

The Transformation and Evolution of Disability Employment Policies in China - An Analysis Based on Historical Institutionalism

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Abstract:

Disability employment policy is a government guarantee for disabled people to obtain equal status in the field of employment, which involves the important logic of institutional change. From the perspective of historical institutionalism, the disability employment policy in China since the establishment of the new China can be divided into five stages: initial start-up, progressive development, multiple coexistence, pattern formation, and stable development. It shows the characteristics of the transformation process from a “support” policy mainly based on social relief to an “empowerment” policy mainly based on social governance. The institutional background, institutional concepts, and external driving forces in structural changes have promoted the policy evolution of disability employment in China. The logic of policy change is explained by path dependence, cultural inheritance, and key nodes in historical changes, while the behavior patterns of various social governance entities elaborate on the driving force system of policy progression. Combining with the current development situation in China, starting from the basic exploration of the logic of policy change, the disability employment policy is entering a period of transformation towards depth and refinement.

Keywords:

Disability, Employment Policy, Historical Institutionalism, Transformation Process, Evolution Logic

1. Introduction

1.1. Presentation of the problem

The employment issue is currently the primary focus after the crisis in China. According to statistics from the China Disabled Persons' Data Science Research Institute, in 2020, there were 8.617 million certified disabled people employed in China, including 3.022 million individuals engaged in flexible employment, 0.784 million proportionally employed, 0.278 million concentrated in employment, 0.147

million in public welfare positions, and 0.143 million in auxiliary employment. Disability employment policies continuously influence changes in employment forms, with the increasing expansion of the needs for disabled employment, the diverse standardization of disabled employment forms is gradually gaining attention.

Professor Yang Lixiong, focusing on the issue of disability employment policies, based on the historical development of China's disability social protection policies and from the perspective of changes in social policy paradigms, believes that China's disability social policies have undergone three changes, established on the foundation of benevolence, humanitarianism, and social rights respectively, with each stage primarily focused on establishing care institutions, sheltered policies, and developmental social policies, which became important criteria for subsequent research stage divisions. Through comprehensive content analysis, such as policy structure and expansion, policy process and trajectory, policy diffusion, etc., the advanced part of the disability policy has been clearly defined as the employment policy with profound significance. Through systematic effect analysis, such as policy impact assessment, specific policy text analysis, policy tool analysis, etc., the effectiveness of the policy significance has been validated and imbued with substance. Furthermore, scholars have utilized the Cite Space software to conduct a visual comparative analysis of core literature on disability employment research in the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI) and Science Citation Index databases from 2010 to 2019, predicting the hotspots of disability employment policies. These scholars have all discussed issues such as the low legal effectiveness, insufficient coordination of subjects, and imbalanced tool structure in the disability labor employment and policy support system, exploring the direction of micro-policy actions within the macro employment policy system context, seeking the exploration of policy evolution and effects based on the logic of institutional change at the meso-level.

Most of the above-mentioned studies have traced the structures and histories from macro, meso, and micro perspectives, but most have overlooked the system's logical chain of macro-environment—meso-level institutions—micro actions, which is precisely where historical institutionalism has its explanatory power. Additionally, the history of disability employment policies is profound, and conducting analyses simply based on policy impact assessment or disregarding the era's characteristics can deviate from its essence. Therefore, the article focuses on the specific exploration of the main employment form changes at each stage of disability employment policies after the establishment of New China, in the hope of clarifying the policy's underlying logic changes and providing ideas for the subsequent development and improvement of disability employment policies.

1.2. Analytical framework: historical institutionalism

In the 1980s, historical institutionalism gradually established core methodological principles from its iconic theoretical summation, giving rise to a new institutionalist trend in Western political science. The operational logic of historical institutionalism is based on exploring the fundamental factors that explain institutions, incorporating interactive relationships among actors to explain the logical sequence between the fundamental factors and phenomena of institutions. Based on this, historical institutionalism forms its own analytical framework in three aspects to analyze the fundamental factors in institutional structures, thereby assessing their logical

relationships, namely structural perspectives, historical perspectives, and behavioral patterns.

