

Considering the Dilemma about Chinese Female's Development from the Fear of Professional Females

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Sohu.com, one of the Chinese largest Internet portal website, conducted a special issue during the Women's Day in 2011, titled "The Women swallowed by the Fear". It described that which kind of female were in a state of anxiety—"The life experience told us that when we open the TV, the most popular TV series' are in the theme of the relation between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law; When we visit the news-stands, the most attractive magazines are females' related; When we go to the street and take a rest in the shopping store, the golden-selling positions are make-up stores". We can sum up these to one word: Fear. Females Smear the best make-ups to slow down the aging, read the most popular magazines to catch up the modern paces, watch the TV-series to learn the tactics when facing one's mother-in-law or daughter-in-law, learn to cook to attract the male's stomachs. The Fear makes females perfect, but who has forced females to become a perfect one?

Professional Females are afraid of 8 things: Aging, Growing Taller, Bad-looking, Getting Fatter, Lacking of Money, Becoming Leftover, Mistress Disturbing and Uninteresting Life. There are many people attended the discussion, people may want to ask: in the 21st Century, what kind of dilemma are Chinese females facing to? We need 2 methods to answer this question: on the one hand we have to review the historical status of Chinese females after the foundation of the People's Republic of China; on the other hand we need to analyze the reason why the dilemma about the Female's development was generated in the process of social transformation.

The big change for Chinese female's status was happened from 1949, the year when the People's Republic of China was founded. Female took in part from the politic leader of the country to the basic level of manager. They also have taken a higher level of education, with a series of female academicians, researchers, professors, and Ph.D.s emerging in large numbers. These people do an important job in the country's scientific research and college education, and to say nothing of the female workers in the factories, servicing fields and the rural areas.

It is undoubted that Chinese female's position has a historical rise in politics, economics, social and families. According to the main measurements made by international community in the equality of gender, female indeed get a higher position in politics, employments, educations and health care, but it remains inequality compare with the developing opportunities of male's and needs a long time effort made by the whole society.

Reviewing the history, when consider the single factor of employment, the biggest achievement of China Women's Lib is females are getting rid of their traditional role in the family and joining the life in the society, fast transforming their roles. When we

talk about the equality of gender, the first thing we think about is the equality in the work place. “The first prerequisite condition of Women’s Lib is all of the females returning to the public laboring”, said by Engels. Led by his thought, from 1949 to the end of Cultural Revolution (1976), Chinese females started to join social laboring under the mobilization of country and didn’t just stay at home. The thought that “Where there is an economic independence, there is liberation” has been surrounded by everyone. The females in city went to public domains in mass under the support of politics and were engaged in all walks of life, gaining an economic independence and a rising on political status. The female in rural areas expanded their scale and scope of laboring in the production under the collective economy and gained the equality in the right to speak and the distribution of the fruit in the production with the males. During this phase, China was pushing socialism modernization in a great effort, using the political motivation in the society and the operating in the political power method, to change the peasant economy in the production which was based on the home economy for thousands of years. It also changed the relations of dependence between the Chinese females and their father or husband, integrated female to the social public life. Female could go out of home and into the society, became the creator of social value, and realized the first step in the liberation of females. It is a change from “the addition in a family” to “a dependent people in the society”.

At the same time, China issued a series of policy and laws, made a guarantee in the gender equality. The females participated not only in the society laboring but also in society politic activities, receiving the national consciousness and forming a national identified “the role of citizen”. Especially, in order to promote the true status of the female’s in the economy and political area, and to wipe out the Feudal thought that “Innocence is the virtue for women”. The country also made great effort on the education for the females after its foundation, in order to aware the female’s consciousness, develop the female’s cultural quality and stable the result that Women’s Lib had made in economics and politics. “Without getting rid of illiteracy and going to schools, the females won’t be librated thoroughly”, pointed by Mao Zedong. Thus, the country not only gave the females the chance and rights to receive education under the legislations and regimes which are equal to males, but also did a country-scope motivation of illiteracy elimination, decreasing the rate of illiteracy among females, expanding the scope of formal education that females could received.

