t-values for Gender Differences of Variables Used in Analysis in China in 2003

	Male		Female		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Human Capital					
Education	11.891	2.959	11.943	3.071	4.420***
Work experience	16.833	10.207	14.726	9.385	5.196***
Labour Market Placement					
Occupation					
Operators and labour workers	.355	.472	.167	.374	9.358***
Agricultural and related production workers	.012	.108	.005	.069	1.810***
Service workers	.057	.232	.097	.296	-3.731***
Commercial workers	.200	.400	.278	.448	-4.518***
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	.204	.403	.175	.380	1.787***
Professional technicians	.134	.341	.255	.436	-7.679***
Leaders of government agencies, party institution, and enterprises	.058	.233	.023	.151	4.120***
Industry					
Agriculture	.017	.130	.002	.041	3.642***
Manufacturing	.243	.429	.222	.416	1.171*
Mining, construction, and transportation	.221	.415	.112	.316	7.014***
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	.288	.453	.371	.483	-4.392***
Education, culture, and public health	.111	.314	.176	.381	-4.628***
Party and government agencies	.121	.326	.117	.322	.286
Family Structure					
Marital status	.824	.381	.809	.394	.963
Number of family members	3.670	1.669	3.560	1.288	1.803*
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

Table 4.4 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values for Gender Differences of Variables Used in Analysis in China in 2005

	Male		Female		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Human Capital					
Education	11.986	3.766	11.692	3.741	3.812***
Work experience	18.364	10.850	16.256	9.490	4.762***
Labour Market Placement					
<i>Occupation</i>					
Operators and labour workers	.030	.169	.008	.087	3.640***
Agricultural and related production workers	.149	.356	.239	.426	-5.370***
Service workers	.137	.364	.106	.307	3.508***
Commercial workers	.158	.365	.303	.460	-8.266***
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	.080	.271	.121	.326	-3.199***
Professional technicians	.005	.073	.010	.010	-1.125*
Leaders of government agencies, party institution, and enterprises	.422	.494	.214	.411	10.497***
<i>Industry</i>					
Agriculture	.093	.291	.060	.238	2.857***
Manufacturing	.106	.308	.167	.373	-4.183***
Mining, construction, and transportation	.271	.445	.409	.492	-6.866***
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	.276	.447	.096	.295	10.734***
Education, culture, and public health	.242	.428	.250	.433	-.453
Party and government agencies	.012	.108	.018	.131	-1.093*
Family Structure					
Marital status	.828	.378	.828	.377	-.024
Number of family members	3.459	1.235	3.335	1.129	2.416***
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

Occupational distribution had also changed, but not obviously. The changes were manifested by a decline in the number of employee leaders in government and enterprises, in administrator and cadre, and in labour workers (both men and women) from 2003 to 2005.

The numbers of women employees decreased in the top three high-paying occupations: leaders in government and enterprises, professional experts, and administrator and cadre; also, the number of women employees increased in the top three low-paying occupations: service worker, agricultural worker, and labour worker. With regard to industry distribution, there was no obvious change for men except a decreased number of employees in government agencies. The biggest change for women was also the decreased number of employees in government agencies.

Chinese Dual Labour Market Segments

In this step, Dickens and Long's switching regression (1985) is applied to examine the dichotomization of the Chinese urban labour market.

The switching model is written as follows:

$$\ln W_{pi} = X_{pi}\lambda_p + V_{pi} \tag{4.1}$$

$$\ln W_{si} = X_{si}\lambda_s + V_{si} \tag{4.2}$$

$$Z_i = D_i\Pi + V_{wi} \tag{4.3}$$

(Baffoe-Bonnie, 2003. p. 465)

where the first two equations represent the wage functions for the primary and secondary labour market respectively, and the third equation is the determinant function of respondents' tendency to be in the primary labour market (Dickens & Long, 1985). $\ln W_{pi}$ and $\ln W_{si}$ are the natural log of the annual income of an individual (i) in the primary sector and

secondary sector respectively; X_{pi} and X_{si} represent variables determining an individual's earnings; "p" and "s" represent the primary sector and secondary sector respectively; D_i represents variables influencing an individual's opportunity to work in the primary sector; λ_p , λ_s , and Π are related parameters; and V_{pi} , V_{si} , and V_{wi} are disturbance terms (Dickens & Long, 1985). The disturbance terms are unobservable factors influencing individuals' earnings and potential to work in the primary labour market; they are assumed to be normally distributed in the switching regression model to avoid potential selection bias (Baffore-Bonnie, 2003; Cain, 1976; Dickson & Lang, 1985; 1988). The Z_i is an unobservable latent variable that measures respondents' possibilities to be in the primary labour market. If $Z > 0$, respondent i 's annual income is determined by equation (a), which refers to the primary sector; and if $Z \leq 0$, respondent i 's annual income is determined by equation (b), which refers to the secondary sector (Dickens & Long, 1985).

X_{pi} and X_{si} are represented by the following wage determinant variables in the dataset: gender, year of education, work experience, square of work experience, occupation, and industry; D_i represents the following determinant variables in the datasets: year of education, work experience, square of work experiences, monopoly industry (monopoly = 1), and number of benefits acquired from current employment. The last two variables are the special contextual factors determining individuals' social status, as discussed in former chapters.

In terms of equation (4.3), if $Z > 0$, namely, $Z = D_i\Pi + V_{wi} > 0$, or $V_{wi} > -D_i\Pi$, the likelihood function for the "i"th individual is given as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \Pr (V_{wi} > -D_i\Pi \mid D_i, X_{pi}, V_{pi}) \cdot f (V_{pi}) \\ & + \Pr (V_{wi} \leq -D_i\Pi \mid D_i, X_{si}, V_{si}) \cdot f (V_{si}) \end{aligned} \quad (4.4)$$

(Dickens & Long, 1985, p. 799)

where $f(.)$ is the probability density function of the disturbance term, V_p or V_s . The first term of equation (4.4) is the probability of appearing in the primary segment, and the second term represents the probability that an individual will be in the secondary segment of the urban labour market. The probability that an individual will be in the primary segment is conditional on the individual's yearly income and personal characteristics, expressed as follows:

$$\frac{\Pr (V_{wi} > -D_i\Pi \mid D_i, X_i, V_{pi}) \cdot f (V_{pi})}{\Pr (V_{wi} > -D_i\Pi \mid D_i, X_i, V_{pi}) \cdot f (V_{pi}) + \Pr (V_{wi} \leq -D_i\Pi \mid D_i, X_i, V_{si}) \cdot f (V_{si})} \quad (4.5)$$

(Dickens & Long, 1985, p. 799)

The results of equation (4.5) represent the probability that a respondent with a specific education, work experience, square of work experience, monopoly characteristics, and number of benefits will be in the primary labour market. Existing research (Baffoe-Bonnie, 2003; Dickens & Long, 1985) set various standards to establish whether a respondent is in the primary or secondary labour market; for example, Dickson and Long set the possibilities over 90% for the primary labour market and under 10% for the secondary labour market, and Baffoe-Bonnie set over 70% and under 30% respectively. They believed that these percentages delineate respondents with characteristics found in the primary and secondary markets. However, the calculations exclude a large number of respondents in the middle area. The purpose of much of the early research was to observe individuals with relatively high possibilities in the primary sector; the cutoff points they used were "arbitrary"

(Baffor-Bonnie, 2003). This study set a cutoff point of 50%, which meant that respondents with 50% or higher possibilities calculated through equation (e) were categorized in the primary sector; respondents with possibilities lower than 50% were categorized in the secondary sector. The 50% cutoff point was chosen according to two issues: (a) the purpose of this study is to place all the respondents into the dual labour market and analyze gender issues; although most respondents cannot be assigned into distinct positions, a 1% higher advantage is still an advantage. The 50% cutoff point is reasonable to provide a context to explain differences in social status; (b) the China General Social Survey does not have a large sample size; to make the quantitative analysis statistically significant and meaningful, it is not rational to skip most of the samples. However, the 50% cutoff point may cause bias in the following areas: (a) number of distribution based on gender may be influenced; given the assumption that the primary labour market is dominated by advantaged groups, women may occupy a smaller number in the primary labour market under previous cutoff approaches than that in the half-half cutoff; (b) the “real” differences between the two sectors based on a distinct cutoff may decrease; and (c) regression coefficients of independent variables in each sector may be influenced by the bias (b). Because the results of quantitative analysis provided in the latter part of this chapter clearly show the purposive pattern of gender inequality in the dual labour market, the purpose of this study can be achieved, so the possible effect of biases can be ignored and addressed in future studies when more suitable datasets are available.

Software called Applied-Maximum Likelihood Version 2 (Aml 2) written by Lee Lillard and Constantijn Panis (Lillard & Panis, 2003) was used in the analysis to execute the maximum likelihood function. “Aml 2” is a statistical package for estimating multilevel and

multi-process models. The probabilities of respondents to be primary labour market are calculated. Table 4.5 and table 4.6 show the detailed mean, standard deviation of annual income, and number of respondents in 2003 and 2005, divided by gender in the dual labour market.

Table 4.5 Means, Standard Deviations of Annual Income in the Dual Labour Market in 2003

	Male			Female			Total		
	Mean	S.D.	N.	Mean	S.D.	N.	Mean	S.D.	N.
Primary	14,900	12,343	789	14,300	12,107	351	14,600	12,262	1140
Secondary	12,300	13,539	710	8,217	8,259	635	10,500	11,770	1345
Total	13,600	13,749	1499	11,258	10,877	986	12,350	12,313	2485

Table 4.6 Means, Standard Deviations of Annual Income in the Dual Labour Market in 2005

	Male			Female			Total		
	Mean	S.D.	N.	Mean	S.D.	N.	Mean	S.D.	N.
Primary	18,194	13,774	617	16,884	14,057	366	17,519	13,857	983
Secondary	16,886	17,366	617	10,877	11,605	591	13,882	15,230	1208
Total	17,540	17,081	1234	11,700	13,222	957	15,347	15,152	2191

Table 4.5 shows that men's average earnings are greater than those of women in 2003. Although women have a smaller income gap than men in the primary labour market, in

the secondary labour market, women earn a lower income than men do. Men's income has a smaller standard deviation in the primary labour market than in the secondary labour market; this means the secondary labour market has unstable working conditions and the income gap is larger, as some people of the secondary labour market having earnings similar to those in the primary labour market, and some people of the secondary labour market earn very low incomes.

Meanwhile, in the secondary labour market, women's income has a much smaller standard deviation than that in the primary labour market; this means women earn a low amount of income generally. In the whole primary labour market, women account for 30.8% of the total number of workers. Among all women workers, 35.6% are in the primary labour market. Among all the men workers, 52.6% are in the primary labour market. Although more women remain at a lower status, the gender earnings gap is very small in the primary labour market and much bigger in the secondary labour market.

Table 4.6 shows that trends in labour divisions and income distribution in 2005 are similar to those in 2003. The table reveals that men earn more than women do on average in 2005. Women earn substantially less income than men do in all levels of labour markets. The standard deviations show a trend similar to that of the 2003 data. In the whole primary labour market, women account for 37.2% of total workers—a small increase in the proportion from 2003. Among all the women workers, 38.2% are in primary labour market. Among all the men workers, 50.0% are in the primary labour market. Compared to 35.6% in 2003, women have more opportunity to enter into the primary labour market (38.2%) in 2005; average income increases for both gender groups and labour market sectors.

Table 4.7 shows the mean of annual income and number of benefits for workers in 2003 and 2005 in China. In 2003, there was little gap in the annual income and benefits for male and female workers in the primary labour market; the average income difference was 600.00 Yuan per year, and the average difference in benefits was 0.25. However, this differs from the secondary labour market situation. Both male and female workers have a sharp drop in mean annual income and number of benefits, female workers have more serious drops (6,083.21 Yuan in income and 3.23 benefits) than their male counterparts (2,600.00 Yuan and 2.58 benefits).

Table 4.7 Income Distribution and Number of Total Benefits in Dual Labour Market in 2003 and 2005 in China (by gender)

		Male		Female		Total	
		Mean	Benefits	Mean	Benefits	Mean	Benefits
2003	Primary Labour Market	14,900.00	4.11	14,300.00	3.86	14,600.00	3.99
	Secondary Labour Market	12,300.00	1.53	8,216.79	0.63	10,500.00	2.16
	Total	13,600.00	2.82	11,258.40	1.22		
2005	Primary Labour Market	18,194.00	4.72	16,844.00	4.70	17,519.00	4.71
	Secondary Labour Market	16,886.00	2.60	10,877.00	0.68	13,881.50	1.64
	Total	17,540.00	3.66	117,00.00	2.69		

The 2005 situation is similar to that of 2003. Although all workers have increases in both annual income and number of benefits, the primary labour market seems a fairer one than the secondary labour market. The average difference in annual income is only 1,350.00 Yuan and in number of benefits is only 0.02. However, in the secondary labour market, the annual income difference between male and female workers is 6,009.00 Yuan, and the benefits difference is 1.92. The results of this table indicate that a dual labour market has an effect on gender differences in earnings, and that the inequality is most likely to occur in the secondary labour market.

Table 4.8 Mean of Annual Income and Number of Workers in Segments of Industry in 2003

Industry	Primary labour market		Secondary labour market	
Agriculture	12,300	(n=12)	11,600	(n=16)
Manufacturing	11,800	(n=310)	10,300	(n=273)
Mining, construction, and transportation	14,200	(n=246)	12,300	(n=196)
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	18,300	(n=153)	10,400	(n=644)
Education, culture, and public health	17,100	(n=189)	11,200	(n=151)
Party and government Agencies	14,300	(n=225)	7,461	(n=70)
Total	14,700	(n=1140)	10,500	(n=1345)

Tables 4.8 to 4.11 present information about dual labour market in urban China in both 2003 and 2005. In 2003, there are 1140 workers in the primary sector and 1345 in the

secondary sector. The categories are listed in declining order of rank (e.g., the lowest level of industry is Agriculture, and the highest level of industry is Party and Government Agencies), and compared to their secondary counterparts; the primary labour market has a dominant number of workers in higher-level industries and occupations. In 2005, the industry Commerce, Real Estate, Finance, and Service had the biggest differences in number of workers between the two sectors.

Table 4.9 Mean of Annual Income and Number of Workers in Segments of Occupation in 2003

Occupation	Primary labour market		Secondary labour market	
Agricultural and related production workers	11,600	(n=204)	8,881	(n=372)
Operators and labour workers	11,000	(n=9)	10,100	(n=14)
Service workers	10,900	(n=31)	7,094	(n=150)
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	16,600	(n=81)	11,000	(n=494)
Commercial workers	15,300	(n=309)	9,317	(n=169)
Professional technicians	16,800	(n=325)	12,100	(n=127)
Leaders of government agencies, and party institutions and enterprises	18,700	(n=81)	12,600	(n=29)
Total	14,700	(n=1140)	10,500	(n=1345)

Table 4.10 Mean of Annual Income and Number of Workers in Segments of Industry in 2005

Industry	Primary labour market		Secondary labour market	
	Mean Annual Income	Number of Workers (n)	Mean Annual Income	Number of Workers (n)
Agriculture	15,200	(n=10)	13,478	(n=21)
Manufacturing	14,558	(n=261)	12,577	(n=277)
Mining, construction, and transportation	16,078	(n=263)	13,370	(n=170)
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	22,978	(n=152)	13,991	(n=573)
Education, culture, and public health	21,476	(n=164)	13,254	(n=126)
Party and government agencies	16,510	(n=132)	10,702	(n=41)
Total	17,693	(n=983)	13,945	(n=1208)

The occupational categories of common administrators and middle-level cadres commercial workers had the biggest differences in numbers between the two sectors. Leaders in government and party, professional technicians, and workers in education, culture, and public health are more prevalent in the primary labour market. It is also obvious that in both years, annual income changes little in various industries and occupational categories in the secondary labour market; but the primary labour market has much larger differences in income distribution among industries and occupations. In industry, the lowest income in the secondary labour market is that of Party and Government Agencies, while the highest income in the primary labour market is earned in Commerce, Real Estate, Finance, and Service. In the occupation category, Service Workers have the lowest income, and Leaders of Government, Agencies, and Party Institutions and Enterprises have the highest income in

both 2003 and 2005.

