The Family Status of Chinese Women - the Past and the Present

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The Family Status of Chinese Women - the Past and the Present

Keywords
The Family Status of Chinese Women; the Past and the Present; Shao Jirong; Foot Binding; San Cong Shi De; Three Obediences: ◊to father before marriage; ◊to husband after marriage; ◊to son after the death of husband; Four Virtues: ◊Morality ◊proper speech ◊modest manner ◊diligent needlework; Arranged Marriage; Polygamy: concubine; secondary wives; Ignorance is a woman's virtue; An ignorant woman is a joy forever. ◊A woman who lacks talent is virtuous; Changing Views of Marriage; Marrying and having children later in life ◊the average age at which men married: 28 ◊the average age at which women married: 27 ◊the average age at which couples had children: 29.7 years; Percentage of marital decisions made by parents over the past 10 years; Rights of Income Management and Allocation; Speaking Freely: Decision Makers; decisions on daily consumption; 77.3% of the respondents were in charge of choosing and buying food, clothes and daily necessities for their families.; Women's Involvement in Making Decisions on Major Family Issues over the Past 10 Years (%); married women in large cities; In reality there are no differences between men and women when making decisions; Less Housework; family-oriented stereotype; “men should work outside the family while women should be responsible for family affairs”

Disciplines
Educational Administration and Supervision | Higher Education Administration | Interpersonal and Small Group Communication

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The Family Status of Chinese Women
- the Past and the Present

Shao Jirong
Foot Binding
Three Obediences:
- to father before marriage;
- to husband after marriage;
- to son after the death of husband
San Cong Shi De

Four Virtues:
- Morality
- proper speech
- modest manner
- diligent needlework
Arranged Marriage

- Polygamy: concubine, secondary wives
Ignorance is a woman's virtue.

- An ignorant woman is a joy forever.
- A woman who lacks talent is virtuous.
Changing Views of Marriage

- Marrying and having children later in life
  - the average age at which men married: 28
  - the average age at which women married: 27
  - the average age at which couples had children: 29.7 years
Percentage of marital decisions made by parents over the past 10 years.
Rights of Income Management and Allocation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>spent their personal incomes freely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51.3%</td>
<td>combined their personal incomes with their husbands’ for communal use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>gave their income to their husbands</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Speaking Freely: Decision Makers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of Families</th>
<th>Decision Makers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Equal decision-making power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 20%</td>
<td>Wives have more decision-making power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearly 20%</td>
<td>Men have more authority over decisions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
decisions on daily consumption:

- 77.3% of the respondents were in charge of choosing and buying food, clothes and daily necessities for their families.
Women’s Involvement in Making Decisions on Major Family Issues over the Past 10 Years (%)
married women in large cities:

- 22.7% had the final say in purchasing houses, cars or other valuables;
- 77.3% made decisions after consulting their husbands
In reality there are no differences between men and women when making decisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To purchase goods of top grades</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
<td>90.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To support one’s parents</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Less Housework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>year</th>
<th>average time women spent on housework every day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>5.01 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4.01 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Average Time Spent on Housework Every Day in 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Urban Areas</strong></td>
<td>3.34 hrs</td>
<td>1.26 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural Areas</strong></td>
<td>4.27 hrs</td>
<td>1.35 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
family-oriented stereotype

- “men should work outside the family while women should be responsible for family affairs”
Modern Views of Childbirth

- Reducing the birth rate
  - nearly 80% of the respondents wanted to have one child
  - 21.7% of the women said they preferred to be DINKs
  - about 76% said they did not want to have children
  - nearly 55% of the women said they were in a predicament
Gendering: Boys or girls?
Divorce

- the right to divorce
- rapid increase of divorce rate
-- 77.3% of the women were content with their material lives
-- 67.6% said they were satisfied with their spiritual lives
-- 93.2% of the women felt satisfied with their marriages and family life.
- 45.6% of women regarded their marriages lives as “happy”
- 19.9% thought they and their husbands were “treating each other with respect”
- 31.7% said the quality of their marriages was “so-so”
- 1.4% felt their marriages were “miserable”
Thank You!