

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Analysis of Gender Inequality in the Labor Market and Its Adaptation to the Conditions of Kazakhstan

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Abstract

This paper examines to analyze the best world experiences for ensuring gender equality in remuneration and adaptation to the conditions of Kazakhstan. A literature review has shown that types of discrimination directly affect how women are represented in the labor market and explain why their career growth is slower than that of men. In the paper, it was decided to use a quantitative method by a detailed analysis of labor force surveys in countries such as Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Rwanda and Nicaragua for the period from 2010 to 2021. It draws upon the nation's experience in its transition to a market-based economy and its impact on gender equality in the labor market. It further examines the challenges and opportunities that Kazakhstan has faced in its efforts to reduce gender inequality in the labor market, particularly with respect to wages, access to employment and labor regulations. Through the analysis of the selected countries with high gender-equal indicators, the study has revealed that Kazakhstan's government lacks comprehensive and eligible strategies and practices to launch for maintaining the gender pay gap and improving equal opportunities for male and female workers. The paper concludes by suggesting a set of interventions that Kazakhstan can pursue to reduce gender inequality in the labor market further and promote economic growth.

Keywords: Economy, Gender, Gender Inequality, Gender Pay Gap, Labour Market, World Experience, Kazakhstan

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1. INTRODUCTION

Today, the gender pay gap shows the difference in income between women and men. This indicator is often used to analyze the position of women in the economy. It reflects the degree of inequality, which is wider than the pay indicator for equal work. In addition, many women face difficulties in economic activity due to gender discrimination and social norms, unequal access to education, healthcare, financial and other resources. In addition, women are disproportionately vulnerable to the consequences of environmental disasters and climate change. Promoting and ensuring gender equality and empowering rural women through decent work and productive employment contributes to sustained and sustainable economic growth and increases the effectiveness of poverty reduction initiatives.

On the contrary, wage differences between men and women reflect differences in many possible parameters, including social issues. It is implied that the study of wage differences is not necessary and sufficient to prove discrimination, but the assessment of inequality is essential. Much of this is due to gender inequality, social inequality and uneven distribution of resources. Thus, gender inequality is one of the most common social dilemmas and challenges in the modern world. It is actively discussed and analyzed by sociologists, economists, independent researchers, and other experts whose activities relate to social and cultural matters (Ahmad, 2020). Thus, not depending on the fact that many countries around the globe try to deal with gender inequality, women continue to face gender discrimination (Hyland et al., 2020). The social necessity of dividing labor on this basis has long disappeared in modern societies. Nevertheless, patriarchal ideologies and traditional roles remain as women must concentrate on the private sphere, and men should succeed in the public sphere (Teixeira et al., 2021).

Analyzing various studies about gender inequality in the labor market, such women's question as a paradigm of the twentieth century has entered the social past (Coe et al., 2019). In 1995 at the World Forum on Women in China, it was declared a paradigm for a transition to a new gender sequence, which is still developing today, gradually introduced into all country enclaves and actively promoting the task of introducing gender public policy (Sokolova & Sorensen, 2021). Each of these directions differs in its subject. However, the objects of these policies are close since they are two system-forming gender communities stratified by a wide range of characteristics, groups, indicators, social role communities, and others (Kleven et al., 2022). In addition, a vital gender stratification function is played by the country's gender structure and a vector of its gender asymmetry, which creates a different gender-country landscape.

Ensuring gender equality means enjoying equal rights, opportunities and services by men and women in all spheres of life, including in the field of work. Women's economic empowerment and gender equality are crucial because they are linked and enshrined in the normative framework of international labor standards, laws and regulations. Women's economic empowerment will ensure women's access to resources and opportunities, including improving their standard of living. Women employed in the economy are discriminated against on many grounds. In addition to discrimination based on gender, they may also be disadvantaged because of their ethnic or social origin and religion. To achieve social well-being and economic growth, justification and practical implementation of a gender policy to improve women's quality and standard of living are required. In addition, new approaches to the development of society are needed, primarily related to the person himself, his intellectual potential, and the ability to create new knowledge and master new technologies.

