

Review of Class-Differentiated Gender Discrimination and Women's Resistance Strategies in Contemporary China

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Abstract. This study systematically reviews 17 academic papers on the experiences and resistance strategies of Chinese women from different social classes in the face of gender discrimination. It aims to reveal how class profoundly shapes women's experiences of discrimination and their available pathways of action. The study adopts the SPIDER framework for literature screening and identifies commonalities and differences through cross-textual thematic analysis. The results show that: class position not only determines the types of discrimination women encounter, but also constrains the resource bases, risk-bearing capacities, and action opportunities for their resistance strategies; the digital environment, family structures, and labor systems exert differentiated effects on women of different classes, deepening the intersecting inequalities of gender and class. This paper further points out the limitations of current policies in addressing structural gender discrimination and puts forward more inclusive policy recommendations.

Keywords: gender discrimination, social class, China, resistance strategies, feminist intersectionality

1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, gender discrimination has remained widespread worldwide, even though many countries have made significant progress in legal systems, education popularization, and the protection of women's employment rights [1]. As a country undergoing rapid modernization alongside profound social structural transformation, China's gender inequality exhibits complex characteristics that are multi-layered and cross-institutional. From family division of labor, the labor market, and algorithmic governance to national discourse and cultural norms, the situation of Chinese women is often simultaneously influenced by the overlapping effects of gender, class, region, and institutional factors such as the household registration system.

Although some studies argue that mainstream gender research often treats women as a relatively homogeneous group [2,3], a growing body of Chinese scholarship has shifted attention to specific subgroups, such as female college students, female managers, female migrant workers, and women in poor areas [4-7], as well as differences among them. These studies have well expanded the scope of research objects in gender studies, but most focus on a single group. Their analytical frameworks often fail to systematically compare the differences in the situations of women from different social

classes when facing gender discrimination, nor do they reveal how the class structure shapes the resistance strategies available to women.

In other words, while existing research increasingly recognizes diversity among women, it lacks a comparative perspective that treats class as a central analytic axis. Many studies remain at the level of documenting gender inequality within particular populations and do not fully address following questions: What forms of structural gender discrimination do women from different classes encounter? What resources, capital, or situational constraints do they have that affect the feasibility and methods of their resistance strategies?

To address these gaps, this study conducts a systematic literature review of 17 core empirical and theoretical research to compare the differentiated situations and resistance models of Chinese women from different classes in the context of gender inequality. The purposes of this review are as follows: (1) To systematically sort out the types of gender discrimination faced by women from different classes in academic literature published between 2015 and 2025; (2) To compare the differences in explicit or implicit resistance strategies adopted by women from various classes; (3) To explore how class shapes women's subjectivity, resource structure, and resistance capacity, laying a foundation for future policies and research.

2. Literature review

This section aims to sort out how existing studies discuss gender discrimination faced by women of different social classes in the Chinese context and their coping strategies. The literature presents three main research threads: first, exploring the discursive conflicts and implicit inequalities experienced by urban middle-class and professional women in both family and workplace settings; second, analyzing the structural disadvantages of rural women, female migrant workers, and mobile women under institutional constraints; third, examining the self-perception, internalized prejudices, and symbolic resistance of female students and young women in educational environments. Although a few studies focus on cross-class comparisons, most tend to center on the experiences and situations of specific groups. Therefore, systematically organizing the differences across classes becomes a key task of this research.

First, studies on urban middle-class women highlight the persistent existence of implicit inequality in modern family scenarios. A qualitative study by Ding and Shi [8] reveals that even when both spouses hold strong awareness of gender equality, the division of household chores is still deeply influenced by traditional gender norms. In particular, non-material labor such as "invisible housework" and "emotional labor" is often overlooked by men [8]. Such studies typically emphasize cognitive biases, limited discourse power, and negotiation dilemmas as core mechanisms of inequality. Workplace research shows similar phenomena. For example, Hao finds that female managers often face a lack of discourse power and questioning of their leadership legitimacy, despite their high educational qualifications and professional capabilities [5]. Other studies focus on the structural conflict between marriage, childbearing, and career development among middle-class women. For instance, Mu and Tian point out that the pressure of "intensive parenting" forces some women to withdraw from the labor market [9]. Meanwhile, from the perspective of macro cultural narratives, Gaetano analyzes how the media attributes low fertility rates to urban middle-class women, thus forming a new form of gender discipline. In response, middle-class women have chosen to delay marriage and childbearing or resist national discourse through lifestyle choices [10].

