

## A Social Work Study of Promoting Women Education and Participation in Iran

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**Abstract:** *The fact that people with higher education, scientific and technical skills and appropriate training for key components in the relationship between scientific knowledge and its application to achieve economic development, investing in education and research and development studies to improve the quality of education generally carried out and higher education, particularly as was done showed that a key role in leading this important social and public institutions of higher education has been done on the show a key role in this important social institution in the behavior of communities in achieving sustainable development its goals. Also, in an effort to reduce unemployment among the communication system of higher education teaching community needs to very basic conditions, some factors like economic depressions, unemployment, unequal job opportunities for men and women in labor market of Iran that has an immediate effect on the level of women's economic participation, we can add some other cultural and social factors like some certain interpretations of women's occupational role and negative attitudes toward women's activities that block the research processes and development of women's participation in economic activities. In this article, there is a large gap between the large number of educated women entering the occupational market looking for jobs and the desirable expected status. There is no balance in the economic and cultural structure of Iran; although women are more willing to enter the governmental organizations, in spite of their higher education, they do not enjoy an equal position in occupations particularly in the governmental organizations and managerial posts.*

**Keywords:** *Women, Politic, participation, Education, woman activity, Employment base, Active population*

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### 1. Introduction

Women have main role to develop the civilization. Then status of women in the society and pricing their acts are a basis of human structure and giving them the opportunity to apply their wills in personal and social problems and challenging with different discrimination at their duties that are pointed out during the human history. Women are half of population in the society and are trainers of the future generations and potential human resources to develop cultural, scientific and cultural structure. Studies show that women have a few opportunities to manifest their values against men and in every field they try to reach considerable success. (Akhavan, et al, 2007)

A large volume of literature pertaining to women and development has also been generated. However, until recently development specialists did not take a very serious note of the gender dimension in development and hence development theories did not address themselves to women's roles and responsibilities. It was ( Boserup, 1989: p: 32 )

This change in the mode of production had its impact on the egalitarian power structure that hitherto existed in simple societies. Women were transformed from free and equal productive members of society to subordinate and dependent wives and wards. The growth of male owned private property, with the family as the institution that appropriates and perpetuates it, is the cause of this transformation. The absence of private property among the foraging communities made man's productive work and woman's household work of equal social significance. 'All production was of the same kind. That is, production mainly for use' (Sacks, 1975, p: 213)

The phenomenon of economic empowerment, employment and work since birth has been considered by the human and each one of scientists speak about this problem. Employment of women is only at homes and men in the farmlands. Although the technique of roles and tasks is a basic factor, nowadays, the importance

of employment of skillful and specialized human force has considerable and attention to women employment as half of population and study of sociology. (Iranpour, 2006)

With the introduction of private property women were further marginalized. Private property changed the relations among men and women, as it changed the political and economic relations in the larger society (Sacks, 1975, p: 216).

Make the assumption that Islamic religion and ideology marginalize women in economy and society. There are two approaches to women and the economy in Iran. In my analysis of Women and Work in Iran. (Poya, 1999)

However, Moghadam's analyses of women's work in Iran and the Middle East and North Africa. (Moghadam, 1998)

According to the United Nations Human Development Report, monetising non-market work would yield a figure of \$16 trillion of which \$11 trillion is the non-monetized, invisible contribution of women. (UNDP, 1995) The emphasis has moved on to the level of earnings; the nature of contract; the access to social services; affiliation to labor organizations; integration of the formal and the informal sectors; their dependence on each other and the fact that the informal sector plays an important role in the functioning of the formal sector and the whole economy. (Bromley, et al, 1979)

It is no doubt true that material abundance is very vital but at the same time development has other important indicators too. It is, therefore, essential to note that real development is one which results in a change in the social order in such a way that social justice is ensured. Development will, therefore, be conceived as a 'multidimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty' ( Todaro, 1982, p: 87).

Development has been conceived as an integral process of economic growth and social progress. This position represents a collective articulation of the desire of the majority of mankind to humanize the condition of people's lives through the process of development (Kalbagh, 1991, p: 3).

These discussions demonstrate that since 1970 the debate on the informal sector has changed. The focus has moved away from the marginality of the urban poor, their economic activities, and their location within the larger economy. (Singe 1972)

Development, therefore, is a process as much as an end product (Krishnaraj, 1988, p: 8).

Nowadays, women as the half of society body of the society want to train economic, social, educational fields to an active and productive generations, it requires great force of women. In other words, the presence of women is recognized as an effective arm to develop. Women with self-trust can change the insight of society against their abilities and show that it is not possible to develop women participation. (Akhavan, et al, 2007)

The number of acceptance of women in Azad and state universities in the year 2003-2004 was 272053 and the figure has been raised to 204.3 in the years 1996-1997, also relative distribution of acceptant in higher education centers including state- Azad universities in the years 2003-2004 was %52.5 that has been increased against three decades ago 13.4. The number of female training staff in higher education centers of our country including state-Azad ones is %934 and in the other words, relative distribution of education centers of women in the higher education centers against all those in the years 2003-2004 that is %17.5 and this figure has %2.75 increasing in these three decades ago. (Sa'adatmand, et al, 2007)

