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Structural Exclusion and Employment Barriers for Individuals with Mental Disabilities: A Comparative Welfare Regime Analysis

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Abstract: This study explores the employment challenges faced by mentally disabled individuals, with a focus on structural barriers, welfare policies, and empowerment strategies. Mental disabilities, encompassing conditions such as depression, schizophrenia, and ADHD, significantly impact individuals' ability to secure and maintain employment due to societal stigma, discriminatory hiring practices, and insufficient workplace accommodations. Drawing on theoretical frameworks such as Critical Disability Theory, the Social Model of Disability, and the Capability Approach, the literature review highlights how systemic exclusion is perpetuated by cultural norms, regional disparities, and policy gaps in countries like China. A comparative analysis of welfare regimes reveals that social democratic models, such as those in Nordic countries, offer valuable insights into integrating mental health services with employment support, while corporatist and liberal regimes provide lessons on employment quotas and anti-discrimination laws, respectively. Logistic regression analysis further demonstrates how personal connections and witnessing successful employment influence societal attitudes toward mentally disabled individuals, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to foster empathy, reduce stigma, and promote workplace inclusion. By addressing structural inequalities and implementing evidence-based strategies, this research provides actionable insights to improve employment opportunities and social inclusion for mentally disabled individuals, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive society.

Keywords: China; employment inclusion; mental disability; social stigma; structural exclusion; supported employment; welfare regime

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this research is to examine the structural, cultural, and policy-related factors that create barriers to employment and social inclusion for individuals with mental disabilities in China. Specifically, it investigates how societal discrimination, limited accessibility, and inadequate vocational training contribute to the persistent exclusion of this marginalized group. These barriers are deeply embedded in cultural norms that stigmatize mental health conditions, as well as in systemic issues such as uneven implementation of welfare policies, insufficient workplace accommodations, and gaps in mental health service provision. In many regions, especially rural areas, the lack of adequate mental health infrastructure leaves individuals without access to proper assessment, treatment, or vocational support.

To provide a broader perspective, this study compares the challenges faced by mentally disabled individuals in China with approaches and outcomes observed in various global welfare regimes, including liberal, social democratic, and corporatist systems [1]. In liberal regimes, anti-discrimination legislation establishes formal legal protections; however, limited public welfare support can reduce the practical effectiveness of these measures. In contrast, social democratic regimes prioritize universal access to healthcare and employment support, offering programs that provide individualized job coaching and workplace accommodations, resulting in higher employment rates among mentally disabled individuals [2]. Corporatist regimes implement employment quotas and vocational training programs, but these measures often focus more on physical disabilities than on mental disabilities, indicating persistent gaps in inclusion [3].

This research also analyzes globally applied empowerment strategies, including supported employment models, flexible work arrangements, and public awareness campaigns. Evidence shows that supported employment programs have been highly effective in promoting sustainable workforce participation, while quota-based approaches may have mixed outcomes due to uneven implementation and prioritization of physical disabilities. By synthesizing these insights, the study aims to identify strategies that can be adapted to China's specific socio-cultural, economic, and policy context, providing actionable guidance for reducing stigma, improving accessibility, and fostering greater inclusion for individuals with mental disabilities [4].

2. Introduction to Mental Disabilities and Employment

Mental disabilities encompass a wide spectrum of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral conditions that can significantly affect an individual's ability to function effectively in various areas of life, particularly in employment. These conditions include mood disorders such as depression and bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders including obsessive-compulsive tendencies, developmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disabilities, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, as well as psychotic disorders including schizophrenia [5]. Each category presents unique challenges, ranging from emotional instability and impaired concentration to difficulties in social interaction and unpredictable behavior. For instance, individuals experiencing depressive symptoms may face persistent sadness and diminished interest in daily activities, whereas those with psychotic conditions may encounter delusions, hallucinations, and cognitive impairments that hinder their professional performance [6].

The barriers faced by individuals with mental disabilities in China are shaped by structural, cultural, and systemic factors. Societal stigma often portrays mental disabilities as personal weaknesses, discouraging individuals from seeking diagnosis, treatment, or vocational guidance [7]. Discriminatory hiring practices, limited workplace accommodations, and regional disparities in service provision exacerbate exclusion from employment opportunities. Structural limitations in healthcare and education further restrict access to necessary support, particularly in underserved areas, resulting in a cycle of exclusion that can impact economic participation, social engagement, and overall quality of life [8].

