

**TWO-CHILD POLICY: THE EFFECT OF BOOMING MATERNITY LEAVE ON  
CO-WORKERS AND ORGANIZATION IN CHINA**

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## **Abstract**

This shred of the document highlights the implementation of a two-child policy regulation in China. This regulation corresponds to a family planning modulation that categorically enables couples to have a second child. It consists of a brief detail of the assigned topic with references to a wide variety of literature and reviews. In this context, multiple facts and instances have been coherently covered. The aim is to comprehend the maternity leave impact and analyzing the same on the tow-policy regulations. However, the primary focus in this document wasto outline the methodology, case designs, and an elaborated data analysis section. All the participating candidates w enrolled from the Guizhou Rural Commercial Bank in China. The analysis portion chiefly includes a discourse analysis with the intent of focusing on the purpose of the semiotic event. The rationale behind opting for such an analysis category is because, in China, certain words or phrases harbor different interpretations depending on specific situations. Hence, discourse analysis was to be the righteous choice of approach. Finally, the accumulated data and their prodigious analysis were to help the readers understand the real significance of the undertaken research in the Chinese context. This document ends with a concise conclusion summarizing the overall research in brief.

## Introduction

With the prodigious replacement of the one-child regulation in China, the inhabitants have received its speculative impact thoroughly. The emergence of a universal 2-child regulation has been enormously significant owing to the lifting of such impending restriction on the Chinese couples regarding family planning (Schwank et al., 2018). As per the 2017 report of the Global Gender Gap, the Chinese inhabitants have subsequently reduced their inclination towards prodigious gender equality. And, that has been immensely feasible since the adaptation of the newer policy of 2-child (Attané, 2016). However, a large portion of online messages collectively portrays certain publications and social media concerns regarding the seamless impact of new policy formulation in China (Kan & Hertog, 2017). As per the reports of many other sources, much of the variation related disparities have been immensely controlled with this. But there is an iota of thoughts where many citizens have vocally expressed their immense worries about the additional layers of stress-bearing a second issue; while many of them categorically harbor the fear that they might just be compelled to quit their professional opportunities. All these messages have suggested that the new policy implementation has its varied repercussions on the working community (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014). While following the introduction of a universal new policy, a few of the female working staff in many organizations have reportedly left or took some time off their job for certain periods or might have taken maternity leaves. This tendency has categorically developed some sound arguments and associated controversies in the specified organization. The reason is pertaining to the sudden workload or knowledge gap that the remaining employees have. So, in a huge number of ways, this culminates towards job dissatisfaction, reduced morals, and attrition rate owing to additional work burden. Regarding this, a considerable amount of literature survey has been conducted by the researchers of this analysis on career opportunities for pregnant employees especially their post gestation period. In this context, a few studies have also gone ahead and mentioned the effect of maternity leave on remained employees and organizations (Kan & Hertog, 2017).

Apart from this, the impact of this formulation has also been viably observed on the concept of gender equality, particularly in the Chinese business sectors. Ideally, for any corporate firm, it is important to have the most efficient employees in place; therefore, it is essential for the business owners to employ the ones who wish to stay on a long-term basis (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014). Because the gestation period essentially influences not just the working staff but also the employer, this study will have immense potential to confront such issues and

prevailing challenges in different corporate sectors all across the globe. All of the background studies and their related previous observations have instigated the researchers of this work to initiate such a campaign to help other researchers continue their investigations on this matter. This will eventually aid millions of working populations in China to get motivation and alter their views towards the positive aspects of the new policy. If not, the research will at least assist the policymakers to strategize their regulatory framework for the betterment of the country's economy. Only when both male and the female candidates perform productively for an association, they would be able to collectively contribute to the revenue generation of the specific company (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014).

Besides, many online reports tend to consistently discuss how such a novel policy has aggravated caused gender discrimination particularly in the architecture of the labor market (Basten & Jiang, 2014). However, all across the country, the potential impact of such a sudden policy shift has categorically been remarkable. With such speculative consequences or outcomes, several works of research investigations have intended to foresee and analyze the health, societal outlook, demographics, and policy effects of this novel regulation (Cooke, 2017). Also, a considerable portion of such previous researches is focused on the policy and its preceding effects. Hence, having a stern understanding of the impact and associated controversies is of supreme relevance for this research to be successfully implanted in the convoluted nation architecture of China (Cai, 2010). Also, due to varied pieces of information, it becomes difficult for the commoners to assess the implication of the system in the present market architecture of China. Therefore, this study preliminarily seeks to minimize the prevailing knowledge gap and investigate the community effect of maternity leave on co-workers and organizations. However, for a more realistic practical purpose, this research will extend its effectiveness and recruit participants from Guizhou Rural Commercial Bank in China as its research objects.

### **Literature review**

There are endless debates surrounding the 1-child policy and its inevitable impact on the children's well-being (Mateer, Yang & Xuan, 2018). However, these shreds of evidence emerge from mixed viewpoints and direct towards the household resources. From varied literature studied to date, the reader will come to know the Government's claim of holding this earlier policy (one-child) responsible for the complete reversal of the fastest growth of

population in China (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014). Birth rates have also declined drastically below the replacement in early 1990 (Mateer, Yang, & Xuan, 2018).