These concepts ignore many examples of women's survival strategies as non-feminist because they do not directly raise feminist questions. My aim is to demonstrate that where women have greater access to resources they are able to achieve feminist goals by challenging gender relations and by engaging in active agency at all levels of economic, social, political and cultural life. However, the majority of women may not directly confront gender equality but their survival strategies end up being empowering for them. This analysis is important because the struggle of the women's movement in Iran, including the women's NGOs,

during the past two decades represents an unprecedented historical transformation, responding to profound changes in women's and men's consciousness and visions of social change. (Rostampovey, 2004)

The Iranian state, like many oil producing countries can be characterized as a rentier state. That is a state which relies heavily on oil revenue by massive extraction and export of oil to other countries. (Hopkins, et al, 1997)

Religious women resisted the differential treatment meted out to them by the state. For example, according to the Shari'a law when a husband/father dies, the custody rights and the financial rights of the children go to their male kin and not to their mother. The war widows, many of them poorer women in female headed households, worked and raised their children on their own. They supported the Islamic state, but they also challenged the Shari'a law of guardianship, which gave all custody and legal and financial rights to the male kin after the death of the husband. They demanded the right to keep and raise their children and to be entitled to their husband's wage, salary or any living expenses payable out of government budget without interference of male kin. (Paidar, 1997)

Human resources with more capability cause optimum use of tools and machinery and other sources that it's natural result is increasing of the extent of investment efficiency. This case represents key affective and creative role of human resources in supplying exquisite and new methods of doing duty and also gaining new approach for better integrating and synthesizing of sources in order to reach organization goal (Salehi, 2005) Following the end of the Iran-Iraq war, the economy was reconstructed. The oil money helped to generate funds. The Gulf War of 1991 and the American destruction of Iraq's economy pushed oil prices up, and Iran benefited. The increase in oil revenue for Iran meant an increased GDP - according to UNDP an average annual growth rate of 2.4% between 1990 and 2003. (UNDP, 2004)

By the late 1990s, Iran was following the major proponents of the free market economy by curtailing the role of the state and encouraging privatization. This trend has continued until the present (2005). Today, 80% of the economy is controlled by the Islamic organizations that were set up in the 1980s. They were and still are funded by the state and provide social services to millions of the urban and rural working classes. They, therefore, have grassroots support. Since the late 1990s they have gradually turned into massive capitalist organizations and follow the logic of private capital accumulation. They have established large industrial enterprises, are engaged in the money market and are gradually becoming private enterprises. However, they still absorb the state capital and still provide services to millions of people. (Maloney,, 2000)

A shift from house hold production for use to production for exchange made production exclusive social and also exchange oriented. This left women' work as private maintenance for family use thus, shadowing its significance. For Engels the shift in production from a stage where women worked for the community to a stage where they worked for their husbands and families brought about a decline in their position. Women' labor was a necessary but socially subordinate part of producing an exchangeable surplus. Thus, women became wards, wives, and daughters instead of adult members of society. (Sacks: 1975, p: 86)

Questions this view point and feels that "ale property ownership is not the only basis for male' supremacy. Class societies make a sharp dichotomy between the domestic and public spheres of life. This domestic power is not transit able into social Power or position in the public sphere. Moreover, in class societies the economic and political autonomy of a household is quite restricted. This probably militates against even domestic equality (Sacks, 1975, p: 229).

## 2. Education and charge of family

Efficiency is one of important and basic concept in economy and is an index for showing the extent of affective and useful consumption from productive resources such as work, investment, field, raw material, energy, technology and etc. for goods and services production .i.e. whatever this index is being more, so we can gain more and better quality product from productive sources.

Efficiency is viewpoint for making actions rational and preventing vain and futile actions.

### 3. Affective education mechanism on efficiency

Education promotes ability and efficiency of family supervisor human through many ways that we can classify this complex in 4 axes as Affective education mechanisms on efficiency:

### 4. Learning the ways for doing responsibility better

There are many ways for doing affairs that has changed to an experiment many long years, so all of these ways aren't suitable but each of them has benefits as well as restrictions. On the other hand, all human aren't aware of these ways. Indeed we can educate best ways through learning in order that they can do their responsibility very well (Motovaseli, 2006).

### 5. Learning better ways (new) for doing responsibility

Dynamism is one of basic characteristics of human society and this case has caused to create and register new ways for doing affairs. Education and promotion of human ability levels, through fertilizing thought gives them necessary power in order that they can find new ways and register them when they are responsible for doing affairs or in conditions that they have faced.

### 6. Learning to do affairs that need skill

Doing some actions (consider to its kind and nature of technology-scientific development) like medicine , great foundation buildings , great management , great programming and so on requires learning special skills that without them , person couldn't deal with those affairs .

Persons gain these skills through education and after finishing these education terms, they gain necessary abilities for doing affaires.