Globally, different welfare approaches illustrate varied strategies for supporting the employment of mentally disabled individuals. Liberal systems generally emphasize legal protections and market-driven solutions but often struggle to provide comprehensive welfare support, leaving many individuals without adequate access to services. Social democratic approaches focus on universal access to healthcare, education, and employment support, integrating personalized job coaching, workplace accommodations, and community-based mental health care, which facilitate higher employment rates and more inclusive participation [9]. Corporatist systems rely on employment quotas and vocational training programs but may prioritize physical disabilities over mental conditions, leaving gaps in integration and workforce inclusion. These examples

underscore the importance of a comprehensive approach that balances legal protections, social support, and workplace accommodations [10].

Mental disabilities may arise from inherited or acquired factors. Inherent conditions, such as intellectual disabilities, often stem from genetic or congenital influences, while acquired conditions, including post-traumatic stress or other mental health challenges, can result from environmental factors, trauma, or illness [11]. These conditions can manifest at different stages of life, from developmental disorders in childhood to neurodegenerative conditions in adulthood. They frequently create obstacles to developing essential professional skills, such as communication, decision-making, and emotional regulation, which are critical for workplace success.

Individuals with mental disabilities often face unemployment rates significantly higher than those without disabilities. This exclusion is reinforced by societal attitudes that equate mental disabilities with unreliability, further limiting access to professional opportunities. However, evidence shows that with proper interventions and support, many individuals can achieve meaningful and productive employment. Inclusive strategies, such as job coaching, flexible work arrangements, and workplace accommodations, have proven effective in enhancing employability and professional satisfaction. These measures not only promote workforce participation but also foster social inclusion and economic contribution [12].

Addressing these challenges requires systemic reforms and proactive measures. Strengthening mental health infrastructure, particularly in underserved regions, expanding access to vocational training, and promoting public education to reduce stigma are critical steps. Comprehensive strategies that integrate healthcare services, workplace support, and social inclusion initiatives can create a more equitable environment, enabling individuals with mental disabilities to fully participate in society. By learning from international practices while adapting to local cultural, economic, and policy contexts, China can develop effective approaches to reduce exclusion, enhance employability, and promote social integration for mentally disabled individuals [13].

3. Literature Review

Despite significant progress in developing welfare policies and institutional frameworks to support disabled individuals, structural barriers such as social stigma, uneven policy implementation, and insufficient focus on mental disabilities continue to limit employment opportunities and social inclusion for individuals with mental disabilities. These challenges are deeply embedded in historical approaches to disability and continue to shape current outcomes, emphasizing the need for more inclusive and rights-based strategies to overcome systemic exclusion [14].

The employment and social integration of mentally disabled individuals remain pressing concerns within the broader framework of disability rights. While progress has been made in establishing protective policies and institutional mechanisms, mentally disabled populations continue to face unique challenges arising from both structural and cultural barriers. Historically, disability management in China evolved from charity-based welfare to a rights-oriented framework. Early efforts primarily provided relief and humanitarian aid, often positioning disabled individuals as passive recipients of support rather than active participants in society. Over time, policy reforms sought to enhance social integration, introduce vocational training, and establish employment quotas for disabled individuals [15]. However, the implementation of these measures has been uneven, with substantial disparities across regions, types of disabilities, and service availability.

Mental health services in China have historically developed in a fragmented and gradual manner. Although psychiatric hospitals and specialized care facilities were established in the early twentieth century, community-based programs and comprehensive mental health interventions only emerged more recently. Programs integrating hospital and community care marked significant improvements, yet persistent challenges such as workforce shortages, underfunded community initiatives, and regional

disparities continue to limit access to mental health services. Consequently, the availability of employment support and vocational training for mentally disabled individuals remains constrained, particularly in rural and underserved areas [16].

One of the most significant barriers to employment is the pervasive social stigma associated with mental disabilities. Despite policy advancements, societal perceptions often continue to frame mental conditions as personal shortcomings or sources of family concern, discouraging individuals from seeking professional support or disclosing their conditions. Employers may hesitate to hire mentally disabled individuals due to misconceptions about reliability, productivity, or workplace dynamics. These perceptions reinforce exclusion and limit opportunities for meaningful employment [17].