Even amidst this, some of the literal mass thoughts towards its beneficial side are as follows. It might enable the young couples of childbearing age to enjoy the liberty to possess their preferred number of offspring (Feng, Cai & Gu, 2013). One of the most potent benefits also includes a significant reduction in the number of abortion rates of certain unapproved gestation or pregnancy cases. With time, the newer regulation might also speculatively induce the virtual eradication of issues and intricacies many families still have encountered due to unregistered infants (Cameron et al., 2013). Over time, it has the sure potential of implanting a more normalized sex ratio. And collectively all of such good impacts will remarkably ameliorate the health outcomes of the Chinese citizens. Some of its impacts might also not be that evident for at least the upcoming twenty years like the rapid aging population and collapsed workforce (Zeng & Hesketh, 2016). In the meanwhile, China waits with expectant eyes to experience more sound norms or related policy actions to meet the societal and healthcare necessities of the aged population in particular.

But the existing challenges and its associated intricacies that the country had been facing is also unavoidable. China has been harboring a shrinking workforce ever since then. Its fast-aging population has also enabled the government body and other policymakers to eventually replace this one-child regulation. The government now reportedly allows families to bear a couple of offspring to categorically raise or elevate the country's overall birth rate (Zeng & Hesketh, 2016). While these family-oriented policies intended to cohesively manipulate the nation's birth rates, both have unintendedly exerted a certain impact on the country's gender-based disparities. And most of the corporate organizations of China categorically suffer the extreme brunt of it (Ebenstein, 2010). With this objectivity, the researchers aimed to dive deeper into such scenarios by taking a few participants who can express their personal viewpoints on this policy.

When it comes to assessing the impact of maternity leaves, for an organization, it often becomes challenging because seeking the right replacement is not always rapid (Linder, 2018). In other words, for many organizations, managers always need a considerable amount of time to seek and appoint the most appropriate replacements to do the job when a pregnant female staff needs time off for her maternity. In such challenging cases, the burden of the additional costs that the management has to bear or invest in the new joiners' training processes matters a lot to the higher officials of the firm. At the same time, many research experts have explicitly expressed their viewpoints that in certain conditions, these

organizations cannot guarantee whether the employee would at all return to their professional domain or not, and even when they do until what time they would resume services. Also, this is of great concern to the employer because the post gestation phase is of enormous importance as far as family affairs are concerned. This is definitely considered to be a critical issue for any company since the subsequent decision of the employees to leave the job or not resume service will eventually cost a lot to these organizations. Also, in many cases, post-maternity, many female workers choose to have a career break, leading to tremendous loss and burden to their associated work and organization (Zhou, 2018). There are many shreds of literature that demonstrate such inconveniences caused by many pregnant female workers and how the company dealt with the brunt of such inconveniences (Zeng & Hesketh, 2016). In many organizations, the excessive workload on another colleague is not embraced and leads to a feeling of inequity. Therefore, just like its indispensable benefits, the new rule also led to discrimination and professional botheration in many cases (Cooke, 2017). Following the literature mining, the researchers decided to segregate each information in a chronological manner. This would easily guide the new readers and assist them to learn more about these impending issues. In this regard, the emerging concerns of fertility rates, maternity leave norms, gender inequality, and the employees' behavioral changes formed the core base of their research initiative.

### **Increase in fertility rate in China**

The implantation of the new 2-child regulation is still recent, which categorically makes its impact challenging for any researcher to state. However, many scholars have attempted to generate its effects and looked at the people's responses regarding this novel introduction in China (Attané, 2016). But as per these research initiatives, it seems like this policy implementation was likely to be not as potent as it intended to be at least in terms of enhancing the fertility rate in the Chinese population. Many pieces of online journals have depicted the core motivations for these couples to plan the second issue (Zeng & Hesketh, 2016). First of all, the presence of two offsprings categorically facilitates more security to the aging parents (Sun, Gordon & Pacey, 2016). Secondly, the second issue was to be a good companion to the first kid. In China, even now many people feel acute pressure from their parents in planning a second kid. The older generation still belongs to large families and therefore believes in the same for its value. However, for most of the Chinese couples, core motivations of not planning the second baby outweigh the ones that are in favor of bearing a

second child. And, this reason categorically leads to the fertility level relatively lower in this country (McLaren, 2004).

However, the emergence of the new universal policy has not just enabled the couples with the liberty of planning a second child but has also encouraged them in doing so. Even the Chinese government intends to encourage the couples to plan a second issue by offering them free medical treatments as well (Lu & Zheng, 2017). Many authors have extended their research diligence to various academic institutions including universities. They have stated how this implementation had exerted its profound effect on the career opportunities of several college graduates (Ebenstein, 2010). In certain other researches, the investigators have mainly focused on the probable rationale behind professional discrimination especially in different recruitment strategies (Mateer, Yang & Xuan, 2018). And over time, such a high unemployment rate of multiple woman graduates from the Universities deserves a very special mention ever since the emerging dissemination of this novel two-child policy. Various other research experts such as Zhou broadly went ahead to examine and investigate the fertility intent and many children bearing young couples' attitudes towards the on-going policy influences (Zhou & Guo, 2020).