Table 4.11 Mean of Annual Income and Number of Workers in Segments of Occupation in 2005

Occupation	Primary labour market		Secondary labour market	
Agricultural and related production workers	14,550	(n=366)	12,193	(n=360)
Operators and labour workers.	11,529	(n=5)	10,625	(n=11)
Service workers	12,180	(n=48)	9,439	(n=166)
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	23,062	(n=60)	15,054	(n=425)
Commercial workers	18,294	(n=209)	1,0659	(n=86)
Professional technicians	21,013	(n=260)	15,696	(n=152)
Leaders of government agencies, and party institutions and enterprises	25,132	(n=36)	17,219	(n=8)
Total	17,693	(n=983)	13,945	(n=1208)

Clearly, Party and Government Agencies have very big earnings differences among the different levels of positions. In the occupational tables, the “leaders” of government and party agencies have the highest earnings among all occupational categories. However, in industrial tables, the government agencies are depicted as below-average income earners. This difference is a typical example showing that primary sectors (in which government and party leaders remain) have many advantages over secondary sectors (in which lower levels of government and party employees remain).

Table 4.12 Monopoly Characteristics and Mean Earnings & Benefits in the Dual Labour Market in 2003

	Monopoly		Non-Monopoly	
	Male Earning & B. N	Female Earning & B. N	Male Earning & B. N	Female Earning & B. N
Primary	14,000 4.42 N=531	12,700 4.34 N=178	16,700 3.23 N=258	15,800 3.24 N=173
Secondary	11,100 1.40 N=164	6,393 1.34 N=141	12,700 0.56 N=546	8,619 0.65 N=494
Total	13,315 2.91 N=695	10,901 2.39 N=319	14,000 1.90 N=804	11,000 1.92 N=667

B. = Number of Benefits

Table 4.13 Monopoly Characteristics and Mean Earnings & Benefits in the Dual Labour Market in 2005

	Monopoly		Non-Monopoly	
	Male Earning & B. N	Female Earning & B. N	Male Earning & B. N	Female Earning & B. N
Primary	18,659 5.13 N=421	14,792 5.12 N=172	22,253 4.54 N=196	16,314 4.22 N=194
Secondary	15,033 2.24 N=146	9,364 2.43 N=68	17,458 0.71 N=471	11,075 0.71 N=523
Total	15,986 3.44 N=567	13,246 3.14 N=240	18,865 2.01 N=667	13,123 1.90 N=717

B. = Number of Benefits

Tables 4.12 and 4.13 show how dual labour markets affect gender inequality, both in earnings and benefits (more benefits represent greater possibility of holding a “good” job). In both 2003 and 2005, respondents working in monopoly sectors earn a little less than those working in non-monopoly sectors; the reason may relate to the benefits system of monopoly enterprises. Due to national control, monopoly enterprises do not usually provide huge

salaries, but they use the best benefits system in compensating employees' total earnings. In the secondary labour market, respondents working in the monopoly sector have better benefits than those working in the non-monopoly sector. Women have a disadvantaged status in the labour market system in both years. In 2003, of all the female respondents, 64.4% (635/986) work in a secondary labour market and 67.6% (667/986) work in a non-monopoly sector; of all the male respondents, 47.4% (710/1499) work in a secondary labour market and 53.6% (804/1499) work in a non-monopoly sector. In 2005, of all the female respondents, 61.8% (591/957) work in a secondary labour market and 50.0% (717/957) work in a non-monopoly sector; of all the male respondents, 47.4% (617/1234) work in secondary labour market and 54.1% (667/1234) work in non-monopoly sector. This evidence depicts women's lower status and opportunities in the labour markets. Female are more likely to work in the secondary and non-monopoly sectors. The data from two separate years generates similar results, which further intensifies the argument for the existence of the dual labour market.

Effect of Dual Labour Market on Gender Inequality in China

The second step of statistical analysis uses descriptive statistical analysis and multiple regression analysis to examine the effect of the dual labour markets on income distribution and gender inequality. In the literature review, I have concluded that there are three "traditional" factors affecting women's earnings; they are human capital accumulation, labour force placement (occupational and industrial placement), and family structure. These factors are used to explain women's lower status in earnings and in the labour market. In this section, the descriptive statistical analysis is applied to examine whether these factors have an

effect on women's opportunities in the primary labour market. As the former chapters have introduced, the years of education acquired and years of work experiences are two variables used for human capital accumulation; dummy coded variables of occupation and industry are used for labour force placement; marital status and numbers of family members are used for family structure.

Tables 4.14 and 4.15 show the differences of human capital accumulation between employees in the primary and secondary sectors and between men and women in 2003. In the primary labour market, women have higher education and less work experience than men; in the secondary labour market, women stay in a disadvantaged position in both of the indicators. Women in the secondary labour market have the lowest accumulation of human capital, with 8.829 years of education and 12.386 years of work experience. In comparison, women's education in the secondary labour market is equivalent to 69% of that of men in the primary sector, 66% of women in the primary sector, and 81% of men in the secondary sector. For work experience, women in the secondary sector women hold 70% of men's work experience in the primary sector, 82% of that of women in the primary sector, and 77% of that of men in the secondary sector. The numbers show that women have disadvantages in human capital accumulation, especially for those in the secondary labour market.

For labour force placement, in the primary labour market there is little difference in labour distribution between men and women, except professional technicians, there are twice as many women as men are more predominant in the category of leaders of government agencies, party institutions and enterprises.

Table 4.14 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values of Variables Used in the Analysis of the Primary Labour Market in China in 2003

Primary Labour Market	Male (n=789)		Female (n=351)		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Human Capital					
Education	12.788	2.829	13.264	2.521	-9.931***
Work experience	17.608	10.191	15.128	8.557	5.190**
Labour Market Placement					
<i>Occupation</i>					
Operators and labour workers	.346	.476	.165	.372	7.936***
Agricultural and related production workers	.009	.094	.003	.058	1.915***
Service Workers	.047	.211	.054	.226	-3.616***
Commercial workers	.077	.267	.110	.313	-3.478***
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	.275	.447	.253	.435	2.341***
Professional technicians	.185	.388	.389	.488	-8.359*
Leaders of government agencies, party institutions and enterprises	.061	.240	.026	.159	3.545***
<i>Industry</i>					
Agriculture	.015	.120	.000	.000	2.566***
Manufacturing	.273	.446	.252	.435	1.228**
Mining, construction, and transportation	.297	.457	.178	.383	5.671***
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	.122	.328	.180	.385	-3.941***
Education, culture, and public health	.127	.333	.228	.420	-4.682***
Party and government agencies	.166	.372	.163	.370	.688
Family Structure					
Marital status	.856	.351	.834	.372	1.513*
Number of family members	3.560	1.309	3.320	1.198	1.539
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

In the secondary labour market, women are more likely to stay in service jobs such as operators and labour workers, service workers, and commercial workers. Those occupations and industries have fewer monopoly characteristics and usually provide fewer benefits for employees; therefore, they are less likely to have positions in the primary sector.

For marital status, there is no statistically significant relationship with respect to gender inequality. However, both men and women in the secondary sector have more family members than those in the primary sector. This may mean that workers in the secondary sector have more home duties; they are more likely to stay in the secondary sector.

The differences in human capital accumulation between the primary and secondary sector and between men and women are also evident in 2005, according to tables 4.16 and 4.17. In the primary labour market, women have higher education and less work experience than men; in the secondary labour market, women have less education and work experience than men. Women in the secondary labour market have the lowest accumulation of human capital, with 8.682 years of education and 16.001 years of work experience.

In comparison, women in secondary labour market acquire education equivalent to 66% of that of men in the primary sector, 65% of that of women in the primary sector, and 81% of that of men in the secondary sector. Secondary sector women hold work experience equivalent to 85% of that of men in the primary sector, 96% of that of women in the primary sector, and 89% of that of men in the secondary sector. For the women respondents, the difference in education between primary and secondary sectors is evident, but the difference in work experience is very small. In this sense, it is obvious that human capital accumulation relates to women's limited opportunities in their access to the primary labour market.

Table 4.15 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values of Variables Used in the Analysis of the Secondary Labour Market in China in 2003

Secondary Labour Market	Male (n=710)		Female (n=635)		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Human Capital					
Education	10.884	2.774	8.829	3.054	9.429***
Work experience	15.962	10.162	12.386	10.026	1.812**
Labour Market Placement					
<i>Occupation</i>					
Operators and labour workers	.322	.467	.169	.375	5.041***
Agricultural and related production workers	.015	.121	.006	.076	.589
Service workers	.069	.253	.133	.340	-1.187*
Commercial workers	.339	.474	.420	.494	-3.539*
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	.124	.330	.110	.313	-.773
Professional technicians	.078	.268	.141	.349	-.519
Leaders of government agencies, party institutions and Enterprises	.054	.226	.021	.144	2.102***
<i>Industry</i>					
Agriculture	.020	.140	.003	.055	2.692***
Manufacturing	.209	.407	.197	.398	.232
Mining, construction, and transportation	.136	.343	.057	.232	4.285***
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	.473	.500	.533	.499	-2.759***
Education, culture, and public health	.092	.290	.132	.339	-.974*
Party and government agencies	.070	.255	.079	.269	-1.215*
Family Structure					
Marital status	.787	.409	.787	.410	-.316
Number of family members	3.800	1.991	3.760	1.329	.967*
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

Table 4.16 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values of Variables Used in the Analysis of the Primary Labour Market in China in 2005

Primary Labour Market	Male (n=617)		Female (n=366)		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Human Capital					
Education	13.064	3.720	13.329	3.539	-1.363*
Work experience	18.797	10.565	16.669	9.131	4.224***
Labour Market Placement					
<i>Occupation</i>					
Operators and labour workers	.037	.189	.008	.091	3.479***
Agricultural and related production workers	.197	.398	.378	.485	-6.661***
Service workers	.232	.422	.180	.385	3.245***
Commercial workers	.043	.202	.091	.288	-5.047***
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	.054	.227	.066	.249	-2.139***
Professional technician	.001	.036	.012	.108	-2.142***
Leaders of government agencies, party institutions and enterprises	.436	.496	.265	.442	6.835***
<i>Industry</i>					
Agriculture	.152	.359	.104	.306	2.145***
Manufacturing	.126	.332	.236	.425	-4.962**
Mining, construction, and transportation	.131	.337	.197	.398	-3.763***
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	.324	.468	.172	.378	7.518***
Education, culture, and public health	.264	.441	.270	.445	-.726
Party and government agencies	.034	.066	.021	.142	-1.558**
Family Structure					
Marital status	.863	.344	.844	.363	-.564
Number of family members	3.386	1.142	3.224	1.119	2.881***
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

Table 4.17 Means, Standard Deviations, and t-values of Variables Used in the Analysis of the Secondary Labour Market in China in 2005

Secondary Labour Market	Male (n=617)		Female (n=591)		t-value
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Human Capital					
Education	10.906	3.496	8.682	3.499	1.928**
Work experience	17.931	11.119	16.001	9.704	1.647**
Labour Market Placement					
<i>Occupation</i>					
Operators and labour workers	.022	.147	.007	.085	1.305**
Agricultural and related production workers	.100	.301	.153	.361	-.845
Service workers	.082	.275	.059	.236	-.139
Commercial workers	.273	.446	.434	.496	-5.636***
Common administrators and middle-level cadres	.106	.307	.154	.361	-2.035***
Professional technicians	.010	.097	.009	.093	1.082*
Leaders of government agencies, party institutions and enterprises	.407	.492	.184	.387	7.958***
<i>Industry</i>					
Agriculture	.035	.183	.033	.179	.254
Manufacturing	.086	.281	.124	.330	-1.344**
Mining, construction, and transportation	.412	.493	.540	.499	-4.667***
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service	.228	.420	.050	.217	7.472***
Education, culture, and public health	.220	.415	.238	.426	.041
Party and government agencies	.019	.138	.016	.124	.185
Family Structure					
Marital status	.793	.406	.819	.386	-.135
Number of family members	3.532	1.319	3.404	1.131	2.347***
* p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001					

For labour force placement, in the primary labour market, men are more prevalent among operators, labour workers, and leaders of government agencies, party institutions and enterprises; and women are predominant among agricultural and related production workers, and labourers in manufacturing. This does not support any conclusions. However, similar to 2003, in 2005 in the secondary labour market, women still have the highest overall number of workers in service jobs—for example, service workers and commercial workers. Those occupations and industries have fewer monopoly characteristics and usually fewer benefits for employees; therefore, they are less likely to have positions in the primary sector.

As shown in the previous tables, marital status has no implications, and workers in the secondary labour market have more family members than their counterparts in the primary industry.

To estimate the effects of different sets of factors on income distribution and on the gender earnings gap, I used a series of four nested regression models with the natural logarithm of earnings as the dependent variable in each sector of the dual labour markets. The statistical model estimating Chinese urban labour earnings is as follows:

$$Y_j = \text{Ln}(A_j) = \beta(b_j, d_j, f_j) \quad (4.6)$$

where Y_j is the natural logarithm of earnings of respondents; b_j is the gender variable; d_j is a list of variables that measure individual characteristics (human capital), such as education, work experiences and square of work experience; f_j represents labour force placement.

Occupation and the industry that individuals work in are used for labour force placement. Since variables are limited in datasets; only marital status and number of family members can be used as variables of family structure. However, there is little connection

between those variables and gender inequality, as shown in former tables and existing research (Shu & Bian, 2003). As a result, variables related to family structure are not selected in this model.

Using this model in each sector of dual labour market, we can see how these factors affect income distribution and gender inequality; as a result, primary labour market and secondary labour market have different circumstances influencing women's status.

Tables 4.18 and 4.19 show the coefficients of the primary and secondary labour market in 2003. As we can see, in 2003, in the Chinese primary labour market, there is little relationship between gender and earnings distribution; 0.068, 0.044, and 0.038 show significant but weak relationship. Years of education have a coefficient of 0.558 in model 2 and 0.549 in model 3. Work experience has coefficients of 0.184 in model 2 and 0.171 in model 3. Labour force placement explains more than 15% of the gender difference in income distribution, as there are 7 of 11 significant variables in occupations and industries.

The regression of table 4.19 shows the results of the secondary labour market in 2003. Things change in this section. Gender explains much more earning differences in the secondary labour market; 1.539, 1,322, and 1,231 all show men's big advantages over women workers.

In the model of human capital, education explains only half of what it did in table 4.18 (0.201 compared to 0.558, and 0.224 compared to 0.549). Work experience has more power of explanation here than that of table 4.18. In the model of many occupations and industries, only two of them are significant (Leaders in government and enterprises, and Mining, construction, and transportation).