Second, research on rural women, female migrant workers, and mobile women underscores the importance of institutional structures. Urban-rural resource gaps, the household registration system, and informal employment constitute the main sources of gender inequality for this group. Wang

demonstrates that rural female students often pursue class mobility through education amid the double pressure of urban-rural disparities and gender prejudices, forming a path of "resisting oppression through upward mobility" [11]. Taking domestic workers as an example, Peng argues that women in the low-end labor sector are often in a state of "structural invisibility" due to insufficient legal protection, household registration restrictions, and occupational stigma. Their coping strategies are limited to individual-level "strategic endurance" and support from social networks [12]. Similarly, Wang Y. emphasizes that female migrant workers engage in "low-risk resistance" in urban employment by frequently changing jobs and seeking resources and opportunities [13].

Third, studies on young women and student groups focus on gender stereotypes and career path choices. Liu indicated that gender-mathematics stereotypes affect girls' self-evaluation and subject selection, thereby deepening gender differentiation in the educational stage. Their resistance is mainly reflected in psychological self-correction and seeking external support [14]. In addition, a study by Liu, Gao, and Wang showed that the widespread use of digital technology has not narrowed the class gap; instead, it has exacerbated income inequality among women with low educational levels, making the "digital divide" a new source of structural discrimination [15].

In addition, some studies focus on professional women and institutional inequality. Chen emphasized that the lack of data leads to the lack of pertinence in policies. Therefore, women's organizations promote institutional changes through data advocacy, forming a "bottom-up" form of institutional resistance [16]. From the perspective of technological governance, Xu discussed algorithmic discrimination and argued that women need to promote the "gender-friendliness" of technological systems in the digital age [17]. Peng, He, and Yi pointed out that women in the science and technology field face the dual challenges of cultural prejudices and institutional deficiencies, and their resistance mainly starts with cognitive self-reconstruction and professional competence improvement [18].

Overall, existing literature generally agrees that class exerts a structural impact on women's gender situations and resistance strategies: middle-class and professional women possess more cultural and social capital, and their resistance is more often expressed through symbolic, discursive, or lifestyle choices; in contrast, due to resource scarcity, multiple institutional barriers, and vulnerable identities, women in lower classes tend to adopt resistance strategies that are daily-based, implicit, and survival-oriented. However, although many studies focus on specific groups, comprehensive analysis on "how class systematically affects women's capacity for resistance" is still relatively scarce. The purpose of this research is to fill this gap.

3. Methodology

3.1. Stage 1: identification of the research question and objectives

This study adopts the method of systematic review, aiming to identify and synthesize the resistance strategies adopted by Chinese women in coping with gender inequality in the 21st century, with a focus on the differences in these strategies across different social classes. The research process follows a standardized procedure for literature reviews, including designing search strategies, setting inclusion and exclusion criteria, screening literature, extracting data, and conducting thematic analysis. To ensure the transparency and replicability of the review, this study uses Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research type (SPIDER) framework to guide the formulation of search strategies and inclusion/exclusion criteria, as specified below:

- S (Sample): Chinese women in the 21st century

- PI (Phenomenon of Interest): Experiences of gender discrimination and corresponding resistance strategies
- D (Design): Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods studies
- E (Evaluation): Identification of gender inequality and analysis of resistance strategies
- R (Research type): Empirical or theoretical studies published in peer-reviewed journals

3.2. Stage 2: identifying relevant studies

Between November and December 2025, this study conducted systematic searches across two core databases, namely CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) and JSTOR. The keywords were constructed around four core themes: gender inequality, resistance strategies, China, and class differences. Boolean operators (AND, OR) and truncation symbols were applied in the search process to ensure comprehensiveness. The initial search yielded a total of 273 documents, which then entered the screening phase.

Sample Boolean search string: (“China”AND “gender discrimination” OR “gender inequality”) AND (“Class”) NOT (“movie” OR “book”)

Zotero was employed for reference storage and organization, while spreadsheets were used to manage the literature screening process.