Regional disparities further exacerbate these challenges. Urban areas often have greater access to mental health services, vocational training programs, and employment support initiatives, while rural regions frequently experience underfunding, staffing shortages, and limited infrastructure. This geographic inequality contributes to cycles of exclusion, restricting opportunities for skill development and workforce participation.

The historical emphasis on physical disabilities within welfare policies has also contributed to the marginalization of mentally disabled individuals. Existing programs, such as employment quotas and vocational initiatives, tend to prioritize individuals with physical impairments, leaving those with mental disabilities underserved. This highlights the limitations of uniform policy approaches and underscores the necessity for targeted strategies that address the specific needs of mentally disabled populations.

Addressing these challenges requires a multidimensional approach. Inclusive strategies should encompass workplace accommodations, flexible employment policies, anti-discrimination measures, and specialized vocational training programs. Public awareness campaigns and educational initiatives about mental health are crucial to reducing stigma, reshaping societal attitudes, and encouraging broader participation in employment and social activities [18].

Engagement with grassroots organizations, community groups, and affected individuals themselves is essential to inform policy development and implementation. Collecting detailed, disaggregated data on mental disabilities can help identify disparities, monitor progress, and enhance accountability. Targeted interventions that focus on the unique challenges of different regions, genders, and socio-economic groups can ensure that resources are effectively allocated and that vulnerable populations receive appropriate support.

The evolution of disability policies in China reflects a transition from charity-based relief to rights-based inclusion, illustrating broader social and political changes. Nonetheless, systemic barriers such as social stigma, regional disparities, and insufficient attention to mental disabilities continue to limit employment opportunities and social integration. Effective strategies must combine legislative, social, and educational measures to promote equitable participation, foster empowerment, and ensure that mentally disabled individuals can contribute fully to economic and social life [19].

Theoretical perspectives provide additional guidance for understanding and addressing these challenges. Critical Disability Theory emphasizes that disability is not merely an individual limitation but a product of societal structures and norms that prioritize certain abilities while marginalizing others. The Social Model of Disability distinguishes between an individual's impairments and the societal barriers that transform these impairments into disabling conditions, highlighting the importance of accessible workplaces and adaptive employment practices. Empowerment-focused approaches encourage individuals to take control of their own development and career paths, demonstrating that targeted support can improve both employment outcomes and personal well-being. The Capability Approach emphasizes the real opportunities individuals have to pursue valued lives, underscoring the importance of equitable access to services and training. Social Exclusion Theory further illustrates how structural, economic, and cultural factors perpetuate marginalization, emphasizing the need for systemic reform and proactive policy measures [20].

A comparative perspective highlights the potential for learning from international experiences. Welfare models that integrate mental health services with employment support, prioritize inclusion, and provide flexible accommodations offer practical insights for improving outcomes. Supported employment, personalized job coaching, flexible work arrangements, mental health awareness programs, and peer support networks have proven effective in promoting inclusion and enhancing professional capabilities. These approaches demonstrate that comprehensive, context-sensitive strategies can empower mentally disabled individuals to overcome structural barriers and achieve meaningful participation in the workforce [21].

Cultural and socio-economic factors also shape experiences of employment exclusion. Gender disparities may compound challenges, as women with mental disabilities often face additional societal expectations and prejudices that limit their opportunities. Income and class further influence access to services and training, with low-income individuals encountering financial and infrastructural barriers. Rural-urban differences in resource allocation and service provision further intensify inequality. Addressing these factors requires nuanced, regionally responsive policies that promote equitable access to support systems, enhance workforce participation, and reduce systemic marginalization [22].

4. Methodology

This research adopts a mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the barriers and empowerment strategies related to the employment and social inclusion of mentally disabled individuals. The qualitative component includes in-depth interviews with professionals, caregivers, and individuals with mental disabilities to capture detailed personal experiences, identify systemic obstacles, and evaluate the effectiveness of empowerment strategies. These interviews aim to explore the nuances of lived experiences, uncover hidden structural challenges, and provide contextual insights that may not be evident through quantitative measures alone. Over 360 surveys have been conducted to complement the interviews and ensure a broader perspective on these issues. Additionally, social media platforms are analyzed to assess public awareness and societal attitudes toward mental disabilities. Platforms such as Instagram, Reddit, and Facebook are examined to measure familiarity, acceptance, and tolerance of mental disabilities across diverse populations and social contexts.