Table 4.18 Regression of Gender, Human Capital, and Labour-Force Placement on Annual Income in the Primary Labour Market in 2003

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value
Constant	5.516	15.432***	29.733	11.533***	37.456	8.071***
Gender (Male=1)	.068	2.754*	.044	2.310*	.038	2.223*
Human Capital						
Education			.558	3.765**	.549	3.469**
Work experience			.184	1.349	.171	2.397*
Work experience ²			-.004	-1.073	-.003	-.974
Labour-force Placement						
Occupation						
Leaders in government and enterprises					5.738	2.517*
Professional experts					3.791	4.498***
Administrator and cadres					5.397	8.334***
Business and commerce					2.071	2.522*
Service workers					2.455	2.546*
Agricultural workers					2.966	2.485*
Labour workers					--	--
Industry						
Party and government agencies					2.527	1.188
Education, culture, and public health					-2.593	-1.189*
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service					-.426	-.202
Mining, construction, and transportation					5.141	2.320*
Manufacturing					-2.678	-1.199
Agriculture					--	--
R²	.022		.180		.242	
F-value	13.076**		59.059***		63.884***	
			* p < .05	** p < .01	*** p < .001	

Table 4.19 Regression of Gender, Human Capital, and Labour-Force Placement on Annual Income in the Secondary Labour Market in 2003

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value
Constant	8.700	5.516***	7.998	74.421***	.247	.104
Gender (Male=1)	1.539	8.754***	1.332	2.021*	1.231	2.849**
Human Capital						
Education			.201	7.931**	.239	2.383*
Work experience			.275	2.909**	.224	3.682**
Work experience ²			-.001	-.645	-.002	-1.413
Labour-force Placement						
Occupation						
Leaders in government and enterprises					7.185	2.468*
Professional experts					-1.192	-.648
Administrator and cadres					-1.732	-1.147
Business and commerce					.140	.120
Service workers					-.053	-.039
Agricultural workers					.104	.052
Labour workers					--	--
Industry						
Party and government agencies					6.886	1.762
Education, culture, and public health					5.993	1.519
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service					5.903	1.477
Mining, construction, and transportation					.147	1.065*
Manufacturing					-2.633	-3.079
Agriculture					--	--
R²	.051		.102		.143	
F-value	10.928**		24.535***		26.269***	
			* p < .05	** p < .01	*** p < .001	

The values of R square also indicate different situations in the two sectors. In table

4.18, the R square of model 3 is 0.242, and it is 0.143 in table 4.19. The difference is much

smaller in the primary labour market than that in the secondary labour market, indicating a fairer environment in the primary sector. Education and labour force placement represent positive signals in the labour force distribution (normal labour force distribution based on market demands and needs); these factors have more influence in the primary labour market than that in the secondary labour market; the primary labour market correlates to workers' credentials and therefore is relatively fair. In this study, as shown in these two tables, education and labour force placement play more important role in the primary labour market than that in the secondary labour market. Furthermore, seniority plays a role in conditions relating to social network and positional priority. Therefore, work experience has a greater influence in the secondary labour market where there are fewer opportunities for promotion and upward mobility.

The R square in tables 4.18 and 4.19 indicate a difference between the two labour markets. The R square is 0.242 in the primary labour market and 0.143 in the secondary labour market. This means that the existing factors explain more variations in the primary labour market than in the secondary labour market, possibly because of unseen, latent, and untestable factors existing in the secondary labour market: a relatively irregular sector in which personal qualifications and normal market adjustment do not play important roles in income distribution. Those factors may relate to cultural traditions, discrimination in institutional systems, and so on. As a result, a higher level of gender inequality appears in the secondary labour market.

Table 4.20 Regression of Gender, Human Capital, and Labour-Force Placement in the Primary Labour Market on Annual Income in 2005

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value
Constant	44.745	53.347***	38.796	13.248***	21.673	4.696***
Gender (Male=1)	.132	3.193**	.110	3.100***	.087	4.145***
Human Capital						
Education			.779	34.676***	.766	31.759***
Work experience			-.225	-12.309	-.210	-1.239
Work experience ²			.006	1.471	.006	1.573
Labour-force Placement						
Occupation						
Leaders in government and enterprises					8.618	2.564*
Professional experts					8.935	2.755**
Administrator and cadres					10.081	2.697**
Business and commerce					11.989	3.215**
Service workers					9.791	1.294
Agricultural workers					11.467	3.565***
Labour workers					--	--
Industry						
Party and government agencies					9.895	4.588***
Education, culture, and public health					11.736	5.783***
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service					5.073	2.751**
Mining, construction, and transportation					4.237	2.258*
Manufacturing					3.952	.781
Agriculture					--	--
R²	.091		.291		.314	
F-value	10.196**		57.870***		70.102***	
	* p < .05		** p < .01		*** p < .001	

Table 4.21 Regression of Gender, Human Capital, and Labour-Force Placement in the Secondary Labour Market on Annual Income in 2005

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value	Coef.	T-value
Constant	6.222	15.886***	8.224	670.023***	8.786	80.744***
Gender (Male=1)	1.226	8.053***	1.045	1.986*	.852	2.782**
Human Capital						
Education			.284	10.986***	-1.724	-.739
Work experience			.226	2.375*	.838	.365
Work experience ²			.001	.663	.001	.900
Labour-force Placement						
Occupation						
Leaders in government and enterprises					-1.742	-.739
Professional experts					.838	.365
Administrator and cadres					-5.386	-2.496*
Business and commerce					-3.111	-1.399
Service workers					-5.081	-1.333
Agricultural workers					-.546	-.251
Labour workers					--	--
Industry						
Party and government agencies					6.064	3.441**
Education, culture, and public health					5.183	3.361**
Commerce, real estate, finance, and service					3.217	1.962
Mining, construction, and transportation					6.701	4.239***
Manufacturing					5.521	2.038
Agriculture					--	--
R²	.156		.278		.289	
F-value	34.850**		50.038***		66.432***	
	* p < .05		** p < .01		*** p < .001	

Tables 4.20 and table 4.21 (2005 data) reveal results similar to those of 2003. In

table 4.20, gender has effects of 0.132, 0.110, and 0.087 in the primary labour market. The

gender coefficients are much bigger in table 4.21 in the secondary labour market. Education plays a more important role in the primary labour market than in the secondary labour market; work experience matters more in the secondary labour market than in the primary labour market; and labour force placement is more significant in the primary labour market than that in the secondary labour market.

Furthermore, R squares show that the gender model explains 9.1% of the earnings difference in the primary labour market and 15.6% in the secondary labour market; human capital explains 20.0% (0.291-0.091) of the earnings difference in the primary labour market and 13.2% (0.278-0.156) in secondary market; labour force placement 2.3% (0.314-0.291) in the primary labour market and 1.1% (0.289-0.278) in the secondary labour market. All of the numbers show that the primary labour market contains fair environment and the secondary labour market contains factors beyond general market rules.

In estimating the effect of the dual labour market on national income distribution and gender differences in China in 2003 and 2005, results show that gender inequality persists in contemporary urban China; as previous research indicated, human capital and labour force placement play a role in the gender earnings gap. In this study, statistical analysis shows a similar result for women's opportunity in the dual labour market distribution. Furthermore, gender inequality is more serious in the secondary labour market than that in the primary labour market.

Existing factors have more power in explaining gender difference in the primary labour market than that in the secondary labour market. As a result, gender difference is more likely to occur in the secondary labour market; because women are more likely to stay in this

sector, one approach to decrease gender inequality is to promote women's access to the primary labour market.

This study uses two general social survey datasets; the samples contain respondents in various age cohorts. To accurately examine gender inequality, age cohorts should be used as one of the control variables. However, another control variable, work experience, is calculated as the difference between respondents' current age and their age at their first job. It is reasonable to assume that most contemporary urban workers in China start their first job at the same or a similar age, especially those in the same cohort. Therefore, age cohorts are not added as a control variable to avoid conflicts with work experience. Gender inequality based on age cohorts in the dual labour market is analyzed separately from the regression model.

To test the effect of various age cohorts, the original variable "year of birth" was recoded into four ordinal groups: "After 1980," "1970—1979," "1960—1969," and "Before 1959." These four groups represent four generations in China with typical experiences and characteristics; they perform different roles in the labour market. The oldest group was born right after the establishment of China and are close to the end of their career now; those born between 1960 and 1969 experienced the revolutionary movements in China and occupy a higher position in the labour market now; those born between 1970 and 1979 were the first group facing a huge national system transition because the revolutionary movements ended and the reform started in this period; they are likely to be their peak period of career in the labour market today; the youngest group experienced the social and economic development after the reforms, and the respondents in this group are in an early stage of career development.

Table 4.22 Gender Earnings Gap in the Dual Labour Market Based on Age Cohorts in 2003

Primary Labour Market		Male		Female	
Age Cohort	Earnings	N	Earnings	N	
After 1980	16,700	31	13,800	30	
1970–1979	14,800	300	15,700	148	
1960–1969	14,800	261	12,800	127	
Before 1959	15,000	197	15,100	46	
Secondary Labour Market		Male		Female	
Age Cohort	Earnings	N	Earnings	N	
After 1980	10,400	103	7,012	111	
1970–1979	11,000	248	9,392	239	
1960–1969	15,100	221	8,166	181	
Before 1959	11,600	138	8,418	104	

Tables 4.22 and 4.23 show the gender earnings gap in the dual labour market based on age cohorts in 2003 and 2005. The results are consistent with those of former regression models because gender earnings gaps are smaller in the primary labour market than in the secondary labour market. Women earn less than men do in all the age cohorts in the secondary labour market; women have higher earnings in two age cohorts in the primary labour market in 2003 and in one age cohort in the primary labour market in 2005.

Age can be an advantage (seniority) in the secondary labour market; the older the respondents, the more they can earn. This excludes individuals in the oldest group, however, who are close to the end of their careers and have a relatively stable income. In the primary

labour market, age is not an absolute advantage for men or women, although older age may be associated with more accumulated work experiences and education. This may partially mean a relatively fair environment containing less advantages of seniority.

Table 4.23 Gender Earnings Gap in the Dual Labour Market Based on Age Cohorts in 2005

Primary Labour Market		Male		Female	
Age Cohort	Earnings	N	Earnings	N	
After 1980	17,992	48	18,581	37	
1970–1979	18,711	190	17,159	123	
1960–1969	17,836	215	15,883	152	
Before 1959	18,718	164	15,670	54	
Secondary Labour Market		Male		Female	
Age Cohort	Earnings	N	Earnings	N	
After 1980	15,317	92	10,965	73	
1970–1979	18,381	189	11,512	224	
1960–1969	19,313	194	12,325	218	
Before 1959	12,609	142	8,620	78	

Except with the oldest group, gender gaps tend to increase in the secondary labour market as age increases: in 2003, men earned 32.5% $((10,400-7,012)/10,400)$ more than women did in the “after 1980” cohort; men earned 45.9% $((15,100-8,166)/15,100)$ more than women did in the “1960–1969” cohort; in 2005, men earned 28.4% $((15,317-10,965)/15,317)$ more than women did in the “after 1980” cohort; men earned 37.4% $((18,381-11,512)/18,381)$

more than women did in the “1970–1979” cohort; men earned 36.2% $(19,313-12,325)/19,313$) more than women did in the “1960–1969” cohort. In the secondary labour market, human capital accumulation has been observed to be less important for income and promotions than it is in the primary labour market; this means that gender gaps by age in this sector can be partially explained by the importance of seniority.

Tables 4.22 and 4.23 show a greater gender gap in the secondary labour market; the primary labour market is relatively fair because women have chances to earn more than men do, and age does not equate to absolute advantage.

To sum up, the data analysis for both 2003 and 2005 shows gender inequality in contemporary urban China. Consistent with previous gender studies in China, this study has statistically examined the effect of gender, human capital, labour force placement, and family structure. To explain the effect of the dual labour market on gender inequality, I use regression analysis for both of the market sectors in 2003 and 2005. The results show significant differences in earnings by gender in the secondary labour market, and weaker differences in the primary labour market. In the analysis, monopoly sector has better returns in income and number of benefits, especially in the primary labour market; there is not much difference between primary and secondary jobs in the monopoly sector, but there is a big difference in that of the non-monopoly sector. The truth is that female workers are mostly concentrated in the non-monopoly sector of the secondary labour market.

Chapter Summary

To examine the three research objectives stated in the previous chapters, this study applies statistical analysis in two steps, employing data from the China General Social Survey

of 2003 and 2005. First, this study employs switching regression to identify the likelihood of respondents in the datasets appearing in the primary and secondary sectors. Monopoly characteristics and number of benefits offered by the employment are two unique factors added into switching regression in the Chinese context. The results show that women are more likely to remain in the secondary labour market and nonmonopoly sector with fewer benefits in employment. The second step of statistical analysis runs the regression model in the primary and secondary sector to investigate how a series of factors affect national income distribution and gender earnings difference. The results examine the effect of human capital accumulation and labour force placement on gender inequality, as previously noted. Family structure does not have much effect on women's status in the dual labour market. The most important finding is that gender inequality is weaker in the primary labour market than that in the secondary labour market in both years studied; therefore, gender inequality primarily occurs in the secondary sector. Because women occupy most of the positions in the secondary labour market, a way to improve gender equality is to promote women's chances to work in the primary sector. In dealing with this issue, it is of utmost importance to discover the reasons for women's disadvantage in this area.

CHAPTER 5 CULTURAL BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S ACCESS INTO THE PRIMARY LABOUR MARKET

This chapter gathers information from interviews to examine cultural factors for women's limited access into the primary labour market. Interviewees represented various perspectives: man/woman, state-sector employee/non-state sector employee, monopoly sector/non-monopoly sector employee, and people with high educational credentials/low educational credentials.

This chapter first examines men's privilege in traditional culture; it then examines women's weak self-identity in career development (self-identity refers to women's belief regarding what they should do in the family and in the labour market and where they should be in the social hierarchy; weak self-identify means weak belief or confidence to take more responsibilities or to pursue further development). The reasons for the different levels of gender inequality between the two sectors are also explored.

Supremacy and Subordination: Historical Origin of Women's Status in China

In the earliest recorded time periods, such as the matriarchal period, females in China shared high status in their clans and families. Later, male dominance developed and matriarchal communities disappeared. However, in the earliest periods, male dominance was not recognized as holding absolute supremacy because Chinese women in ancient time were celebrated as founders of the family and inventors of many household things (Xiong & Zhan, 1998). As a result, although women did not hold a powerful position in ancient Chinese society, they shared equality with men and were respected properly (Cao, 2000).

Men's supremacy was highly emphasized during the *Han* Dynasty (206 B.C–A.D 220), when the central government began to set up privileges and establish a stable regime

and strictly controlled system (Mou, 2004). Men then established themselves as absolute rulers and made laws and doctrines to limit the power and freedom of women (Li, 1992). Later, the Tang Dynasty (A.D 618–A.D 906) was notable in that it had the only female emperor in China’s history. The female emperor challenged the patriarchal system and destroyed male dominance during her governance. However, the following emperors feared women’s thirst for power and thus reinforced a value system that emphasized how the roles of women should be restricted to focus on maternal duty and feminine virtue (Sun, 2010). The notion of feminine virtue can be summarized as women’s “absolute obedience to men, contentedness in an ignorant and limited life, and utter self-abandonment in the service of the husband’s family” (Duan, 2000, p. 249). This notion peaked during the Song Dynasty (A.D 960–A.D 1276); for women, nothing could be more serious than losing virtue (Sun, 2010). In the final imperial Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), women continued to have lower status, while the persistence of foot-binding continued to limit women’s ability and their rights to develop interests and causal times as well as their character, intelligence, credentials, and ideologies (Huang, 1998).