In addition, the following criteria were applied to determine which articles to include in the final review:

Table 1. Inclusion criteria

Criteria	Description
Time Scope	2015–2025
Research Subjects	Contemporary Chinese women
Research Themes	Gender discrimination, class differences, resistance strategies
Research Methods	Qualitative, quantitative, mixed-methods studies
Literature Type	Peer-reviewed journal articles

Table 2. Exclusion criteria

Criteria	Description
Historical Studies	Research focusing on women in ancient or modern Chinese history
Cross-country Comparisons	Studies centered on cross-national comparisons rather than China-focused analysis
Non-academic Research	Newspaper articles, commentaries, literary analyses
Purely Theoretical Articles	Articles that do not address gender discrimination or class differences in reality, focusing on gender theory
Irrelevant Themes	Studies on gender education or psychological counseling with no connection to class issues

3.3. Stage 3: study selection

The initial search retrieved 273 articles. After title screening, 74 potentially relevant articles were retained for abstract screening. After applying the inclusion/exclusion criteria, 27 full-text articles were reviewed. 10 of them were excluded due to irrelevance (e.g., focus on unrelated populations).

The final set of studies included for analysis comprised 17 articles. Figure 1 illustrates the study selection process in PRISMA format.

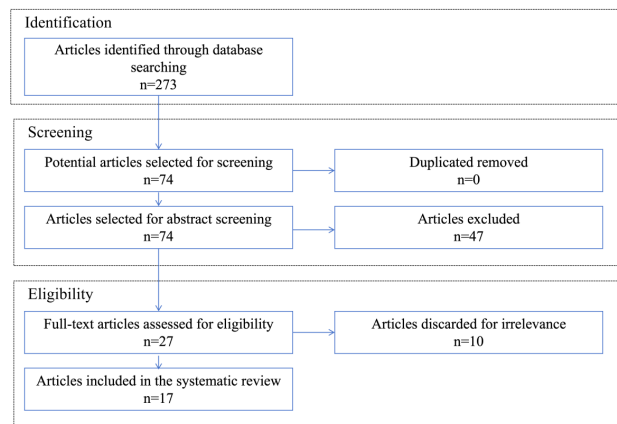


Figure 1. Selection process

3.4. Stage 4: data extraction and charting the data

All included studies were reviewed using a data extraction table adapted from the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) Evidence Synthesis Manual [19]. An Excel spreadsheet was created to record the following details for each study:

- (1) Database;
- (2) Title;
- (3) Author(s), Year;
- (4) Method;
- (5) Key findings on gender discrimination and gender inequality
- (6) Class/Group Focus
- (7) Resistance strategies (explicit or implicit)

Table 3 below summarizes these key characteristics.

Table 3. Synthesis: class-based gender discrimination and resistance strategies in China

Database	Title	Author(s), Year	Method	Key Findings on Gender Discrimination	Class Focus	Resistance Strategies (Explicit or Implicit)
CN KI	Unseen Inequality: How Invisible Housework and Gender Equality Awareness Create...	Ding, Y. & Shi, Y. (2025)	Qualitative (Interviews, N=38)	"Invisible housework" (emotional/cognitive labor) falls on women; men have a "perception gap" regarding their contribution.	Urban Middle Class	Cognitive Rationalization (Negative Resistance): High equality awareness is used paradoxically to "obfuscate" inequality rather than fix it; women may rationalize the disparity to maintain the "modern couple" facade.
CN KI	How Data Governance can Help Promote Gender Equality	Xu, C. (2024)	Exploratory Analysis	Discrimination extends to online spaces (algorithms in hiring/loans); lack of female perspective in data sources.	General / Professional	Systemic/Institutional: Demanding "female affordance" in technology; changing data governance to reduce algorithmic bias (Top-down resistance).

Table 3. (continued)