The structural perspective of historical institutionalism reflects the structural relationship between the grand institutional background of the state and specific institutional arrangements, as well as the structural relationships of political variable sequences. The evolution of disability employment policies demonstrates significant macro “contextual” influences during the evolutionary process, not only showing different arrangements of social systems and economic systems in the macro background but also the influence of dual conceptual factors and external drivers of policies in developed countries. Institutional change in the historical perspective is reflected in path dependency theory, which also includes path dependence on cultural inheritance, while exploring the regularities of key nodes in policy change. The evolution of disability employment policies is driven by the interaction of institutions and behaviors, specifically understood as the interaction between multiple subjects of social governance and disability employment policies being influenced by positive and negative institutional factors, while the exploratory interaction of multiple subjects further drives institutional change (Figure 1).

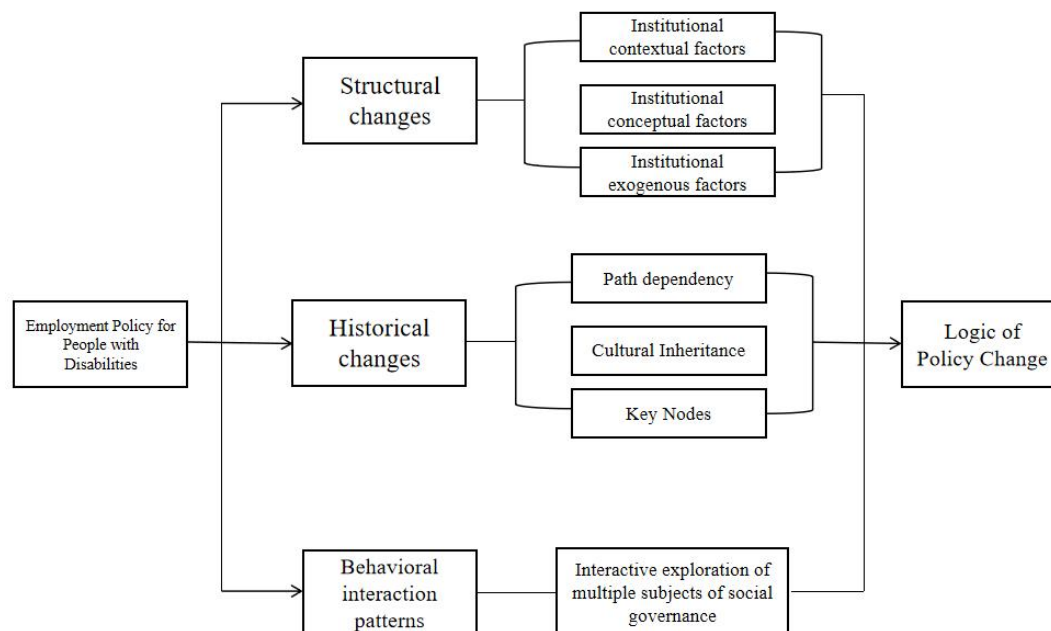


Figure 1. Logic of change of employment policy for disabled persons.

2. Transformational History of Our Employment Policy for Persons With Disabilities

Our country’s disabled employment policy transformation can be roughly divided into five stages based on the timeline and key events. The policy is closely related to the form of disabled employment, with landmark documents on the disabled career sector and local laws mostly regulating various employment forms. Currently, specific forms of disabled employment in our country include centralized employment, proportional employment, individual flexible employment, as well as later additional channels like supportive employment and public welfare employment. Policy formulation mostly responds to the current situation of employment forms and channels.

(1) Initial stage: “Residential care” policy dominated by social relief (1949-1977)

The disabled employment policy in the initial stage aimed to alleviate the living difficulties of the disabled through the “residential care” policy, which originated from the social relief ideas for widows, widowers, orphans, and disabled individuals in various dynasties. This policy ensured the basic living environment for the disabled population, fundamentally changing the destitute life conditions of the disabled before liberation. The focus of the policy was mainly on the basic survival rights of the disabled, as reflected in various meetings and legislations such as the 1951 “Labor Insurance Regulations of the People’s Republic of China,” the 1954 “Constitution of the People’s Republic of China,” and the Fifth and Sixth National Civil Affairs Conferences in 1959-1960. The specific contents of the main meetings and policy documents are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Major Conferences and Policies on Employment of Persons with Disabilities at the Initial Start-up Stage.