Based on the above, this study aims to analyze the best world practices for ensuring gender equality in remuneration and adaptation to the conditions of Kazakhstan. The following research questions were generated for the investigation to meet the significant purpose, such as:

RQ1: What is the current state of the problem of gender inequality in the labor market in Kazakhstan?

RQ2: What are good examples of countries' experiences addressing gender inequality in the labor market?

RQ3: What strategies of developed countries could the Kazakhstan government implement to improve its gender equality indicators and eliminate negative consequences of gender inequality in the labor market?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender pay gaps are considered one of the significant indicators determining the presence of gender inequality issues in the country (Meara et al., 2020). Generally, this is a specific difference between the incomes of males and females based on gender characteristics (Meara et al., 2020). The notion of the gender pay gap has emerged from two primary sources. Analysing various studies in recent years, it became clear that in the modern labor market, employers are more willing to deal with men, employ mainly employing, rather than women, who are usually unemployed (Ahmad, 2020). For example, men have more complicated jobs, so it is fair to put higher wages for them while women need to be more experienced due to the fact of getting maternal leave and spending much time on family (Cohen & Kiran, 2020). Second, employees are judged by gender factors. In most cases, females are discriminated against by their gender, getting lower salaries than men because of different reasons unrelated to their professional abilities and education.

In modern production, with an upgraded development of technologies, a focus on a division of labor by gender depends not so much on psychophysiological signs as common stereotypes exist both at the level of social consciousness and individual consciousness of women themselves (Coe et al., 2019). Generally, women's jobs include qualitatively defined functions that a woman can perform following biosocial characteristics (Coe et al., 2019).

One of the main reasons for a division of labor based on gender is still the influence of archaic attitudes that the women's natural ability could negatively affect the success of their professional activities (Hyland et al., 2020). In addition, women's activities and jobs are often formed by a simple transfer to a social micro-level of traditional women's activities within the family framework (Teixeira et al., 2021). However, everything connected with a female occupation is considered not prestigious and pays lower, while more socially prestigious professions relate to men. Each country approaches this complex issue in its way and with different success, given that the gender policy differs from the policies of the family, economic, and social aspects (Sokolova & Sorensen, 2021).

There are often such situations when both these sources are combined, and females are not motivated to focus on their human capital as they already know that a level of income would be less than for the same position occupied by males (Office for the UK National Statistics, 2021). See Figure 1 example of the women and men working part-time.

As is seen in Figure 1 above, there is one of the examples of how the gender pay gap works. In 2021 the Office for the United Kingdom National Statistics investigated, which revealed that women should work 41% more than men to get the same income for their efforts. Generally, the results demonstrate that the gap is quietly unfair due to gender reasoning.

In some countries, women are not considered reliable workers, so an average female employee is usually not compared with an average male employee as they are different, according to the government or employer's opinion. For example, a female employee can have a qualified education and essential work experience but due to the gender is not accepted for better promotion or higher income. At the same time, a male employee with less qualifications can easily get this promotion option. Undoubtedly, such type of discrimination is not allowed in progressive countries, but in developing ones this is normal practice (Kovalenko & Topfer, 2021).

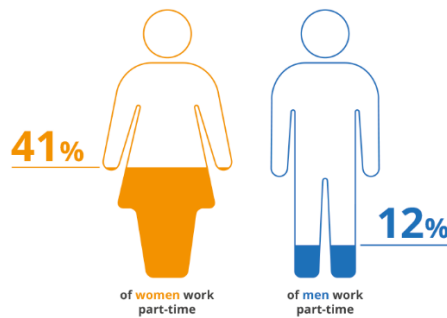


FIGURE 1. Example of women and men working part-time

Note: compiled by authors from data UK National Statistics (2021)

It is possible to remember from history, that only several centuries ago women got an opportunity to get an education as their major duty was to give birth to children and take care of the family (Lyons & Zhang, 2022). They could not go to work or have other activities except managing households. In modern times female employees need to get some career pauses due to devoting their efforts to children, so often, their work can be penalized and given up. Several relevant studies were chosen to understand the significant challenges of the gender pay gap and the apparent characteristics of gender inequality in the labour market.