C N KI	Women's Consciousness of Gender Equality and the Influencing Factors	Dong, J. (2018)	Quantita tive (CGSS2 015)	Education and class identity correlate with equality awareness; awareness positively impacts economic status.	Cross- Class	Economic/Cognitive: Leveraging gender consciousness to improve income and family status (Virtuous cycle for those with higher education).
C N KI	The Dilemma of Chinese Single Women: Understanding Oppression...	Gong, W., Guo, Q., & Jiang, L. (2018)	Theoreti cal / Intersect ional Framew ork	"Leftover women" stigma; State and media pressure to marry; oppression varies by intersecting identities.	Middle/ Upper vs. General	Discursive/Negotiation: High-SES women use their status to "downplay" marriage importance and frame singleness as "self-enhancing" and empowering (Visible resistance).
C N KI	Relative Resources Theory, Class Stratification and Power Relationships...	Li, J. & Guo, M. (2015)	Quantita tive (3rd National Survey)	Power dynamics vary by class: Peasants value wife's finance; Middle class compares resources; Upper class pursues ideological equality.	Stratifi ed (Peasan t to Upper)	Resource-Based: Lower classes resist via economic contribution; Ideological: Upper classes resist via adherence to modern equality values (distinct from pure economic bargaining).
C N KI	Gender Equality in Technical Field	Peng, F., He, Y., & Yi, X. (2015)	Theoreti cal	Inequality in participation and status in tech; rooted in traditional culture and system deficiency.	Technic al Elite / Profess ional	Cognitive/Self-Reconstruction: Breaking "gender dualism" and changing female self-cognition to overcome "intrinsic factors" in male- dominated fields.
C N KI	Opportunity Equality, Risk Society and the Gender Dimension...	Feng, T. (2025)	Theoreti cal	The "Standard Family" model (male breadwinner) hinders opportunity equality; risk is individualized to women.	General	Policy Advocacy: Demanding liberation from housework and recognition of gender differences in social construction (Structural resistance).
C N KI	The Influence of Internet Use on Gender Wage Gap...	Liu, Y., Gao, J., & Wang, R. (2022)	Quantita tive (Regress ion)	Internet use widens wage gap for uneducated women but narrows it for educated women.	Private Sector (Low vs. High Edu)	Educational: "Diversified re-education" and rational internet use to bridge the gap. (Low-class women are vulnerable to technology's negative effects).
C N KI	Married Population's Concept of Gender Role and Its Influencing Factors	Hu, S. & Lei, Y. (2023)	Quantita tive (CGSS2 017)	Husbands with high relative income become more traditional; Wives perform "gender display" to balance dynamics.	Marrie d Couple s (Mixed Class)	Strategic Compliance: "Gender Display/Performance"—Acting traditionally to maintain family harmony despite economic power (Hidden/Compromising resistance).
C N KI	The Development of Chinese Girls and Their Challenges in the New Era	Song, Y., Wang, R., & Wu, X. (2022)	Literatur e Review	Basic rights improved, but development is unbalanced; digital era brings new challenges.	Youth / Girls	Developmental: Gaining access to education and health resources as a baseline for future resistance.

Table 3. (continued)

JS T O R	Gender Statistics and Local Governance in China	Chen, L. (2016)	Qualitative (Case Study)	Lack of gender stats hinders effective policy; "State feminism" often disconnects from local reality.	Policy / Community	Activism: Community activists demanding specific gender statistics to force government accountability and policy changes (Bottom-up political resistance).
JS T O R	Gender-Math Stereotype, Biased Self-Assessment...	Liu, R. (2018)	Quantitative (CEPS)	Stereotypes lower girls' self-assessment in math, reducing STEM aspirations even when performance is equal.	Adolescents (Students)	Psychological (Implied): The struggle involves overcoming internalized stereotypes and biased self-assessment to pursue STEM.
JS T O R	Negotiating the Intersection of the Urban-Rural Divide and Gender...	Wang, L. (2017)	Qualitative (Interviews, N=54)	Rural female students are not passive victims; they face interlocking oppression of rural origin + gender.	Rural-to-Urban (Transitional)	Agency/Identity Negotiation: Resisting the "victim" label; using education to negotiate fluid identities and escape rural patriarchal structures (Upward mobility as resistance).
JS T O R	No Country for the Low-end? An Intersectional Analysis...	Peng, Q. (2019)	Legal / Intersectional Analysis	Domestic workers face "overlapped disadvantages" (gender, origin, occupation); legally invisible.	Migrant / Working Class	Endurance/Survival: Often lack legal tools for resistance; resistance is implicit in their survival and continued labor despite exclusion (Hidden resistance).
JS T O R	The Changing Patterns and Determinants of Stay-at-Home Motherhood...	Mu, Z. & Tian, F. F. (2022)	Quantitative (Census/CGSS)	Rise in stay-at-home moms among those with resources due to "intensive parenting" pressure and work-family conflict.	Urban Middle/Upper Class	Opting Out (Paradoxical): Withdrawing from the workforce to manage family pressure; utilizing economic resources to "afford" a traditional division (Individual solution to systemic problem).
JS T O R	The Chinese State, "Reform and Opening," And The Regulation Of Women...	Gaetano, A. M. (2018)	Qualitative / Discourse Analysis	Successful women are blamed for demographic issues (e.g., low fertility); State reasserts patriarchal values.	Urban Professional	Lifestyle Choice: Postponing marriage, non-marriage, or advocating for sexual rights; refusing to conform to the state's timeline for women (Visible, lifestyle-based resistance).
JS T O R	The Mystery Revealed—Intersectionality in the Black Box...	Wang, Y. (2015)	Qualitative (Interviews)	Hukou and Gender create "splintering, contesting, or collaborating" barriers to employment.	Female Migrant Workers	Navigation: Navigating the complex matrix of Hukou and gender restrictions; trying to find cracks in the "entrenched" labor market (Survival-oriented).