Not long after the foundation of the People’s Republic of China, the country put the concept that “The men and women are equal” into everyone’s mind using the legislation, ideology, political motivation and administrative intervention. Chinese females’ status in the cultural of politics, economics and society were in a notable rising. It contains two leaping development, the one is to jump out of the Feudal family to the wide society, becoming dependent in economic personality; the other one is to jump out of the relationships affiliated to Feudal society to the public field of life in the modern society, becoming socialized personality with civil rights.

When we are analyzing the accomplishment that China Women's Lib and the rising of the female's status making, it is not difficult to find its internal characteristics: First, the China Women's Lib is a kind of social revolution from up to the down, under the motivation and intervention of the country. The country made a great effort in proposing and propagating the slogans like "The females can dominate half of the sky" or "The females can do the male's work as well", modeling a new figure of Chinese females and got an high acceptance by the society in the 1950s to 1970s. Second, the internal driving forces of China Women's Lib are lacking. Most of the females are lacking of the general awareness and self-striving. Compared with the country dominated activities and the effort of "Preaching", the awakening of the females' awareness are still in the beginning level, with an automatic transformation to the auto psychic level. The auto psychic of female is the key of personality dependence. Because of the lack of the internal driving forces, it is very hard for Chinese females to fight for the equality of gender just relies on the external forces, and Chinese females play a very awkward role in the public field in society.

The 2 characteristics in the Chinese Modern Female's Movement are mixing together, adding a crudity negation for the different of gender, a negation for the characteristics of females, an excessive emphasize of the neutral role in the workplace, and a dilution of the role in the family, distorting the social role of Chinese females, with a strong oppose comparing with the traditional role. Especially, all of the female model workers, female leaders, female factory directors, female village heads are unable to take care of the decoration of aesthetic or even are described under the word "Strong Women" who don't care about human beings. If someone want to show her characteristic of females, she will be criticized with the reasons of unrespectable, frivolous, fond of making up, and capitalism.

In 1978, China entered a new period of social transition reform and opening up, Chinese Modern Female's Movement also entered a new stage. With the changes in China's economic system and the political system, the market economy was gradually deepening, the higher education was rapid developing, and the only child policy was widely implemented, so the opportunities for female's development are greatly increased. The only child policy makes a lot of attention to female's development in the family who has a girl, combined with China's college entrance examination system, women's development has opened up a broader stage and awakened Chinese female's consciousness to a certain extent. But it is noteworthy that with the deepening of reform and open up, the rise of the market economy formed a competition of survival of the fittest. Chinese female's access to development was accompanied by enormous challenges. With the gradual deepening of reform and opening up, the market economy began to develop, the stable job modes ("iron rice bowl") which country offers using its system and regions were broken by producing and efficiency. Women were falling down from a balance of gender equality in the sky, becoming a "vulnerable groups." Laid off problems of females, the difficult in the employment of female graduates, the tension problem of the professional women, the

feminization of the agricultural population, the problem of trafficking women, the problem of prostitution, the problem of women in politics crisis, and a series of China 's current social problems. The gained social status and achievements in the liberation of the traditional market for many years that female had gained was disappeared in a huge whirlpool, so that some women feel deep anxiety and fear considering their own situation of survival and development prospects.

The females are discussing helplessly: It is a hard thing or not a hard thing to be a woman? Be a woman, the important thing is to realize one's value or stay at home and do the housewives' works? The result is "It is very hard to be a woman". There is a joke prevalent in the Internet. "Females in these years: faithful to friends, rushed to pay, wore high heel to the battlefield; good at commercial campaign, always struggle to fight, chased rogue with a BMW; high educated, personality-owned, fought IQ both in the career and sentiment; could dress-up oneself, also supported the family, had the courage to grab the bride better than groom. There are many pieces of scripts in reality, telling the tough and helpless of professional females faced in a ridicule way.

Firstly, the females in the workplace were required to work independently (to do their job) as males, to compete against males with their highly educated diploma and smart brains, in order to protect their surviving platform – careers. However, when females have gained a middle-level management position in the workplace -- executives, or managers, they have suffered a bottleneck in the career development. According to the statistics, China's most dominant position was dominated by males, about 3/4. As the traditional culture thought, the concept that "women can't do better than men" is very popular. Social culture has an opinion that females are weak and strongly dependent to others, it is not suited to undertake important jobs. It shows its effect in the subconscious in the male bosses' brains and the real workplaces, and becomes an obstacle to the further development of females. Females often need to do more and more than males in the road of promotion. Even females are getting promoted, the sounds of unconvinced are fast spreading: "Why did she get promoted" "Did you see her flirting with boss X day by day? I really don't know what was happened" "Wear less is better to well done".

