ANALYSIS OF GENDER EQUALITY IN PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

The relevance of the topic of the present academic paper is due primarily to the need to study the issue of professional equality. The labor market of any country is characterized by one or another level of gender segregation. Consequently, in order to objectively assess this phenomenon, it is necessary to have a clear idea of how this level changes over time, what processes in the labor market, in society, as a whole, contribute to increasing or decreasing gender asymmetry in the distribution of workers between professions as well as reveal the economic consequences of the existence of segregation.

In the sphere of economics, gender segregation is one of the characteristics of the labor market; it is a complex dynamic phenomenon that affects its functioning. In this case it is accepted to allocate horizontal (branch, professional) and vertical (official) segregation. Gender segregation is often the cause and it is closely linked to the concept of concentration (unequal representation of workers of different genders in any professional, branch or official group). However, in contrast to concentration, gender segregation shows an asymmetry in the distribution of men and women from different activities, rather than within one.

In the modern world, the presence of a gender-balanced staff has a rather favorable effect on the business of an organization, forasmuch as the company’s staff is more motivated, productive and active in terms of offering and promoting ideas. In turn, these factors have a positive effect on financial performance and growth of the organization as a whole. Along with this, the availability of a wider choice of candidates, which opens up gender diversity, helps address the issue such as staff shortages.

The purpose of the research is to analyze the state of gender equality in the labor sphere and the research methods are as follows:

1. To analyze the Women in Work Index of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Women Business and the Law Index among 190 countries.
2. To construct a mechanism for the emergence and support of gender segregation in professional activities.
3. To conduct a study of the share of men and women among employees of different professions.
4. To develop mechanisms in order to ensure gender equality in professional activities.
**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Recently, scholars have been paying special attention to gender research, in particular gender equality in involvement in professional activities. It is obvious that gender differences significantly affect the spheres of social activity, including labor one. Comparing inequality in Europe and the United States, Blanchet, Chancel and Gethin (2019) have noted that inequality in Europe remains lower and it has increased much less than in the United States, despite the income gap between European countries and the weaker progress of pan-European income redistribution.

Blau and Kahn (2017) conducted a study, using microdata from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) for the period 1980-2010. Consequently, they provided new empirical evidence of the scale and trends of the gender pay gap, which decreased significantly during the study period. Gender inequalities in occupations and industries, as well as differences in gender roles and gender division of labor, remain important issues.

Collins, Landivar, Ruppanner and Scarborough (2020) in their study identified how the Covid-19 pandemic have affected the employment of dual-income parents. The results showed that, in general, mothers have reduced their working hours much more than fathers.

The research findings of Hyland, Djankov and Goldberg (2020) indicate that women still face gender discrimination in various spheres. The level of legal discrimination is particularly high in some densely populated countries, which limits economic opportunities for a very large number of women.

Redmond and McGuinness (2017) in their work have found that the degree of convergence varies significantly across Europe. Gender differences in job preferences contribute to a 10% pay gap, which is longer than the length of service, previous work experience or education.

Deaton (2013) has described major global innovations, namely: the role of antibiotics, pest control, vaccination and clean water; as well as failures, namely: famine and the AIDS epidemic, gender inequality. He has studied these phenomena in the United States, concluding that currently the country is experiencing growing inequality. He has investigated how economic growth in India and China has improved the lives of more than a billion people.

Amado, Santos and Sao Jose (2018) have developed an improved method for measuring the gender pay gap based on extensive data analysis and the Malmquist Index. They have used this method in order to compare the gender pay gap in 20 European countries. As a result, a significant difference in wages in all countries studied has been revealed, which indicates that women receive insufficient wages.

Mortensen (2015) argues that only “formal legal equality is a property of law, and equality and equal protection of the law are the guiding principles in building legal systems; they are used only by modern legislators”. Consequently, he notes that equality is characterized by the same judicial (legal) position of human before the law, that is, the identification of the whole set of rights, freedoms and responsibilities, and equality, in turn, is characterized by the identification of exclusively human rights.

Piasna and Plagnol (2017) have investigated how working conditions affect women’s employment choices and birth rates. They have analyzed in their scientific article, how the stages of family life are related to certain aspects of the quality of work among employed women in 27 European countries. The results have shown that mothers with young children are more likely to hold senior positions than women at other stages of life.

Joyce and Xu (2019) in their work have investigated different types of inequalities and proposed the creation of a common effective program of action to overcome them. They have conducted a comparative analysis of the developed world in order to study the impact of different political institutions and policy actions on inequality.