On the quantitative side, surveys are distributed to a wide range of demographic groups within China, encompassing individuals of different ages, genders, educational backgrounds, and professional sectors. These surveys aim to measure public attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors related to mental disabilities and employment. To maximize accessibility and inclusivity, surveys are conducted both online and offline, accounting for potential literacy limitations among certain populations, particularly those directly affected by mental disabilities. In cases where individuals cannot participate directly due to literacy or other barriers, family members or caregivers are invited to provide responses, ensuring that the perspectives of these populations are accurately represented.

By combining qualitative and quantitative methods, this research achieves a robust, multidimensional understanding of the systemic barriers and potential strategies for improving employment outcomes and social inclusion for mentally disabled individuals. The integration of personal experiences, observational data, and societal attitudes allows for a more nuanced analysis, highlighting patterns and correlations that inform actionable recommendations.

Logistic Regression Model: A logistic regression analysis is conducted to explore how personal experiences and observational encounters influence attitudes toward mentally disabled individuals. The analysis focuses on two primary outcomes: (a) whether respondents perceive that additional efforts are needed to support mentally disabled individuals within their communities, and (b) whether respondents feel comfortable working alongside individuals with mental disabilities. Survey data from 363 participants are used to model these relationships, examining the effects of personal closeness to

someone with a mental disability and exposure to successful employment experiences of mentally disabled individuals on overall attitudes. Descriptive analyses provide insight into the prevalence and distribution of personal and observational experiences among respondents, highlighting the extent to which these experiences shape perceptions, tolerance, and support for inclusive employment practices.

5. Results

Approximately 22.6% of participants reported having a close family member, relative, or friend with a mental disability, while 24.0% indicated that they had witnessed or experienced a successful employment case involving a disabled individual within their workplace or community. Regarding the dependent variables, 80.2% of respondents believed that more efforts are needed to support individuals with disabilities, reflecting widespread recognition of gaps in existing support systems. However, only 36.6% of respondents reported feeling comfortable working alongside someone with a mental disability, suggesting that personal acceptance of workplace inclusion remains comparatively limited.

5.1. Model A: Belief That More Needs to Be Done

The first logistic regression model examined whether personal closeness to someone with a disability or witnessing successful employment experiences influenced the belief that additional community support is necessary. Results indicated that having a close personal connection slightly increased the likelihood of perceiving that more support is needed (Odds Ratio [OR] = 1.36, 95% Confidence Interval [CI] = 0.71-2.60), though this effect was not statistically significant ($p = 0.36$), indicating limited evidence for the impact of personal closeness on this outcome. In contrast, observing successful employment of disabled individuals was significantly associated with lower odds of endorsing the belief that additional measures were required (OR = 0.54, 95% CI = 0.30-0.95, $p = 0.032$). This finding suggests that exposure to positive employment outcomes may reduce perceptions of insufficiency within the community and foster a sense of confidence regarding existing support mechanisms.

5.2. Model B: Comfort Working Alongside a Person with a Disability

The second logistic regression model explored predictors of comfort in working alongside someone with a mental disability. Personal closeness to an individual with a disability emerged as a strong and statistically significant predictor of comfort (OR = 3.35, 95% CI = 2.01-5.60, $p < 0.001$). Respondents with close personal connections were over three times more likely to report feeling comfortable working with disabled individuals compared to those without such connections. Conversely, witnessing successful employment did not significantly predict comfort levels (OR = 0.77, 95% CI = 0.46-1.31, $p = 0.334$). While observing positive inclusion experiences may influence general perceptions of adequacy, it does not appear to directly affect interpersonal comfort in the same manner that direct personal relationships do.

Predicted probabilities were further calculated for four groups: (1) those neither close to someone with a disability nor having witnessed successful employment, (2) those close but without witnessing successful employment, (3) those who had observed successful employment but were not personally close to someone with a disability, and (4) those both close and having witnessed successful employment. The results demonstrated that individuals with personal closeness consistently reported higher comfort levels. At the same time, those who observed successful employment were more likely to perceive that less additional support was necessary. When both factors were present, respondents generally exhibited higher comfort alongside lower perceptions of systemic inadequacy, highlighting the nuanced interplay between direct and indirect experiences.