Major conferences and policies and legal documents	Year	Summary of main contents
Regulations of the People’s Republic of China on Labor Insurance	1951	Provided for relief benefits, pensions and labor insurance for disabled workers
The Fifth and Sixth National Civil Affairs Conferences	1959, 1960	In accordance with the Central Government's policy of “adjusting, consolidating, enriching and improving” the national economy, the scope of welfare production organized by the civil affairs departments was determined
National Program for Agricultural Development, 1956-1976	1960	Providing clear guarantees for the production arrangements and living care of disabled members of agricultural cooperatives
Draft Interim Measures for Resettlement of Work on Farms	1963	Clarifying “agricultural enterprises under the ownership of the whole nation”, whose tasks are to resettle and reform and to organize production

(2) Progressive development stage: “Assistance” policy emphasizing social progress (1978-1987)

The disabled employment policy in the progressive stage was based on the “assistance” policy that balanced the development of the socialist market economy with safeguarding the labor rights of the disabled. In contrast to the previous stage’s “residential care” policy, the “assistance” policy further emphasized rational distribution, considering disabled individuals and welfare enterprises as valuable market resources to be developed and utilized. Meetings and policies such as the Seventh National Civil Affairs Conference in 1978, the National Urban Social Relief Work Conference in 1979, and directives like the “Notice on Further Improving the Employment Placement of Blind, Deaf-Mute, and Other Disabled Young People in Urban Areas” proposed training requirements in labor and education alongside placement and relief efforts, encouraging disabled individuals to enter the labor market, reflecting the idea of social progress. The specific contents are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. *Major conferences and policies on employment of persons with disabilities in the progressive development stage.*

Major conferences and policies and legal documents	Year	Summary of main contents
Seventh National Civil Affairs Conference	1978	Explicitly recalled social welfare factories that had been handed over during the Cultural Revolution
National Conference on Urban Social Relief Work	1979	The National Conference on Urban Social Relief Work further clarified the guidelines and policies for running social welfare production
Circular on Further Improving the Employment and Placement of Unemployed Blind, Deaf and Mute Disabled Youth in Cities and Towns	1983	Proposes that the employment of such disabled persons should rely on the streets to organize and self-finance welfare factories
Circular on Tax Exemption for Welfare Production Units Organized by Civil Affairs Departments	1963	Operational rules and regulations on the implementation of tax incentives for welfare enterprises

(3) Coexistence stage: “Transfer” policy focusing on social rights (1988-2006)

The disabled employment policy in the coexistence stage emphasized both the development of productivity and human development through the “transfer” policy, transitioning away from relief and assistance towards a focus on transferring democratic political rights, allowing disabled individuals to engage more freely in social market activities. The year 1988 marked a milestone in China’s disabled development with the State Council issuing the “Five-Year Work Outline for China’s Disabled Persons,” initiating a breakthrough in disabled employment policy. Channels for disabled employment expanded, leading to the formal establishment of a diverse landscape for disabled individuals. Documents like the 1990 “Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities” specified the rights to employment for the disabled and delineated responsibilities for the government and employing units, embodying a comprehensive and diverse approach. The specifics are outlined in Table 3.

Table 3. *Main policies on employment of persons with disabilities at the stage of multiple coexistence.*

Major conferences and policies and legal documents	Year	Summary of main contents
China’s Five-Year Work Program for Persons with Disabilities	1988	Specific tasks and requirements are put forward on issues such as education and employment and training work for the disabled
Provisional Regulations on the Recruitment of Disabled Workers by Social Welfare Enterprises	1989	Supporting and protecting the development of welfare enterprises and solving the problem of employment of persons with disabilities through multiple channels
Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities	1990	Safeguarding the legitimate rights and interests of persons with disabilities at the constitutional level, developing the cause of persons with disabilities, and guaranteeing the full participation of persons with disabilities in social life on an equal footing
Interim Provisions on the Administration of the Employment Guarantee Fund for Persons with Disabilities	1995	Regulates and strengthens the management of security deposits for persons with disabilities