In the real workplace, most females have experienced the "glass ceiling", which means there is no opportunity in promoting. Some females think about that they will lose their power and passion to stay on one stable position and have no chance to promote for several years. Especially the work like bank tellers, factories technician, and the work that dealing with data are easier to get tired and upset. Doing the same thing every day, life has not changed, the work is no innovation, the special personalities were killed, and the golden career time of females was consumed. Nobody cares about their development and psychological needs, they are bored with their instrumental characteristics.

Secondly, females are required to balance the dual role in career and family. On the

one hand they need to do their work dedicated, on the other hand they need to look after their husband and children. Especially now the males in the city are easy to be unfaithful to their wives, the braking of the family is a tragedy that females don't expect to happen. However, females are unwilling to give up to the careers in order to the happiness for the family. They can only to take both things into account and get very tired. There are also some professional females who think a lot for family and children and give up their works and to be housewives. But they lost the interest in the workplaces, lost the development in the career life, and worried about their prime years would go by, as well as their husbands cannot understand the difficulty encountered, feel like that their lives is determined by others, and thus a feeling of lost, unfair and nameless anxiety and panic.

Thirdly, the pursuit of fashion and dressing up, and the reflection of a woman's taste, beautiful and young seem to be essential elements for females in the workplace. Females themselves can determine what to wear is a modern step forward. Females can show their personality, charm, grace through clothing and make-up. It is an originally important part of free development, but in the pushing of business culture and traditional culture, the society over emphasized the objectified characteristics of the females and expanded the features of slim, beautiful, and the length of breast, waist and hip. Media and fashion advertisement made females "objective" and solidified the subordination of them. Variety of entertainment gossip and news are discussing that beautiful women and their bodies are becoming objects of consumption. Especially in the "beautiful" definition of global business culture, "beauty girls" have become a selling point of the economy, propelled millions of females at all costs. A market survey showed that, more than 70 % of females are most concerned about the issue of their growing wrinkles. In order to remain females' charm, they diet, make-up themselves, fit their bodies and do SPA aromatherapies. All of these are because of the fearing of getting old. In this era that attractive people are more populated, Chinese females feel fear in every aspect: fear of age, ugly and obesity; fear of poor and left (nobody want to marry them); fear of mistress; fear of giving birth to a baby and the fear of harassment.

Fourthly, females have un-married troubles when they are above the average age for marriage. Professional females have great work pressures and limited working spaces, coupled with high- mate conditions and hold the opinion of putting quality before quantity, although they have a fear of left(nobody want to marry them). For some white-collar female said that they dare to grab the bride better than groom, it is just a talking fun. A survey shows that 54.46% of the females selected "Just the feeling of fall in love" when asked for the most important things in choosing a mate, while 37.48% of the females selected "He must has owned a house, and has certain economic strength and his own career". These two conditions become the main reason for Chinese females choosing a mate and married. It forms a situation that "Females don't want to decrease their status and marry to males who lacks of money, females don't like to marry to males who is honest, females are not dared to marry males who

is very excellent, females don't wish to marry to males who is fair and a little above the average level. They wait for the right person to appear in anticipation, but they have grown old in the waiting, perhaps miss the right person in the waiting, and become sad in the waiting. It should be noted that the misunderstanding in the mate choice in the people who are above the average age for marriage is the product of psychological dependence contradiction with modern feminist consciousness interactions.

There are also some females who gave up their efforts abandoned their independent personalities, and fell into the worship of money, to be mistresses of rich men in themselves' wish and become the "second wife" or the "third wife" of them. In the well-known television program "If You Are the One", a female who is knowledgeable in marriage, said, "I would rather cry in a BMW to sit on the backside on the bicycle with a smiling face." There are discussions on Internet and debates hold by university female students titled "Can we marry to wealthy man". These discussions and debates made a diversification in values of the younger generations of the females. They don't know whether to live in the society with this kind of manner and pattern, and at last being alienated and materialistic in the business society. Even we can often read on the newspapers that some of the female university students leaned on moneybags on weekends flew to the somewhere in south to sell their own bodies. It is no wonder that some scholars engaged in the women's movement think that the Chinese Women's Liberation Movement are moving backwards obviously.