Apart from that, a new offering of extended maternity leave is being disseminated to the female employees to create a more appealing policy comprehension (Qin, 2019). Furthermore, the new regulation also narrates that couples giving second childbirth was also be categorically eligible for numerous welfare benefits. However, there is no literature work available to back this statement and specify the category such as welfare benefits. These effective government measures however terminate the earlier financial privileges of bonuses and incentives. But the consumption of contraceptives is not officially a part of the Chinese provincial policy but has now been left to the couple choices (Kan & Hertog, 2017). Finally, such measures also include volume-based successive propagandas highlighting the relevance of childbearing as a huge attempt to stimulate and hearten couples to bear another child after their first born (Lee, 2012).

### **Gender disparities and maternity leave implications among the citizens of China**

Multiple agendas of news reportedly show that gender disparities are not legal as per the strict regulations of China. Yet, a huge range of employment advertisements continues exerting the same increasingly. In fact, many of such companies categorically specify their preferences for a “male candidate” (Kuhn Shen, 2013). Different authentic works of literature however mention that the recruitment of a woman or even more specifically a married female

is a reluctant job as it seems to aggravate the unavoidable risks of having to bear the maternity leave amount (Foley, Ngo Loi & Zheng, 2015). In addition to this, many female workers raising one child also encounter such ghastly discrimination and its associated brunt. Earlier, the female candidates used to plan the first issue even before initiating their careers to enhance their probability of getting appointed (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014). This would relieve the specified company from bearing her maternity expenses. But with the eventual prominence of the new child regulations in the country, this case is no longer feasible since those women having just a kid has been encouraged by the government body to plan the next (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014). This, in no time, has enormously limited their career progression in many fields with a few exceptions. Therefore, the researchers of this conducted such an elongated review to remain aware of most of the past whereabouts of the country regarding this policy formulation. This has clearly instilled a sense of hidden fear and anxiety among the female candidates that would eventually make this community much less effective. They will start to question their abilities and believe that their potential stands no chance before their male contemporaries particularly during the promotion times (Foley, Ngo Loi & Zheng, 2015). Yet, the pivotal victims of this enhanced gender disparity are young eligible females without offspring. This also included those female workers that were the core members of this very research. However, as the analysis goes deeper, the findings of this extensive research might help many people in observing some interesting facts that have no concordance with the literature in a few cases.

### **Research Aim**

Since the female workers are equally crucial for an organization, the higher authorities, and management department must prioritize their health and operational development to maintain a steady workplace synchronization. Keeping the facts and consequences in mind, the research harbors the following three aims.

- i. To study the maternity leave impact following the implementation of the newer 2-child policy in the organizations in China.
- ii. To derive a comprehensive analysis of the same with respect to the Chinese organization framework.
- iii. To highlight the conclusion or summary from the undertaken research and propose some recommendations to the officials of the organization chosen to better manage the necessities if the results emerge feebly.

## **Research Questions**

For this study, the research questions were predefined with the sole purpose of ensuring that the research objectives are clearly understood. Each of the questions depicted below had a substantial association with the interview question that this analysis consists of. On purpose, the researcher kept the questions relatively comprehensive owing to language intricacies. The researchers intended to get a clear background of what the participating candidates conveyed. Also, the priority was to understand how the common corporate workers adjusted with the unanticipated policy formulation by the government in China.

The research questions were as follows:

- i. How does the new two-child government policy affect remained the staff in the Guizhou Rural Commercial Bank?
- ii. How does the new universal two-child government policy affect the organization (Guizhou Rural Commercial Bank)?

## **Methods and methodology**

This was precisely meant to be qualitative research. Therefore, it preliminarily relied on a semi-structured qualitative interview.

## **Sample**

For this study, the participants were the employees of the Guizhou Rural Commercial Bank (also named Guizhou Rural Credit Union) in Guizhou Province, China. For a research analysis to be conclusively stern and convincing, it is solicited to employ the maximum number of participating candidates. However, the present research was not able to fund that much owing to limited time and resources. Therefore, the target candidates were the ones with an employment history of a minimum of 5 years with this organization. The rest all were discarded from the research study. The reason behind such a criterion is that it categorically provided the researchers with a quick comparative analysis before and after the policy implementation. This aided them to study and evaluate their behavior and attitude change towards the regulations from the remaining workers. According to the latest information on the official website of the chosen organization, the current number of working staff is approximately 28,000, which was far beyond the limitation of this research. Hence, to simplify the sampling, around 8 individuals of varied age range and both genders were chosen as the interviewees.