First, the gender pay gap has several vital components influencing its average rate. The core one of them is the level of education of employees in a particular country. It is necessary to specify that when there are more educated and smart females, the gender pay gap will be decreased (Schieder & Wrohlich, 2021). In turn, when there are more non-educated women, the gender pay gap can be increased or kept in the same position for several analysed periods. However, the specifics of the chosen field can be crucial because females less frequently choose such educational specialities as new technologies, engineering, and science. There are a variety of studies that have concluded that even in modern times gender stereotypes do not allow women to choose so-called male specializations since school times. It happens as there is a belief in society that the gender factor can influence a person's skills. However, this is one of the most popular social stereotypes that should be prevented due to its contradiction with reality and relevance to discrimination cases (Bennedsen et al., 2019).

The second reason is that women usually have less work experience than men because of various interruptions, such as childbirth, family issues, pregnancy, motherhood, and other related situations (Sihna, 2022). It is relatively hard to concentrate attentively on both work and family obligations for women, so one of these parts can be suffering (Finley et al., 2021). In most cases, their career becomes less necessary for female employees, so they often give up work over family values (Fisher & Ryan, 2021). Therefore, employers prefer to hire males in more responsible positions as they know the men would not leave because of maternity and would always be available for overworking and extended business trips.

2.2 Labour inequality biases

One more aspect to focus on is the existence of certain biases, which affects negatively on the equal distribution of duties and responsibilities at work, as well as opportunities for promotions and development (Auer, 2022). Auer noted (2022) that the most obvious one is the selectivity bias, which happens due to a non-random selection of males and females for better positions in modern enterprises. For instance, officially employed women could have an excellent education and brilliant skills compared to employed men but still need better working conditions, as well as females who have no ambition for career promotion in the future (Feliciano, 2020). It means

that women are automatically considered untrustworthy workers as they can leave the company suddenly due to a new pregnancy or other family concerns (Feliciano, 2020). Undoubtedly, any business owner wants to save money and time in finding a relevant substitution for the labour force, according to Feliciano (2020). Therefore, from a business point of view, it would be better to hire a person to be confident in the future.

2.3 Gender pay discrimination

Analysing various previous studies revealed that almost all reasons for an unequal distribution of incomes for male and female employees are derived from discrimination basics (Raile et al., 2023). As highlighted above, employers consider women, even with the same skills and characteristics as men, less qualified for specific positions or deserve to be promoted by the career ladder (Raile et al., 2023). In this regard, female workers are viewed differently based on certain stereotypes, prejudices, and opinions. It is possible to mention at least four types of gender pay discrimination, such as stereotyping, taste-based, statistical, and normative discrimination (Raile et al., 2023). See Figure 2 for types of gender pay discrimination.

Stereotyping	• Personal preferences over genders
Taste-based	• Certain distaste towards females
Statistical	• Focus on observable characteristics
Normative	• Underlying cultural beliefs

FIGURE 2. Types of gender pay discrimination

Note: compiled by the authors based on Raile et al. (2023)

Based on Figure 2, it is necessary to provide more details on each of the defined types of gender pay discrimination. First, there is stereotyping, based on which employers make their recruitment decisions, concerning not a candidate’s expertise and knowledge but personal assumptions, beliefs, and social prejudices. There are such situations when women apply for jobs which are related to male ones in society but are not accepted because of the gender factor. In addition, different previous researchers have identified an interconnection between gender and a profitable position in large corporations as women are not so desirable to take a leading role in the company’s management (Litman et al., 2020).

Second, taste-based discrimination is formed from the fact that regular employees, clients, and owners of a specific enterprise have a particular type of distaste towards females as potential candidates to work. This concern happens because employers believe that women’s productivity level as current or future mothers will be much lower than men’s career abilities. Generally, this is a standard way of how prejudices look in employment terms. The following problem often happens in monopolistic companies, which implies limitations and barriers for those females who want to apply there (Boll &Lagemann, 2019).

