

**WOMEN'S ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN ARAB COUNTRIES****Matibaeva Raziya, International Islamic Academy of Uzbekistan****Rysbekova Lazzat, International Kazakh-Turkish University named after****A.Yassavi**

**Abstract:** The article points out that the status of women in Islamic society is largely determined by traditions that have developed over the centuries. Gender equality in Arab countries has existed for only a few decades, so it does not have a great impact on the status of women. The changes taking place in Arab countries related to the solution of the gender issue are contradictory.

**Keywords:** woman, Arab countries, Arab women, economic activity, status of women.

**INTRODUCTION**

Most Arab countries are characterised by a low level of women's involvement in social production. The problem of women's employment, being an integral part of the problem of employment in general, has a number of peculiarities due to the special biological and social functions of women - motherhood and guardianship. These functions themselves cause some restrictions or complete cessation of women's employment for a certain period of time of their economic activity, but they are not dominant in determining the role and place of women in social production.

Another specific feature of the problem is that women's employment is much more strongly influenced by certain elements of the superstructure than men's. Among the factors directly affecting the level and nature of women's employment are religion and national cultural and domestic traditions. The social status of women, which is determined by these factors, varies considerably from country to country. In some Arab countries, she is recognised as having almost equal rights with men, while in others she is completely disempowered. Therefore, issues of women's status (including women's economic activity) need to be considered in the specific context of individual countries.

**METHODS**

The article considers the principles of system analysis, comparative-historical, structural, functional approach and sociological methods to study the implemented state policy and mechanisms of increasing women's rights and freedoms, socio-political and socio-economic activity in Arab countries.

**OBTAINED RESULTS**

The lowest female employment rate is observed in countries where the majority of the population is Muslim. Despite significant differences in the level and pace of economic development of these countries, they are on a par with each other in terms of female employment. Even in the oil and petrodollar-rich countries of the Middle East and the Persian Gulf [1:91], which are currently experiencing a shortage of labour and are developing their economies at the expense of immigrants, the issue of using women in public production has not yet arisen. Islam appears to be the direct cause of this situation, but the strength of its influence is in turn due to the fact that there has been no decisive change in the nature of work and life of the majority of the local population. The prevalence of the remnants of feudal and tribal relations, combined with the traditions of Islam, does not, however, allow for the participation of women in wage labour. In addition, the spheres of application of women's labour are limited: agriculture is underdeveloped, industry is represented by an insignificant number of mostly small enterprises; the development of social infrastructure sectors has not been given due attention until recently; while the modern extractive sector and related industries, which place special demands on the labour force, are more than supplied with highly qualified Western specialists and cheap imported labour [2:231].

The lack of demand for women's labour, as well as the traditional Islamic view of women as "domestic slaves", contribute to the fact that "women remain largely outside of social production, engaged in domestic work" [3:126]. [3:126]. Even the shortage of labour force in oil-producing countries does not initially create a need for women's labour, does not break women out of "domestic slavery" and centuries-old traditions of reclusiveness, and does not involve them on a large scale in social production.

According to current estimates, Arab women are the most discriminated class in Arab society because of cultural and religious beliefs that can often be reflected in the laws of the Arab world, affecting criminal justice, the economy, education and health care [4]. 4] The dwarf state of Comoros has the most women's rights, followed by Egypt, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Centuries of subordination to the canons of reclusiveness, conditioned by the norms of Islamic morality, have left a deep imprint on the social psychology of women themselves, as well as on the broad masses of the people, in their view of women and their place and role in the life of society.

According to the media company Thomson Reuters on women's rights among out of 22 Arab countries (2021) [5]:

Comoros occupies the first position. Although politicians are still convinced that women have no place in politics, their number in parliament is 3 per cent and 20 per cent hold various ministerial positions, while 35 per cent have jobs;

Oman is ranked second, with 2.3 per cent of MPs being women and 29 per cent employed;

Kuwait - 3rd place, women gained the right to vote in 1985 and to run for office in 2005. Female employment is 50 per cent, much higher than the rest of the Arab world. Women in Kuwait are legally free to work and enter politics;

Jordan is ranked 4th; women first gained the right to vote in 1974. The Constitution guarantees equality to all Jordanian citizens regardless of gender, nationality and religion, and 12 per cent of the members of the House of Representatives are women (18);

Qatar is ranked 5th and has only one woman on the municipal council; she also became the first female judge in the country in 2010. One in two women in the country is employed;

Tunisia - 6th, women have had the right to vote since 1957 and the right to run for office since 1959. Tunisia's new constitution allows women to work in non-traditional sectors such as medicine, the army, engineering, for example, as well as the ability to open bank accounts and run businesses;

Algeria is 7th with 31.6 per cent women in the country's parliament and 16 per cent working;

Morocco is 8th, since its independence from France in 1956, women have had the right to education and 17 per cent of the parliament is made up of women;

Libya is ranked 9th; among the 200 representatives of the General National Congress, 33 are women and 28 per cent of women are employed. Employment among women is 27 per cent, with higher education, about 43 per cent are women;