### Participants for the Study

Number of Respondents	Designation	Gender	
4	Manager	2 males	2 females
4	Bank employees	2 males	2 females

Since the policies pertaining to maternity leave are gender-centric, it was rational to consider its prodigious impact on different groups in the organization. Furthermore, a few higher officials were requested to volunteer this qualitative interview. Most of the respondents were approached through snowballing. The recruitment information was to be circulated over WeChat App and conducted by the recruited officials. Additionally, an expert translator was needed to be enrolled. Most of the employees were Chinese but if any participant belonged to any other language domain, the specified language translator was also appointed for the sake of uninterrupted interview progress and data collection.

#### Prerequisites of the scheduled interview

Before initiating the interview, the respondents were very well informed about the research purpose. And, they were told that each interview of this category was meant to be solely anonymous. The interview was recorded and documented with proper number coding where each code represented one participating candidate. Alternatively, a specific color-code was thought to be employed to organize and document the interview of each respondent. Such interview data would rightly provide a concrete impression of their views and how such policies have impacted them over time. Besides, such interviews also depicted how the future expectations of these employees were impacted by their switching to the newer policy.

Simultaneously, to receive the most unbiased and impartial answers from them, the study tried their best to limit any unprecedented misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the interview questions. The ideal number of offspring a couple will bear is invariably interpreted as a mere attitude instead of a concise plan in China, it could perhaps be one of the finest ways of obtaining the most honest replies from the unknown participating candidates given the prodigious circumstance and insufficient resources that the analysis was conducted.

### **Ethical considerations of the research**

Before the study onset, certain ethics must be prioritized and adhered to by the researchers.

These were as follows:

- Voluntary participation was necessary for the study.
- Informed consent was collected and well preserved.
- Participants must not be subjected to any harm.
- Transparency should be maintained between the trial team and the participating institute.
- The confidentiality of personal information must be adhered to.
- No exaggeration of the study objectives was solicited.
- Participants can withdraw anytime depending on their feasibility.

### **Materials and resources**

This section will highlight the details of the interview design and procedural models.

### **Design of the interview questions**

This interview was arranged to bear certain questions intended at the wide variety of future aspects that the new policy might be exerted upon the participants. The research questions coupled with the available information over the literature formed the core basis of the interview questions. The interview was initiated with general questions and thereafter dug into the specific ones. Not only about the policy impact, but the respondents were also asked about their opinions or viewpoints on gender discrimination, their family expectations, and many more. Furthermore, they were asked about their current workplace and how the organization has assisted or influence their thoughts or takes on the new policy. However, a few participating candidates might never realize the societal impact or their views.

The details or guide of the interview questions are attached in Appendix 1.

### **Procedure and method design**

An elaborated research analysis required a qualitative approach, as mentioned earlier. **The Snowball sampling approach** was employed for appointing the participating candidates for the study. This approach is easier when the research participants recruit other respondents for a specified study undertaken. For the better comprehension of the readers highlighting a few common pros of such a sampling approach is solicited.

- i. Due to the paucity of time and resources, snowball enabled this research to be simple and economical.

- ii. This approach required little planning and much fewer workforce which categorically made the process quicker and less challenging to handle.

The research details were distributed over the online media WeChat application with a specified ID. Interested candidates scanned the given referral code to add me to their list in private. As per their personal details and the appointed recruiter's help, those 8 candidates were selectively chosen. Thereafter, the interview was organized based on their convenience. Since the interviewees were different, their interview responses were distinct which immensely helped the researchers form a structured panel of diverse responses to analyze their individual viewpoints.

### **Data analysis and results**

The responses were collectively gathered from each candidate. The accumulated information went through a series of analyses. The results and common findings of the research have categorically been layered in different aspects for the simple comprehension of the readers. The relevant aspects of each part have been discussed separately in this document. Thematic analysis was employed which collectively balanced a high degree structure in the course of evaluating the interview data. This allowed the researchers to adopt the same as per the study needs. Based on the codes, the data was chronologically documented and archived keeping its confidentiality intact. But what was more important is the use of **discourse analysis**. In any qualitative research scenario, discourse analysis is relevant for certain social, linguistics, and cultural purposes. It holds a stern impact as it is an interpretive method to analyze certain texts or its contents. The researcher, therefore, made interpretations on the basis of the responses and also its contextual details. Also, a core discourse analysis will help other researchers to conduct such prodigious studies of this category to assess the content analysis from each subject. It becomes essential to judge what a participant intends to express as per the research context and tone.

In China, due to their native language and its diverse interpretation, certain words carry multiple meanings based on the situation. Conducting such an analysis was a priority for it clearly evaluated how language functioned and its meaning was created in varied social contexts. It was extremely crucial to judge and assess what the respondent intended to convey through their answers. Some scholars describe this analysis to be a "language analysis beyond the narrated sentence" (Liu et al., 2016). In the end, it will also aid many researchers as a helpful approach to explore the insights of interviewees through their response ranges.

However, the focus was categorically attributed to the following aspects.

- i. The cultural rules and the sheer convenience of the respondents in communication through their answers.
- ii. The purpose of certain phrases so that they follow the situational context and are not misinterpreted.
- iii. How the respondents communicated their assumptions and opinions on the impact of the proposed and implemented policy in China.