(4) Formation stage: “Assistance” policy focusing on social equity (2007-2012)

The disabled employment policy in the formation stage primarily aimed at achieving social equity through the “assistance” policy, promoting ideas like “non-discrimination” and “inclusion” to facilitate disabled individuals’ participation in societal activities. The “Regulations on the Employment of Persons with Disabilities” was China’s first regulation specifically tailored for disabled employment, marking an important milestone in the formation of disabled employment policies during this stage. Subsequent policies like the revisions to the “Law of the People’s Republic of China on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities” in 2008, the issuance of opinions promoting the development of the disabled cause in 2011, and the “Eleventh Five-Year Plan for the Development of China’s Disabled Cause” also demonstrated support for creating a fair employment environment and treating disabled individuals with equality. The details can be found in Table 4.

Table 4. *Major Policies on Employment of Persons with Disabilities at the Pattern Formation Stage.*

Major conferences and policies and legal documents	Year	Summary of main contents
Regulations on the Employment of Disabled Persons	2007	Aims to comprehensively promote the employment of persons with disabilities and safeguard the labor rights of persons with disabilities
Revision of the Law of the People's Republic of China on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities	2008	The State adopts auxiliary methods and support measures to give special assistance to the disabled
Opinions on Promoting the Cause of Persons with Disabilities	2008	Improving laws and regulations and policy measures to promote the development of the cause of persons with disabilities, and realizing the coordinated development of the cause of persons with disabilities
The Outline of the Eleventh Five-Year Plan for the Development of the Cause of Persons with Disabilities in China	2011	Further improving the system of laws and regulations for persons with disabilities

(5) Stable development stage: “Empowerment” policy focusing on social governance (2012-present)

The disabled employment policy in the stable development stage revolves around the “empowerment” policy aimed at enhancing the social governance structure. The continuous improvement of the disabled employment policy encourages equal participation of disabled individuals in public affairs and exercising their social rights. Directives such as the 2015 “Opinions on the Development of Supportive Employment for the Disabled,” the 2016 “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan for Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities,” the 2017 “Action Plan for E-commerce to Aid the Disabled for Poverty Alleviation,” and the 2022 “Three-Year Action Plan for Promoting the Employment of Persons with Disabilities (2022-2024)” all contribute to better government-led initiatives in promoting employment. The specifics are detailed in Table 5.

Table 5. *Major Policies on Employment of Persons with Disabilities at the Stable Development Stage.*

Major conferences and policies and legal documents	Year	Summary of main contents
Three-Year Action Program to	2015	Give full play to the government's role in

Promote the Employment of Persons with Disabilities (2022-2024)		promoting employment and further implement policies to support the employment and entrepreneurship of persons with disabilities
Opinions on Developing Supported Employment for Persons with Disabilities Disabilities	2015	Establishment of supported employment organizations to meet the employment needs of persons with intellectual, mental and other physical disabilities with a certain degree of working ability
Implementation Plan for the 13th Five-Year Plan for the Promotion of Employment for Persons with Disabilities	2016	Survey on the situation of unemployed persons with disabilities in the special basic service conditions and needs of persons with disabilities
Implementation Program for the Development of Handicrafts to Promote the Employment and Poverty Eradication of Poor Women with Disabilities	2017	Developing employment and entrepreneurship positions for poor women with disabilities, and providing training in handicraft skills
Implementation Plan for E-Commerce Actions to Assist Persons with Disabilities in Poverty Alleviation	2017	Supporting impoverished families with disabilities to set up online stores, and driving people with disabilities to engage in e-commerce industry chain business to increase their income

3. Vicissitude Logic of Employment Policy for Disabled Persons in China

3.1. The Structural Changes in China's Disability Employment Policy

3.1.1. Institutional Background: China's Macro-Situational Institutional Environment

The institutional context in historical institutionalism, i.e., “institutional environment refers to the basic political and economic institutions stipulated by the constitution.” The uniqueness of the institutional environment in various periods in China similarly determines the variable choices in disability employment policies.