4. Results

After systematically reviewing 17 academic articles, this study finds that Chinese women's resistance strategies exhibit a distinct class-based structure. While sporadically mentioned in existing research, this structure lacks systematic discussion. Through cross-textual comparison, this study identifies three core findings: first, class not only determines the type of gender inequality women encounter, but also precisely defines the available forms of resistance and the level of risks they can afford to take; second, the female group, often regarded as "homogeneous" in public narratives, shows significant disparities along the class dimension—especially in terms of the intensity of agency, space for resistance, and choice of pathways; third, institutional policies, family structures, and the digitalization process exert a differentiating effect on women of different classes,

thereby further reinforcing the class-based nature of gender inequality. Each of these findings will be elaborated below based on evidence from the literature.

4.1. Finding 1: class shapes women's capacity and pathways for resistance

Class profoundly shapes both what women can resist and how they resist. Middle-class women, equipped with higher education and economic capital, gain greater discourse flexibility in relationships, families and workplaces. They address structural inequality by negotiating household labor division, reconstructing marriage and childbearing narratives or leveraging digital skills to boost professional status [5,8,15]. For example, Gong, Guo & Jiang note that middle-class women can turn potentially stigmatized identities like "singlehood" or "career aspirations" into symbols of autonomy and independence, resisting mainstream gender expectations [20]. Their resistance tends to be symbolic transformation, discursive contestation or resource-based selective actions, with lower risks than institutional confrontation.

Yet middle-class women also face what can be described as a "modernity trap." Mu & Tian find that more high-income, highly educated women are choosing full-time motherhood [9]. This "return to family" is not a mere extension of traditional gender norms but a choice enabled by class privilege, which in turn solidifies gendered parenting models. Ding & Shi reveal that "invisible housework"—including emotional labor and family management—is unequally distributed in urban middle-class households, with men's lack of awareness masking structural disparities behind "surface-level equality" [8]. Hu & Lei add that wives earning more than husbands may adopt traditional behaviors to maintain family stability through "performative concession" [21], showing that even middle-class women's actions are constrained by gender norms despite their bargaining power.

4.2. Finding 2: disadvantaged women adopt implicit, survival-oriented strategies to cope with multiple inequalities

Economically disadvantaged, rural and migrant women's resistance is distinctly survival-oriented. They face oppression from both gender inequality and overlapping structural constraints such as the household registration system, informal employment and insufficient educational resources [12,13]. Unable to afford the high risks of open confrontation or institutional advocacy, they mainly use low-risk, implicit micro-strategies: changing employers, expanding social networks, enhancing bargaining power through continuous labor or pursuing intergenerational upward mobility via education [11]. Though labeled "weak resistance", these strategies are the most common and sustainable actions for disadvantaged women in highly constrained environments.

4.3. Finding 3: digitalization, family structure, and institutional policies produce differentiating effects across classes

Digitalization, family structure changes and institutional policies do not bring homogeneous benefits to women of different classes; instead, they become new mechanisms of class-based inequality. For example, improved digital skills boost workplace advantages for highly educated women but widen the digital divide for their less educated counterparts [15]. Family structure "modernization" leads to discursive negotiation and cognitive misalignment in middle-class households [8], while disadvantaged groups rely heavily on marital and childbearing norms with limited bargaining power. Institutional advocacy works effectively for professional women [16,17] but lacks accessibility for

lower-class women. These disparities mean macro social changes have divergent or even opposing impacts on women of different classes, further strengthening the class-based structure of gender inequality.

In conclusion, Chinese women's resistance strategies are not a single linear model but a differentiated logic shaped by class constraints. Middle-class and professional women prefer discursive, symbolic and resource-intensive strategies, while blue-collar, migrant and rural women adopt implicit, individualized and survival-oriented approaches. This class-based structure is a core mechanism for understanding differences in women's resistance pathways and reveals class's pivotal role in shaping women's agency boundaries, making a theoretical contribution that existing literature has not fully systematized.

5. Discussion

The systematic review reveals that Chinese women exhibit a highly class-stratified pattern of resistance, entailing complex tensions with state-promoted gender equality policies. While China has strengthened legal protections—such as revising the Law on the Protection of Women's Rights and Interests and improving anti-domestic violence systems—this study finds their actual effects are not uniform across social classes. In fact, they may inadvertently reinforce existing inequality. This section explores policy effectiveness, limitations, countereffects, and future implications.