Third, statistical discrimination is when companies overview the general statistics about the share of men and women to reveal their performance indicators (Tharp et al., 2019). Through observation, employers try to predict an individual probability among those candidates who have applied for a position. Obviously, this approach can have at least two significant biases to a concern (Tharp et al., 2019).

See Figure 3 for prejudices and gender discrimination at modern companies.



FIGURE 3. Biases and gender discrimination at modern companies

Note: compiled by the authors based on Tharp et al. (2019)

According to Figure 3, biases are related to stereotypic cultural perceptions and ways to assess productivity. It proves that heads of enterprises would provoke a gender pay gap, even if they believe that there is not any bias in observations.

Fourth, normative discrimination is about assumptions that women are only for raising children, so they should be awarded higher promotions due to their task to stay at home and be good mothers (Tharp et al., 2019). It leads to modern employers unconsciously discriminating against female employees, mostly in companies where men are preferable, such as IT, engineering, automobiles, construction, and others (Tharp et al., 2019). These types mentioned above of discrimination directly influence how women are represented in the labor market and explain why their career growth is slower than men.

3. METHODOLOGY

Analysing the eligibility of different research methods, it was decided to use a quantitative method through a detailed analysis of Labor Force Surveys in such countries as Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden for the period from 2010 to 2021. The choice of the following countries was done based on its highest gender-equal indicators in terms of labor according to Global Gender Gap Report, based on the results of 2022.

The primary research purpose of the current study is to identify the global experience in addressing gender inequality in the labor market to understand better what should be done to improve the gender-equal indicators in the Republic of Kazakhstan, which are much lower than the selected states have. Therefore, by observing males' and females' employment rates in these countries, it would be compared with Kazakhstan's results.

3.1 Research design

Considering the chosen research method, the study would be designed through three major stages, such as:

1. Analysis of gender-equal indicators of Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, and Kazakhstan.

2. Analysis of practices and any related experience of the researched countries in addressing gender inequality in the labor market.

3. Analysis of applying some of the revealed practices to the conditions of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Through these three steps, it would be clearly seen what more successful countries in achieving the highest rates of gender equality in the labor market have done to maintain these brilliant results. Obviously, such indicators were reached not immediately but through a set of trials and mistakes.

3.2 Analysis of gender equal indicators

First, it was decided to investigate gender-equal indicators of the selected seven countries and compare them with Kazakhstan's results from 2010 to 2021. Through overviewing the dynamics of employment rate by gender, it would be seen how progress was made during these years and the current difference between male and female employment in the countries. Therefore, considering these indicators in 2022, it was decided to focus on these nations more attentively to reveal its progress from 2010 to 2021, clarifying its strategies for achieving gender equality in the labor market. Its experience can help Kazakhstan to focus on the significant challenges during preparation and the implementation of better approaches to deal with any case of gender inequality and its inconsistencies.

4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Background Information

According to the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2022), Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden have taken the leading positions as the most gender-equal countries in 2022.

Figure 4 shows the top countries in Global Gender Gap Index in 2022.

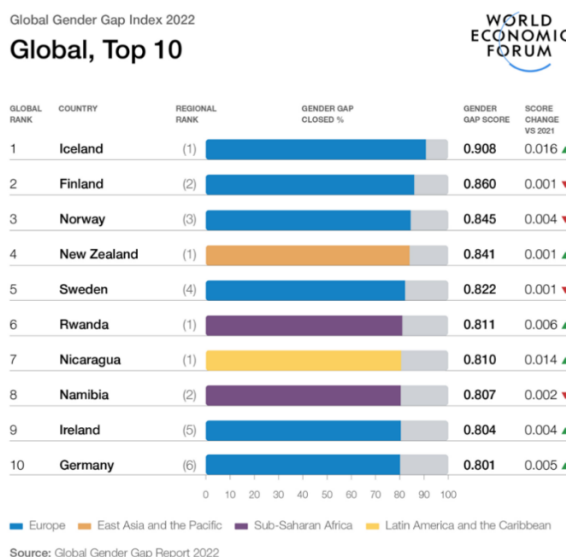


FIGURE 4. Top countries in Global Gender Gap Index in 2022

Note: compiled by the authors based on data Global Gender Gap Report (2022)