During this long imperial period, women held a lower status than men not only at the state and social level but also in their own families; women’s subordinate positions were highlighted, as depicted in Confucian theories and gender-based hierarchical division (Xiong & Zhan, 1998). Through the long history of China, male supremacy and female subordination were developed in specific historical periods and extended by the dominant Confucian philosophy. Confucius established some foundational rules to support the authority of dominators and build well-respected and strict ethic orders; the supremacy of the husbands

was one of the rules (*Guangming Daily*, 1974, p. 2B). Confucius is said to have established the maxims that “the subordination of women to men is one of the supreme principles of government” and that “the relations between husband and wife, like those between king and minister, between master and servant, and between father and son are all universal under Heaven” (People’s Daily, 1974, p. 2A).

“Virtue” is an important word Confucius used to describe gender relations; “holding virtue” is one of the traditional Chinese beliefs that people can obtain respect and trust. “Virtue” has very strict ethical requirements for Chinese women: “...not only to sexual purity but also to absolute fidelity to husband..., including lifelong devotion to the parents-in-law and heirs of the deceased spouse...and voluntary contribution of their time, energy, and even lives to maintain absolute commitment to fidelity” (Du & Mann, 2003, p. 219). Specifically, virtue for women is depicted by ethical codes of conduct for women, requiring a woman to stay behind, to be quiet in the public, and to do all of her household work well and willingly (Croll, 1976). China has rich traditional heritages throughout its history; people are proud to carry on the traditional culture represented by ideologies and customs. Confucian “virtue” thus has been accepted even by women themselves, with the belief that it is extremely important to show loyalty and to follow their ancestor’s ideology.

Turning to the 21st century, the traditional gender role division has been challenged by a series of significant changes within family and workplace, but women still do not fully take advantage of new opportunities, as a large number of women maintain subordinate status. In the labour market, women are concentrated in peripheral jobs and occupations that represent extensions of their household roles and those emphasizing stereotyped qualities. At

home, women are still highly dependent on men and play a secondary role. Family is still the most important social unit in China and is valued more than individuality; women often voluntarily accept a subordinate status to maintain a stable family. As a result, when there is conflict between personal development and family needs, and especially when a family member needs to sacrifice, the burden usually falls on woman. However, an interesting phenomenon is that less gender inequality is reported by the younger generation of women; this may be partly because traditional thoughts are more acceptable for older generations.

In former chapters, I mentioned that gender inequality exists particularly in the secondary labour market in contemporary urban China. Therefore, it is very important to examine the reasons for women's limited access to the primary labour market, a sector with typical job categories such as engineers/designers in key technologies, long-term-contract employees in state-owned monopoly enterprises, higher-level managers/leaders, owners of companies/organizations, and so on. The jobs in the primary labour market do not necessarily provide the highest earnings, but offer easy access to redistributive power, priority to acquire resources, increased benefits, and usually a comfortable working environment. Theoretically, employers select employees based on market competition, business needs, and individual credentials; this process represents normal market rules. However, Chinese traditional culture spontaneously set barriers for women and limit their equal rights and freedom of development. As a result, women are underrepresented in the primary labour market. Employers' considerations associated with women's disadvantages in hiring processes become latent norms existing beyond general market rules; these considerations are barriers and embeddedness based on cultural ideologies, standing in labour market activities and

creating discriminated practices against women.

Cultural Barriers to Women's Access into the Primary Labour Market

Guided by Confucian thoughts, men want to keep their status as the breadwinners in the family and believe their status should never be challenged. The traditional culture maintains the social value that men represent strength and power and women represent helpmate and housekeepers; therefore women are not competent in the labour market. Women should follow the important traditional virtues and focus less on public and social activities. Even if women can positively contribute in labour market, men tend to limit women's role in accordance with prejudiced judgments and cultural ideologies embedded in employment processes.

The following stories show how traditional culture embeds in labour market activities and creates barriers to women's access into the primary labour market. Interviewee No. 1 (male; age 36) worked as a team leader of the production sector at a large, state-owned, mechanical enterprise. This enterprise had existed since the 1950s; it designed and produced an important accessory for aircraft. Because of its importance to the nation's development and its specific production needs, it had been located in an isolated suburb area. After some decades, most of the employees worked and lived here generation after generation. The enterprise had a school, a hospital, security, entertainment, and all other facilities to fulfill all needs of employees. In northwest China, it was one of the only two producers of this special accessory, so it had never worried about production and sales; big contracts always came in. However, because of the location and production methods, employees did not live in the city center and seldom communicate with other urban residences; it was a huge and traditional

community. Thus, although new technologies were highly developed today that many employees elsewhere could take advantage of, people living and working here held the traditional style of family structure and gender labour division.

Men are doing important jobs here and men need family support; women just need to join in, support and enjoy. Women do not need to think about promotion and career development, because they are not efficient or competent enough to join important processes. Furthermore, we have everything here for them and they do not need to work too hard; but just conduct easy jobs and provide support to our great men. As I have said, we hold traditional ideas. We do not like women who are aggressive in working and in their career, and men will feel like lose their high status as breadwinners, they hate it very much. For women, they understand this traditional thought; they can have well-beings and stable life if marry one of our men and take care of family duties.

For the leaders in the whole enterprise and each functional section, there is no woman in charge. Maybe women are mostly working in less decent positions, but this is not bad for them, and they are honored by their husbands. Women here can never get into higher level management. Men will not allow it and women are not interested in it (Interviewee No.1; male; age 36).

Interviewee No. 1 said he believed that he worked in a primary labour market because of salaries, benefits, and good living conditions regarding the special importance of the enterprise to the national development. However, men's cultural cognitions on women's roles set ideological barriers for women; the barriers were indeed latent and "reasonable" norms embedded in workplaces. He saw many young women having great dreams and plans for career development finally accept the "norms" of gender division after marrying a man who worked in the enterprise.

A young lady working in the enterprise will probably marry a man working here. She would not worry about her future. She will have a stable live; why should she be different and break the tradition (Interviewee No.1; male; age 36)?

It is obvious that a traditional, separate community would maintain strong traditional culture and the embeddedness existing with labour market rules. Women in this community have fewer opportunities overall, and they are happy to give up their personal development to support their family. How do people living in the modern city center feel about women's role in workplaces? Interviewee No.2 (male; age 25) told me a similar story. He worked as a mechanic technician at an oil/gas company located in the city center. This company was a typical monopoly enterprise because its stake was mostly held by the central government of China. Employees in this company shared special priorities in financial and resource distribution. Jobs were thus most likely classified as belonging to the primary sector, and people were eager to be employed there. However, about half of the employees worked in tough and poor environments—in the field or in the wild, specializing in construction and transportation; these positions were traditionally regarded as men's jobs because of the requirement for physical strength. Other positions within this company were decent and stable, but most of them were not for women. According to Interviewee No.2, women's lower status was caused by the traditional stereotype that women were weak and ineffective in key positions; women's innate ability to focus on details made them suitable only for easy jobs such as administration. Many other jobs were considered "men's jobs." Therefore, women had limited choices.

Women are hard to be considered into primary works in our company. First, although some lower level positions provide very good financial returns, those positions are considered as "male" jobs by us. It is in poor condition, and need to be exhausted of body energy and high efficiency and time management. Women are never considered into those jobs. They are thought to be emotional and ineffective, as well as poor skills of analytical capacity and time management. I know it is criticized by professors and researchers, but we are a company, we need profits, we stand in a society which

traditionally developed in China. For higher level of positions, it is even harder, or impossible, for women to be promoted. 90% of those positions are covered by men.

Some excellent women are definitely qualified for those positions, but as most of Chinese do, I will worry about these women's families, because there will be no one take care of household duties and children education. One of our senior managers in human resources is a lady; she is so successful in working, but has divorced because of her busy jobs and lack of time taking care of family (Interviewee No.2; male; age 25).

From these conversations, we can see that both the traditional community away from the urban center and the open community in the city center share traditional values regarding women's roles. In this community, cultural barriers are also embedded with market selection processes, making gender-based norms beyond general rules. It is reasonable for a community located far from the city center to be extremely traditional, but situations in enterprises in the city center show similar cultural recognition. Thus, it is evident that traditional culture plays a significant role in the discrimination against women in the labour market.

In addition to the situations occurring in monopolies and state-owned enterprises, similar (even worse) situations happen in private companies. Private companies have disadvantages in accessing into resources compared to state-owned enterprises; therefore owners and operators of private companies are particularly concerned with gaining profits, even if that means not hiring women because of concerns about their inefficiency. In private companies, strong cultural ideologies as well as barriers created by embedded gender norms blur people's judgment regarding women's qualifications.

Interviewee No. 3 (female; age 29) worked as a human resource assistant in a private real estate & research company. This company worked on design and research for

government real estate projects. Her opinions regarding women's employment represented a typical hiring process in private companies.

Our work mainly focuses on research, so it does not matter whether women or men do it. However, we still have more male employees than female employees; the manager of human resources and the company owner are women (all other leaders and managers are men). New employment recruitment is managed by women, there are still less women hired every year. The reason is the leaders believe men are more efficient and effective than women while working. With less female colleagues, of course there will be fewer chances to see a woman works in higher level of management position, which can be categorized into primary labour market.

Another thing I want to mention that, I really think our female leader of the company is not efficient or effective enough. For example, our boss usually sets up some assignments, which are not seriously considered; it usually happens that when we get prepared for those assignments, she changes her mind, and lets us stop to do other things. It is very frustrating, and it happens all the time (Interviewee No.3; female; age 29).

Women are regarded as less qualified in many kinds of job because of the gender stereotype. Market needs decide the best qualified workers; but cultural ideology is an additional norm making decisions in hiring. Cultural barriers are especially evident in private companies because these owners hire men rather than women to increase their companies' efficiency and economic profits. Even when the owners are women, they tend to hire men. Interviewee No.3, for example, seemed to stereotype the mistakes made by women as "female" tendencies. The truth is that no one is perfect, and wrong decisions and ineffective leadership happen all the time.

Confucian culture and traditional stereotypes lead to gender discrimination even when a woman is well qualified for a position. For example, design jobs in China require workers who can perform numerous design tasks. They need to draw sketch maps every day.

It is very tiring but very well paid, as employees said. There are always new projects coming in, and the employees do not have to worry about earnings. As a result, leaders of these institutions believe that the profits and performance of the institution closely correlate with employees' hard work, which should be continued day and night. They need employees who can work like machines to keep the projects moving forward. Traditionally, because of gender stereotypes, employers in this occupation consider women less energetic; they usually believe that women are always less productive than men in such machine-style work. Therefore, culture again becomes a basis for informing rules embedded in hiring processes; women are rarely hired through market needs selection, even when they are much more qualified and when they work very hard. Interviewee No. 4 (female; age 24) was a recent graduate and works in this occupation.

I have met very serious gender discrimination. When I was interviewed for a position of Design and City Planning Institution, I was told to wait for further notice after my excellent performance during the interview. However, a boy was hired immediately when the interview finished. One of my friends who worked in that institution told me that I was more qualified than the boy, but girls are not usually preferred here (Interviewee No.4; female; age 24).

Women are thought born genius in simple and low-skill works, and should stay far away from high-level jobs. Women are thus hired for jobs with easy tasks and relatively lower returns. This is one of the reasons women are overrepresented in the secondary labour market. On another hand, men tend to work hard to maintain their position as breadwinner; some may seek a second job if they are not satisfied with the current one. Generally, having a job with a female tag will make men feel shame and be doubted for their capacity to feed their families. Interviewee No. 5 (male; age 30) told me his story regarding men's job options. He

had two jobs, working as an instructor in technical school and as an employee in a private company.

I have two jobs. First, I am a college instructor. This is a steady job, easy, automatically renewed contract, and no technical requirements. What you need to do is to teach. Term after term, you will be familiar with all the knowledge and experiences you need to process. The disadvantage is relative lower income. That is why most of the instructors are women in my college.

Traditionally, men think themselves as breadwinner at home. They always suppose they are commitment to all of family's financial needs. If they work in this job like me, they will have fewer earnings; most importantly, they will have more chance to be beaten by their wives. If the wives have more decent jobs, or earn more than the husbands do, the husbands will feel losing faces, which mean they feel shame on themselves. I believe most of Chinese men think like this. Therefore, every year when we hire, there is few men applied; we actually want more men in order to keep gender balance in the college, but it is hard. This is also why I and most of other male instructors here have a second job. We do not have classes every day, and we do not need to sit in the office.

In our free times, we work in some companies related to our teaching areas on part time basis. We are tired, but we have to do it, or we will be laughed, may be by wives, family, and friends, even whoever knows our awkward earnings in the college. In this situation (like my teaching college), those instructors should be grouped into secondary labour market; the majority of workers are women (Interviewee No.5; male; age 30).

There are few part-time job opportunities in China's urban labour market. Most urban citizens hold one job and do it full-time. These college instructors give up their easy life by choosing to take a second job. They are tired and sacrifice energy and time; the aim is not only to earn more money but also to protect the "breadwinner certificate," and avoid being mocked by others. Traditional culture assigns men more responsibilities for feeding their families and men's honor to be respectable by women all the time. Lower-income jobs damage men's self-confidence; this is why men tend to be more positive and aggressive than women in the labour markets. This also reveals men's spontaneous endeavors to maintain the

traditional cultural norm, making stereotypes embedded in labour market.

If a woman shows her aggressiveness in self-development and in seeking career promotion, she will likely be unwelcomed by others (including men and women but especially men). Doing primary jobs, women will most likely spend more time and energy in work than in the family; meanwhile, men usually feel they lose absolute control, authority and emotional loyalty in the family. Thus, men's traditional ideology on gender roles has been intensified by their continued pursuit of women's "virtue." From the interviews, I found that although women's participation is widely accepted in the labour market, some men have been protecting their authority at home and in society in an aggressive way. Traditional cultural are embedded by an extreme approach in labour market, blocking women's right in self-development. Men radically suppress women's improvement, promotion, outreach, and communications with other social actors. When women have opportunities for higher-level work positions that require communication, social networking, and even profitable exchange, it is often in their best interest to avoid such positions, or they will possibly be doubted and then blamed by men for reasons of betraying traditional virtue, even loyalty. Family conflicts usually happen under such circumstances. Interviewee No. 6 (male; age 33) worked in production at a state-owned enterprise. His work was not in a comfortable environment but was within the monopoly sector; therefore his work and life were very stable. He shared his ideas about women's personal development.

Many of my friends have similar ideas to me; we do not want our wives hold too much desires in career development. When we were young, we just did not like girls in Students Unions; because their managerial desires could not let us feel that they were lovely girls. Now, after marriage, I will probably get unhappy if my wife has a better job than I do. More importantly, higher level of positions mean more responsibilities and time sacrifice; I do not care

sharing household duties with my wife, but her work let her take care of social networks. We all know that higher level of social networks are mostly men, it is too risky for a women to dealing with network with men, because she may betray traditional women's virtue in my family, and I will feel lose my face having a wife like this. So, if she has an opportunity, I will probably say no, and suggest her to stay stable, because it is good enough. I can get better develop and provide more support for family (Interviewee No.6; male; age 33).

Interviewee No. 7 (female; age 38) also shared her opinions from a woman's perspective regarding women's career development and personal improvement. She worked as an associate professor in a university and believed that women should not dream too big about career development and rather should stay at home and care for their husbands.

To be honest, if I have some ideas about career development, or a better chance for promotion, my husband will be unsatisfied or angry sometimes. In my understanding, this is because that he might worry about a reverse of positions in the family and my incompetence to take care of family. Most of Chinese people believe economic condition determines position or priority within a family. Traditionally, men take more work and earn money for the whole family, so they are always the "most important part" of the family. However, when women earn more money, or have higher status in the working, things will change, they will get impatient in family, pay less attention in household works, and start to speak to husband in a tone similar to talking to working assistants.