Rather than considering the shorter units about language, the researchers studied the larger chunks including the respondents' entire written conversion, texts, and tones. These resources were cohesively analyzed on several levels.

The interview comebacks made it evident that each participant understood the implication of the policy and its associated regulations.

### **Study findings from the research interview**

#### **i. Respondents' views on the 2-child policy impact**

**Purpose:** The researcher categorically intended to evaluate if the participants at all knew about the policy. So, in this context, the researcher chose a one-tracked focus.

**Findings/Discovery:** From the varied responses of the interview, it was abundantly clear that the majority of the responding candidates have expressed how the intent of a second-born could affect career expectations by complicating their personal lives. However, as previously mentioned, many existing shreds of literature categorically argue regarding the new policy and its impact on fertility intentions. This has significantly caused the birth rates to relatively remain lower. Moreover, a few respondents expressed their viewpoints of a fully liberal policy that they believed to have addressed issues like population imbalance and aging. They also mentioned about their awareness of the fertility policies that cohesively coped with such population issues in China. But many of them have responded in a partial tone which indicated that they are unaffected towards the switching to this policy. So, it was more like a mixed response. The management team was not greatly impacted though. In fact, most of the members expressed their intention of changing their fertility intentions owing to this new policy.

From the 8 members volunteering for the study, 2 have responded stating they have not yet given it a thought of bearing a second issue at the moment; 3 of them depicted unaffected views towards the same. However, the other 2 considered not planning the second issue as

they felt that would categorically violate the 1-child regulation. But they have also mentioned about certain financial resource burden that the families might have to experience with the arrival of a second life. So, despite the depiction in the literature where the little impact has been shown on the people towards their fertility intentions owing to this new policy, the interview showed a more literal outlook of the candidates' views. Those whose life seemed to remain unperturbed owing to a second-born also demonstrated this because they had no issues bearing the financial expenses under the new policy altogether. However, from a few responses, the researcher concluded that the respondents' intent of possessing two kids is relatively for their personal benefits. As literature works say, having more than one offspring provides mental security and more joy than bearing one especially when the couples grow old and feeble. Another new observation from the interview sounded reasonable when some members mentioned that their motivation towards this policy emerged as they grew up in a nuclear family as a single child which brought tremendous childhood loneliness. However, this again corresponds to the previous 1-child regulation where couples had to adhere to such policies and raise single kids.

Apart from this, the discordance of opinions of the candidates occurred due to a plethora of reasons. Many scholars have argued upon the fertility rates being much higher especially in families with a relatively less family-work dispute (Zhou & Guo, 2020). Probably this explains the rationale behind some of the respondents' high fertility intentions. Literature works also suggest that owing to economic constraints, many families choose not to opt for the second one. But most of the working respondents are fairly stable in terms of financial aspects. Therefore, such constraints were less likely to have impacted the study participants to bear an additional responsibility (Zheng et al., 2016). This explains their intent of higher fertility.

On the whole, from this layer of the interview, the researchers can coherently decipher and conclude that the expectation and impact of the novel policy on the working community (although the research comprises of the limited sample) is still very speculative and their opinions on fertility intentions might not be similar and could alter in the times ahead.

## ii. Respondents' views on maternity leave

**Purpose:** The sole intent of this matter was to assess if the employees understood and embrace the banking sector's maternity leave under its corporate environment. They even intended to seek if the response were in favor of this policy or reproaches its implementation in China.

**Findings/Discovery:** The interview intended to investigate the maternity regulations at the chosen organization and under the core corporate environment, how it aids or impacts the employees. The researcher intended to acquire a strong understanding of the interviewee's comprehension of their company's maternity policies and how far they support or derive sheer benefits from such leave regulations. From the members' responses, it was understood that the bank has set a leave policy of around 98-158 days for its female workers and around a month for the male employees. However, within the duration of their paid leaves, if any worker resumes his/her services and returns to work earlier, the rest of their leaves gets converted in wages by default which the employee receives with the monthly salary. Out of the eight respondents, 6 exhibited a reasonable opinion towards such leave policies and assumed this as a social responsibility. One participant categorically expressed negative viewpoints stating that the setting of maternity policies in the bank was unreasonable. She cited a couple of stern reasons behind this. Firstly, her response concretely showed her reluctance towards such organizational policies where employees are indirectly encouraged to resume work in place of additional wages. She intended to adhere to a specific number of days leave to improve the physical and mental health of the mother. Another respondent opined that the company leaves the setting for the male workers is too short a duration to look after the family dimensions. Furthermore, many responses showed that owing to the leave norms, many workers are professionally solicited to work overtime owing to humungous work pressure. This remarkably reduces their personal opportunities with their families after duty hours. Also, 3 of the four appointed managers expressed that their lives have not been supremely impacted owing to the bank's maternity norms. But a considerable portion of these answers also highlighted that adapting the new policy and the impact of the organizational maternity regulations have affected the career expectations of a few of them. However, in this context, two of the responses typified that the maternity costs that an organization has to inculcate limits the prodigious hiring of the female staff in China, and many shreds of literature have categorically assisted this statement in varied parts of the world (Zhou & Guo, 2020). That is their inclination towards discarding potent and eligible female workers only to avoid the maternity expenses. The researchers also additionally came to know one of their experiences where one working staff disappeared from the organization during her office period to feed her baby. Such obligations are reasonably common in case of personal aspects, but it is leaving the other employees in an inconvenient state as the additional work burden is eventually imposed on them. Also, for the woman, it is not a matter of personal choice rather a serious compulsion without anyone else to take charge of the kid. However, it is rational for