The study of gender equality aims to find ways in order to eliminate inequality among people. The directions of such a search are determined by international legal instruments on human rights.
METHODS
Theoretical analysis of the problem of gender equality in the context of professional activity has been carried out on the basis of investigations of international organizations, as well as works of foreign scientists using a set of methods, namely: systematic and logical analysis, comparative analysis, generalization and systematization and a number of others.

An analysis of the gender gap among employees has been conducted by using the following indicators, namely: Women in Work Index for 2018 among 35 countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); Women Business and the Law Index for 2000-2019 among 190 countries; The level of employment in the professional activities of women and men in 2000-2020 in the world. The visualization of the mechanism of origin and support of professional gender segregation has been developed. A study of trends in the employment of men and women over the past five years on LinkedIn by clusters of modern professions has been conducted. Professions with growth trends in the developed economies of the world have been selected for the study. Based on the data analyzed, mechanisms have been developed to ensure gender equality in the labor sphere.

RESULTS
In practice, gender equality currently is understood as equal opportunities for women compared to men in employment, building an official career, fair parity remuneration, as well as creating favorable working conditions, taking into account the reproductive function of women, economic and social guarantees for a successful combination of professional and family responsibilities. The essence of the idea of gender equality in the context of labor relations is based on the concept of equality of intellectual and physical potential of individuals regardless of their gender. The Women in Work Index 2020 indicator covers the countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The Women in Work Index consists of the following components, namely: the gap between women’s and men’s earnings - 25%, the employment rate of women - 25%, the gap between the employment rates of women and men - 20%, the unemployment rate among women - 20%, the share of women working in full employment - 10%.

Figure 1. Gender gap among employees in OECD countries, 2018

![Gender gap among employees in OECD countries, 2018](image)
The first three positions in the Women in Work Index are occupied by Iceland, Sweden and Slovenia. The results of the Women in Work Index show that increasing the share of women employees within OECD countries could increase the GDP of these countries by 6 billion USD, while a decrease in the wage gap between women and men could increase women's earnings by 2 trillion USD. The Women Business and the Law Index measures how laws and regulations affect women's economic opportunities. Total scores are calculated by taking the average score for each of the eight indicators (Moving, Getting Started, Paying, Marriage, Having Children, Doing Business, Asset Management and Retirement); herewith, 100 points is the highest possible score. This index tracks progress towards legal equality between men and women in 190 countries. Data are collected using standardized questionnaires in order to ensure comparability between countries (Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Women Business and the Law Index, 2000-2019**

![Women Business and the Law Index graph](image)

**Source:** It has been compiled by the author based on the Women Business and the Law Index (2020)

Improving performance in the areas measured by the Women, Business and Law Index is closely linked to an increase in the number of women in the workforce, as well as higher incomes and improved development outcomes. Equality before the law and economic opportunities are not only sound social policies, but also good economic policies. Equal participation of women and men will give each company a chance to unleash its potential. Taking into consideration the economic importance of women's empowerment, the ultimate goal of analyzing this index lies in encouraging governments to reform laws that deter women from working and doing business. Gender segregation in the labor market is a situation where women and men are unequally distributed between different activities, resulting in the emergence and existence of “predominantly male” or “predominantly female” industries, professions or enterprises. Thus, the existence of an implicit social contract determines both the different preferences of employees for professions, and the possibility of joining them (Figure 3).
Figure 3. The mechanism of occurrence and maintenance of occupational gender segregation

Source: It has been compiled by the author

The Duncan Segregation Index is a gender-based indicator of occupational segregation that measures whether one gender is more present than another in a particular profession or workforce than expected by determining the percentage of employed women (or men), who would have to change professions for equal distribution of professions between men and women. The value of the Duncan segregation index is 0, when the share of women in each sphere of activity is the same as the share of employment of women in general. In other words, 0 indicates ideal gender integration within the labor force, while a value of 1 indicates complete gender segregation within the labor force. The ratio of the employment rate of the labor force of women and men (%) is defined as the proportion of the population aged 15 and over that is economically active (Figure 4).
The average gender gap in the level of participation, that is, the difference between the share of men and women in the labor force, has been decreasing since 2000, mainly due to the decrease in the share of men in the labor force worldwide, however, it remains significant. According to Figure 4, men are still more likely to participate in labor markets than women. As we can observe, the figures are usually much lower than 100%, which means that the participation of women is usually lower than the participation of men. However, the differences are noticeable: the ratio is less than 25% in such countries as Syria or Algeria. In contrast, in Laos, Mozambique, Rwanda, Malawi and Togo, the ratio is close to 100% (that is, there is a gender parity of labor force participation in these countries).