### 7. Learning new affaires

Aim of each education system is expanding knowledge borders that people use for fulfilling and gaining necessary thought abilities is being under education. One of important outputs of expanding boarder of knowledge due to education is to achieving new discoveries that it would open new ways and dimensions for human life. Inventing steam power, computer, counting tools all are cases that directly or indirectly related to production of education system and scientific development. So we can see, by expanding education, rhythm and rate of scientific – technologic development has increased. New discoveries from different viewpoint can have important role in developing efficiency and economy of country that main cases includes:

Discovering new organization, improving quality of available organization and quality of available productions, declining production cost and declining lack of usefulness and supply new productions (Motovaseli, 2006)

Conventional behavior is that woman for caring family stay at home and man as a supporter supports her. Separating duties, remove women needs to education in order to join workforces. Perhaps, because of this dependence, Middle East women accept lower economic-social condition, rather than men. Fear of education affects on thought's independence of women and more practical affects, was one of consideration in Saudi Arabia in 1980 s.

The interrelationship between pro-West capitalist development and Shii Islam ideology was particularly painful for traditional middle-class women. They had to endure modernization observing the absolute Islamic values of segregation, including wearing the chador (full-length cover), dictated by their families, especially male relatives who regarded the culture of modernity as horrific and inappropriate for their women. For

respecting these values and traditions on the other hand, they had to pay the heavy price of being labeled as backward in schools, universities and workplaces. These women were torn between their families' traditional values and a society which promoted Western values, including wearing the latest Western fashions. Many tried to resolve this dilemma by accommodating both values. They left home veiled and took their veil off before entering school, university or the workplace. But many others, under family pressure, took a defensive position and wore the veil as a sign of protest at the uneven economic, political and social change. (Tabari, 1982)

Changes in modes of economic and social life saw a marked change in the position of women vis-à-vis men. When men began to gain control over the modes of production and relegate women to the domestic sphere, the motion of man as the 'producer' and woman as the 'consumer' gained ground. The establishment in the institution of marriage and family further suppressed women because child care which was hitherto the responsibility of the community was thrust society on women. With domestication of plants and animals a large number of societies came under the fold of agriculture and animal husbandry. The planting of crops as a technique for food acquisition resulted in marked differences as compared with hunter gatherers, not only in work habits but also in social, political and religious organization. (Friedl, 1975, p: 46).

During years 1969-70, higher education had been made by a new frame and was compromising to global patterns and established the university. Female students were allocated a few percentage of university capacity. During recent days, their share was only % 24.7 capacity. (Pishgahifard, 2003, et al, p: 52)

Education is one of factors that by direct and indirect effects on affective factors has important role in efficiency on changes in this valuable economic index. Importance of education can be analyzed from two aspects:

First, new methods and recent plans of improving efficiency can't be created and registered without any trained forces at all economic levels.

Second, it can be a tool along promoting development and quantity progress of human force as a meditation method base on education and culture of efficiency. So it can be assumed positive and parallel direction relationship between education and efficiency.

If human investment isn't properly applied will be worn and depreciate. The worst kind of depreciation happens when this investment being unapplied. Moreover, in accordance to the costs government has applied, it seems that the field of job and also return cost prepares more and more. So we advise more interaction of universities and educational institutes with industrial and servicing productions centers of country (Rajaeikhorasani, 2004)

Economists, while trying to understanding growth process have reviewed relative importance of different factors such as education. Direction of affection is as follows: education helps to grow by different methods such as public education and technical education through affecting on increasing efficiency of workforce.

Current premises between education and economic expansion are same rich human theories , that base on this theories , each improvement or motivation of work force leads to improving in worker's efficiencies . So, since education cause improving quality of human societies, has known as an affective factor on economic growth. (Erna, 2003)

For first element (longevity) life expectancy at birth is considered as an index. In this belief, the importance of life expectancy is hidden that having long longevity is valuable. Also this fact that indirect and different human life like enough nutrition and suitable health has a close relationship with life expectancy, statistics of literacy rate for second key element (knowledge) is just considered as a special reflection of access rate to education, especially in high quality of education that is necessary for living base on production and construction in developed societies, isn't sufficient. But literacy is first human step toward learning knowledge. So extent of literacy is basic in every analyzing human development. In order to gaining third index , according to the shortage of sources requirements ,for analyzing of having suitable life , they use income index that of course it has very hidden realities and it just includes some restricted parts of facilities and human rights .

In accordance to institutions needs to sophisticated human force and by considering great and fast changes in developing technology and jobs being specialized and positive and meaningful effects of experiment on income, seems necessary and useful education while working. Public educations will be very useful especially in developing countries that in health and education case, so social and cultural case did not reach to favorite extent. (Tudaro, 2004)

One educated mother pays more attention to after and before childbirth care and more attention to health services. But educating woman can increase the probability of child life. Because they have more power in labor market and so earn more in order to improving family.

It is believed that this index has revealed some poorness dimensions. In this index, those three components of healthy and long life, knowledge and standards of life have counted for males and females and has separately compared. Whatever numeral extent of this index is being more, so it will represent more equity between males and females that this subject is the evidence of clear conditions of making subsidies purposive.

Thus along with private property not being available to women the existence of class society has further pushed women into the background, (Benston, 1969, p: 205).

Women in playing their various roles have a big determining share in children's welfare. Women's situation and their access to education and other services can highly influence social and economic flourish. Trying to promote the social standpoint and significance of women in development of a society and country must begin with young girls; it feels necessary that opportunities such as good health care, nutrition and education be provided for the girls so that they can to their best flourish their talents in every field. (UNESCO, 1992, p: 9).