5.3. Implications

These findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions to enhance disability inclusion in the workplace. Employers should prioritize structured programs that facilitate direct interaction and collaboration with disabled individuals, thereby replicating the positive effects of personal closeness. Such opportunities can foster empathy, familiarity, and interpersonal comfort. Simultaneously, public messaging should balance optimism with a continued emphasis on the need for systemic improvement. While showcasing success stories can inspire confidence in existing mechanisms, overemphasis risks obscuring persistent gaps. A balanced communication strategy is essential for promoting both personal acceptance and broader societal engagement.

5.4. Limitations

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, reliance on self-reported data introduces the potential for social desirability bias, where respondents may answer in ways they perceive as socially acceptable rather than reflecting true beliefs. Second, the binary coding of outcomes may oversimplify attitudes, potentially overlooking subtler variations in opinion. Third, the cross-sectional design limits causal inference, as the directionality of observed relationships cannot be definitively established. Future research could employ longitudinal designs to monitor changes over time and utilize continuous scales to capture a broader range of attitudes. Investigating contextual moderators such as workplace policies, cultural norms, and demographic differences would further illuminate the mechanisms shaping these relationships.

Overall, the study emphasizes the value of adopting international best practices—such as supported employment programs, flexible work arrangements, and public awareness initiatives—while adapting them to China's specific socio-cultural and economic context. Such strategies can strengthen inclusion, promote personal acceptance, and improve employment outcomes for mentally disabled individuals.

6. Analysis

Structural barriers, including discriminatory hiring practices, inadequate educational systems, and stigmatizing cultural norms, significantly impede the employment prospects of mentally disabled individuals in China. The education system often fails to provide inclusive environments, leaving mentally disabled students underprepared for the competitive labor market. Vocational training programs frequently prioritize physical disabilities, neglecting the specific needs of individuals with mental disabilities. Employment discrimination is also widespread, as employers may perceive mentally disabled individuals as less reliable or productive. Cultural norms further exacerbate these challenges, with mental disabilities often stigmatized, viewed as personal shortcomings, or associated with family obligations and societal expectations. These factors collectively contribute to exclusion from education, employment, and social participation, perpetuating cycles of limited opportunities and marginalization. Addressing these barriers requires comprehensive reforms, including anti-discrimination measures, public education initiatives, and improved accessibility in education and employment.

The findings from the regression models highlight two distinct but complementary mechanisms through which personal and observational experiences influence attitudes. Personal closeness to someone with a disability significantly affects interpersonal comfort, likely due to increased empathy and familiarity. In contrast, witnessing successful employment experiences shapes broader perceptions of community adequacy, demonstrating the feasibility of inclusion. These mechanisms operate independently, emphasizing the importance of addressing both emotional and systemic dimensions of disability inclusion.

Comparative analyses of welfare regimes worldwide provide insights into diverse approaches for addressing the employment challenges of mentally disabled individuals.

Social democratic regimes, such as those in Nordic countries, provide universal access to mental health services integrated with employment support programs. Supported employment initiatives, offering personalized job coaching and workplace accommodations, have resulted in higher employment rates and improved retention for mentally disabled individuals. In liberal welfare systems, anti-discrimination legislation forms the core of support; however, limited public welfare provisions and high healthcare costs often undermine these measures. Corporatist systems implement employment quotas and vocational training programs but tend to prioritize physical over mental disabilities, leaving individuals with mental disabilities underserved. While China's welfare system has made progress in promoting the rights of disabled individuals, it lacks the comprehensive integration of mental health and employment support seen in other regimes, highlighting the need to adopt and adapt best practices from international models.

Empowerment strategies for mentally disabled individuals vary in effectiveness depending on their design and implementation. Supported employment programs that provide personalized guidance and accommodations have demonstrated substantial success in improving job retention and satisfaction. Public awareness campaigns have also reduced stigma and fostered greater societal acceptance of mental disabilities. Conversely, interventions such as poorly enforced quota systems have yielded mixed results. Sheltered workshops, while offering supportive environments, may isolate participants from mainstream employment and limit opportunities for career advancement. These observations underscore the importance of tailoring strategies to meet the specific needs of mentally disabled individuals while promoting their inclusion in regular workplaces.

