

THE ROLE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN POVERTY REDUCTION AND DECENT JOB CREATION

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Abstract

The article considers the world experience and practice of gender equality, which is one of the human rights enshrined in many declarations and conventions. Much attention is paid to this issue in our state, to help improve the situation in the field of gender equality. The main directions of gender equality in the employment of women are studied, the gender balance by spheres of work is given, the influencing factors are analyzed, a number of practical proposals and recommendations are given.

Key words: *gender equality, gender statistics, human rights, human interests, guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for women and men, the level of gender equality.*

Introduction: The issue of property is reflected in the agenda of the socio-economic politics of Uzbekistan. There is an opinion among the citizens that this problem can be solved through the payment of social benefits and material assistance, or an increase in their size. But this is a one-sided approach that does not give an opportunity to solve the problem in fully. Poverty of reduction should be aimed at implementing a comprehensive social and economic policy to awaken the entrepreneurial spirit of the population, fully realize the inner strength and potential of a person, and create new jobs. In addition, the most important factor for getting out of poverty should be the desire of a person to achieve a specific goal, relying on his own strength.

Gender equality issues are very relevant to the current state of affairs. Indicators that characterize gender equality should be used to study the state of affairs, identify problems and define the tasks on which the government should work in close contact with civil society. It is unambiguously necessary to improve the situation in all of the above areas. It is necessary to constantly monitor the criteria defining the equality of women and men in all spheres of activity.

Gender statistics are the result of years of accumulated social problems and stereotypes deeply rooted in the minds of the role of men and women in the family and society. And if it is impossible to solve all problematic issues at once, then a significant contribution of both material and human resources is needed to change the thinking of not only men, but also women themselves.

Gender equality is one of the human rights enshrined in many declarations and conventions, including the legally binding Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women [1] (CEDAW), where gender equality is defined as: "... equality of rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys. Equality does not mean that all distinctions are blurred between women and men; it means that the rights, duties and opportunities of men and women should not depend on what gender a person belongs to.

Gender equality takes into account the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men, while recognizing the presence of different social groups of women and men. "The convention was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979".

The entry into force of the Law on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men [2] (September 2, 2019) was a fundamentally important event contributing to the improvement of the situation in the field of gender equality in the country.

Gender equality as key to development and equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is Sustainable

Development Goal (SDG) number five, as well as an important indicator under other SDGs.

"... Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls ..." Reform is envisaged to provide women with equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control of land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources in accordance with national laws.

Research methods: (Materials and Methods) The study of economic processes that characterize social production as the interconnection of productive forces and production relations is associated with ensuring gender equality as one of the priority tasks of the state's socio-economic politics. Considering the theory and practice of world experience in the field of gender equality, in Uzbekistan, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the social, economic and political spheres is one of the main factors of strengthening peace and economic stability of our society.

The data comparison methods of system analysis and synthesis, forecasting, scientific abstraction were used in the process of studying the state and prospects of changes in the field of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men.

Analysis: Gender equality occurs when men and women are socially significant, have equal rights and responsibilities, and have equal chances (equal access to resources and opportunities) to use them. Formal equality or "equality on paper" means equality enshrined in law.

Human rights are the inalienable rights of every person, regardless of their nationality, place of residence, gender, national or ethnic origin, skin color, religion, language or any other characteristic (2). All people are equally entitled to human rights, excluding any kind of discrimination. This includes: the right to life, equality before the law, the right to work, social security, education and the right to development. These rights are interrelated, interdependent and indivisible. [3, chapter V, article 18]

Indicators of economic growth, gender equality index, human development index have a close relationship; therefore, achieving gender equality contributes to the improvement of the situation of both women and men, strengthening of the family and thereby contributes to economic growth and an increase in the welfare of society.