In developing countries, women enjoy two thirds of men's literacy level. In developing countries, pregnant women are fifty times more in danger of death than those in developed countries. A major portion of what women and young girls accomplish remains hidden since their accomplishment does not appear in national auditing and census. Women's working hours are 25 % longer than those of men, and most of their work is at home providing and preparing food products for which they are not paid at all. Although their working hours are longer than those of men, they enjoy less vocational and educational facilities and get lower pay. Cultural, social, legal, and economic obstacles for women and young girls' development are far more than those men and young boys face. Women's participation share in regional and national decision making is far more limited than men's, thus unequal (UNESCO, 1992, p: 14)

## 8. Productivity increase

Political participation and contribution increase (educational women are more aware of their rights and are more able and practical to use them, so they are more willing to participate in political activities).

Health and wellness improvement (in national level, women's education brings about longer life expectancy, fewer children, less death rate, and less birth rate; in family level, their education contributes to higher family income, and has more positive and promising effects on the family's health and wellness).

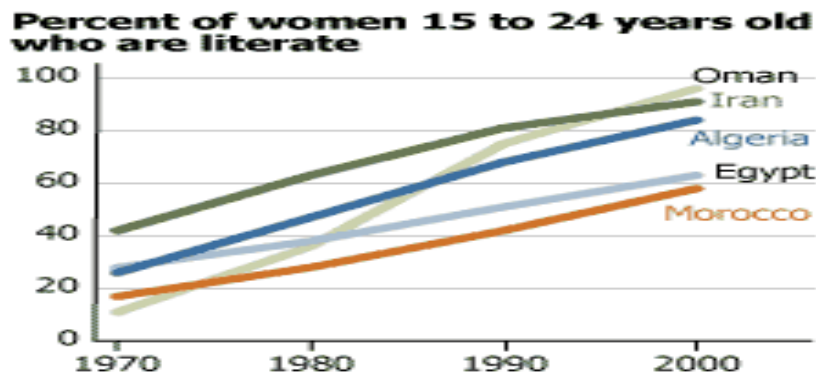
Older-age marriage (educated girls are less willing to marry at young age since they consider their economic opportunities).

Less pregnancy (an educated woman desires fewer children and prevents pregnancy. She would like to bear children at longer intervals), women in developed countries enjoy higher level of education and, compared to those in developing and underdeveloped countries, they have better and more comfortable life. It is obvious that women's education is one of the most effective factors in development and mutually it [education] gets affected by it [development]. That is why today in most countries, educational activities are more welcomed by women because lack of their access to educational opportunities is not only a dispossession, but along with other deprivations are a cause to other deprivations in the society. Development of women's education can create new spheres and opportunities in different economic and

political grounds. By investigating the advocators' viewpoints on girls and women's higher education and the other social, economic, and cultural activities, their reasons can be classified in eight general axes:

Contribution to regime's reliability and credibility: the elevation of regime's reliability can disparage and eliminate enemies' propaganda intended to disgrace the Islamic Republic System Contribution to social development: Women's education and their other activities in different spheres can help reduce underdevelopment, facilitate and speed up the development, increase the capacity and span of development, and finally pave the grounds for improvement, progress, and advancement.

**Figure 1.** Literacy Rates among Young Women in Selected Countries, 1970 – 2000



**Source:** United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics, "Literacy Statistics" ([www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org), accessed March 11, 2003).

Elimination of inequalities: Through women's education and their activities in other shares, sexual discrimination can be eliminated or at least reduced, women's civil rights can be guaranteed, family power can be balanced, and justice and equality can be achieved and practiced.

Cultural awareness: Women's education and their other activities in other spheres can elevate their and the society's cultural awareness. It helps improve the society's awareness and knowledge, develop educational agents, develop general culture, elevate humans and human communities, develop cultural adaptability, develop women's intellectuality, increase women's general knowledge, make women know better about the world, learn living skills, and turn the family into an educational cannon.

Contribution to family standards: Women's education and activities in other spheres helps reduce children and mother's death rare, increase marriage age, reduce the birth intervals and pregnancy span, delay the first child's birth, develop one-child families, increase life expectancy, and escalate general health care of children.

Economic contribution: Women's education and other activities in other spheres help make them independent, will to get better jobs, increase vocational opportunities, increase family income, develop vocational motivation, increase fruition, enjoy better financial opportunities, increase national gross, income, and increase the number of taxpayers.

## 9. Women's Participation

Women's education and other activities in other spheres help women experience participation in practical social institutions, increase their access to power, enjoy better social opportunities, make people pay attention to women's standing in the society, undertake macro and micro responsibilities such as management, improve the quality of management by educated, talented, and interested women's management.

As for the link made in the Hadith (traditions) between women's intellectual deficiency and their testimony in law, one might point out that the connection occurs only in one case, namely, the evidence which requires the testimony of one man and two women. This testimony is mentioned in the Quran in Chapter 2, verse 282, which deals solely with financial matters. And this is the only testimony in which the issue of gender is a dominant factor; in other testimonies the Quran stipulates the justice rather than gender.