these companies to appoint a male worker as the leave duration will be cost-wise much more preferable for men owing to their 30 days set time. Hiring married female employees is likely to compel the employer to invest in their maternity costs. Also, many companies are considerably wary in recruiting female staff post the implementation of the 2-child norms out of their significant fear to pay for their leaves twice (Feng, Cai & Gu, 2013). In this context, two respondents also mentioned that such extended leaves tend to cause a huge interruption on their professional schedule which, in turn, also affects the smooth continuity of their organizational operations.

Therefore, to concisely sum up the intricacy and positivity of maternity leaves on these bank staffs, it is clear that it bears a mixed impact on these Chinese workers.

### iii. Respondents' views on gender discrimination and professional expectations

Based on a plethora of existing literature, the influence of such new policies especially on the career graphs of many women has been found to be much closely associated with gender equality (Sun, Gordon & Pacey, 2016). On today's date, where female pay gaps, harassment, and gender difference still persist in many organizations, this research analysis demonstrated a discordant result. Theoretically, just like the former policy, the newer 2-child scheme also exerted its significant impact on gender disparities (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014). But owing to the relatively new implementation of the family policies of planning two children, very little evidence pertaining to this exists on gender-based equalities. And therefore, numerous scholars have been characteristically focusing on assessing the most probable long-term influence of the policy on the societal architecture of the country.

**Purpose:** The very intent of the researchers, in this case, was to ensure that they acquire a strong comprehension of the attitudes of the bank employees towards organizational gender equality.

**Findings/Discovery:** Most of the partaker's active responses in this matter made it clear to the research investigators that the chosen banking sector does not inculcate gender biases in their inner architecture. However, most of this research's participants (5 of 8 members) mentioned equal respect for the gender in this banking sector. Among them, three have categorically voiced their personal views stating their organization has an astounding recognition for their warm treatment to the female workers. In this regard, they have mentioned and expressed their gratitude towards the company's efforts in celebrating women-centric occasions such as "International Women's Day" and "Mother's Day" as well. They even provide or honor the female workers with rewards as a sign of utmost respect, concerns, and sympathies for women as a whole for their nature of enduring so much. This

depicted how the banking sector supported women's advancement and took the utmost care of female employees. But it does not take away the existing facts that compared to the earlier policy, the newer one seemed to have restricted much of their professional opportunities (Cameron et al., 2013). Online journals, news reports have collectively intended to create stern public awareness among the citizens of China before ever since the emergence of this novel policy.

#### iv. Respondents' views on the consequences of maternity policy of the Banking organization

**Purpose:** Finally, in the light of how maternity holiday regulations affect the individual professional experience in terms of workload, the researchers went a little extra to assess the same on a broader level. In this case, the researchers also aimed to know the kind of measures the employees or the management of the financial sector had taken to deal with any of such volatile effects.

**Findings/Discovery:** The researchers seemed to have found and categorized the positive and negative responses respectively. Some of them have hence not considered this workload to be a humungous burden. Those respondents that shared **positive views** coherently mentioned that while the female employees were on leaves (maternity), the additional work burden had provided them with better learning experiences and opportunities. They were of the opinion that such extra assignments or overtime work had facilitated more income, incentives, or monthly allowances to them along with their fixed salaries. Some of them believed that such opportunities in the presence of such less competition subsequently enhanced their possibilities for due promotions at work. So, in many ways, some of the bank employees expressed their positive opinions and expectations from this policy setting in their company. However, as mentioned previously, candidates also shared their **negative** experiences. Some employees unable to cope with such sudden work pressure increments often produce poorer performance. This affects their job functionalities as well as performance appraisals. Ideally, many employees who are not very well receptive of additional corporate responsibilities make frequent professional errors which, in turn, affects their efficient performance remarkably (Sun, Gordon & Pacey, 2016). In many such cases, these employees are often penalized with a considerable amount of professional losses. This often to reduced morale and consequently brings spot resignation. Also, some employees stated that post-maternity, the sudden discontinuation of some staff from their prolonged services increases the possibility of business faults. This is solely because new replacements struggled with the unfamiliar work pattern and ended up in extension professional inaccuracies.

v. **Respondents' views about the behavioral change of the staff post-maternity**

**Purpose:** Finally, the researchers of this analysis wished to know the extent to which the employees change their behavioral patterns or attitude once they resume their respective services. Basically, this would help to comprehend if there was any discordance in their productivity after receiving the prolonged leave of maternity.