In 2019, the World Bank conducted and published a study "Women, Business and the Law" [4], which examined the situation with women's rights in 187 countries of the world. To prepare the study, the experts assessed the legal frameworks of the countries over the past ten years. The assessment used indicators such as freedom of movement, employment, wages, and marriage and having children, running your own business, asset management and

retirement benefits.

In the rating scale, Uzbekistan scored 70.6 points out of 100 possible in terms of gender equality, falling behind all CIS countries. Guatemala has the same indicators; Congo is one line below (70 points).

Among the Central Asian countries, Tajikistan received the highest number of points - 81.8, followed by Kyrgyzstan - 76.8, and Kazakhstan - 75.6. Turkmenistan was not included in the rating.

Six countries became the leaders of the rating: Belgium, Denmark, France, Latvia, Luxembourg and Sweden - they scored the maximum indicator on a 100-point scale. Closing the list is Syria (34.3 points), Qatar (32.5), Iran (31.2), Sudan, the United Arab Emirates (29.3) and Saudi Arabia (25.6).

The research studies points to a link between the level of gender equality in a country and the level of its economic development. Thus, out of 39 countries that scored 90 points or more, 26 are among the states with a high level of income. Since gaining independence in 1991, the Republic of Uzbekistan has made gender equality a fundamental democratic principle, which fixed in the Constitution. The country has joined more than 60 international human rights treaties and several international organizations, agreements with which promote gender equality and the protection of women's rights. The Women's Committee of Uzbekistan is the main driving force in promoting gender equality in the country. Analysis of the socio-economic aspects of gender equality in Uzbekistan covers a wide range of issues related to the empowerment of women by increasing their economic activity in various sectors of the economy [5].

The reforms being carried out in the renewed Uzbekistan, while ensuring human interests as one of the priority values, are aimed at raising the status of women in society, protecting their rights and opportunities. At the same time, increasing the political, social and economic activity of women is one of the priority directions of state politics.

In particular, over the past three years, important measures have been taken to strengthen the legislative and institutional framework for gender equality. Approximately 20 normative legal acts were adopted, including 2 laws, 1 presidential decree, 4 presidential decrees, 13 decrees of the Cabinet of Ministers, aimed at protecting the rights and interests of women. An inventory of legislation was carried out for compliance with the standards for the protection of women's rights to work and business.

In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On guarantees of equal rights and opportunities for women and men", recommendations have also been developed on the establishment of an Advisory Council on Gender Equality in all ministries and departments and in labor collectives, advisory councils have been created.

The analysis of the Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan [6, Chapter 1, Article 6], conducted by the Asian Development Bank, confirms that the legislation of Uzbekistan contains articles prohibiting gender discrimination in employment and dismissal in accordance with general labor law.

The labor legislation of Uzbekistan enshrines guarantees to ensure that women perform their reproductive functions, and also establishes a set of measures aimed at protecting parental rights, protecting

maternity and paternity. However, the female labor force is less attractive to the employer due to the combination of two functions by a woman - professional and maternal, since the burden of paying maternity benefits is imposed on the employer.

In this regard, in order to eliminate the discriminatory nature of the norms of the Labor Code, it seems possible to give women the right to decide for themselves whether to use these benefits or not.

According to the statistics of 2019, the percentage of women and men in the total population of Uzbekistan is 49.7% and 50.3%, respectively. The ratio of the population aged 18 to 59 years in 2019 was 49.95% of women and 50.05% of men. The resident population of Uzbekistan as of January 1, 2021 reached 34 million 558 thousand 913 people, as of February 1, 2021 - 34 million 610 thousand 836 people, with a ratio of 17402328 men (50.28%), women 17208508 (49.72%). Thus, the distribution of the number of the working-age population among women and men in the country is practically equal.

Such indicator as the literacy rate among the male adult population is 99.72%, among the female adult population - 99.47%. In this case, the adult population means all people over the age of 15. Youth literacy rates are 99.9% and 100% for men and women, respectively.1

But if we consider such an indicator of the level of education as the number of graduates of higher educational institutions, then there is a significant imbalance among men and women. Among graduates of higher educational institutions, significant proportions are men (Table 1).