At the beginning of the founding of New China, disability employment policies in this stage were mainly influenced by social institutions to showcase the superiority of socialist institutions. On one hand, the government implemented separate protective measures for marginalized groups, combining relief and social regulations; they established production and rehabilitation centers and farms for vagrants and rest & recreation centers for disabled revolutionary cadres. On the other hand, under the planned economic system, resource allocation and utilization were carried out based on central directive plans, social welfare organizations accepted unified resource allocation from the government, providing centralized support for various types of disabled persons.

Since the reform and opening-up, disability employment policies have been mainly influenced by changes in economic systems, political factors, and society, primarily aimed at developing a socialist market economy while simultaneously promoting market economy and democratic political construction. There has been progressive expansion in choices for disabled individuals, allowing them to independently choose employment positions and engage in individual entrepreneurship based on personal preferences or voluntary organizations. The relaxed employment environment has

brought about a new atmosphere, laying the foundation for expanding employment opportunities for disabled individuals.

3.1.2. Concept of Institutions: “Ruling with Benevolence” and “Self-Reliance”

Chinese disability employment policy originated 4,000 years ago and was influenced by Confucian culture, primarily manifesting in social protection. China has always had a centralized imperial system where the relationship is akin to that of a ruler and his children. On one hand, the ruler is both a governor and a patriarch, and subjects must obey unconditionally while also bearing the responsibility of nurturing citizens. On the other hand, the ruler’s responsibility of “nurturing citizens” is reflected in their daily lives and education, creating necessary living conditions for them, and formulating measures for work and income security. This concept served as the foundational idea for successive rulers to establish policies for social protection of disabled individuals, gradually evolving into the unique Chinese “dwelling and nurturing” model, which persisted until the pre-reform and opening-up era, with the benevolent governance and altruistic thoughts continuous.

Since the reform and opening-up, influenced by the concept of “self-reliance”, encouraging and supporting disabled individuals to independently choose and create job opportunities has been an effective approach to address the employment issues of the disabled in new circumstances. On one hand, disabled individuals are gradually moving away from relying on charity to escape poverty, actively participating in employment and entrepreneurship within their capabilities, forming an important basis for policy development, which has later produced positive policy results. On the other hand, on January 12, 2018, the China Disabled Persons’ Federation, the State Council Poverty Alleviation Office, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions, the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League, the All-China Women’s Federation, and other departments jointly issued the “Opinions on Supporting Disabled People’s Independent Employment and Entrepreneurship” (Disabled Persons’ Federation Order [2018] No. 6), aiming to encourage and support disabled individuals in independent employment and entrepreneurship through over 20 measures, including providing reasonable convenience and preferential treatment, support and guarantee, and employment services.

3.1.3. External Drivers: Disability Employment Policies in Developed Countries

The disability employment policies of developed countries have provided rich practical experience for China’s policy-making, indicating that appropriate employment promotion policies can prompt various sectors of society to provide suitable job positions for disabled individuals. In developed countries, disability employment policies mainly focus on income support, employment plans, and rehabilitation plans. Income support policies involve providing subsidies to support disabled persons, similar to the income subsidies provided to disabled individuals in welfare state countries like the United States and the Nordic countries. Employment plans include providing employment opportunities for disabled individuals, with two main approaches: arranging disabled individuals to work in sheltered workshop environments, similar to the centralized employment model in China, or providing support in the open labor market for disabled individuals, known as supportive employment models, equivalent to China’s current individual flexible employment arrangements. Countries like Finland, Sweden, and Australia have similar employment plans where the government sets up sheltered workshops to provide job

positions for a large number of disabled individuals. Rehabilitation plans include physical and occupational rehabilitation. Vocational rehabilitation based on physical health is a comprehensive policy requirement; physical rehabilitation serves as the foundation for independent work, but more importantly, it provides appropriate employment training, counseling, and services based on their disability status. China has learned from these experiences and established three forms of disability employment that are compatible with the national context, further optimizing them as development progresses.