Therefore, it is not right to use this verse in order to accuse women of being intellectually deficient. For it is no more than a guiding verse aiming at promoting justice when dealing with complicated financial issues. In other words, the verse is meant to give advice that if, under certain circumstances, men are not available to testify, the alternative is to accept the testimony of two women (who could be ordinary members of the public, having little or no experience with financial matters, or who could be undergoing temporary disturbances resulting from menstruation or postnatal conditions) as being equal to that of man; the aim here being is to ensure that precautionary measures are in place when dealing with an area where women are less likely to be experts.

Furthermore, by investigating the cons' viewpoints on girl students' presence and participation in different squares of the society, eight reasons can be concluded:

**Security:** the opposing group believes that girl students' participation in social and political squares causes a gap between/among different groups of the society, brings on dissatisfaction among people because of their educated girls' unemployment, **Social:** the opposing group believes that girl students' participation in social and political squares causes/develops social crises, impairs the social balance, and brings about nation crisis. **Social abnormalities:** The opposing group believes that girl students' participation in social and political squares causes/increases women's expectations, and helps their movement towards the formation of negative causes of feminism.

**Mental problems:** Mental and social problems such as depression, anxiety, addiction, and offences, society's mental health being threatened, moral deviations, and threats to families and eventually the society all result from girls' higher education and their participation in political, social, spheres. **Familial problems:** It is believed that women's higher education and other activities cause the divorce rate, marriage crisis, marriage age to increase, familial crises to develop, educated women marrying with uneducated men to decrease, the number of for-sure-to-remain single to increase, and the vulnerability of bachelorhood to lengthen. **Economic problems:** Women's higher education, and other activities in other spheres cause problems resulting from the women as workforce, the increase of unemployment, the increase of specialized women, the increase of stay-at-home men, and the waste of capital and human resources employed in women's education. **Management:** Women's higher education and other activities in other spheres bring about transitions in the management and administrative structure of the country.

The deficiency referred to in the Hadith, therefore, is not natural but rather contingent or casual and does not necessarily contradict the fact that there are women who possess high qualities and enjoy special capacities is announced by the Central Bank each year according to the prices and the inflation resulting from economic fluctuations. As a result of this amendment, women's legal rights in respect of the marriage portion have increased one-hundred fold.

One group maintains those girls' collegial education results in their success in achieving a better marrying with a better man from a better family. Another group holds that there is a direct relationship between women's education and divorce rate increase, on the other hand, studies convincingly indicate that women's education helps control births and form smaller families, and educated parents have fewer children than those uneducated. Moreover, girls' education causes their marriage to delay.

## 10. Positive Consequences

All social planners in the world have come to this conclusion that the society which keeps half of its population away from effective employment will never develop, and if the improvement of family life is the



purpose, women's employment must be encouraged because occupation of new opportunities by women does not necessarily mean that men get limited in action and employment, but they contribute to the manner of production and occupation at all levels in the society, and profoundly affect the economic, social, and cultural structure .

**Table (1):** Selected Socioeconomic Indicators in the Middle East and North Africa

	Percent of Population Over Age 15 Who Are Illiterate, 2000		Number of People Over Age 15 Who Are Illiterate (thousands), 2000		Percent of Population Ages 15 to 24 Who Are Illiterate, 2000		Number of People Ages 15 to 24 Who Are Illiterate (thousands), 2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Middle East and North Africa	42	22	50,057	26,671	23	11	8,585	4,573
Algeria	43	24	4,211	2,360	16	7	530	227
Bahrain	17	9	32	25	1	2	1	1
Egypt	56	33	12,253	7,374	37	24	2,500	1,678
Iran	31	17	6,696	3,819	9	4	655	296
Iraq	77	45	5,070	3,057	71	41	1,593	962
Jordan	16	5	220	78	1	1	3	5
Kuwait	20	16	103	130	7	8	15	19
Lebanon	20	8	246	91	7	3	23	9
Libya	32	9	533	168	7	0.5	43	1
Morocco	64	38	6,286	3,702	42	24	1,265	750
Oman	38	20	246	155	4	0.5	9	1
Palestine	16	6	136	48	—	—	—	—
Qatar	17	20	21	57	3	7	1	3
Saudi Arabia	33	17	1,723	1,092	10	5	187	101
Syria	40	12	1,879	566	21	5	376	85
Tunisia	39	19	1,307	621	11	3	106	27
Turkey	24	7	5,453	1,539	6	1	392	81
United Arab Emirates	21	25	117	345	6	13	10	29
Yemen	75	33	3,525	1,444	54	17	874	292

	Gross Enrollment Ratio (%) <sup>a</sup>				Women as a Share of University Enrollment (%)	Public Education as a Share of Total Government Expenditure (%)	Percent of People Ages 15 and Older in Labor Force <sup>b</sup>		Women as Percent of Labor Force <sup>b</sup>	Total Fertility Rate <sup>c</sup>
	Primary		Secondary				Female	Male		
	Female	Male	Female	Male						
Middle East and North Africa	91	100	62	71	—	—	20	73	20	3.3
Algeria	107	116	73	68	—	16	—	—	—	2.8