As it is seen on Figure 4 above, the only country in the world that could reach more than 90% of its gender gap, taking the leading position for about 12 years in a row, is Iceland. Generally, this is an example of the economy, which treats women and men equally without putting gender as the critical factor during recruitment. The neighbouring countries with Iceland, such as Finland, Sweden, and Norway, also represent a good result as New Zealand, Rwanda, and Nicaragua. These countries are in the top 10 ranking of gender-equal states around the globe.

Compared with Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Rwanda, and Nicaragua, Kazakhstan takes 65th place in the Global Gender Gap Index Rankings in 2022, scoring 0.719. See Table 1 comparison of the Global Gender Gap Index Score.

TABLE 1. Comparison of the Global Gender Gap Index Score

Country	Rank	Score	Score change
Iceland	1	0.908	+0.016
Finland	2	0.860	-0.001
Norway	3	0.845	-0.004
New Zealand	4	0.841	+0.001
Sweden	5	0.822	0.000
Rwanda	6	0.811	+0.006
Nicaragua	7	0.810	+0.015
Kazakhstan	65	0.719	+0.009
<i>Note:</i> compiled by the authors based on Global Gender Gap Report (2022)			

Table 1 above clearly shows that Kazakhstan should maintain more effective practices to get jumped to the top 10 countries with the best ranking and eliminate a sufficient gender gap. Obviously, Iceland kept its score for many years, so in 2022 it got 0.016% of change, which is a good result, becoming the first country which becomes closer to 100% of complete gender equality in the country. In comparison, Kazakhstan has a good upgrade to 0.009% of change.

4.1.2 Iceland

The country that took first place in 2022 by its Gender Gap Index is Iceland. It has reached a score of 0.993, which means that the country is close to getting 1, detecting complete equality in the labor market. It should be underlined that Iceland had stable gender-equal indicators for more than ten years, showing a perfect example of an absence of gender discrimination and inequality worldwide. For example, women could hold higher positions and even easily promote to the country's presidency if they have enough skills and expertise.

Undoubtedly, these gender equality achievements in Iceland have fluctuations. Based on the data of the ILO, got sufficient differences in the employment rate of males and females in 2012 and 2021 (Figure 5).

Figure 5 demonstrates that there is still a gap between employed males and females. However, this tendency can be explained by certain factors, such as the personal choices of employees, rather than a fact of gender discrimination. Obviously, the dynamics of the employment rate in Iceland is the same for both men and women, proving the equal development of labor opportunities for any country citizen, not depending on gender or other aspects.



FIGURE 5. The employment rate in Iceland for a period from 2010 to 2021

Note: compiled by the authors based on ILO (2022)

4.1.2 Finland

The second country is Finland, which scored 0.860, demonstrating good development of gender equality policies. However, the results in 2022 were lower than in 2021 due to falls in gender parity towards incomes. Finland is one of those countries focusing on improving its current strategies based on the previous lessons and findings. Therefore, if there is a certain limitation in reaching an excellent indicator of gender equality in the labor market, some other factors should be considered as the recent pandemic and the further complicated situations happening around the globe. See Figure 6 for the employment rate in Finland.



FIGURE 6. The employment rate in Finland for a period from 2010 to 2021

Note: compiled by the authors based on Statista (2022)

According to Figure 6 above, it is evident that the dynamics of male and female employment rates have been at the same speed since 2012. These indicators remind growth in Iceland for the earlier period since 2008. Interestingly, the equality of both men and women in Finland's labor

market was achieved in 2022, getting almost 74% in the two genders. It can be considered a sufficient advantage of stabilizing gender indicators and proving that Finland made significant progress in addressing gender inequality challenges to reveal that other countries could deal with the problem accordingly.