This happen all the time, I know some women who are personally nice, but I agree with the traditional culture and the judgment that most of women will change after they have higher status in the society compare to their husbands. Many of my friends under this situation met big trouble in their families, for example, conflict, fight, even divorce. Regarding this, my husband is always worrying about this, he does not want to lose his core position in the family, and I understand that. Although I had some ideas and plans for career development, I am not reluctant to sacrifice it, and just support him. After all, I will have less pressure in work, it is not bad (Interviewee No.7; female; age 38).

Although Interviewee No.7 did not absolutely disagree that women should be concerned to develop their careers, she felt it was reasonable to follow traditional culture and

favor the husband—even if that was unfair to the woman. A man feels threatened if his wife has a good career opportunity or works in the primary labour market; as a result, the man will be reluctant to support his wife in that opportunity. These examples show embedded cultural barriers to women's access into the primary labour market.

Women's Weak Self-identity

Self-identity refers to women's beliefs regarding what they should do in the family and in the labour market and where they should be in the social hierarchy; weak self-identify means weak belief or confidence to take more responsibilities or to pursue further development.

What will women think or do when they meet discrimination regarding career barriers caused by culture barriers, cognitive stereotype, or husbands' disagreement? Do they want to seek or hold opportunities in the primary labour market? There must be some women who study and work hard to increase their credentials and improve their qualifications for future development, either because of personal dreams or to feed their families. They try their best to be competent in the occupation and make significant contributions for their organizations. Interviewee No. 8 (female; age 31) was a typical example of a woman who persistently pursues her dreams. She worked as a sales manager in a private IT company. The company was small, but the sales records showed that Interviewee No.8 had made great contributions to the company during her nine years hard work. She seemed to be a person with a very positive attitude in working and living; she was open, nice, and very easy to communicate with.

I learned marketing in my undergraduate studies because I was a happy girl and very good at sales and communication. I have set my dream to be a No. 1 sales person in China's history (laughing...) and studied and worked very hard to achieve it. I remember it was my third year of studies, I wanted to

gain experiences in marketing and sales, so I chose this company to start my internship as a sales person. I really enjoyed it and finally I graduated with high marks and was formally hired by the company. I love my job because it was directly related to my interest and competency. This is why I went to school again to do a three-year Master study in a part time basis. It was tired as I had multi-tasking but I was happy with what I have done.

I was promoted as the sales manager three years ago because of my work performance and high level of degree. I believe I have achieved half of my dream. I will keep working hard but next step of my plan is to find a husband. I have not had a chance to think about it until now (laughing...) (Interviewee No.8; female; age 31).

From this example, we see how a woman set up a plan of action and finally obtained her desired social status. Her success was the result of hard work. However, she believed that there are some reasons for success that not everyone possesses. She shared her ideas regarding gender inequality.

Yes it is very serious gender discrimination in the labour market. It is very hard for a girl to have her own dreams and finally achieve them. As a girl, I had to study hard and work hard; I had to have appropriate and fortunate opportunities to meet good employers. I was lucky because private companies like ours provide trust to employees and equal competitions for job seekers. We need people with qualifications to increase the profits. Therefore, my boss gave me trust and made me confident. I believe we must prove us in the society; we must first have high level of credentials in order to stand in the labour market. Fighting, living, and enjoying (Interviewee No.8; female; age 31)!

Interviewee No.8 said she was lucky, but the key factors of success other than good fortune should be strategies, planning, and hard work. However, the interview revealed that eight out of ten women in this study had very weak self-identity and a negative attitude regarding promotion and development in every level of the labour markets.

There are three kinds of weak self-identity among female interviewees: (a) they have great success in the early stage of their careers, but give up after marriage; (b) women in the

younger generation who have decent jobs hold both good credentials and weak self-identity, being influenced by the older generation; and (c) typical secondary sector women workers hold fewer credentials and absolute weak self-identity.

Women in the first category were mostly of the older generation (born between the 1950s and the 1970s). They received appropriate education and equal assignments in the early years of China's development. They were motivated by the central government as workers with positive strength in building the society. Therefore, women born in this period usually had big dreams and motivations. However, a large number of women in this period finally gave up their dreams and focused on family duties and child-bearing responsibilities. Interviewee No. 9 (female; age 45) was an assistant professor at a university. Her position was tenured because of the old employment system in China and her long time serving in the university. She acquired her current position at age 28; after marriage, she did not seek further promotion. Family education in gender roles is another reason for her weak self-identity.

I actually did not have more strategic plans for my career development after marriage, because I was taught by my parents to be a caretaker of my family and my children. When I was young, almost all the families educated their kids like this; it is also a traditional culture, and social context. We live in a society like this; few people can escape from the ideology. To be honest, we were encouraged to contribute to our socialism development in old time, but I knew that I would give up and maintain my stable family. I had some ideas about my future when I was still a student; everything has gone after marriage. Now I love to put all of my energy into child education, and I am happy to see my boy grow up. My family is happy, and my life is perfect (Interviewee No.9; female; age 45).

In addition to marriage, a stable job is another important reason women stop developing their career. Interviews showed that older -generation women tended to seek

employment with state-owned, monopoly, and stable companies. Once they were hired, they chose to be satisfied, especially after marriage. Most interviewees saw this a perfect scenario. Interviewee No. 10 (female; age 42) worked as an administrator in a state-owned electronic enterprise. Her company was a typical monopoly work unit. The monopoly characteristics attracted thousands of job seekers. Even some lower-level company positions were very popular; once hired, employees had easy tasks and a relatively stable life, and of course more opportunity for unbelievable earnings.

I believe I am working in a perfect company. I do not need further promotions because this is good enough for me; furthermore, I can take care of my family without fighting for more money. In this company it is hardly to see much gender discrimination because all the employees here have strong social networks; network is almost the only way to be hired here. Therefore, although women are working in some lower level positions, other will respect you because they do not want to get trouble with the network behind you.

Gender discrimination exists in the process of promotion, because higher level managers are mostly men. In my opinion, this is reasonable; because women like me do not want to join the competition for these positions. We are satisfied for current status and do not want to be exhausted in multitasking working and family (Interviewee No.10; female; age 42).

This story tells us two important facts. First, it is difficult for women to obtain important and higher-level positions because of their own self-identity. Women locate themselves at a lower level to maintain stability and have more energy to take care of their family. Compared to other women workers in non-monopoly companies, Interviewee No. 10 has a much better and easier life; at least she does not have to worry about unemployment or unexpected expenditures in family life. Therefore it is understandable that men conduct more responsibilities in workplaces and are easier to be promoted compared to women. The promotion process is usually where gender inequality is most evident in the primary sector.

Second, in the primary labour market, gender inequality is not evident because a number of positions are acquired through social networking. Women working in these positions already had relative higher status because of their family or husband.

In the second kind of women's weak self-identity, the younger generations (i.e., new graduates age 18–25) were not taught formally about labour gender division or gender stereotypes. They usually held good credentials obtained from formal education and pre-employment training or internship opportunities. They were qualified for decent jobs within the primary labour market. However, interviews showed that women (including a number of this group's female friends) did not have concrete ideas about how and why women needed to contribute to family and thus sacrificed career development; these younger girls were at an important stage in shaping their life objectives and values, but were negatively affected by deeply embedded cultural ideologies from their older colleagues, friends, and acquaintances in the social context. Interviewee No. 11 (female; age 23) spoke of her work experience and how her ideas regarding gender division were shaped. She worked as a client representative of a national bank. Her job required that she dealt with clients' needs in investment and banking. This was a highly skilled job and requires knowledge in both finance and client services. Therefore, graduates with the desired degree were the best candidates. There were mostly women workers in the bank; one reason, known from conversations, was that there were more females in majors such as economy, finance, and accounting in universities than in other areas; when they graduated, those students were the main resources for bank jobs. In Chinese traditions, most families had their girls study economy, social sciences, and literature and doing jobs in a relatively comfortable

environment, because they believed that “girls did not need to work hard for achieving personal success; they could fulfill their dreams by marrying a successful man.” The second reason was that employees at entry-level positions were responsible for communicating with the public; women were believed to be more competent in these tasks because clients felt more easily to talk with a female customer representative, especially a young and good-looking one.

About 70% of entry-level bank workers are female. But situation changes when we look at higher level of managers; only about 30% of them are female. To be honest, 30% is a very “good” proportion in the bank, since most of lower level workers are female. The only reason is that women’s distraction of their concentration because of family lives and household duties. Some of my best friends, as well as colleagues, were 100% dedication to their works some years ago; after marriage, they started to getting “lazy” in their jobs, projects, or personal promotion. As they have said to me, “nothing is important except my husband and kid.” Of course their husbands have a good job, in this way they can treat their own jobs like this.

I am becoming less focused on my work as well after communicating with them. I do not want to be busy and tired, just conduct easy jobs. I do not know the reasons; I just feel like I cannot focus as I did before. Just like most of my girl-friends, we like to do many things together, for example, chatting with each other, or have some snacks while working; we cannot focus on work long time. Just ideologically, or psychologically, I also want to marry someone, and put most of my energy into family, although I do not know when I have this idea. If I have a stable family, or, excellent man as husband, I will not give him too much pressure because I will leave the front line and stand behind him (Interviewee No.11; female; age 23).

Women gradually give up career development because they are influenced by colleagues and traditional culture. The values taught by the older generation are embedded in daily life, later on in labour market activities impacting women’s choices for development; these values instruct women to be subordinate and to support men in their family duties to maintain so-called stable family relationship. Because many women today tend to treat their

husband's success as their own success, these women transform their career seeking to "husband seeking," and believe that they will be set for life if they marry a "good man."

Furthermore, although a woman may be ideologically dependent on her husband, she usually has higher authority in family management, especially in financial control; thus, returns on family control can be a substitution for her career development. This situation usually happens for those in the third category of women's weak self-identity. Women in this group do not have great human capital and may not be competent in the primary labour market.

Again, Interviewee No.1 (male; age 36) gave me additional opinions.

Men are the main and important labour force in the enterprise; they are in charge of all the key positions of each section. In the most important sections, for example, technique exploration, model design, and sales management, are occupied by men.

Majority of the women are working as administrators, human resource assistant, and factory cleaners, which are, we say, subordinate positions. They are not competent to do technical and skilled jobs. The most important thing is that they are happy to do those less decent jobs because all their wishes are to support the enterprise, and to support their husbands. About 70% of women workers here are wives of men workers of the enterprise. Those wives are automatically enrolled in workforce here after marriage.

In my opinion, here is perfect for those women and they do not need to hold big dreams for career development. They have easy jobs and causal lives here, and most importantly, they have found husband and built family; their futures are set (Interviewee No.1; male; age 36).

In Interviewee No.1's company, women with fewer credentials can have a less decent but stable job through marriage with male employees in the company. State-owned enterprises offer good financial returns and competitive benefits to their employees. However, private companies and unstable jobs cannot provide their employees similar returns, especially to these secondary labour market workers. Interviewee No. 12 (female; age 36)

was a typical secondary labour market worker in the city as a housekeeper. As she indicated, she was born in a poor family with no networking resources and held a three-year high school diploma. She did not receive any formal employment training. She shared the story of herself and her husband.

It is extremely hard for someone with less education and “clear background”(family with lower status and less resource). We do not have any resources, opportunities for training, or networks. We do not have beautiful education and experiences so we are discriminated everywhere, especially as a woman. All I can do is this causal job; when I become older, it will be more difficulty. I do not believe I can have more opportunities for development so I have given up since few years ago. All my hope is my husband.

My husband has similar background. He has less education as well. He could not do decent jobs right now but he can find something easily. He is doing two jobs now and trying his best to be a team leader; in this way, he will have more authority and may bring me better life. He said he was trying his best (Interviewee No.12; female; age 36).

This story describes typical secondary labour market women workers at the lower level of the urban social stratification. They hold very few credentials and feel no hope for further development. They give up fighting and wait for their husband’s success. Following traditional culture, women with fewer credentials also choose to support their husbands. As a result, men have more opportunities for success and in upward mobility to the primary labour market, although sometimes men’s efforts are because they have no other choices.

The above conversations provide examples of ongoing ideologies and practices that reproduce traditional values of Chinese culture, creating and reinforcing employment barriers for women. The barriers exist as informal norms embedded in the labour market processes. If a woman insists on working hard to pursue career success, what will happen? Interviewee No.7 (female; age 38) provided examples with more information.

Some of my friends, or someone known by my friends, divorced because the wives got higher positions or big promotions. Couples usually have more contradictions and even fights after wife's job success; it sometimes because husband feel losing authority in the family; sometimes because the wife does predominate her husband; and also, sometimes because the husband doubts his wife's virtue; their children will have trouble in childhood education. The children may be less cared and taught.

I have heard many examples that a successful wife pays less attention to her child's education; and then her child gets far behind in school studies. A worse thing is, well living conditions and less parental education make this child deviate from a normal development path. My friend is an example. She has a boy aged 17, an important age in children's early development in China. The boy lives in a comfortable environment; his parents provide good living support, but less family education, because the parents both work in higher level of positions and busy all day. As a result, the boy is less energetic in studying and lack of future plans. There is too much pressure for children such as studying, extra classes in weekends and holidays, but we can do nothing with it; at least he needs to pass the college entrance exam to be possible to be considered for a job. Now the boy is wasting time every day, and school has grouped him a "no-hope student (Interviewee No.7; female; age 38).

Women are willing to pursue less in their career because of both family and personal reasons. Not all working wives pay no attention to their children's education; however, it is something that women worry about. Therefore, most women choose to follow gender role division and labour market division and pay more attention to household duties.

Others hold totally different ideas about women's work. In one interview, I talked to Interviewee No. 13 (male; age 50), director of a state-owned railroad and construction enterprise. In his opinion, everyone needed to be placed in an appropriate position in accordance with his or her qualifications and interests. Therefore, gender-based labour division was not always reasonable and acceptable; Chinese traditional culture that advocated women to stay behind men and did easy jobs should not be accepted universally. Women usually did much better than men did in so-called male jobs such as engineering,

management, and research; there were also successful and respected women who did an excellent job not only at work but also in family life, communicating well with the husband at home. Couples liked this understood each other and loved and cooperated very well.

A man has to have generosity to fairly treat wife's success. He should not get angry, frustrate, or even jealous to the wife's achievements and opportunities. Losing face is the most ridiculous idea in our society. We cannot selfish; the happiness of the whole family should be the final destination. After all, if the man is excellent enough, why should he worry about his wife's success?

In my opinion, when a man says "women need to be focusing more on family," I believe he is not strong and powerful enough; he does not understand what true responsibilities a man should take. A strong man should well plan his study and work, and make strategic development in his life. In order to be successful, he needs to work very, very hard, and brave enough to face any challenge and difficult. If he provides good condition for his wife and children, the whole family will be proud and happy. Of course, in this sense, the wife can be "free"; because she can do everything that she is good at, or interested in. Women need to find their own value and honor too, we cannot exploit their rights (Interviewee No.13; male; age 50).

He agreed that women should have freedom in their career development and work opportunities; women should have more opportunity to work in the primary labour market. However, his ideas were still based on gender stereotypes generated from traditional culture. He chose to free women from subordination, but extended men's supremacy. He believed that a man should have the power to do everything for his wife and protect the family. Equally speaking, women and men were fair biologically; there should be no division in social or cultural context.

Chapter Summary

In ancient times, women were not subordinate to men. Men's predominance over women became evident in Han Dynasty (206 B.C–A.D 220), with the state becoming more

stable. In later dynasties, feminine virtue was highlighted for absolute obedience to men. During the imperial times, women were limited in their freedom in all aspects, including working, living, ease, and marriage.