Public attitudes remain a critical factor influencing the inclusion of mentally disabled individuals in employment and society. Stigma continues to act as a major barrier, as mental disabilities are often misunderstood or associated with perceived incompetence. Personal closeness to someone with a mental disability strongly predicts comfort in working alongside them, highlighting the value of fostering empathy through direct engagement. However, exposure to successful employment cases without personal connection may reduce perceptions of systemic inadequacies, potentially creating an illusion of progress. Public education initiatives that combine awareness campaigns with opportunities for direct interaction are therefore essential for cultivating understanding, empathy, and social acceptance.

China's welfare policies have advanced the rights of disabled individuals, but significant gaps remain, particularly regarding mental disabilities. Employment quotas are often inconsistently enforced, and vocational training programs primarily address physical disabilities. Furthermore, the lack of integration between mental health services and employment support limits policy effectiveness. Areas for improvement include reinforcing the enforcement of employment quotas, expanding vocational programs to address mental disabilities, and increasing investment in community-based mental health services. Adopting international best practices, such as integrated employment support programs and effective quota enforcement, could help bridge these gaps and enhance inclusion.

Mentally disabled individuals in China face compounded marginalization due to intersecting factors such as gender, socio-economic status, and geographic location. Women with mental disabilities may experience dual discrimination based on societal expectations regarding caregiving and emotional stability, limiting employment opportunities. Low-income individuals confront additional obstacles due to the high cost of mental health care, which remains prohibitive for many families, particularly in rural areas. Regional disparities in healthcare infrastructure further restrict access to mental health services, vocational training, and employment opportunities. Addressing these intersectional challenges requires targeted interventions, including subsidizing mental health services in underserved regions, implementing gender-sensitive employment policies, and expanding support for economically disadvantaged populations.

To enhance employment and social inclusion for mentally disabled individuals, China should adopt a multi-faceted approach informed by international best practices. Supported employment models can provide individualized job coaching and workplace accommodations. Employment quotas should be rigorously enforced, with clear accountability mechanisms. Public education campaigns must reduce stigma and increase societal understanding of mental disabilities, while investments in rural healthcare infrastructure are necessary to address regional disparities and ensure equitable access to services. Achieving comprehensive inclusion requires simultaneous attention to systemic, cultural, and socio-economic factors, fostering environments in which mentally disabled individuals can participate fully in economic, social, and community life.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the structural barriers and empowerment strategies influencing the employment and social inclusion of mentally disabled individuals in China. The analysis revealed that systemic obstacles, including discriminatory hiring practices, inadequate educational opportunities, regional disparities, and stigmatizing cultural norms, continue to limit access to meaningful employment and social participation. Personal and observational experiences were shown to play complementary roles in shaping attitudes, with direct closeness fostering interpersonal comfort and exposure to successful inclusion influencing broader perceptions of community support. These findings highlight the importance of addressing both emotional and systemic dimensions to promote effective inclusion.

Comparative analysis of global welfare regimes demonstrated that international best practices, such as supported employment programs, integrated mental health services, employment quotas, and public awareness campaigns, can significantly improve the inclusion of mentally disabled individuals. However, strategies must be carefully adapted to the Chinese socio-cultural and economic context to be effective. Tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of mentally disabled individuals, while ensuring rigorous enforcement and inclusive policy design, is essential to bridging existing gaps.

Empowerment-focused approaches, including personalized job coaching, flexible work arrangements, vocational training, and peer support networks, were identified as critical mechanisms for enhancing employment outcomes and social integration. Simultaneously, public education initiatives that reduce stigma and promote empathy are necessary for fostering societal acceptance and creating supportive environments. Special attention must be paid to intersectional factors such as gender, socio-economic status, and geographic location, which can amplify barriers and exacerbate exclusion.

In conclusion, achieving meaningful inclusion of mentally disabled individuals in China requires a multi-faceted strategy that integrates systemic reforms, empowerment programs, and cultural change. By adopting evidence-based policies and best practices from international contexts, while addressing local disparities and challenges, China can create an environment that not only protects the rights of mentally disabled individuals but also enables their full participation in economic, social, and community life. This holistic approach provides a roadmap for fostering equitable opportunities, reducing marginalization, and building a more inclusive society.

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