Bahrain	103	103	105	98	60	12	19	65	17	2.6
Egypt	96	103	83	88	—	15	20	74	21	3.5
Iran	85	88	75	81	47	18	11	75	12	2
Iraq	91	111	29	47	34	—	17	75	18	5.4
Jordan	101	101	89	86	51	20	22	76	21	3.7
Kuwait	95	93	57	55	68	14	43	83	25	4
Lebanon	97	101	79	72	52	8	27	76	28	2.4
Libya	117	115	—	—	48	—	23	78	21	3.7
Morocco	88	101	35	44	44	25	30	79	28	2.7
Oman	71	74	67	69	58	16	16	79	14	4.1
Palestine	109	107	86	80	47	—	10	67	13	5.7
Qatar	104	105	92	86	73	—	35	92	13	3.5
Saudi Arabia	—	—	—	—	56	23	15	80	11	5.7
Syria	105	113	41	46	—	14	21	83	20	3.8
Tunisia	115	120	80	76	48	20	24	73	24	2.1
Turkey	96	105	48	67	41	15	26	72	27	2.5
United Arab Emirates	99	99	80	71	—	20	31	92	12	3
Yemen	61	96	25	69	21	22	29	82	27	7

**Sources:** UNESCO Institute for Statistics, "Literacy Statistics" ([www.uis.unesco.org](http://www.uis.unesco.org), accessed March 11, 2003); United Nations Development Programmer, Human Development Report 2002; UN Statistics Division, The World's Women 2000: Trends and Statistics (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/ww2000/table5d.htm>, accessed Aug. 23, 2003); F. Roudi-Fahimi, "Women's Reproductive Health in the Middle East and North Africa" (2003); and C. Haub, 2003 World Population Data Sheet.

That women economically get independent and have a share in living costs or take better roles is not a crisis; the least reason is that if in a competition square- to some extent unequal and imposed- some are determined to compensate for their backwardness, how and with what logic can they create problems and obstacles in their way? Moreover, as women will to manifest their abilities and skills in very difficult situations, how and with what reason can one create obstacles in their way, whether they win or lose? This trial is their absolute right whose deprivation is not fair even if it is for their more vulnerability or for advisability and good-well.

On the other hand, under pressure of women, students, youths and workers, the state continued its interventionist policies. The notion of the interventionist state revolves around the idea that it is embedded in civil society, and subject to political pressures exerted by various civil society organizations. (Evans, 1995)

Of all the positive consequences of women's working in the family and society are the escalation of health care, better enjoyment of material and spiritual resources, increase of women's managerial power in the family, increase of women's confidence in a society, filling the leisure time and prevention of social problems, women's social security against different crises, the flourish of women's humane gifts, the development of responsibility among women for their families, and escalation of more self-confidence and constructivism in the society .

## 11. Women Education

Education is regarded as the key factor in overcoming the barriers that women face and the basic tool for empowering women and bringing them into the main stream of development. Education not only provides knowledge and skills to improve health and livelihoods, but it empowers women to take their right place in the society and development process. Education gives status and confidence in decision making. Educating women is the key to reducing poverty. The need of women education is emphasized all over the world this fact is presented by Sharma and Sharma, M.B (2004) as: One of our greatest needs is to spread of education among our women. As a matter of fact there is room for the extension of education even among men. The condition of women's education is, however, such that any attempt as its spread deserves help and encouragement from all quarters.

Women status in the society and education are interrelated. All over the world movements have been carried on to change the situation of illiteracy as stated by Bhatt, D.B and Sharma, R.S (1992)

## 12. Women's Participation

Cultural, social, and economic development will not be possible unless all sections of a society take part in the process. Their economic participation in line with their cultural contribution is of great importance. Economic participation is very important, but it is not the final determining factor in women's social life. The emphasis national and international organizations put on women workforce, their participation in economic spheres and emphasizing on this index of development is in fact a deviation of women's position. Position of her standing can be possible through development in education. High illiteracy of women compared to men is the essential factor in limiting their participation in economic and social development. Therefore, the promotion of education of women and the level of their contribution and participation in society is a necessity, not an economic device (Shaditalab, 2002, p: 26).

This undeniable huge number of illiterates, large number of out of school children and disparity between male and female is advocated by UNESCO Institute of Statistics (2006) "According to the most recent UIS data, there are an estimated 781 million illiterate adults in the world, about 64% of who are women." UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2006) "The adult literacy rate for South Asia during the year 2002-04 was 58.7% for both sexes, for male 70.5% and for female 46.3%." These illiterates are the hindrance in the development of the nations. The gender gap in the year 2002-04 is 24.2. This fact indicated the under privilege and unfavorable situation for females literacy in South Asia. Sri Lanka and Maldives are not gender biased as a result, in Sri Lanka female literacy rate is more than male. According to EFA global monitoring report 2005/06 Women's literacy is the crucial importance in addressing wider issues of gender inequality .yet, women still account for the majority of adults illiterates in most of the E-9 countries, with some of them are showing substantial gender disparities in literacy. In Bangladesh, Egypt, India and Pakistan- the E-9 countries with the lowest over all literacy rates-less than 70 women are literate for every 100 literate men. In South Asia there exist huge gender gap with low literacy of female as indicated by Khan, R.S (1993) "South Asia is the region, along with sub-Saharan Africa, in which girl's education lags behind boys education most dramatically. At secondary and tertiary levels South Asia has the largest gender gap of any developing region." The present picture of gender gap in South Asia indicates the huge challenges in the female literacy. In countries where over all literacy rates are comparatively low, male/female and urban/rural disparities are also large. Industrialization and mechanization further marginalized women. The introduction of large scale production moved production away from the hut into the factory. The large industries gradually drove the home industries out of business. Women lost their hold on production because the type of products they were making came to be replaced by products which were being made by the factory. With mechanization the work that women had been doing was, by and large taken over by machines and women were either placed in substitute jobs or thrown out of work. But this did not and does not generally happen with men, as, most

often they are absorbed in other jobs. Either because of their biological functions or because of lack of access to skill acquisition women easily succumbed to the pressures of a capitalist mode of production (Tong, 1989, p: 42).