The United Arab Emirates ranks 10th, with female literacy reaching 90 per cent in 2007. After completing secondary school, 77 per cent of girls enrol in higher education and account for 75 per cent of the total number of students at Al Ain National University. 60 per cent of female high school graduates enter professional careers. Women account for 1-2% of those in managerial positions, 20% of administrative positions, 35% of the national labour force and 80% in the household sector. Also, the

country has the highest female employment rate at 59% (14% of the total working population). On the Abu Dhabi Stock Exchange, 43 per cent of investors are women, and the city's Businesswomen's Association has 14,000 women members. In 2006, women accounted for more than 22 per cent of the Federal National Council. In 2008, they were allowed to become judges;

Mauritania is ranked 11th, with 20 per cent women on all lists and 29 per cent of the working population being women;

Bahrain, ranked 12th, has a high representation of women in different professions and workplaces and has been eligible to vote since 2002. Over the past 30 years, women's opportunities in work, medicine and education have increased significantly, with 40 per cent of women working, representing 19 per cent of the total working population;

Djibouti is ranked 13th, women were first admitted to parliament in 2003 and make up 11% of the national assembly, they also make up 38% of the labour force of the population;

Somalia is 14th, with 14 per cent of federal parliamentary representatives being women and employment at 39 per cent;

Palestine is ranked 15th and women gained the right to vote in 1996. Among women, 17 per cent are employed and only 7.4 per cent are unemployed;

Lebanon is ranked 16th, with 3 female ministers as of 2013, the first of whom took office in 2004. The employment rate among women is 54 per cent. Women officially have the right to vote, work and receive education;

Sudan - 17th place, among representatives national assembly country 25% make up women. Women mostly work in the field of agriculture, 78%-90% women work in traditional sector, get money on living minimum;

Yemen - 18 place, in country position politician position occupy 5 women, they participate in parliamentary election as voters as well as candidates;

Syriac - 19th place, in 2012 year among judge 13%, and occupancy is 16%. After the beginning of the syrian conflict their number significantly reduced, and now data unknown;

Saudi Arabia - 20th place, women did not have the right to vote in elections, receive health services and education. It was only in 2019 that women were allowed to drive a car and since 2012 have been entitled to work in special "women's jobs";

Iraq is 21st, employment among women is 14.5 per cent, over 72.4 per cent of women in rural areas and 64.1 per cent in urban areas, but must get permission from their guardian husband before receiving medical care;

Egypt is the last 22nd place. The Arab Spring led to a rise in Islamist sentiment and a number of discriminatory laws were passed. This has made Egypt the most disadvantaged country in the Arab world for women.

Internationally on gender equality from 148 countries:

Bahrain, 45th; Tunisia, 46th; Kuwait, 47th; Oman, 59th; Algeria, 74th; Lebanon, 78th; Jordan, 99th; UAE, 109th; Iraq, 120th; Sudan, 129th; Syria, 133rd; and Mauritania, 139th [6].

As noted above, women's employment is characterised both by specific features due to the level of cultural development, the strength of traditions and religious influence on the masses, and some general features inherent in the problem of employment in general. In general, we can say that the former largely determine the level of women's employment, while the latter determine its nature and structure.

The persistently low literacy rate of the female population has a definite impact on women's employment patterns. There is a perception that secular education is an unnecessary luxury for women, and that Quranic education is sufficient.

In families where incomes are so low that parents have to choose between educating their daughters and sons, the latter are favoured because the cost of educating sons may in the long run improve the family's economic situation and even its social status. It makes no sense to educate a daughter with the expectation of her economic fulfilment in a society that has for centuries cultivated reclusiveness and rejected women's non-domestic labour.

Even in families where the financial situation allows for the education of both sons and daughters, the education of the latter is more often considered in the light of marriage prospects than economic activity.

An educated and highly educated woman is a rarity in the economically active population of Arab countries. It is very rare for a woman to turn her education to the direct benefit of society, to apply her knowledge in social production, even if she wants to. Overcoming family resistance and social prejudice, women face an equally difficult problem of employment: intelligent, highly paid labour is historically a male privilege in the East. In addition, it is difficult for a woman to combine her professional duties

with marriage and motherhood, and the entrepreneur will not meet her needs in this case.

In general, higher and special education continues to be available mainly to women from the upper strata of the population, and they most often do not connect graduation with the prospects of participation in social work; the second reason is the persistent traditionalism regarding the place and role of women in society, historically formed in the form of Islamic moral norms.

### CONCLUSION

Thus, an examination of some aspects of women's economic activity in Arab countries shows that Islam continues to have a significant impact on the level of women's involvement in social production. At the same time, it is the direct cause of women's limited participation in public labour, their subordinate and belittled position in the family and society. At the same time, the very vitality and stability of religious forms of consciousness is a consequence of slow shifts in the socio-economic structure of Muslim society. The elements of the superstructural order, primarily the official religion Islam, fulfil an important role in consolidating and strengthening the social situation created under the influence of deep, basic factors.

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