

THE ROLE AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC SECTOR IN THE DIGITAL ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the impact of women on the economy in the context of digital transformation, what challenges and opportunities they face, as well as prospects for further development.

Keywords: Digital economy, women in the economy, innovation and technology, digital professions, gender gap, access to technology, stereotypes and prejudices, women's entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

The digital economy has become a key factor in the development of modern society. It covers a wide range of industries and provides new opportunities for business, learning and communication. In this context, special attention is paid to the role of women, whose participation in the economic sector has changed significantly in recent years.

Analysis of literature on the topic

In Western literature, for the first time, a description of a female entrepreneur appeared as a woman who is engaged in entrepreneurial activities, manages and manages a commercial enterprise. It has now become clear that women's entrepreneurship has a significant positive impact on the economy, which has led to increased attention to this area. Women's entrepreneurship is important for individuals, communities as well as countries. According to A. Abritalina, the contribution of women to the national economy in terms of job creation, economic growth and wealth accumulation is extremely large, and now no one doubts this. In addition, countries with high levels of female entrepreneurship are more resilient to financial crises and less prone to economic downturns [2].

The development of the digital economy and the Internet creates new opportunities for women to earn more, expands the range of women's importance in the labor market, softens the conditions for women's work, creates new spaces and areas of employment for women, provides great advantages for building a career ladder that is more equal with men, full and of high quality. and, of course, opens up new opportunities for women's entrepreneurship [3].

Examples from around the world demonstrate that providing women and girls with access to technology for their personal and professional growth can produce dramatic results. Women-led startups solving local problems and global programs striving for gender equality in technology are shining examples of success. However, systematic efforts are required for sustained and significant progress in this area. Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society must join forces to create an environment in

which women and girls not only consume digital content, but also actively participate in its creation, development and distribution [4].

It should be noted that there is a need to empower women with digital skills so that they can become powerful agents of change and drivers of sustainable, inclusive and sustainable growth [5]

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

During the research process, statistical, analytical, comparative, observational, inductive, deductive, logical, monitoring, express assessments and other methods of analysis were used. As a result of the literature studied, the topic was fully disclosed. The tables have been compiled and collated accordingly.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The role of women in the economy has been the subject of debate for many years. Historically, women have been underrepresented in leadership positions and their educational and employment opportunities have been limited. However, in recent years, significant progress has been made in increasing women's participation in the economy.

In our country, women have the right to education. However, due to the traditions and religious beliefs of the Uzbek people, not every girl can afford to study at a university. Since ancient times, the dominant ideology was that a woman does not need education, that her duty is to take care of the house and raise children. Now, in the 21st century, the Uzbek people have partially moved away from such beliefs, but they have not yet been eradicated. Despite the conditions created in modern society for women to obtain higher education, as statistics show, the proportion of women studying at universities in Uzbekistan is significantly lower compared to the proportion of men.

Proportion of students studying in higher education institutions, by gender at the beginning of the academic year, % [6]

Indicators	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/20 17	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	2019/ 2020	2020/ 2021	2021/ 2022	2022/ 2023
Bachelor's degree (Total)	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Women	37,6	38,3	38,3	40,1	44,4	46,1	45,6	45,6	47,6
Men	62,4	61,7	61,7	59,9	55,6	53,9	54,4	54,4	52,4
Master's degree (Total)	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0
Women	36,5	35,5	36,8	38,0	40,5	41,6	42,7	47,0	69,0
Men	63,5	64,5	63,2	62,0	59,5	58,4	57,3	53,0	31,0

Statistics show that the proportion of women studying in universities is significantly lower than men. However, in these statistics it can be observed that the indicators for the 2021/2022 academic year are much higher compared to the 2014/2015 academic year [6].

This means that the number of women who have access to higher education is growing every year. The growth of this indicator is very significant, because if a woman is educated, the

nation as a whole is educated, because a woman is the foundation and basis of environmentally friendly, healthy relationships in the family, where everything originates.

In order to further improve the level of education and professional skills of women in Uzbekistan, many projects and decrees have been developed. In 2022, the Decrees of the Head of State "On measures to improve the system of work with families and women, support of mahallas and the older generation" and "On measures to further accelerate work on systemic support for families and women" were signed, the Presidential Decree "On organizing the activities of the State Family Committee and women." [1]

Below are statistics showing how much the share of employed women in Uzbekistan has decreased in 2021 compared to 2016.