3.2. The historical transition of employment policy for persons with disabilities in China

3.2.1. Path dependence in the process

The employment policy of the disabled can be traced back to the welfare security of the past dynasties, which is the continuation and inheritance of the “path dependence” phenomenon on the basis of historical tradition. Path dependence emphasizes that an important system or major event in the historical process has a profound impact on the current system composition. Due to the participation of factors such as learning effect, coordination effect and adaptive expectation, policies will continue to self-learn and strengthen along their established direction.

(1) Learning effect

The accumulation of learning effects will put the employment policy of persons with disabilities into an intensified trend track. Although the guidance of government policies has always been in the direction of independent mode, the idea of “living and supporting” rooted in traditional culture has made it impossible to get rid of the all-in mode in the later period of policy. Such a policy can significantly increase the employment rate of disabled people, but it will be criticized because of the “rigid mode” and resources cannot be fully utilized, especially the concentrated employment policy is the most obvious. The continuation of the policy was not changed until the end of the welfare enterprise system in 2016.

(2) Coordination effect

The employment policies of persons with disabilities show obvious synergies. The policies of centralized employment, proportional distribution and individual flexibility, which are the three main forms of urban employment, are arranged and integrated at each stage, and proportional distribution of employment has alleviated the problems of uneven distribution and over-saturation of centralized employment for persons with disabilities to a certain extent. At the same time, the welfare enterprise system has declined in the later stage. Proportional distribution and encouraging individual flexible employment make up for the vacancy of concentrated employment.

(3) Adaptive expectations

With the long-term adjustment and improvement of the policy, the income level and employment rate of persons with disabilities in employment are gradually increasing, and the adaptability expectation of social subjects to the policy is also increasing. Therefore, at the beginning of the promulgation of the development program for persons with disabilities and the employment regulations, the policy can form a good interaction with all sectors of society. Thus forming policy impetus.

3.2.2. Developing cultural inheritance

The system cannot be separated from the constraints of culture, and the cultural factors always go deep into the specific provisions and internal spirit of the system, and become an important variable to determine the direction of institutional change. Through social learning, individuals inherit and spread culture through discourse, habits and customs. In fact, the way of individual cultural learning is also the basis of institutional learning, which carries out mutual continuation and dependence among institutions through observational learning, form imitation and goal imitation.

(1) Observational learning

Observational learning refers to the effect of promulgation and revision of employment policies for persons with disabilities in the context of The Times. The development of employment policies for the disabled is rooted in traditional culture, which is not only a study of the idea of “living and supporting” in traditional Chinese culture, but also a highly refined and sublimated thought. This can be explained not only from the continuity of concepts, but also from the following forms of imitation and goal imitation. The current employment system arrangement of disabled persons in our country is in line with the fact that disabled persons are employed in our country.

(2) Imitation of form

Throughout Chinese history, there has always been a focus on the role of rescue organizations. Early adoption institutions appeared as early as the pre-Qin period, mainly targeting “widows, widowers, orphans, the elderly, and the disabled”. Through the development of ideological thoughts over the generations, specialized adoption institutions became an important way for ancient China to implement relief, such as the Western Zhou “interest-free” system, the Song Dynasty’s residing care homes, Anji Fang, as well as the establishment of welfare pharmacies in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties, the Qing Dynasty’s refuge for the wandering, and the establishment of relief institutions in the Republic of China. These provided rich ideas for the establishment of relief and production institutions after the founding of New China. Modern society’s nursing homes, welfare enterprises, and many social institutions dedicated to assisting disabled individuals in employment can be seen as mimicking traditional institutions to some extent.

(3) Imitating the goal

The “Book of Rites·The Rules of Rites” states, “Not only care for one's own relatives, nor just raise one's own children, but also ensure the elderly have a place to spend their remaining years, the strong have a purpose, and the young have a future. Widows, widowers, orphans, the elderly, and the disabled should all be supported.” Traditional culture has systematically practiced how to support “widows, widowers, orphans, the elderly, and the disabled”, which is the core of traditional culture in terms of assisting and arranging for disabled individuals. This aligns well with the current focus in our country on the survival and security of this vulnerable group of disabled individuals. With the progress and development of society, the equal employment and human dignity of disabled individuals are being increasingly emphasized.