According to Chinese history, male supremacy and female subordination were developed in specific historical periods and were extended by Confucian philosophy. As one of the most important cultural heritages, Confucian thoughts regulated gender based labour division negatively affecting women's status in China; women thus had very limited opportunities in the primary labour market. Traditional culture guides that men should be supreme in the family; women should be subordinate to men and maintain absolute loyalty to husband. This cultural understanding is deeply embedded in social actions and labour market activities, creating cultural-based gender norms beyond gender market rules. The gender norms are highly advocated and accepted by both men and women as they are proud to succeed ancestor's ideology.

This chapter has gathered information from interviews to examine women's limited access into the primary labour market. Interviewees shared their stories from different perspectives: men/women, state-sector employees/non-state sector employee, monopoly sector employee/non-monopoly sector employee, and employees with high credentials/low credentials. The results show that men want their wives to focus more on household duties and child education because traditional gender division has taught most Chinese people that women are not as effective, efficient, or reasonable as men in paid work. Even female employers themselves do not like to hire women.

Second, to maintain their position as the "breadwinner," men may be unhappy with

women's career development and job success, especially when women earn more than they do; this makes men feel they are losing their supremacy in the family. Furthermore, if women pursue career development and job success, they will possibly leave family duties and lose their husbands' trust because higher positions of work usually require more communication, networking, and profit exchanging (which is dominated by men). Husbands will feel a risk of losing their wife's loyalty, the most important virtue and a very serious issue that traditional culture emphasizes.

Third, women themselves accept men's supremacy and are willing to be subordinate. Older generations are taught to follow traditional virtues of women; younger generations are influenced by older generation, even those who hold high credentials and a primary job. Women with few credentials have difficulty entering the primary labour market and thus reasonably hold weak self-identity; thus, they give up personal development and wait for their husband's success. Therefore, women are limited in the labour markets and men are more positive and aggressive in career development. As a result, other than general market rules, culture creates latent rules embedded in the selection of workers in urban labour force; both men and women are controlled by the embeddedness voluntarily, sometimes reluctantly but having no choice.

The interviews provided information on gender inequality in the primary and secondary labour market. There is more equality in the primary labour market because employers in private companies pursue economic profits, providing equal competition for candidates with higher credentials. Women holding appropriate credentials have more opportunities than women with fewer credentials. In state-owned or monopoly enterprises,

jobs are mostly believed to be primary positions. These jobs require effective social networking; such networking raises the social status of the admitted female candidates and can provide security against being treated with discrimination. In the secondary labour market, jobs are unstable and less secure; women in this sector usually hold fewer credentials and less resources, which create more difficult for women in labour market competition.

CHAPTER 6 INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS TO WOMEN'S ACCESS INTO THE PRIMARY LABOUR MARKET

This chapter provides a qualitative analysis of institutional barriers for women's equal access to the primary labour market. Institutional barriers exist at two levels. The informal level represents workplace gender norms, policies, and practices; the formal level represents national and local governments in public policy and management as well as the effect of mass media in delivering and extending gender ideologies. Both levels of institutions violate labour laws, creating discrimination for women in labour market; but they exist beyond market rules and exist in market activities. Institutional barriers become latent and acceptable as they come to be embedded in employment.

Informal Institutions Embedded in Organizational and Managerial Processes in the Labour Markets

The term "institution" has two categories of meaning; the first category refers to informal regulations, customs, and behavior patterns active in a society, and the second level is applied to particular formal government management and public policies as controlling mechanisms. Institutions exist as social orders and norms to regulate behaviors in a society, playing a role in supporting and legitimatizing values and beliefs. Institutions create latent norms and practices in the whole society in formal level and inside an agency or group in informal level; the norms and practices are not necessarily reasonable but are accepted by most of the members. Institutions are thus embedded beyond market laws and rules, generating barriers for women's access to primary labour market.

Turning to the new century, along with the continuous growth of China's economy and the overall progress of its society, the Chinese central government improved its legal

system to give women more guarantees for equal rights and opportunities. However, at informal level, institutions create norms, regulations, and practices in the process of organization, management, and employment in the labour market activities. In the late 20th century, although the Communist Government created various laws and policies to assure that women were equally treated and protected, employers still discriminated against women. For example, to save on costs associated with maternity leave, the provision of child care facilities, and absenteeism due to children's illnesses (Honig & Hershater, 1988), most employers tended to advertise fair competition in job postings but eventually hired men; worse still, another example showed that some enterprises adopted an inner-work policy of early retirement and forced female employees to retire as early as age 45 (Liu, 1997). These workplace norms did not break any laws, but they were evidently violations of policy spirits. The problem was that these actions were widely acceptable and could not be closely monitored.

Informal institutions are embedded in three processes: workplace norms/policies, management, and employment. Through the interviews, I found that typical informal institutions existed in workplace norms/policies in limiting women's equal opportunities. Interviewee No.14 (female; age 34) worked as a temporary service worker in a large-scale private marketing company; she held a high school diploma and did not have better opportunities for employment due to her lack of professional skills and knowledge. The company was famous in its consulting capacity in the areas of finance and customer management. The company had two policies: employees working three years or more should be transferred to permanent status, and only permanent employees had health care benefits,

accommodation, and insurance. However, a large number of women workers were hired through temporary, three-year contracts and then lost the job before the term ended and the contracts were not renewed.

In our company, those who have higher levels, for example, leaders, managers, consultants, and engineers, are permanent employees and are definitely in the definition of primary labour market. They have unbelievable salaries and benefits, as well as opportunities and priorities regarding social networks; they work in comfortable offices, doing brain-storm tasks. In a word, they have very high class of social status in China. Women are mostly enrolled in lower level of administrative and maintenance positions; a very large number of temporary service positions are occupied by women too, like me, but we will not probably get the contracts renewed after 3 years. The company has a policy that benefits are only available to permanent employees and employees working here for more than three years. In this way, the company saves a lot of money by excluding us from benefits.

In my opinion, although professional employees can contribute to the company, our service works are also extremely important (shows confidence and angry while talking); but we cannot do anything to change our status. We do not have good education or training; good positions are not belonging to us. However, we work very hard in order to keep our position or seek promotion, at least a team leader; it still seems impossible (Interviewee No.14; female; age 34).

Interviewee No.14's employer implemented working norms/policies to treat service workers unequally. The service workers were mostly women; the result was simply that women had limited access to job security, work experience accumulation, and promotion. With temporary service experience and fewer credentials, these women workers generally could not find better jobs after their contracts expired. They would most likely remain in the secondary labour market for a long time. Obviously, the contract renewal norms were set beyond market rules; employers did not offer equal treatment to women workers and the gender norms were deeply embedded in workplaces.

In addition to workplace norms/policies, the processes of employment and management also create typical gender discrimination, limiting women's opportunity and development. Gender-biased practices are often performed in conjunction with sexual harassment. Employers draw not only on workers' physical labour activities and productivity but also on their personality, sexual identity, and bodily disposition into a circuit of both material and symbolic production (Adkins, 2002; Freeman, 2000; Salzinger, 2003).

A typical example of an institutional barrier in employment and workplace management happens in government agencies. As interviewees have expressed, in the government jobs, qualifications and efficiency do not matter in the hiring process; instead, social networking and a good-looking face are the most crucial factors in determining a girl's employment and promotion. Interviewee No. 15 (male; age 41) worked as a senior administrator at provincial government office. He told me a story about his good friend, a good-looking girl hired through networking relationships. The girl's position was called administrative support, but the actual working duties entailed accompanying the department head for business trips, banquets, and networking parties to drink with others and as an "off-site personal secretary"; the head showed off her beauty in front of lower-level workers and used her physical attraction to get close to higher-level working partners for cooperation and interaction. Interviewee No.15 has worked in the provincial government for 15 years. He was confident in confirming his judgment about the high level of gender discrimination within government agencies.

A job description in my department requires female applicants with certain physical height, facial attractiveness, as well as experiences and college education. In the actual process of recruitment, many qualified applicants are wiped out, left two with strong social network connected with our department

head. In the end, the better looking one gets hired.

I believe this girl has a very good job compared to others, because she works in the government agency bring her a stable life, good benefits, above-average income, endless resources, networks, easy tasks, and comfortable office environment. This job is definitely considered in primary labour market.

However, as a friend, she tells me that she cannot stand the job anymore; she is tired of doing personal assistant and professional drinking accompanier; she wants to have real working practices in order to pursuit her career dreams. The most serious problem is that her stomach has been hardly hurt by the drinking tasks. As a result, only four months later, she quits this decent job belonging to primary labour market (Interviewee No.15; male; age 41).

From this example, we can see the “qualifications” government employers require for competence: physical attraction and networking but not education or experience. Government officers use their positional authority to set these requirements, forming institutional norms embedded beyond normal employment processes. As a result, in this case, only those with physical beauty have the opportunity to enter the primary labour market; direct gender discrimination and sexual harassment exists in this primary government jobs; women are hard to stay in these primary jobs, hardly accumulating valuable experience for career development or entering to higher-level jobs within government.

Private companies also create similar latent norms in management process. Interviewee No.16 (male; age 32) shared his work experience as a manager of a marketing department at a private IT company. He was responsible for hiring new salespeople for the marketing department. He wanted to hire qualified candidates with the proper experience and educational background, and people who were smart, open-minded, and creative. However, he was unable to make the final decision, and the owner of the company preferred male candidates.

Male sales are easier to be managed; they usually can better adapt to changing environments and requirements and therefore efficient to bring back big contracts by their great drinking capacities. Women need to be cared much in their business trip and usually require vacations and leaves (Interviewee No.16; male; age 32).

He said he was not frustrated because at least he would not feel guilty when male salespeople were assigned for projects; marketing negotiations and sales social networking entailed sexual harassment, which was highly harmful for women sales persons.

I heard many cases regarding sexual harassment while girls were working with some potential clients for contracts negotiation. Before I was the manager here, there were two pretty girls in sales section of the department. They were here only because of their good-looking faces. The boss did not need any skills from them, but just the beauty. The girls were new graduates and they did not fully understand sales job in private company. They thought it was a job promoting them in communication, social network, and so on. However, they were scared in their first contract negotiation. They were assigned to another city for an important contract, the managers of the potential client, of course all men, did many harassments during the so called business supper and the party after that. The men delivered some messages to the girls that the only way to get the contracts signed was to follow whatever they would ask for, including sexual behaviors. The girls were scared and then resigned the job. As far as I know, there is few girls are willing to have a career like this, and it is not surprising that higher level of sales and marketing seldom have women in charge (Interviewee No.16; male; age 32)..

Through this story, we see that in this company, women have difficulties obtaining an entry level job in marketing and sales; even when women are hired, they do not usually have good sales records as men do and thus have limited opportunity to be promoted to primary positions. However, some girls want to work in this type of environment because they want to take advantage of their beauty and pursue their own success, as Interviewee No.16 had notified.

In private business settings, some employers seek to take advantage of women's beauty and physical attractions by utilizing workplace authority in management and employment processes. Women's physical features thus become potentially lucrative employment opportunities. In a traditional society such as China, virtue is a crucial factor determining women's moral standard; it is also an important indicator of whether a family is in a positive and stable relationship. Therefore, if the wife works in a business environment such as the one described above, the husband will feel that his wife's virtue is threatened. It is much more serious if these female characteristics are used as an exchange to seek employment promotion, resources, and networks. This is how social institutions interact with cultural recognitions within labour market activities to limit women's equal access in the primary labour markets.

Interestingly, interviewees in monopoly and state-owned enterprises (e.g., large telecommunication companies) reported different types of gender inequality. Interviewee No. 17 (male; age 30) worked as a production manager at a large telecommunication company. This company held the largest number of clients in the mobile industry in China. As he said, monopoly and state-owned enterprises usually had unlimited resources and social networks, so they had never worried about contracts; the marketing department in these enterprises did not need employees to work hard to enlarge sales channels. Sexual harassments did not actually happen in the marketing process. Employees in these sectors were responsible for easy tasks and were preferred by women. Internal male employees were not usually interested in these positions because they wanted something with greater challenge and potential for promotion. In the recruitment, social networking was the only channel to be hired; only those

who had powerful resources had the opportunity to work here. Gender inequality rarely occurred in employment and marketing.

However, gender inequality exists in the interior promotion. Over 80% of the higher level of positions is occupied by men. For women in higher levels, a small part of them is truly qualified in their jobs; the rest of them, namely, majority of women in higher levels displaying the company's show. The company wants to show to the public that it is a fair community that men and women have equal opportunities. For this purpose, only those positions that do not important to the core technology are arranged to be took over by women (Interviewee No.17; male; age 30).

Similarly, Interviewee No. 15 (male; age 41) reported this “show” in the government.

There are about 25% to 30% female employees in the provincial government. With respect to higher level officers, only 10% are female. From our perspective, the reason of such a few numbers of female officials in government is the unseen, under-table regulations. First, in most of cases, when the government sets up a female in a senior official's position, the primary aim is to show the government's fairness. The only reason of doing this is to eliminate criticisms and show “support” to national policies regarding women's rights (Interviewee No.15; male; age 41).

Throughout these interviews, it is clear that gender inequality (related to company profits) occurs in the hiring selections and working processes in private companies. Women meet unequal treatment at the entry- and lower-level positions; women's physical attraction are used by employers to fulfill personal desires. Public sector employers such as government agencies, state-owned enterprises, and monopoly enterprises show different gender norms and practices in limiting women's access to the primary labour market (government agencies practice similar gender inequality and sexual harassment in the management process).

Generally, women working for these units have higher-level credentials or strong social networking skills and thus do not encounter inequality in seeking employment. However,

problems exist in the internal promotion structures. Women are limited in their access to higher-level positions. The “fair show” directly displays women’s embarrassing encounters in the primary labour market. These interviewees’ experiences regarding gender inequality do not represent all of the cases in China. I believe there are still some women who work very hard and are promoted because of excellent qualifications. However, the examples provided in the interviews are typical cases in the labour markets.

Although policies and laws have been created to protect women’s rights and opportunities, gender inequality exists under embedded institutions in working norms, management, and employment; these institutions exist in a “reasonable” way that does not disobey existing laws. Institutions maintain their own rules of behavior and compel individuals to behave in accordance with the rules.

During the interviews, I found one woman who was able to concentrate on both family and career concerns; she was so excellent at what she did because she was able to escape the institutional barriers. Interviewee No. 18 (female; age 36) worked as a sales manager in a private company. She worked hard and thus was promoted as a manager; more importantly, she had a good family in which her husband and daughter both support her work.

The following conversation was part of her story.

I am a sales manager. Many of my friends say that it is not a good job because too much dark side is involved in marketing and sales process, especially for a female manager. However, I love my job, I like the challenge, and I want to deliver my happiness to all the people by talking and communicating. To make our productions famous, I feel strong sense of success. My hard work and perseveres brought me success without any gender norms. Although this job cost much time and energy, both my daughter and my husband support my job, trust me, and always try to cooperate with me. My girl is very smart; she communicates with me in the morning and at night each day, so that I can know everything about her. My

husband help me to do some household clean when he has time, and shows his patience when I am busy. I have tried my best to do everything well, and I did it, and I am happy. Although tired, I have a wonderful life (Interviewee No.18; female; age 36).