**Table (2):** Women working in major sectors in cities and villages (in percentage)

Year	Urban				Rural			
	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Other	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Other
1956	4.1	39.4	52.5	4	35	52.7	11.7	1.2
1966	3.1	45.7	45.6	5.6	32.1	61.2	5	1.7
1968	4.2	42.8	46.9	6.1	51.3	42	5.4	1.3
1971	1.7	39.6	53	5.7	41.1	55.8	2.5	0.6
1986	2.5	12	73.5	12	54.3	33.6	8.1	4

**Source:** Iran's Statistical Center

The table above shows that: the activities of rural women in industrial fields decreased from 52.7 percent in 1335 (1956) to 33.6 percent in 1365 (1986) whereas their activities in agricultural areas increased from 35 percent to 54.3 percent. It is to be noted that at present, the industrial sector uses modern technology more than the agricultural sector. Such a discrepancy in the utilization of modern technology has caused simple manpower to be replaced by investment in the industrial sector. In other words, this has diverted the female work force from traditional industries to traditional agriculture mainly because of the failure of traditional industries to keep pace with modern technology.

## Women and Development

In the last two decades issues concerning women have received global attention. A large volume of literature pertaining to women and development has also been generated. However, until recently development specialists did not take a very serious note of the gender dimension in development and hence development theories did not address themselves to women's roles and responsibilities. It was (Boserup, 1989 p: 138)

The role of women in development is most clearly related to the goal of comprehensive socio-economic development and is an important issue in the development debate. Any development strategy which neglects the need for enhancing the role of women cannot lead to meaningful socio economic development. The access of women to development opportunities and the impact of development programmer on women assume importance as women constitute half of human resources in all societies.

Development, therefore, is a process as much as an end product (Krishnaraj, 1988 p 8). Development should bring about a change in the lives of large masses of people and should have wide applicability. In this background an effort is made in the next section to examine the role of women in development.

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It is no doubt true that material abundance is very vital but at the same time development has other important indicators too. It is, therefore, essential to note that real development is one which results in a

change in the social order in such a way that social justice is ensured. Development will, therefore, be conceived as a 'multidimensional process involving changes in structures, attitudes and institutions as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and eradication of absolute poverty' (Todaro, 1982, p: 87).

Development has been conceived as an integral process of economic growth and social progress. This position represents a collective articulation of the desire of the majority of mankind to humanize the condition of people's lives through the process of development (Kalbaugh, 1991, p: 3).

After the Islamic revolution, the officials have paid most attention to women's education, especially higher education. The statistics show that 60% of those who passed the Entrance Examination of universities in 1380 were women that indicated their social and mental development. Regarding the increasing number of women who pass the Entrance Examination of universities, it is inevitable that we must make a good plan to enjoy their enormous capacity.

### Active Population

In view of the fact that women in the Third World work without any or much payback (homework, handicraft, cooking for her family) these figures are low in these countries. It is maybe because the conception of job refers more to a kind of work for which you receive regular payment and other kinds of work do not be identified as job and thus, in statistics, we just consider the works with payment.

The researches show that if we use co-operative observation in our research, instead of questioning men and women, the figures of the statistics will be changed.

The victory of Islamic Revolution in Iran changed the circumstances of women noticeably. In basic principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran, except for the 115th article which according to it, a woman cannot be the president, both men and women have equal opportunities for education and occupation. The twentieth article says: (all people of the nation are backed up by law equally and enjoy all human, political, economic, social and cultural rights by considering Islamic scales.)

Nowadays, the level of women employment is one basis of development in industrial economy. The factors like wrong cultural manners, unfair social rules and lack of facilities for participation of women in social and economic affairs can lead to women unemployment and supporting family just by men.

**Table (3):** Rates of participation of female and male human forces (%) and gender gap among active women economically per 100 men, 2003

	LFPR women (%)	LFPR women (%)	gender gap among active women economically per 100 men
world	79.4	53.9	68
Middle East- south Africa	76.8	28.2	26
South Africa	81.1	37.4	44
Latin America	80.5	49.2	64
Industrialized economics	70.3	50.5	76
Temporary economics	65.7	53.1	91
Southeast of Asia	82.9	60.5	75
Countries of African desert	85.3	63.2	77
East Asia	85.1	73.1	83

Ansari, Mohammad Ismail (2004), the status of gender within management & development Study of Women Education According to the Enumeration in 1976 and 1986.