**Findings/Discovery:** In general, there are two attributes to this finding. Firstly, some workers strongly believed that such long leave durations invariably affect individual performance. That is, their business proficiency always reduces due to the prolonged detachment from familiar jobs. Sometimes the memory capacity also changes after such an extended professional gap. Another aspect which the management in general mentioned was the obvious tendency of these employees to apply for frequent leaves. This is because, it becomes enormously crucial for both the male as well as female workers to take time out for certain important family affairs (Zeng & Hesketh, 2016).

On the flip side of this aspect, some employees expressed their increased morale especially because the peers are happy having the colleagues back. Also, for some people, such extended leaves help to regain the lost professional motivation; so, when they resume professional services, their productivity enhances and is able to deliver much better work performance in the times ahead (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014). This categorically refines their sense of belonging to their respective organizations and ameliorates their job satisfaction as well.

**Matching of the findings with the research questions and objectives**

This section of the prospective research will highlight the concordance and discordance aspects of this research analysis with the main objective of the initiative. It would also explicit the varied possibilities of measurements to ascertain the extent to which the study initiative has answered each of the research questions pre-selected for this study. If a reader carefully understands the research questions, he will find relevance in two different aspects. First of all, the research analysis aimed to study the extent to which policymakers have impacted the working corporate organizations. Once this question is properly answered, the researchers intended to move a step ahead to categorically know the effect of the policy on the working community. With such an intent, the researcher conducted the analysis. Firstly, from the wide variety of replies obtained from the interviewees, the researchers tried to evaluate the current situation of the chosen banking sector. The responses showed a mixed

impact of the policy on the interviewees. Their first section included general queries about their overall knowledge of the new policy. Each participant comprehended the intricate details of the policy. So, the primary focus of the researcher in this context has been served.

Secondly, the researcher wanted to examine the policy impact on the personal and corporate sectors highlighting the concept of maternity leave. The responses of the candidates seem to be mostly in their favor because they find such leave policies to be fairly reasonable and well justified in terms of corporate dimensions. However, one candidate expressed some disappointment regarding the fixed number of holidays considering it to be relatively harmful and burdensome for the remaining group members. Therefore, in all of these attributes, this section categorically serves the second objective as well while the results were in concordance with the main research aim and questions.

The final aspect of the interview was on the prevalence of gender discrimination in the chosen banking sector. The research intended to examine if the chosen banking organization treated its female workers differently from the male staff. However, as seen in most of the interviewees' replies, they actively believe that the bank promoted gender equality and by no means treated the female staff any differently. From their responses regarding the initiatives of the bank to provide gifts to its women workers on specific occasions, the generosity of the organization is reflected. So, it clearly serves the final intended objective of the study on gender dissimilarities.

From the above aspects, the researcher could draw a strong comprehension of each of those 8 candidates' personal views regarding their organizational whereabouts on maternity leaves and the new policy implementation.

### **Discussion of the research findings**

The results coherently demonstrated mixed responses yet highlighting some of the most interesting features regarding the commoners' viewpoints on the policy. The results lined with the findings of various other pieces of studies conducted previously after the introduction of the dual-child regulations in China. As expected, the respondents' answers were reliable. Since the participants belonged to different designations, it was fairly easier for the researcher to have a strong background of how the implication of the policies has influenced the professional groundings of different people differently. The interview atmosphere was relatively cordial which perhaps led to such honest responses. The members were free and sporting enough to discuss a very personal and sensitive subject like family

planning to the researchers. Hence, in every possible manner, the study participants reflected their honest opinions and viewpoints on the topic. A huge observation that was in discordance with the prevailing literature lies in the views of the candidates whose fertility intents increased as a consequence of the policy. Besides, the average fertility intent of this research group was much higher than the country's average of 1.5 offspring per female (Zhou & Guo, 2020). Many of the candidates intended to bear the responsibility of a second issue while others depicted unaffected responses from the policy implementation. This observable outcome was noticed probably because many of the respondents were young participants compared to the studies conducted by other scholars on the same topic previously. But it might so happen that at a later point in time, the thought process of this research group might vary with newer experiences. However, the only differential aspects for these participating groups could be articulated by the fact that the majority expected to have a moderately low demanding professional sector, which perhaps would have made it less challenging for them to combine their career with child responsibilities. Hence, to a certain extent, the existing knowledge about the policy impacts does not immensely apply to this specified research group.

Secondly, their responses reflected their long-term vision of gender equality in the country. The extensive literature mining conducted by this study does not specify such observations among the Chinese inhabitants too elaborately. While this undertaken interview was not particularly intended to enunciate such distinction as far as the vision of the participants is concerned, most of the respondents were firm believers of the additional pressure that gets imparted upon them when a pregnant employee leaves on maternity holidays. However, a few of the managers expressed their unperturbed professional experience from such leaves. But the best segment of this narrative interview was when most of them expressed their stern beliefs on the gradual mitigation of such discriminating concepts from the convoluted professional sphere in China. This corresponds to an interesting study finding as it articulates that even if the inculcation of gender disparity has demonstrated sluggishness with the new policy introduction in China, these young female respondents were immensely positive about its demarcation in the times ahead. The findings additionally suggest that the SES disparities pertaining to the fertility intents of the participating group were mainly with the females harboring one offspring.