First, while China has progressed in building an institutional framework for safeguarding women's rights, actual outcomes vary significantly by class. Middle-class and professional women generally possess stronger legal awareness, digital skills, and institutional accessibility. Possessing higher gender equality awareness and class identity, they effectively utilize the existing policy framework—such as applying for protection orders or using digital tools to collect discrimination evidence [22]. This indicates that while institutional protection is technically available to all, in practice, it is more easily accessed by those with greater cultural capital and negotiation power [20].

Second, for blue-collar, migrant, and rural women, policy accessibility is significantly limited. The literature shows these women face multiple forms of marginalization, including household registration restrictions, informal employment, and information barriers [13]. For instance, despite labor laws prohibiting discrimination, women in sectors like food delivery and domestic service are often excluded from protection due to lack of formal labor relations [12]. Consequently, lacking effective complaint channels, "changing employers" becomes their primary risk avoidance strategy rather than institutionalized rights protection. This suggests that formal gender equality systems have not fully reached the most vulnerable groups, revealing a clear class bias.

Third, certain "protective" policies may produce counterproductive effects, becoming institutionalized grounds for discrimination. While recent policies extending maternity leave intend to boost fertility, the absence of paternal leave or enterprise cost-sharing mechanisms has increased the hidden costs of hiring women of childbearing age [10]. Consequently, employers increasingly prefer men, reinforcing structural exclusion. Without fair cost-sharing, these policies—based on standard family assumptions—create perverse incentives countering their original intent [23]. This disproportionately affects blue-collar and migrant women with limited bargaining power, as they rely heavily on stable employment yet lack access to standardized professional fields.

Furthermore, the increasing digitalization of institutional governance may exacerbate inequality. Regions adopting app-based reporting or online legal services implicitly assume users possess high digital literacy. However, studies show that while internet access benefits highly educated women, digital barriers widen the gap for those with low qualifications [15]. Disadvantaged women face digital exclusion and data bias in algorithmic governance, leading to further marginalization of their

voices [17]. These phenomena suggest that if gender policies fail to account for class differences, they may generate a hierarchical discrimination effect during implementation.

Analyses above put forward the following policy implications: First, the formulation of gender equality policies needs to shift from a framework based on "universal female experiences" to one centered on "differentiated female experiences", which means explicitly recognizing the significant disparities in institutional accessibility, resource capacity, and risk-bearing capacity among women of different classes.

Second, fertility support policies should adopt structural reforms that promote shared responsibilities between men and women, such as implementing "mandatory and enforceable paternity leave", providing subsidies to enterprises to share fertility costs, and offering career continuity support to women of childbearing age, to prevent protective policies from resulting in reverse discrimination against women.

Third, the government and social institutions should strengthen supervision and penalties for gender discrimination by enterprises, and reduce the structural incentives for recruitment discrimination through open and transparent oversight and accountability mechanisms.

Finally, policy formulation should pay greater attention to the accessibility of digital governance. While promoting digital solutions, it is essential to provide digital skills training and offline alternative channels for women with limited resources, to prevent the digital divide from evolving into institutional inequality.

6. Conclusion

Through a systematic review of 17 research papers, this study reveals distinct class-based differentiation in Chinese women's resistance strategies against gender discrimination. Class not only shapes inequality but determines the forms of resistance, resources mobilized, and potential risks involved. Middle-class professionals leverage educational and cultural capital for symbolic and discursive strategies, whereas blue-collar and migrant women adopt implicit, survival-oriented micro-strategies. Theoretically, this contributes an integrated framework for understanding the relationship between class, gender, and women's agency.

The study also notes that recent gender equality policies have yielded complex, uneven effects. Implementation is often class-biased: middle-class women effectively leverage institutional resources, while disadvantaged women struggle due to weak legal awareness and unstable employment. Moreover, protective policies like extended maternity leave can create perverse incentives, serving as justification for gender-based exclusion by enterprises lacking cost-sharing mechanisms. These institutional effects have further deepened structural differentiation.

In light of these findings, future policy-making must shift from "universal female experiences" to addressing "class-specific needs." Equitable reform requires lowering institutional access barriers, promoting paternal involvement, and bridging the digital divide. Finally, the study calls for empirical research into specific sectors like the platform economy and domestic service. By integrating gender studies with class analysis, future scholarship can better grasp the dynamic mechanisms linking women's agency and structural constraints.

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