Share of women from the total number of employed, in% (as of January 1) [6]

Regions	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
The Republic of Uzbekistan	45,7	45,8	41,6	41,4	41,4	41,3
Republic of Karakalpakstan	48,0	48,1	43,1	43,0	43,2	42,9
Andijan region	46,3	46,3	40,7	40,4	39,1	40,0
Bukhara region	47,7	48,9	42,5	45,0	42,9	42,9
Jizzakh region	45,2	45,4	39,0	39,6	40,1	40,0
Kashkadarya region	44,2	43,6	37,9	38,1	37,2	36,9
Navoi region	48,0	48,8	44,1	45,6	44,3	42,4
Namangan region	42,6	41,9	39,8	41,9	42,7	41,5
Samarkand region	45,3	44,9	41,8	38,8	39,4	39,3
Surkhandarya region	44,1	43,8	39,1	34,9	38,2	37,9
Syrdarya region	46,0	47,0	42,7	40,0	40,6	40,4
Tashkent region	49,6	50,6	42,7	41,7	42,2	43,4
Fergana region	45,7	46,2	42,9	44,2	43,2	42,6
Khorezm region	45,3	44,7	43,7	42,1	42,6	42,7
Tashkent city	43,2	43,7	44,4	46,7	45,8	45,7

It can be seen in the statistics that the female employment rate in the country has decreased significantly during the pandemic. The International Labor Organization (ILO) reports that in 2019-2020, employment among women decreased by 4.2 percent, with 54 million jobs lost [5]. This means that in 2020 there were 13 million fewer working women than in 2019. The low economic activity of Uzbek women is primarily due to the fact that they are fully employed and responsible for housekeeping and childcare. In Uzbekistan, women are unpaid workers, which leads to double burden on women. Uzbek women spend 22% of their time on unpaid housework and childcare. Men spend 9% of their time on household chores. Also referring to government statistics, it is worth noting that in 2022 the difference in salaries between men and women in Uzbekistan was 39% [6]. At the end of 2022, the norm of "equal pay for equal work" was included in the labor code of the Republic of Uzbekistan[1]. Enshrining this norm at the legislative level may further help reduce the difference in wages between men and women.

Our country has created favorable conditions that provide the female population with freedom to choose a profession and good conditions for working. The Labor Code of the Republic of

Uzbekistan, based on the Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan, enshrines the equal rights of every person, regardless of gender, to work, to free choice of work, to fair working conditions and to legal protection from unemployment [1].

From gender diversity to culture, age and race, diversity has been proven to promote creativity and innovation. Likewise, men and women will inevitably have different experiences that shape their approach to business. By challenging each other and collaborating with people who think differently, you can stimulate creativity and promote innovative ideas that move organizations forward. Entrepreneurship provides a pathway for women to close the pay gap and advance into leadership positions on their own terms. Running their own company also gives women the opportunity to collaborate with and hire other ambitious, like-minded women, raising the next generation of women in leadership roles.

Women play a key role in the development and adoption of digital technologies. They hold leadership positions in large technology companies, run successful startups, and are actively involved in scientific research. Leaders such as Sheryl Sandberg of Facebook and Susan Wojcicki of YouTube [8] demonstrate that women can be leading figures in the technology sector, making significant contributions to its development. With the growth of the digital economy, the demand for specialists in the field of IT, data analytics and digital marketing is increasing. More women are choosing these professions, helping to narrow the gender gap in high-tech industries.

Despite significant advances, women still face a number of barriers to accessing digital technology and education. In some regions of the world, access to the Internet and modern educational programs remains limited, creating barriers to women's participation in the digital economy. To overcome these problems, it is necessary to develop infrastructure and create specialized training programs.

Gender stereotypes and biases continue to impact women's career opportunities in the digital sector. Many women face discrimination in hiring, promotion, and equal pay. Combating these stereotypes requires a comprehensive approach that includes changing corporate culture, implementing equality policies and supporting women's leadership.

The digital economy provides unique opportunities for the development of women's entrepreneurship. Internet platforms, social networks and e-commerce allow women to create and grow their own businesses, reaching a wide audience. Women's entrepreneurship support programs such as accelerators, grants and mentoring programs play an important role in this process by providing the necessary assistance and resources.

To further increase the role of women in the digital economy, it is necessary to continue to develop initiatives aimed at supporting their education and professional growth. It is important to ensure equal access to digital technologies and combat gender stereotypes. Corporations should strengthen their policies for equality and support for women's leadership, and governments and international organizations should invest in infrastructure and programs to reduce the digital divide.

CONCLUSION

The role of women in the economic sector continues to grow in the digital economy, bringing significant benefits to society as a whole. Women's participation in innovation, digital

professions and entrepreneurship contributes to sustainable economic development and social progress. Despite existing challenges, the digital economy offers new horizons and opportunities for women, and it is important to continue efforts to support and promote their role in this rapidly changing world.

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