4.1.3 Norway

The third country is Norway, which has also met a particular decline in 2022 compared to 2021. The gender pay gap is constructed from several elements, including the education rates and other types of parity, necessary to illustrate a complete picture of what is happening in the market regarding gender equality. For example, according to the data of the Global Gender Gap Report for 2022, Norway made essential progress towards hiring more women into politics and providing them more opportunities for the same career development conditions as men. See Figure 7 for the employment rate in Norway.



FIGURE 7. The employment rate in Norway for a period from 2012 to 2021

Note: compiled by the authors based on Statista (2022)

As it is clearly seen in Figure 7 above, the employment rate for female and male indicators are almost the same. The percentage of the employed women is not so much different from the percentage of employed men. One more interesting detail is that Norway keeps its stable dynamics for about ten years in a row. According to the data, the employment rates have increased or decreased by a few per cent, so this difference is insignificant visually. This finding shows a qualified gender equality strategy, adopted by the Norwegian government to provide an eligible environment for successful work for citizens based on their professional qualifications.

4.1.4 New Zealand

The following large country, which got in the top 10 best gender-equal nations, is New Zealand. Unfortunately, there is a lack of raw data for a detailed analysis of employment rates of males and females in this country for years before 2010. However, an interesting figure was found, showing an actual share of unemployed women who cannot find a good job because of gender stereotypes. In the previous years, New Zealand has demonstrated stable growth of its gender-equal indicators, even during the hardest economic times, such as the pandemic and financial instabilities. Based on getting statistics, it becomes obvious to construct the overview of the employment rate for males and females in New Zealand for a period from 2010 to 2021. See Figure 8 for the employment rate in New Zealand.



FIGURE 8. The employment rate in New Zealand for a period from 2010 to 2021

Note: compiled by the authors based on Global Economy (2021)

Based on Figure 8 above, female unemployment indicators decreased in 2021 in comparison with 2014. It was noticed a slight fall in 2018 and 2019, with a sharp growth in 2020, and the following dramatic down at the end of the period. Concerning that New Zealand is a country with patriarchal values and a high number of male occupations, decreasing the female unemployment rate can be stated as the ultimate success.

4.1.5 Sweden

Further, Sweden is one more European country which provides a positive tendency of gender equal ratios. As it was mentioned above, the general overview of gender equality indicators is built from different factors, including health and survival, education, opportunity, and another subindex, defining the quality of the governmental policies towards dealing the gender inequality issues. Sweden got zero change in its gender pay gap in 2022, but still, its results are better than in many other countries, which are also reporting the gender-equal measures. See Figure 9 for the employment rate in Sweden.



FIGURE 9. The employment rate in Sweden for a period from 2010 to 2021

Note: compiled by the authors based on ILO (2022)

As in the previous five selected countries, Sweden got the same dynamics of employment rates in both genders. However, women took the smaller percentage in comparison with men. Generally, there is almost no country which got a similar indicator except Finland, which could reach the same results for both genders in 2022.

4.1.7 Kazakhstan

Analyzing indicators of seven chosen countries, which have the highest gender-equal indicators, it is possible to compare Kazakhstan to understand what way it should pursue to achieve similar results and be at least in the top 20 states. As it was specified above, Kazakhstan got the 65th position in the gender pay gap ranking. Undoubtedly, since gaining its independence, the country has changed a lot of political courses and strategies to become a successful economic player to be effective in the global market. In recent years, huge progress has been made towards addressing social challenges, including the highest unemployment rate and slow financial development in terms of foreign exchange and export directions. See Figure 10 for the employment rate in Kazakhstan for a period from 2010 to 2021.

