

# Efforts of the Chinese Physical Society to Promote Women in Physics in China

Asia-Europe Physics Summit  
Tsukuba, Japan, March 24 ~ 26, 2010

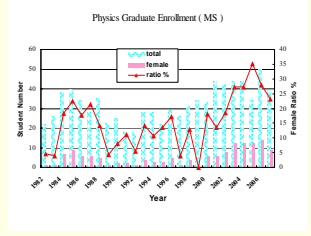
Chinese Physical Society, Beijing, China

Funding in China is increasing year by year so prospects for physicists are bright, though not so much so for women. The ratio of women physicists in China is less than 25%, dropping at senior levels due to the "leaky pipeline" effect and the forced retirement of female professionals below the rank of associate professor at age 55 compared to 60 for men. Paradoxically, the number of female graduate students has increased in recent years, but this is due to the new trend of employment discrimination against women as the country evolves towards a market economy.

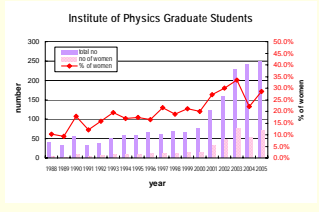
Since the formation of the Chinese Physical Society's Working Group on Women in Physics in 2002, much effort has been made to reverse this trend and to promote the image of women physicists. Statistical data are collected; a special session is held on gender issues at the Society's annual meeting; each March issue of *Physics* magazine has articles devoted to women in physics; the Xie Xi-De Physics Prize for Women was established and first awarded in 2007; special prizes for girls are awarded at provincial Physics Olympiads. However, much still remains to be done.

Increasing job discrimination leads to Increase in ratio of female graduate students, as they seek higher qualifications

Graduate Students in Fudan University, Shanghai

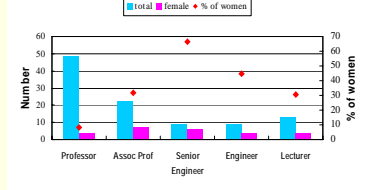


Graduate Students in Institute of Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences

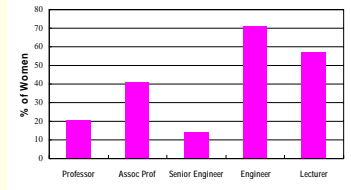


Enforced early retirement leads to high ratio of retired/current female professors

Faculty in Physics Dept of Tsinghua University, 2008

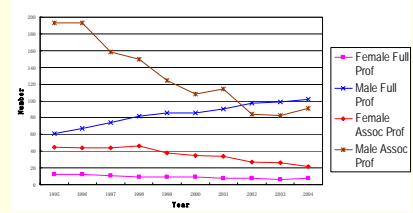


Retired Faculty in Physics Dept of Tsinghua University, 2008



Although the current faculty has the usual "scissors" gender distribution, amongst the retirees there is a disproportionately high ratio of senior ranked women. This indicates that they had to retire earlier with a lower rank than their male colleagues, or that they live longer, or both!

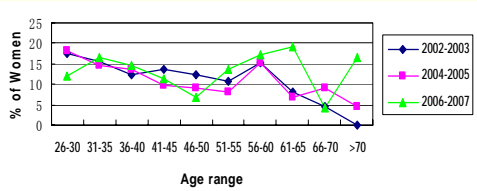
Number of senior research staff in the Institute of Physics, Chinese Academy of Sciences, 1995-2004



The ratio of senior female physicists is slowly decreasing

Ratio of Women Awarded NNSF of China Grants in Physics, Ranked by Age

Age distribution of women awarded regular NNSF grants in physics, averaged over every two years from 2002 to 2007.



Note the 2 dips in the age distribution, where  
1) Women in their mid-forties are too burdened with family cares?  
2) More women over 60 are retired.

Ratio of Women Awarded Major NNSFC Grants Ranked by Age

Age	2001		2002		2003		2004		2005		2006		2007	
	Total No.	% Fem.	Total No.	% Fem.	Total No.	% Fem.	Total No.	% Fem.	Total No.	% Fem.	Total No.	% Fem.	Total No.	% Fem.
26-30	1	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
31-35	5	0	11	0	7	0	12	1	2	0	2	0	2	0
36-40	37	3	47	1	70	3	65	3	5	0	7	2	9	0
41-45	29	0	25	0	32	0	58	2	12	0	9	1	17	0
46-50	0	0	6	1	8	1	16	2	2	0	3	0	4	0
51-55	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
56-60	7	0	10	1	12	1	9	0	3	0	0	0	1	0
61-65	12	2	16	3	15	0	12	0	2	1	4	0	1	0
66-70	4	0	4	0	5	0	9	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
>70	0	0	2	0	3	0	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
	100	5	123	4.88	154	1.35	177	4.52	26	3.85	30	10	37	0

Women awarded major grants are still very few

## Actions of the Working Group

- Xie Xi-De Physics Prize for Women established, awarded in 2007, 2009
- Special March issue of *Physics* magazine each year on WIP
- Special girl's prize in provincial Physics Olympiads
- Round table meeting to discuss women issues at annual CPS meetings
- 2005 World Year of Physics — reaching out
- Networking at home and abroad
- ....



## Future Tasks

- Increase awareness of problem at all levels
- Increase popularization of physics
- Implement equity, not just equality
  - Grant application requirements relaxed for childbirth
  - Equal retirement age for men and women
  - Equal employment standards enforced

## International Cooperation

- Attendance at international conferences
- Foreign visitors invited to attend domestic round-table meetings