3.2.3. Key nodes in the transition

The policy-making process has the characteristic of innovating with the trend. Although the employment policy for people with disabilities shows strong path

dependence, it also has “key nodes” of institutional change. These “key nodes” refer to important turning points in historical development where decisions by policy designers directly determine the direction and path of political development in the next stage. In this article, there are multiple key nodes in the employment policy for people with disabilities that drive policy changes and transformations.

(1) The proposal of the Development Outline for the Disabled

After the establishment of the China Disabled Persons' Federation, the “Five-Year Development Outline for China's Disabled Persons' Cause” was issued. It stipulated strict implementation of existing policies related to the employment of disabled persons, such as preferential interest rates, tax exemptions, and exemptions from business tax for disabled individuals starting their own businesses. Clear regulations were also made for disabled employment from school education to employment service guarantees, outlining a standardized five-year plan. This key node saw a leap in the development of disabled employment.

(2) The promulgation of the Employment Regulations for Disabled Persons

The “Employment Regulations for Disabled Persons” detailed guidelines on the employment policy for disabled persons, responsibilities of employing units, protection measures, and employment services. It effectively regulated and safeguarded the labor and employment rights of disabled persons from a legal perspective, providing strong legal protection for disabled employment. With the publication of these regulations, disabled employment was further standardized, gradually establishing a complete institutional system, marking the entry of disabled employment policy into a sound legal track. The Employment Regulations for Disabled Persons represent another key node in China's disabled employment policy.

(3) The end of the welfare enterprise system

After going through stages of protection and support, liberalization and revitalization, and vigorous development, the Ministry of Civil Affairs issued a notice regarding the cancellation of the qualification assessment for welfare enterprises in response to streamlining administration and deepening administrative approval system reforms. This policy signifies the end of the welfare enterprise recognition system, becoming a key node in the entire policy system.

3.3. An interactive behavioral model of employment policy for the disabled in China

The analysis of institutional behavior will particularly emphasize the rational choices of actors. China's disability employment policies face the cross-interaction issue of multiple subjects in social governance. Rational choices of multiple subjects deeply influence policy orientation at each stage. The governance body of the article consists of three elements: citizenship, government responsibility, and the functional structure of social organizations. To activate and safeguard the awareness of rights and interests of disabled people, it is necessary to integrate the power of multiple governance bodies.

Firstly, the disabled community is a key interactive factor. Disabled individuals strive to overcome their limitations, enhance skills, but the overall strength of the disabled community is relatively weak. They mostly rely on government policy support and the goodwill of society. Therefore, the personal development of physical and mental health of disabled individuals is increasingly crucial for them to overcome difficulties. Secondly, the government is a dominant interactive factor. The

government plays a strong leading role in the employment process of disabled individuals. It not only plays a significant supportive role in improving social security and legal assistance policies for disabled employment but also needs to regulate the practical activities of disabled individuals and social organizations. Lastly, various social organizations are an important cohesive force in interactions. For disabled individuals in poverty, government relief must be combined with comprehensive assistance from various social forces, including providing career guidance, vocational training, job placement, and other related services.

4. Conclusions

The employment policy for people with disabilities is an important part of our country's employment policy system. Currently, the development of the disability cause in China has formed a relatively complete policy framework, and the employment policy context is gradually becoming clearer. Addressing the severe employment issue requires a complete perspective, especially for vulnerable groups like people with disabilities, who need to be viewed with a long-term perspective. The systematic rigor of policy processes determines the effectiveness of policies. Looking at China's employment issues for people with disabilities from the perspective of historical institutionalism is in line with its policy characteristics. Since the founding of the country, the employment policy for people with disabilities has gone through five stages: initial start, progressive development, plural coexistence, formation of patterns, and stable development, each stage with important key transitional points. Dissecting the reasons for changes and strengthening, it has been concluded that structural changes are caused by variables such as background, ideas, and external drivers, historical changes composed of path dependence, cultural inheritance, and key transitional points, and the behavioral patterns of multiple subjects in social governance. These three factors form a complete logical chain for exploring disability employment policies. However, developing institutional policies to solve our country's employment issues for people with disabilities cannot be achieved overnight, and further consideration is needed for the existing employment methods and related policy issues.

Conflicts of Interest

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