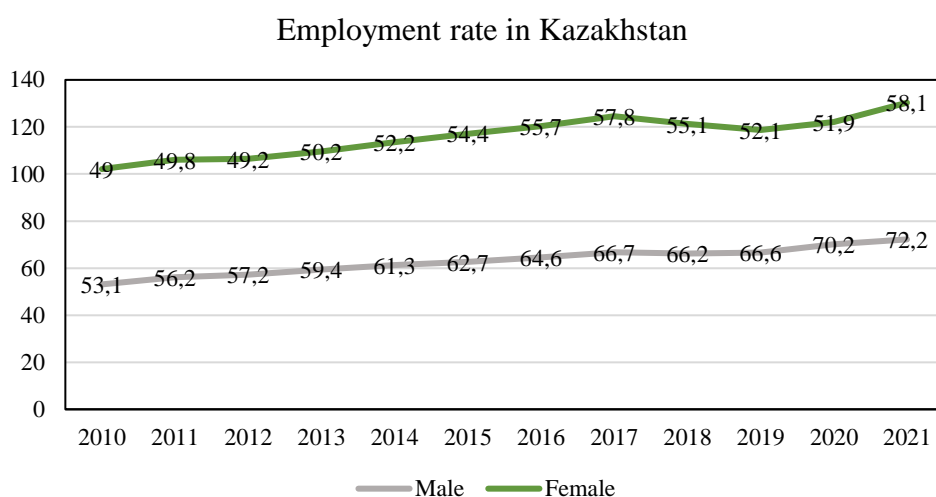


FIGURE 10. The employment rate in Kazakhstan for a period from 2010 to 2021

Note: compiled by the authors based on Global Economy (2021)

Figure 10 shows that employment conditions of women in Kazakhstan are unstable, getting sharp ups and downs. However, in 2021 the situation has relatively stabilized, and now females got more access to employment opportunities, which were considered for men only before.

4.2 Analysis of practices and any related experience of the researched countries in addressing gender inequality in the labor market

The analyzed seven countries have performed the highest-ranking indicators in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report. Therefore, it became interesting to know what activities the governments of these states have implemented to achieve such results and maintain a perfect development of gender-equal opportunities for its citizens. Through a detailed investigation of the applied measures by Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, Rwanda, and Nicaragua, it was highlighted the following findings:

1. Women's rights are highly protected by the law.
2. No wage discrimination by gender factor is allowed.

3. At least 30-40% of women should be employed on the management board of progressive and large enterprises.
4. Eligible conditions for parental leave.
5. Education about gender equality from school times.
6. Introducing a specialized body for gender equality matters promotion (Global Gender Gap Report, 2022).

These six major policies are completely or partially implied in all seven countries, which were selected for the detailed analysis of the following study (see Table 2).

TABLE 2. Practices of the selected countries addressing gender inequality in the labor market

Practice	Iceland	Finland	Norway	New Zealand	Sweden	Kazakhstan
Legislation	+	+	+	+	+	-
Equal wages	+	+	+	+	+	-
A defined percentage of women in the management board	+	+	+	-	-	+
Parental leave	+	+	-	-	+	-
Education since school times	+	+	+	-	+	-
Specialized body for gender matters	+	+	+	-	-	-
<i>Note:</i> compiled by authors						

Table 2 above clarifies what strategies and instruments the governments of Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden use to improve their gender equal indicator and maintain gender equality in the labour market. Generally, this is usually a complex of different measures at different levels to define a strong and successful approach for teaching the population that gender does not play a crucial role during a process of employment. It allows dealing with discrimination cases and prevents such situations in the future.

4.4 Analysis of applying some of the revealed practices to the conditions of the Republic of Kazakhstan

Through a review of current practices used by Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, Sweden, it is possible to generate some suggestions for the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan by highlighting how the government can launch them. Obviously, a process of a transformation of the current gender perceptions in the labor market could not be so immediate, especially in such a patriarchal society as Kazakhstan's one.

See Table 3, application of successful policies of the selected countries to the conditions of Kazakhstan.

The results above provides a list of possible strategies that the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan can implement to address gender inequality successfully, considering all the features and specifics of the country's mentality.