Lastly, it is highly solicited that similar research initiatives are organized in China. The more the number of such study initiatives, better assistance will be provided to the readers regarding the varied social groups and how the policy implications have altered their

respective professional expectations with the subsequent emergence of the new 2-child regulation in the nation. Furthermore, this research could potentially serve as stern guidance to future investigators to conduct numerous small follow-up activities to enunciate if the viewpoints of the common mass changes with time or not. This would explicitly provide the common inhabitants of China with an insight into the degree to which their upcoming professional development will be impacted by such policies. Also, more research works will aid the commoners to understand if, with the gradual flow time, people still keep their fertility intents significantly higher. Thus, for now, it feels fair to establish that in some ways the policy tends to impact certain female's professional experiences possibly owing to the emerging trends of gender discrimination in the current societal architecture.

### **Strength of the undertaken study**

The present analysis has its strength with the use of reliable measurements particularly the evaluation of the socioeconomic status (SES) of the study group. However, certain aspects such as occupancy, education, above all earning tend to reflect the SES of the inhabitants of a particular nation. Researches state that income still happens to be quite a sensitive matter among the Chinese workers (Lee Cooke & Xiao, 2014) and people do not like discussion the same with unknown people. Although the group participants in this study hinted about their earning potential, they were reluctant to reveal their income levels in this interview. Additionally, it is not feasible to categorically validate the varying data set from the Chinese statistics given the humungous population of the entire nation.

### **Limitations of the study**

As mentioned before, this study barely included a significant sample size to uniformly convince the readers about its potential. The major cause behind this is its limited resource. As a result, this handful of people can by no means be the sole representatives of other Chinese professionals. Also, considering one service sector can never be the benchmark instance for others to follow but it can provide certain guidance and assistance to other researchers in framing or planning strategies to initiate more investigations on this subject. Also, the perpetual outcomes of fertility intentions were also a very sensitive matter. So it is possible that there could be certain distinctions between future empirical surveys and the interview method used in this specified analysis.

## Conclusion

The undertaken research coherently contributes to different shreds of literature in multiple ways. Firstly, the impact that the novel 2-child policy has on professional expectations of these female workers adds to the available shreds of literature. Also, such stern research on female's career expectations is a novel approach and has not been explored or researched previously. This sudden switching was most definitely affecting their professional expectations perhaps owing to the accelerated gender discrimination that has immensely been caused. Also, the literature might be at par with the respondents' feedback regarding the intricacy a women candidate might have to withstand in getting hired at a top designation or promotion which demands adequate official responsibilities. The study findings will provide a concise yet valuable framework for other experts to conduct further studies on this subject in many other employment sectors. On the whole, it can be stated that the implantation of the two-child norms in the Chinese sectors would eventually make it feasible for the female communities in their respective professional fields thereby enabling a sheer balance between child-rearing and services. This study and its concrete results might not be supremely convincing to many scholars but it will certainly provide potential information for many other developing nations that enforce such family planning regulations and are gradually modernizing.

Finally, the study cannot formulate any probable **recommendation** because of its limited utility. It needs a bigger platform and more extensive researcher investigations to persuade the common people about the same for good. However, the analysis might aid the policy-makers and associated bodies to figure a better fertility-friendly regulation/policy that would potentially motivate high SES female workers to bear more than one issue in the times ahead. The research has prodigious potential to enunciate the effectiveness or brunt of the policy implementation all across the country architecture.

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WritingXperts Sample

## Appendix 1. Interview questions

### For managers

Part A: Personal information (gender, age, position)

Part B:

1. Do you know the universal two-child policy?
2. What's the maternity leave regulation in your company?
3. As a manager, can you tell me about your view relate to the setting of maternity leave in your company?
4. From your point of view, has your *work* been affected by your colleague/employee's maternity leave?
  - a) yes, positive or negative?What measures will you take to deal with these effects?
5. From your point of view, has your *life* been affected by your colleague/employee's maternity leave?
  - a) yes, positive or negative?What measures will you take to deal with these effects?
6. Do you think the company treats female employees more differently than the general staff?
7. Do employees' behaviour or attitude change after they return to work?

**For employees:**

Part A: Personal information (gender, age, position)

Part B:

1. Do you know the universal two-child policy?
2. What's the maternity leave regulation in your company?
3. As an employee, can you tell me about your view relate to the setting of maternity leave in your company?
4. From your point of view, has your *work* been affected by your colleague's maternity leave?
  - a) Yes, positive or negative? what measures will you take to deal with these impacts?
5. From your point of view, has your *life* been affected by your colleague's maternity leave?
  - a) Yes, positive or negative? What measures will you take to deal with these impacts?
6. Do you think the company treats female employees more differently than the general staff?
7. 7. Do employees' behaviour or attitude change after they return to work?