Formal Institutions Embedded in National Public Policies and Management

Institutions are also manifested at a formal level in government policies and management. The Chinese government implemented a number of policies and laws to create the legal and policy foundation to protect women's equal rights especially in the labour market, for example, the Marriage Law in the 1950s, the Population and Family Planning Law, the Law on Rural Land Contracting, and the Law on Protection of Rights and Interests of Women; furthermore, both central and local governments made the guarantee of equal employment opportunities between women and men and fair sharing of resources to ensure that women could enhance their self-development and improve their social and economic status. However, the interviews and data analysis in the former chapters demonstrated Chinese women's poor attendance in the primary labour market, inadequate protection in job security, interrupted human capital accumulation, lower status under workplace authority, and awkward work assignments at higher-level positions. These realities revealed women's actual condition in the labour market; discrimination could hardly be regulated and supervised by current policies and laws due to China's special administrative and political model in economic market activities. These administrative and political models are embedded between economic market rules and labour market activities, making barriers to prevent women from sharing equal opportunities and being protected by laws.

Difficulties in Policy Implementation

Policies and rules cannot on their own, achieve their objectives in protecting women's equal rights; there are also inefficiencies in implementation, due to four reasons: (a) the "top-down" policy-making strategy; (b) political and ideological influences on policy implementation; (c) lack of effective connections to academic research; and (d) citizens' lack of understanding in legal rights (Biddulph, 1999; Huang, 1991; Li, 1996; Zhuang, 1998; 1999).

First, China's "top-down" policy-making strategy was a fundamental weakness (Biddulph, 1999). The "top-down" strategy meant that existing policies were created through political or ruling intentions but might not represent the interests of the citizens. For example, the early stage of Chinese women's emancipation in the 1950s was implemented by the needs of political revolution, but not through the original initiatives or from the voices of women (Zhuang, 1998; 1999). Nowadays, some existing policies are made to build up a positive image of the Chinese government and to show that the government is concerned with women's rights. However, interviews revealed that government agencies and state-owned enterprises acted in similar ways to place a few women in higher-level positions to show their "fairness" and support for the government policies. In this way, related policies and laws do not have the executive strength to supervise and regulate gender inequality in the labour market.

Second, some policies and laws were made and implemented under political and ideological influence. Guided by the principles of socialist regime, the same policies and laws were applicable to all kinds of workplaces and thus rarely represented and protected all

women workers (Biddulph, 1999; Huang, 1991); the police implementation in state-owned institutions could be directly supervised, but not in private companies because these companies had relative freedom to make their own policies and norms. Under this condition, it was not surprising to see that although the government made policies to ensure women's equal rights in work security and safety, some private companies avoided paying benefits and insurance to lower-level workers by offering them nonrenewable temporary contracts. As a result, women workers occupying the majority of lower-level positions were unprotected by national laws.

Third, Chinese policy making entailed a lack of connections with academic research and at the same time research are lacked qualities that did not perform well to support policy making. The government had a "top-down" policy-making strategy and thus rarely focused on the strength of academic research. Academic research was important for policy circles in examining the real needs of people in all classes. There had been many national and international academic and political activities regarding women's status in recent decades, such as the United Nation's World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. However, research results and policy suggestions were not well utilized by the government as policies. Meanwhile, the government did not open national statistical data until recent years; even worse, in the recent national-level survey database, gender related information in the labour force was not published (or might not be collected during the surveys). It has been evident that the government did not provide sufficient support to gender studies and research.

The last difficulty in policy implementation was citizens' lack of understanding of their legal rights (Biddulph, 1999; Huang, 1991). Eleven decades after overthrowing the

emperor's domination and six decades after establishing the new state, China had not established an effective educational system to provide real knowledge of respect, freedom, human rights, and gender equality. The educational system highlighted the absolute loyalty to the Communist Party, and led the younger generation to sacrifice personal concerns to favor national profits. As a result, people usually had some moral tolerance for discrimination, which in turn represented a huge obstacle in policy implementation (Biddulph, 1999). During the interviews, the interviewees complained about specific policies, norms, and moral issues, but no one could recognize the full extent of gender discrimination behind these activities. These interviewees said they had no plans to fight against gender inequality and that they would choose to follow the rules to work, live, and exist.

Insufficient Gender Awareness in Public Policy and Management

Gender awareness refers to the level of government's concerns about gender equality. A government paying particular attention to gender inequality or making great efforts to eliminate gender inequality is called to have much gender awareness. After reviewing existing national and local laws and policies regarding gender equality in the labour market, I found that some of these documents revealed a lack of real or sufficient concerns for women's equal rights; these deficiencies could be direct reasons for women's lower status.

First, there were deficiencies in existing policies. It was widely criticized that there were different age requirements regarding retirement for men and women in China's public policy. It was unfair that women had to retire five years before men, and in some situations

even earlier. Similarly, in “The Regulations on the Pension in State-Owned Work Units” (关于机关事业单位离退休人员计发离退休费等问题的实施办法) says⁸:

After retirement, employees who have worked for 35 years have a pension equals to 90% of his/her salary before retirement; employees who have worked for 30-35 years have a pension equals 85% of his/her salary before retirement; for those who have worked less than 30 years have a pension equals 80% of his/her salary before retirement.

This is obvious gender discrimination within labour policies. Based on a different age for retirement (55 for women and 60 for men), women workers will have no chance to have a higher level of pension; their earnings will never equal men’s earnings even if they started the job at the same time. From the interviews, I found that 19 interviewees, both men and women, said they could accept these policies regarding retirement. They accepted the policy because they believed women were weaker than men and needed to retire earlier, or family needed women to take care of them. One female interviewee could not accept these policies and felt it was extremely unfair; however, she admitted that nobody could change the situation.

Some other policies were intended to increase women’s status but in fact brought the reversed results. For example, the “Law on the Protection of Rights and Interests of Women” (妇女权益保障法) clearly states that⁹

Women’s rights should be protected. No working unit can decrease women employees’ salary, fire women employees, or withdraw employment contract by the reasons of marriage, pregnancy and maternity leave.

⁸ Government of People’s Republic of China. Retrieved from: <http://www.gov.cn/flfg/index.htm> [in Chinese].

⁹ Government of People’s Republic of China. Retrieved from: <http://www.gov.cn/flfg/index.htm> [in Chinese].

Employers therefore avoid employing women workers because of their higher cost in management. According to the interviewees' own experiences and the stories of their friends, I found that if women workers needed maternity leave, they might had to resign the current job if they worked in private companies and then tried to find new jobs after the maternity period. Women employees working in educational institutions were lucky to have one month break (usually school break in the summer or winter term) for maternity leave; most of them had to go back to work as soon as possible (less than one month) to keep the job.

Second, although policies and laws were originally intended to protect women's equal rights, women were still treated unequally everywhere in China. Lack of supervision is a part of the reasons for the ineffectiveness of the policies and laws. For example, the "Employment Promotion Law" (就业促进法) requires that¹⁰

Different levels of local government should create integrated employment service system to help job seekers. Service system should provide job information, salary guide, and training opportunities....Local governments should be responsible for creating fair environment in the local labour market, and insure that women can share equal rights.

As required, local governments should provide effective services for women to accept training, find jobs, and protect their rights in local labour markets. Local Labour Market Information Centers is a typical institution providing such a service; in the Shaanxi provincial information center, job positions and job fairs are held regularly (the Information Center is in the city in which job interviews were conducted). I visited it during the interview timeline. It was a big room displaying different kinds of employment and training

¹⁰ Government of People's Republic of China. Retrieved from: <http://www.gov.cn/flfg/index.htm> [in Chinese].

information. About 500 job postings were provided that day; about 70% of the postings clearly stated “male workers wanted/only”; these jobs were of a variety ranging from engineer to construction worker. Another 20% of the postings had a requirement of female workers; these jobs were mostly in administration, reception, and casual housekeeping services, which were already typically female-dominated occupations. The rest of the 10% of postings had no requirements regarding gender. Furthermore, there was no information specifically made for women with disabilities or regarding their education, training, career advice, and life plans. One of the interviewees was met in this center (Ms. Zhao, 36 years old and works as casual housekeeper). She told me that like all other women job seekers here, she was here to read and record the postings; she found ones requiring women. Because most of the postings required men, these women job seekers usually stayed in the center in a short time. There were limited choices for women and generally lower-level jobs. They did not know that the Information Center should be responsible for other services-related employment; the center had never hosted services other than displaying job postings.

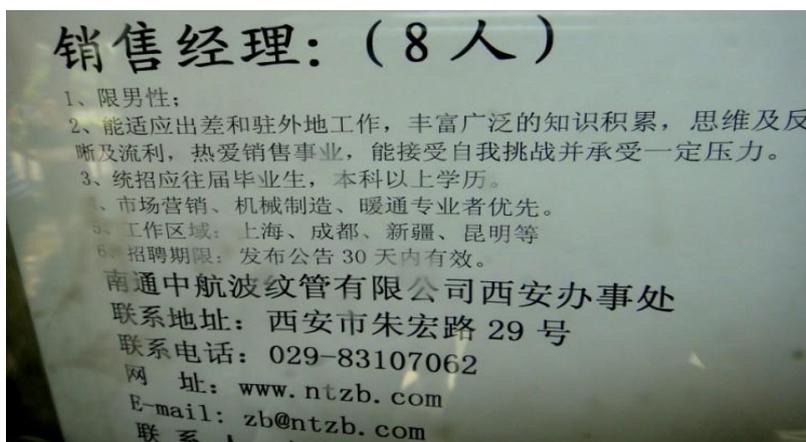


Figure 6.1. Job Posting Requiring Male in Shaanxi Labour Market Information Center

Figure 6.1 is a job posting in the Shaanxi Labour Market Information Center. It clearly states that sales managers are wanted, and male only.

Figure 6.2 is a second job posting in the Shaanxi Labour Market Information Center. This is a hotel posting, and three positions are advertised: reception, server, and cleaner; they all require females, clearly stating their age (must be between 30-40 years old) and physical (must taller than 160 cm) height requirements.



Figure 6.2 Job Posting Requiring Female in Shaanxi Labour Market Information Center

The provincial Labour Market Information Center provided job postings with gender, age, and physical discrimination and no further additional services to local workers. The discrimination and limited services should be supervised and corrected. The government should present sufficient awareness of gender equality and create a healthy, fair, effective environment in the labour markets.

Third, the governments sometimes broke rules and unequally hired women in the employment process, creating negative examples and effects to society. There are no specific gender requirements in many government positions. However, hiring managers of some institutions did not welcome female applicants; they usually obscured their intention and

refused women by implying women candidates to give up and giving less-qualified male candidates priorities. As stated in “Employment Promotion Law” (就业促进法), employers could not refuse to hire women for reasons of gender, except “*some occupations or positions that are not suitable for women.*”¹¹ There was no clear statement regarding the definition on specification of “some occupations or positions”; some hiring managers in government agencies took advantage of this unclear sentence to refuse female candidates. Women therefore had fewer opportunities in this career. As law makers, governments did not respect women’s equal rights; other local institutions and enterprises would doubt the authority and effectiveness of laws and might chose not to follow accordingly.

In Chinese laws, a contradiction is also found regarding women’s political rights. The “Law on the PRC National People’s Congress and Local People’s Congresses at all levels” (中华人民共和国全国人民代表大会和地方各级人民代表大会代表法) states¹²

Chinese citizens aged over 18, regardless of race, gender, occupation, religion background, educational level, and family conditions, have the right to be members of People’s Congress.

In a later section, the same law states¹³

The National People’s Congress should represent citizens in all classes and levels. An appropriate number of women should be selected to enter the Congress.

These two statements within the same law have evident contradiction regarding women’s equal rights. The former one regulates women’s rights, but the latter one suggests

¹¹ Government of People’s Republic of China. Retrieved from: <http://www.gov.cn/flfg/index.htm> [in Chinese].

¹² Government of People’s Republic of China. Retrieved from: <http://www.gov.cn/flfg/index.htm> [in Chinese].

¹³ Government of People’s Republic of China. Retrieved from: <http://www.gov.cn/flfg/index.htm> [in Chinese].

the need to intentionally place women in the Congress to show fairness. The word “*an appropriate number*” is another obscure statement that might be used to set barriers for women. If women really enjoy equal rights, why do they have less opportunity and need to be placed into Congress intentionally?

From the analysis and evidence in this section, we can see that in the formal level, China’s laws and policies as institutions contain both direct and latent discrimination against women’s equal rights, making barriers for women’s development. Furthermore, insufficient supervision and negative examples in hiring are major problems. Institutional barriers exist as latent norms and practices beyond market rules and national laws to directly decide women’s opportunities in labour market.

Role of Mass Media as an Institution

Other than the difficulties in the implementation of public policies and insufficient awareness of gender equality in public management, mass media constitute the third important source in creating and extending the influence of institution on women’s status. The widespread impact of modern mass media propagandizes the young sexed body as a marker of personal gains through individual investment (Baker, 2005; Hazell & Clarke, 2008). Movies, TV shows, and advertisements are important forms of modern mass media. Specifically, mass media perpetuates and reinforces gender norms by portraying the definition of ideal women: physically beautiful, submissive, and sexual objects (Baker, 2005). As a result, women’s sexual bodies and their feminine attractions have been largely highlighted and propagated.

Nowadays, the female body represented in the mass media is invariably young,

fashionably dressed, and sexually desirable, which are all important factors for highlighting their feminine attractions (Evans, 1997; Evans, 2008). Combining traditional gender culture and new definitions of modern beauty, mass media today are always reminding men of the existence of female beauty and sexuality. Many advertisements, films, televisions, and Web sites present sexual and female beauty content to attract the public and gain profits. In such a society full of desire, mass media provide people with some deviated values; for example, men are always seeking opportunity to own female beauty to achieve personal satisfaction and show success.

Interviewee No. 19 (male; age 25) worked as a journalist in a famous media institution; he shared opinions about media's roles and gender inequality. He insisted that mass media limited women into domestic roles, enlarged men's desire for women's physical attraction, and promoted women to be an indicator of men's success. He believed that mass media was a patriarchal institution, a sexuality mechanism for social regulation, and an instrument to maintain male privilege.

In such a patriarchy society dominated by men, it is hard for women to have much priority and opportunity. Traditional Chinese culture defines women as home-makers and subordination to men; today's media strongly intensifies this culture. We can see many news, stories, movies, and especially advertisements that highlight women's role in household, and their feminine charm. Through media, women's existence and values are defined in term of their beauty, as seen motivations and objectives of men's endeavors; acquiring and use of female beauty become one of the indicators of success.

As a result, women often face sexual harassment and discrimination in workplace, which are socially legitimized gender norms in workplaces. The worse thing is that women are not able to fight for it in this patriarchy society; they have to accept it and they did (Interviewee No.19; male; age 25).

A further result is that women start taking advantage of their beauty as a special form of human capital in seeking opportunities in the primary labour market. The beautiful women usually have related priorities in employment opportunities reinforced by the latent market processes. Those women who are old, with lower educational credential, and not fashionably dressed will never be in a privileged place; their socioeconomic and cultural position prevent their access to the fashionable urbanite's pleasures and therefore, working opportunities in the primary labour market.

Mass media also influences society by enormous effect on the lifestyle of a culture. Younger generations thus learn traditional gender roles anywhere at any time. Interviewee No. 20 (male; age 29) shared the story of his sister's family (Interviewee No.20 worked as a financial worker in a state-owned enterprise).

My sister has never taught her seven-year-old son anything regarding gender roles. But the boy expressed his ideas that he should be strong to feed his future wife and child; his wife should not appear too much in the public. I just cannot believe the power of our traditional culture and its transition in the society. I guess he got these ideas when he played or communicated with other kids, who may listen or look some books, radios, or TVs related to gender stereotype. These boys can exactly repeat what advertisements said regarding women's roles and physical attraction. I know it is not fair to treat women in a lower status. But I cannot say anything to the boys, as their ideas help them become a strong and sound individual in his further development (Interviewee No.20; male; age 29).