This difference, regarding the kind of their job, is clearly shown in their employment statistics. For example, among 1054000 people who have scientific and specialized jobs, just 243000 of them are women while the

number of men reaches to 719000. Also, at the high ranking official and administrative level, while the number of women is 2000, the number of men at these levels is 43000. With a brief glance at conditions of women education, you can clearly understand this issue.

Table (4): The level of economical participation of educated women in the period of higher education in the years 1997-2002

Description	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997
All countries						
Man & woman	83	84.4	86.2	76.7	85.6	89.7
Man	90	91	93	92.4	91.5	93.4
Woman	71.1	72.4	74.1	75.3	73.9	81.6
Urban areas	81.8	83.3	85.2	85.6	84.7	88.9
Rural areas	91.7	93.3	95.8	95.7	95.2	95.9

Abbasi, (2002) periods of higher education during years 1997-2002

On the other part, the increase in the number of educated people has been more in those less than 15 year old ones and the rate of education in adulthood has had a little increase. Considering the effect of higher education for women on decreasing the births, we must prepare the situations for them to continue their learning and be efficient in country's economic expansion.

Table (5): Unemployment rate for people aged 10 and over during 2000-2008(percent)

Year	Unemployment Rate		
	Women	Men	Women&men
2000	16.5	13.8	14.3
2001	19.9	13.2	14.2
2002	22.4	11.2	12.8
2003	21.2	10.1	11.8
2004	17.8	9	10.3
2005	17.1	10	11.5
2006	16.2	10	11.3
2007	15.8	9.4	10.5
2008	16.7	9.1	10.4

Source: Iran's Statistical Center

Although many factors can affect the number of births in country, but it is inevitable that the most important factor that has a great influence is the level of women's education and the kind of their employment.

If we prepare the essential grounds for women participation in economic activities and encourage them to work out of house, we can help to decrease the births. In other words, developing occupation grounds and training women can prevent from population explosion.

Table (6): Labor force participation rate for people aged 10 and over during 2000-2008 (percent)

Year	Women	Men	Women&men
2000	11.9	62.1	37.2
2001	11.8	62.1	37.2
2002	10.8	62.8	37.2
2003	11.5	63.7	38.1
2004	11.4	64.9	38.6
2005	17	64.7	41
2006	16.4	63.9	40.4
2007	15.6	63.5	39.6
2008	13.6	61.9	38

Source: Iran's Statistical Center

The table above shows that: rate for the total population as well as male and female at the age of 10 and over, during the years 2000-2008. The data is shown separately for men and women. Based on the information provided in the table above, in 2008 the LFPR for population at the age of 10 and over regardless of sex was 38 percent. For men this rate was 61.9 percent and for women only 13.6 percent. The LFPR in the country's rural areas was 41.5 while in urban regions this figure was 36.5 percent. Based on this data the LFPR for the 35-39 years age group was the highest (56.9 percent) but it was different for the two sexes; with 95.1 percent for men and only 23.6 percent for women.

## Conclusion

The most important motivations that make women to work out of house is making money to support their family and if the men's income was enough to support their family, women have not a strong tendency to work.

Also, there is an immediate relationship between women education and their employment, their age of marriage and their social and cultural participation.

Women mention many factors as the blocks to progress in their employment that contrary to public opinion is not richness or lack of interest or little education but the main reason is the children existence in family because women are forced to sacrifice and stay at home and take care of their children. Second, for some women, not a single factor, but a combination of some factors prevents them from working out of house. We hope that by adopting suitable strategies, women can progress and develop their opportunities to have economic activity.

In order to establish equality of opportunities between men and women, they must give equal salary and fringe benefits. The above social phenomena have a close relationship with each other. We must study them to change women circumstances in labor market. But it will not be an easy work because regarding the predominant social and cultural values most people think that men are superior to women in political, social and economic issues.

## Reasons for Low Rate of Women Participation

- Lack of legislative support for women workers
- Illiteracy or lack sufficient education and skills
- Undercounting women work
- A large number of Iranian women are housewives

## Suggestions

We suggest the priority of using government sources for educating deprived and rural regions in order to create equal education chances for them. (Motovaseli, 2006).

One of reasons that can leads to differences between men and women is the kind of approach of society toward females and social restrictions in the field of working of this group and also some customs that is especially exist in rural areas. So it is suggested that changes have to be applied by these approaches and preparing well conditions in order to occupation of females in the society. (Balazadeh, 2006).

Number of institutions of the female in formal system of education may be equalizing to number of institutions of male to minimize gender gap in Iran.

The women must determine the kind and direction of development programs by accessing to better health, gaining more income, learning new skills and technologies, and having equal rights with men and having control over their own body.

Establishment of consulting centers for women and training them in dealing with their social and familial problems.

The employed women with higher education, the employed women with more experience and married women believe that discrimination, education factors and economic issues are very influential in occurring occupational problems and the administrators must pay attention to these issues.

The governments must pay more attention to the women activities in their home and provide them social insurance and encourage them to have a job of their own and see their homework as a job.

We cannot find some things collectively. Level of Higher education is a sign of trust of people in every group or society. Also acceptable level of Higher education causes to social interaction as critical events for solving problems of Higher education as most basic source of solving problem and criterion of available process. So recognition of effective factors in enforcing or weakening of Higher education is important.

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