Table 1.

Graduation of specialists by higher educational institutions¹

Total	2017-2018		2018-2019		2019-2020	
	men	women	men	women	men	women
Level, %	62,0	38,0	61,8	38,2(+0.2)	61,7	38,3(+0.1)

This state of affairs can be explained by the fact that traditionally most girls get married immediately after graduating from school or receiving secondary special education, and it is believed that the woman is mainly the guardian of the home.

As a result, most managerial positions are predominantly held by men and, accordingly, receive higher pay for their work.

In the list of positive changes, it can be noted that in recent years in Uzbekistan, it has become increasingly available to receive education in higher educational institutions in correspondence and evening forms of study, which makes it possible for married and working women to combine studies, work and household chores. In Table 2, image 1 the analysis of the population distribution by economic activity and gender is described.

As can be seen in the graph below (Figure 1), only in the spheres of trade, agriculture, health care and education the share of women exceeds the share of employed men.

The differences in salary can be explained by two main reasons: first, women are paid less because they themselves choose lower-paid jobs, and second, women are less valuable workers due to their lack of experience and qualifications. [8, p. 52]. Sometimes ill-conceived "protection of women's interests" only harms them. Especially when the costs of "protection" are shifted on to the shoulders of others: thus, in Uzbekistan, employers are responsible for paying maternity benefits.

Table 2.

Distribution of the number of employed by type of economic activity by sex on average for 2018-2019²

Indicators	2018		2019	
	men	women	men	women
Total	100	100	100	100
Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	25,9	27,8	25,4	27,3
Industry	13,5	13,7	12,9	14,3
Building	14,6	1,3	15,7	1,5
Trade	9,0	12,8	8,8	13,2
Transportation and storage	7,6	1,0	7,6	0,8
Accommodation and catering services	1,9	2,8	1,9	2,9
Information and communication	0,6	0,3	0,5	0,4
Financial and insurance activities	0,6	0,5	0,6	0,5
Education	4,6	13,6	3,5	15,3
Health care and social services	1,6	8,7	1,8	8,4
Arts, entertainment and recreation	0,5	0,5	0,5	0,5
Other activities	19,6	17,0	20,8	14,9

Table 3.

Working conditions in construction as of January 1, 2020³

Types of factors	Percentage of employees employed in the total number of employees of the corresponding sex	
	women	men
Worked in conditions that did not meet sanitary and hygienic standards	11.9	14.8
worked in conditions of an increased level:		
increased noise level	0.8	4.8
increased vibration		0.2
unfavorable temperature conditions	0.5	2.2
other factors (radiation, light environment, etc.)	0.6	2.3
Were engaged in hard physical labor	0.2	5.0
The number of employed workers provided with PPE (personal protective equipment)	17.8	41.3