TABLE 3. Application of successful policies of the selected countries to the conditions of Kazakhstan's labour market

Policy	Implementation	Duration	Level of the implication's success
Legislation	-Act on Equal Rights of Men and Women -Equality Code	2-3 years	Medium
Equal wages	-Equal Income Statute	2-3 years	Low
A defined percentage of women in the management board	-Based on Act on Equal Rights -Based on Anti-corruption laws	1-2 years	High
Parental leave	-Act on Maternity/Paternity -Salary conditions	1-2 years	Medium
Education since school times	-Specialized equality programs for pre-school/school students	1-2 years	High
Specialized body for gender matters	-Creation of an equality Committee/Department/Ministry for dealing with gender equality challenges	2-3 years	Medium
Other related policies	-Creation of additional policies to support gender equality	2-3 years	Medium
<i>Note:</i> compiled by authors			

First, this is an adoption of specialized laws, such as Act on Equal Rights of Men and Women and the Equality Code (such as Labour Code, Tax Code, and other). In most the cases, females' rights are usually violated, so it is crucial to protect women from any gender discrimination and allow them to choose a specialization based on their interests and preferences. The newly adopted laws could specify distinctions between direct and direct discrimination cases to prevent any related violence. In addition, this strategy would help to deal with stereotypes that some genders are obliged to do defined activities, such as men are responsible for breadwinning, while women – for children and households.

Second, this promotes equal wages for both males and females. In Kazakhstan, women usually earn much less than men, having similar duties and responsibilities for the same job. This is one of the signs of gender inequality when there is a disproportion between men's and women's incomes.

Third, this is a certain percentage of females on management boards of companies taking leading positions. For example, now it is partially launched in Kazakhstan as enterprises oblige to have at least one woman on the board of directors. However, it can be improved up to 30-40% of female employees in the firm's leadership.

Fourth, this is an improvement of conditions for parental leave through introducing a specialized Act on Maternity/Paternity as it has been successfully implemented in Iceland since 2006. Undoubtedly, Kazakhstan is not so rich, so it should not cover about 80% of the salary as in Iceland or Sweden, but it can cover at least 50-60% of the salary for a new mother or father. Paternity leaves are not widespread in Kazakhstan, so the government can also review this opportunity.

Fifth, there are educational courses in the programs for preschool and school students to teach

them more about gender equality and provide better values to avoid stereotyping in future generations.

Sixth, this is a specialized body which would be responsible for the gender equality questions. Kazakhstan's authorities could create a unique governmental body or organization that should deal with gender discrimination.

Finally, additional legal documents and acts can be created for specific situations to increase the population's awareness of being loyal, honest, and transparent in labor market environment.

5. CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, the following study has focused on world experience in addressing gender inequality in the labor market and its effective adaptation to the conditions of Kazakhstan.

Through the analysis of gender development index rankings of seven countries with the highest indicators in 2022, such as Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden, it was found that an eligible justification for three research questions.

First, the current state of the problem of gender inequality in the labor market in Kazakhstan can be claimed as not challenging but common. Compared with the previous years, women now have more freedoms in the labor market, such as promoting to some political positions, being leaders in large corporations, and earning more money. However, there are still a lot of limitations, restrictions, and stereotypes towards women in Kazakhstan's labor market.

Second, Iceland, Finland, Norway, New Zealand, and Sweden were selected as good examples of countries' experiences addressing gender inequality in the labor market. The dynamics of employment rates were revealed for the latest years, demonstrating that they keep stable growth and development, offering equal career opportunities for both men and women.

Third, the example of the selected states has shown that some of its gender equality strategies could be implemented by the Kazakhstan government to improve its gender equality indicators and eliminate the negative consequences of gender inequality in the labor market. These policies include better legislation, equal wages, a defined percentage of women on the management board of large corporations, parental leave, specialized education since school times, a new body for managing gender equality matters, and other related policies.

The investigation has demonstrated that even small and poor African countries successfully manage the gender pay gap by paying more attention to internal policies and activities to provide citizens with equal opportunities for adequate employment. Kazakhstan has already made a lot of significant steps to become an economically developed and prospective country in the global market, so improving gender equality questions through reliable policies and instruments would make the country even more attractive for both population and foreign partners. When the nation takes care of citizens and wants them to develop, it will be open to changes and discoveries to help the country to become progressive and competitive. Those individuals who respect each other, not depending on such factors as gender, nationality, and age, would build a strong state with a purpose. Therefore, Kazakhstan should now deal with gender inequality through well-thought policies.

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