Mass media is important in keeping, extending, and delivering culture and social institutions embedded in labour market activities. Mass media promote the formation and extension of cultural and institutional barriers existing between normal market rules and employment processes; men thus use traditional supremacy to unequally treat women in labour market through embedded and latent gender norms. Women barely have a choice or

opportunity to fight against the context; sometimes even women themselves do not recognize the discrimination because of the strong power of mass media in cultural distribution.

Chapter Summary

China has traditionally been a patriarchal society with a clear demarcation of gender roles. Chinese women play a secondary and subordinate role in both the public and family domains, and they occupy a lower status in society than men. In the labour market, women are confined mostly to the secondary sector, working in jobs that typically have fewer benefits, resources, networks, and a less comfortable working environment. Institutions, as well as cultural factors, are also significant in lowering women's status. Latently embedded between normal market rules and actual employment processes, workplace gender norms and practices have been socially structured and politically utilized by institutions,

Institutions can be understood in two aspects, informal workplace norms and practices and formal public policies and management. In the first aspect, workplace gender norms and practices play a role in limiting women's opportunities in the primary labour market. Employers provide only temporary contracts for women and other lower-level workers to avoid paying them workplace benefits. Employers also take advantage of their workplace authority to fulfill personal desire as it relates to women's physical attraction and bodily sexuality. Therefore, women's sexual bodies and feminine attraction can be utilized to seek opportunities in decent jobs or in the primary labour market (e.g., higher-level positions). Furthermore, to support the gender policies, employers place women in some higher-level positions to show their fairness. Women have only few opportunities and are rarely seen as

competent in the primary labour market.

At the formal level, public policies and management create barriers to women's equal rights in the labour markets. Although Chinese Communist Party has introduced many laws and policies to promote gender equality, there are still four limitations in the implementations of these laws and policies. These limitations not only affect the efficiency and effectiveness of policy implementation but also provide soil for the existence of informal workplace gender norms. Furthermore, public policies and management contain direct discrimination to women, provide insufficient supervision to local government and labour markets, and create negative examples and effects in government hiring processes. As a result, gender discrimination in labour markets is informally rationalized by society and politically allowed by government; women's equal rights and interests are not well protected by public policies; and women's equal access in the primary labour markets is not ensured by public management.

Mass media play an important role in intensifying cultural ideology and in creating workplace norms and practices, as well as in delivering existing institutions to the younger generations. Advertisements, TV shows, movies, magazines, and other media tools largely emphasize women's subordinate role and women's female beauty and sexuality, shaping public perceptions on physical attraction as a sign of success.

CHAPTER 7 STUDY SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study has been concerned to answer the question of why women persist on the stay in disadvantaged positions relative to those of men in the contemporary labour market of urban China, under the highly paced development of society and economy. A rich body of academic achievements has provided several effective explanations and suggestions addressing this issue. In these works, human capital accumulation, occupational and industrial placement, and unpaid heavy load of family housework are cited as the predominant reasons for women's lower status in China and other countries in the world. However, contemporary Chinese women have achieved significant improvement in human capital accumulation, especially in education attainment; while Chinese women's household work burden has been decreased by the national policy regulating only one child in each urban family. But occupational and industrial placements have been proved to be a persistent problem in the Chinese labour market. More macro-level explanations are needed to explore why and how Chinese women persistently hold lower status in the urban labour markets.

A concrete conception of the dual labour market is used to address gender inequality in this study. This theory divides the labour market into two segments, a primary sector and a secondary sector. The gap of earnings, benefits, training, promotion opportunity, and working environment are major differences between the two sectors. However, there is little research focusing on the direct relationship between gender inequality and the dual labour markets; existing research drew much attention to changing trends of gender-based labour market divisions over time and across various locations; descriptive analyses were conducted in most of the studies, but more comprehensive explanations are needed. Furthermore, the dual labour

market analysis conducted in Chinese studies used unconvincing indicators to divide the primary and secondary labour markets.

Using dual labour market theory as its main theoretical framework, this study has been conducted to pursue the following three research objectives:

1. Determine the extent to which distributions across primary and secondary sectors characterize the labour market for contemporary urban workers in China;

2. If a dual labour market applies, examine how it relates to gender inequality in contemporary urban China, and provide evidence of the major factors that affect gender inequality in the Chinese dual labour market; and

3. Identify the major factors that contribute to women's limited access to positions associated with the primary labour market.

To achieve the above three research objectives, this study adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods. Statistical analysis was conducted to examine dual labour market division and gender gap in each sector. Data from China General Social Survey (2003 and 2005) was used for statistical analysis. However, secondary data had limited variables to provide sufficient explanations of why and how gender inequality persists in the dual labour markets, and so, interviews were conducted as qualitative method in the final stage. I interviewed 20 volunteers in Xi'an, a city located geographically in the central area of China. The experiences, feelings, and thoughts of the interviewees were collected to explain reasons for women's limited access to the primary labour market.

The results offer empirical evidence that gender discrimination in women's earnings, work experiences, and employment opportunities has persisted in Chinese urban labour

markets. In the dual system, women were more likely to stay in the secondary labour market, including most of the non-monopoly sectors and companies with fewer benefits (private companies and enterprises, etc.). Because gender inequality was more widespread in the secondary labour market than in the primary labour market, women's access to the primary labour market could be expected to decrease gender inequality. Therefore, it was very important to know why and how women persistently remain in a disadvantaged position in relation to the dual labour markets.

I used cultural and institutional perspectives as the macro-level explanations to examine women's limited access to the primary labour market. In the culture perspective, men tend to keep their breadwinner status to maintain supremacy over women; men believed that women were not rational, effective, or efficient enough to work in higher-level positions; men also felt that wives' loyalty might be threatened if women had higher status. Women themselves accepted subordination roles and did not want to pursue further promotion in their careers. As a result, women tended to voluntarily support men, chose to be quiet in their careers, and worked on easy jobs to live with ease.

Institutional barriers existed at two levels: at an informal level in the workplace gender norms, policies, and practices; and at a formal level in national and local governments' public policy and management. At informal level, employers used their positional authority to create specific working norms to limit women's opportunities, development, and promotions. Furthermore, employers placed women in some higher-level positions only to show their "fairness" to governments and the public. There were laws and policies protecting women's equal rights, but some of them had contents with direct gender discrimination; the

government did not apply effective supervision for local governments and workplaces to create an equal market environment.

Along with cultural factors and public policy and management, mass media created a social context of gender stereotype and delivered biased gender ideology to the public and the younger generations. Advertisements, TV shows, movies, books, and music intensified and expanded women's subordinate roles.

As a result, cultural and institutional barriers limited women's opportunities to gain access to positions within the primary labour market. Cultural and institutional barriers were manifested by gender-based norms and practices; they existed between general market rules and labour market activities: while selecting who to hire, employers would not use market rules and personal credentials as references, but follow biased gender norms, stereotypes, and policy necessities. In this sense, culture and institution embedded in labour market under Chinese historical and political contexts, leading to women's lower attendance in primary labour market.

Cultural and institutional barriers are difficult to remove because they are based on people's subjective recognition, living style as well as historical and political contexts. The most powerful group in pushing forward women's status should be women themselves. But due to the fact that most women already accept their subordinate position in both paid and unpaid work and that women are extremely under-representative in key position of power (for example, government leaders and policy makers), we should not expect great changes in the near future. Therefore, government should take the responsibility to relieve women who are alone struggling against gender discrimination in the labour market. Government should

amend existing laws to eliminate sex segregation in employment and increase strength to labour market supervision; government should also set gender discrimination and sex segregation as clear topics specifically addressed in national laws and policies. Empirically, I have detailed suggestions for government management in the following six aspects.

(a) Existing laws require that all citizens share equal rights in the labour market, regardless of their race, gender, religion background, and so forth. But these regulations are insufficient to reduce discrimination. More specific and clearer regulations must be created to reduce discrimination in the labour market; for example, employment should provide equal opportunities to all applicants and must not make requirements on gender, age, urban identity, physical height or physical beauty; information regarding unequal requirement are not allowed to be posted in any public circumstance.

(b) Abolish the national policy of gender-based retirement ages and quickly stop workplace norms that have benefits and pension on gender differences; for example, employers are not allowed to set age differences for retirement between men and women; employers must respect laws and labour contract and provide equal benefits packages to men and women; employers must respect women's biological characteristics and are not allowed to set any barriers for women with pregnancy or disabilities.

(c) Intensify supervision regarding women's legal rights in the workplace; create strict and detailed approaches to punishment; for example, central and local government must build an effective connection in supervising labour market discrimination; local governments must set specific offices and programs to receive, collect, and report labour market discrimination and rapidly react to those illegal activities; local government must build

effective mechanisms with registered companies, agencies and institutions in the labour market to monitor discrimination.

(d) Set up community-based social service systems of care for children and the elderly, relieving women's burden in household work; for example, local governments must build effective connection with communities and provide financial (subsidy) or physical supports (family-based daycare) to working women with kids under school ages.

(e) Create integrative social and employment service and information system for women; improve their self-ideology for development; and help them with all aspects of studying, training, development, and appealing, if necessary; for example, local governments must provide effective and sufficient assistance for women in all levels of Labour Market Information Center; services must include all aspects such as employment information, interview coaching, self-awareness, confidence building, career planning, and educational resources.

(f) Government should recognize the importance of research and academia in eliminating gender inequality; build effective mechanisms to receive, understand, and operate research suggestions. Government should also help research agencies to build strong and independent abilities in developing theories and standardizing methodologies; for example, government must make effort to encourage and provide international communication and financial support for social sciences, especially in the research of gender issues; statistical institutions must provide real, integrative, and effective usage of data systems; gender must be set as one of the most important indicators in data collection.¹⁴

¹⁴ As shown on the website of the National Bureau of Statistics of China, in the Statistical Yearbook section, there is no "gender" information in the National and Local Employment and Labour Market for the past five years (2006–2010).

Gender inequality persists in Chinese society, making barriers for women in their access to equal rights. Research has focused on this issue and made remarkable achievements in explaining it. Most research describes women's status but rarely provides detailed macro-level analysis on why and how women stay in a disadvantaged position. Dual labour market theory can be a fresh perspective to address gender inequality in labour market, as existing literature does not include sufficient explanation on the direct relationship between the dual system of labour market and women's status. Studies addressing on the measurement of dual system had rarely compared gender differences. Furthermore, Chinese domestic research uses different meanings of dual labour market such as urban and rural segment and formal and informal segment, which can hardly represent various indicators in dual labour market theory. As proved by this study, women meet huge barriers in dual labour market system; studies are needed to explore the reasons and how it persists to promote women's equal rights. This study contributes to the existing literature in building a direct connection between gender inequality and the dual labour market theory, comparing and analyzing women's status in primary and secondary sector respectively. This study applies a comprehensive approach to generate multiple indicators to test the dual division of labour markets in contemporary urban China. Using Western-developed dual labour market theory, this study provides a new version of dual labour market system in China using both male and female samples. Look through the dual system, gender inequality is examined in each sector. Through macro-level perspective, this study uses cultural and institutional factors to provide detailed analysis on women's disadvantaged position in dual labour market: embedded gender norms exist beyond normal market rules and lead employers' biased selections. The

results show that cultural and institutional barriers block women's equal rights in accessing to primary labour market and then make the persistence of gender inequality in urban China.

This study is conducted with the attempt to find evidence and reasons for workers in disadvantaged position: women workers and secondary sector workers; with possible solutions to eliminate inequality in labour market, I hope this study can shed light on urban workers' efforts and fighting for their better lives.

There are three limitations in this study: (a) the findings of this study are mainly based on qualitative methods and represent interviewees' personal experiences and feelings. They may not represent the thoughts of whole population of China; however, they are typical reasons gathered from empirical studies that explain gender inequality in the dual labour market. Future studies may conduct a quantitative analysis regarding cultural and institutions factors if databases are available; (b) China's contemporary urban labour market contains a large number of migrant workers from rural areas. These migrant workers do not usually have urban identification and cannot share equal rights with original urban residents. They are primarily found in construction and service industries. As this study focuses only on those persons with urban labour force identities, and there is a very limited number of migrant workers in the China General Social Survey data of 2003 and 2005, I excluded all the migrant workers resident in urban areas. Further studies could include migrant workers in the urban dual labour market and compare the result with this study if larger sample size are available; (c) this study assumes that men are always the main earners but does not address any situation that women are the primary earners in the households. Furthermore, Chinese women tend to have unique authority at family emotional and financial controls over men. These

reversed realities can be interesting topics within labour markets. Further studies could focus on these unique issues and conduct analysis on gender relations inside families versus gender inequality outside families.

In the end, this study verifies that the Chinese government has made great efforts to ensure women's equal rights with men. In addition, the government continuously seeks to develop women in all possible ways because this is an important part of the effort to build a harmonious socialist society. Although gender inequality persists, I believe that as the nation continues to develop, gender-based laws and policies will be reinforced, and women will have more opportunities in the primary labour market.

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APPENDIX
LAW STATEMENTS IN ORIGINAL LANGUAGE

After retirement, employees who have worked for 35 years have a pension equals to 90% of his/her salary before retirement; employees who have worked for 30-35 years have a pension equals 85% of his/her salary before retirement; for those who have worked less than 30 years have a pension equals 80% of his/her salary before retirement. (Page 143)

关于机关事业单位离退休人员计发离退休费等问题的实施办法：工作年限满 35 年的，按 90% 计发；工作年限满 30 年不满 35 年的，按 85% 计发；工作年限不满 30 年的，按 80% 计发

Women's rights should be protected. No working unit can decrease women employees' salary, fire women employees, or withdraw employment contract by the reasons of marriage, pregnancy, and maternity leave. (Page 143)

妇女权益保障法：任何单位不得因结婚、怀孕、产假、哺乳等情形，降低女职工的工资，辞退女职工，单方解除劳动（聘用）合同或者服务协议。但是，女职工要求终止劳动（聘用）合同或者服务协议的除外

Different levels of local government should create integrated employment service system to help jobs seekers. Service system should provide job information, salary guide, and training opportunities....Local governments should be responsible to create fair labour market, and insure that women can share equal rights. (Page 144)

就业促进法：各级政府应建立健全的公共就业服务体系，设立公共就业服务机构，为劳动者免费提供以下服务：....职业供求信息，市场工资指导，价位信息和职业培训

信息发布

...some occupations or positions that are not suitable for women... (Page 144)

就业促进法：国家保障妇女享有与男子平等的劳动权利。用人单位招用人员，除国家规定的不适合妇女的工种或岗位外，不得以性别为由拒绝录用妇女或提高对妇女的录用标准

Chinese citizens aged over 18, regardless of race, gender, occupation, religion background, educational level, and family conditions, have the right to be members of People's Congress. (Page 147)

中华人民共和国全国人民代表大会和地方各级人民代表大会代表法：中华人民共和国年满十八周岁的公民，不分民族，种族，性别，职业，家庭出身，宗教信仰，教育程度，财产状况和居住期限，都有选举权和被选举权

The National People's Congress should represent citizens in all classes and levels. An appropriate number of women should be selected to enter the Congress. (Page 147)

中华人民共和国全国人民代表大会和地方各级人民代表大会代表法：全国人民代表大会和地方各级人民代表大会的代表应当具有广泛的代表性。应有适当数量的基层代表，特别是工人，农民和知识分子代表；应有适当数量的妇女代表，并逐步提高妇女代表的比例。