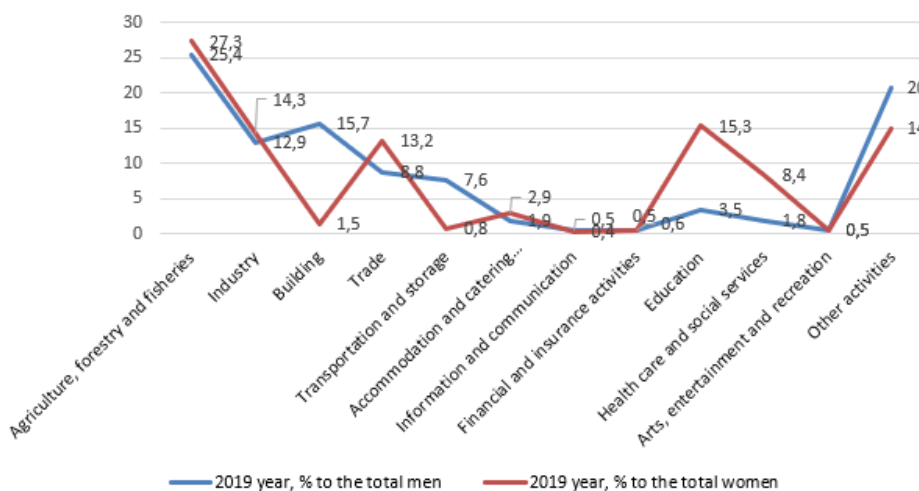


Figure 1. Ratio of employed by sex in the sectors of the economy

As a result, employers are reluctant to hire young women, fearing that they might go on maternity leave. As a result, young women are unable to find work.

The labor market of any country is more or less subject to a greater or lesser degree of unequal distribution of men and women between spheres of activity. Until now, a significant proportion of the use of female labor in harmful and unfavorable conditions (Table 3).

Research results: in order to prevent discrimination against women, a Commission on ensuring gender equality of the Republic of Uzbekistan has been established.⁴

The Commission was established in accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On measures to further strengthen guarantees of labor rights and support for women's entrepreneurial activity" [9].

On February 11, 2020, during a meeting of the Working Group, the draft Strategy for Ensuring Gender Equality in Uzbekistan, foreseen for 2020-2030, was discussed. [10]

It was noted that according to the Strategy, the rights of women are supported in the equal use of economic

resources, in particular, movable and immovable property, land, financial loans, public funds, as well as the implementation of freely chosen entrepreneurial activities.

It is planned to carry out work to develop and expand financial knowledge, as well as practice, create opportunities to use all the services of financial institutions, in particular, improve skills in working with banks and loans, and introduce preferential loans.

Most importantly, the implementation of the Strategy on Ensuring Gender Equality in Uzbekistan will contribute to the implementation of national and international obligations (the Beijing

(China) Declaration and Plan of Action, the Convention on the Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination of Women's Rights, the UN Sustainable Development Goals and others) adopted in the context of the strategic goals in the field of ensuring rights person in the country.

The program to provide women with decent work in remote areas and rural areas will be further improved. Particular attention there will be paid to expanding the coverage of preschool and primary school education to ensure employment rights and use of the labor market.

Discussion. Ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the social, economic and political spheres is one of the main factors in strengthening peace and economic stability in our society. Taking this into account, a draft "Strategy for achieving gender equality in the Republic of Uzbekistan in 2020-2030" was prepared and agreed with state and non-governmental organizations. It is noteworthy that all areas of this Strategy are developed in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals until 2030.

Equality between men and women plays an important

role in ensuring the well-being of the people, peace in society and economic stability. From this point of view, the issue of ensuring employment for women, expanding opportunities for them to fully realize their aspirations and abilities is constantly in the center of attention of our state. Thus, in order to increase the participation of women in public administration, a reserve of over 6,000 active women has been formed. Nowadays, classes are being organized on a systematic basis to prepare them for various leadership positions.

In order to support women in Uzbekistan, popularize the life experience of successful women who have found their place in society, the website www.genkom.uz has been created.

Conclusion/Recommendations:

The World Bank advises to increase the number and improve the quality of factors of production and the efficiency of their use - to create favorable economic conditions (institutional and social), develop trade integration, and increase the availability of financial instruments. But the main thing is to encourage investment in human capital.

An overview of the current situation in the field of gender equality in Uzbekistan was carried out on the basis of official statistics. At the same time, there is a main obstacle to achieving gender equality - these are stereotypes about the traditional role of women in society, which do not take into account the changes taking place in the modern world and the need to change, become more confident, independent, well-educated and motivated individuals, regardless of gender. A family will become strong and stable if it consists of equal partners, where children will grow up in an environment of well-being.

There would be like to note that, the positive changes - the country has recently been pursuing an active policy to improve the position of women in society, namely, the adoption of new laws protecting their rights, as well as a significant increase in the salaries of medical workers and teachers.

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