In summary, the rising in China's economic and the social life constantly being under the influence of marketization, made the development of Chinese females have both new historical opportunities and extreme difficulties. Due to the complexity of changes in China's social transformation, the professional women in China are facing a serious differentiation trend, some people seize the opportunity to become the elite of society and play an important role through their own struggle, but situation of the majority of females in the lower social status is not optimistic.

There are many complicated reasons causing such situation. Analyzed from the obstacles that Chinese females faced in the fight for gender equality, we can't ignore the subjective factors except to the objective factors of social transformation. After 1949, the improving of the status of women mainly relied on the state regions, laid the foundation for gender equality, developed a range of females' social roles, achieved the transformation of females' from the traditional family roles to the "social role", which is a historical progress. But this is just basic work and the long march was the first to finish the journey, the road in the next is difficult to go, especially in the context of globalization.

It should be seen that the female's status' improvements today are more rely on the protection of the law. Since the reform and opening up, the country did develop a legal system based on the <Constitution>, mainly interpreted in <The Law in

Protecting Female's Right>, included a variety of legal basis, single regulations, local government departments and administrative regulations, and a set of protection for women's rights and gender equality. It clearly states that "To protect the legitimate rights of females is a common responsibility of the whole society," "The country encourages females to be a self-esteem people, a self-confidence people, a self-reliance people and a self-improvement people, and to use the method of legislation to safeguard their legitimate rights and interests." "The country laws protect the special rights of females and gradually improve the social security system for them." However, due to the implementation is not effective, the propaganda is not popularized and therefore the results are not satisfactory. Most females do not have the legal awareness or do not know how to use these legal weapons to protect their legitimate rights and interests.

This raises a further thought, the status of Chinese women has made a historic change, why the status was not become consolidate and happened partial setback or crisis? I believe that the females had not yet established a clear development goal to be achieved as well as ways and means to achieve such goals. Also, the females had not constructed a theory fitting with the free and equality development under globalization and China's modernization. This lead to the value of diversity conflicts for Chinese females in the reality, they fight on each of the many crossroads and in a free state, lacking of social forces and efforts to form a correct theoretical guidance. In the present the investigators specializing in women's issues and the advocates promoting women's movements are mostly women, but they mainly concentrated in a small number of Women's organizations and universities. They are not only separated from the majority of the female's movement in reality, but also have no right to speak in the society. They are isolated and have no ability to transform their results of the studies into the social forces. It sounds like an entertainment. Especially in China, the Chinese government at all levels only pay attention to GDP, there is no sense, time and experience to think about how to protect female's rights and improve female's status of equality. Females once again become a tool of social labor, marginalized and vulnerable.

No one is born consciousness, regardless of gender. Only through education can a people understand others, inspired his relationship with the surrounding, assess his situation and seek appropriate ways to change the unfavorable position, protect their own legitimate rights and interests, realize one's liberation and development. After the founding of New China, the large-scale socialist construction needs lots of labor, the country encouraged females the participation in society through political mobilization, and in order to improve the quality of workers, the country carried out a massive anti-literacy campaign to improve the quality of female's culture, formed a basic sense of equality for the females. Today the educational level and scale for females are come up with tremendous changes, but there is no one teaches about the rights and interests, statues, developments and health from the perspective of females. And the females between different age groups didn't know their special rights and interest

under the basis of equality differences. In the absence of an “empowerment” of the Enlightenment-style education, led some female leaders also discriminate against females, they don’t bring the social gender to the mainstreams and decisions. The females who work in the media area will also pursue more eye-catching news and pay less attention about female’s issues in order to guard their job positions. They won’t use the pen to solve the female’s problems, not to mention the male citizen. Lots of them think it is a scourge when hear the word of feminism or feminist.

Transforming the concept of equality in all kinds of modern education is the most effective way to improve the social cultural environment. I made efforts in my own teaching practice made, but my power is weak. So I am expecting the men of insight in China committed to advancing female freedom, equality, and development can cooperate together, forming an effective social force to promote Chinese females out of the current predicament, to improve the real status, and to develop with males in common.