

Work-Life Balance in Mainland China

– The Interactive Effects between Work, Family Role and Self-Development

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1. Aim

Previous works related to work-life balance had been done in the field of Human Resource and Economics are most likely to focus on the conflict between work and family role. Fewer studies are found in sociology field, and rare are found on discussing the usage of private time, people's personal life (especially women's) seems to be always ignored in this field as they have to be either at work or the actor of "caring". In this research, work-life balance will be introduced as work (working hours) and life (family role and self-development). In other words, it will involve three big components: working (hours/weekly), family role (taking care of family members, hours/weekly), and self-development (score the frequency of using private time). We thus hypothesize that working and family role influenced each other in a negative way and have no effect on self-development. This paper also aims to find other factors that may have influence on it.

2. Data & Methods

For this purpose, a quantitative analysis was held which focuses on discussing how work, family role and self-development influenced each other by examining the relationship among the three factors. This research will employ a face to face interview which was jointly hosted by International Social Survey Program: Family and Changing Gender Roles IV and the National Research Center, Renmin University of China. The data was collected in China General Social Survey 2012 (CGSS2012) (Part M) which consisted of 11761 adults aged 18 to 96; since not all the samples were answering questionnaire B, after accounting for missing values on key variables, a remaining valid sample of 5946 respondents were used in the analyses.

3. Results

We found that work and family role do have a negative effect on each other. Work also appears a negative effect on self-development; however, family role shows a positive effect on self-development. Higher education background seems to be negative on taking care of family members although the result is not significant. Gender is obviously an important factor when considering work-life balance. Living with a life partner helped a lot on work and fulfill family role, however it doesn't helped on self-development.

4. Conclusion

From these findings, this research proved the interactive relationship between work, family role and self-development. We should notice the gender differences in all three dimensions. Education is important when considering self-development, that's why we should focus more on women' education in rural area. The analyses which focus more of current situation on how woman lives as an individual to enjoy personal life not a subordinate of a family or a company will be discussed on further research.

5. Reference

Duxbury L, Higgins C (2001), Work-life Balance in the New Millennium: Where Are We? Where Do We Need To Go? Work Network: Canadian Policy Research Network, Inc.