The absolute value of the gender segregation index depends on numerous factors of a purely methodological nature. However, the fact of asymmetric distribution of men and women between spheres of activity is not in itself a positive or negative characteristic of the labor market. In other words, the absolute indicator of gender segregation and even its change cannot be the subject of normative analysis without clarifying the reasons underlying the feminization of some activities and masculinization of others, without assessing the consequences of such a manifestation of gender asymmetry in the labor market. Such an analysis helps formulate, if necessary, the basic principles of policies aimed at equalizing gender disparities in employment. The main negative consequence of the existence of gender segregation is the inequality of work outcomes for men and women. Herewith, the problem is not limited only to the traditional difference in wages for men and women: studies show that under otherwise equal conditions employees of the same gender (for instance, men) are employed in “male” and “female” fields of activity also receive different remuneration for their work.

The gender dynamics of occupational segregation is reflected in a series of new indicators developed in cooperation with LinkedIn and the World Economic Forum. Large technology companies, which began publishing gender statistics in 2014 and invested millions of dollars in gender diversity efforts, are currently short of gender parity and have made even less progress in hiring more coloured men and Latinos. This year, the World Economic Forum has stated that it would take women 257 years to bridge the gender gap in employment in all sectors, compared to the previous estimate of 202 years. Analysis of employment trends for

Source: World Bank (2020)
five years on the LinkedIn platform makes it possible to identify eight clusters of occupations that have prospects for employment growth in 20 leading economies (Figure 5).

**Figure 5.** Share of male and female employees by professions, 2020

![Bar chart showing the share of male and female employees by professions.](chart.png)

Source: It has been compiled by the author based on the data of LinkedIn, 2020)

Figure 5 illustrates the extent of gender gaps in different occupations. This figure also includes the proportion of women employed in vocational and technical jobs, which generally reflects the level of work of women in skilled work as opposed to low-skilled or manual work in the world economy. LinkedIn data show that gender gaps are evident in specific skilled jobs. In particular, according to the three technical specialties identified by LinkedIn, women make up 26% of all employees in the field of database development and artificial intelligence, 15% of employees in the field of engineering and 12% of employees in cloud computing technologies.

Databases and artificial intelligence are the latest professions in technology, ready to hire more women than engineering and cloud computing. Roles in marketing, sales and product development are closer to gender parity, with women accounting for 40%, 37% and 35% of the workforce, respectively. In addition, by analyzing professions with a set of skills that are not included in these occupations, we observe significant gender gaps. For instance, women make up 12% of automation engineers, 13% of Android developers, 18% of robotics engineers, and 19% of cybersecurity professionals.

Employment policy and active labor market policies aim to promote the efficiency of the labor market in order to ensure labor-intensive economic growth and the creation of quality jobs through the development of appropriate regulatory frameworks and institutional capacity building. Due to the gender-sensitive tinged nature of the labor market, special mechanisms are needed to fully integrate gender perspectives in both policy formulation and implementation. According to the data analyzed, it is recommended to use the following mechanisms to overcome gender inequality in professional activities, namely:

1. Obstacles to achieving gender equality are shortcomings in the implementation of appropriate national policies and law enforcement. Development policies and programs should challenge stereotypical assumptions about the role of men and women, which are becoming increasingly systematic. Initiative measures need to be...
taken, such as legal protection of the interests of historically oppressed groups, advocacy for employees’ rights, advanced vocational training of employees throughout their working lives and empowering women with economic rights.

2. Outdated systems need to be reformed; forasmuch as they affect gender-neutral assessment of job responsibilities and functions with a view to equal pay for men and women.

Through the use of social dialogue mechanisms in order to ensure gender equality, political leaders can be influenced in the following way:

- To increase women’s participation and status in the dialogue process.
- All issues included in the social dialogue agenda should be considered through the prism of gender equality, in order to reflect the nature of changing labor markets and the mechanisms of functioning of the labor sphere.

3. In order to create opportunities for women and men to obtain productive and decent jobs, it is necessary to ensure the sustainability of economic growth, which leads to job creation. However, at the national level, economic growth should be inclusive, coordinated and consistent. It should be supported by public and private investment; it should be also achieved with a gender perspective as well as targeted to specific needs. Consequently, it should be carried out with the full involvement of tripartite participants in this process.

4. It is necessary to promote employment by creating a stable institutional and economic environment in which people can work productively, enterprises are able to seek employment growth in order to increase income opportunities, and society is able to achieve its goals of economic development, improving living standards and social progress. In the context of government programs of decent work, increasing the demand for labor, expanding employment opportunities and achieving higher quality work depending on the level of development, all these aspects would effectively combat poverty. However, if there is a deficit in employment, the problem of getting out of poverty at the expense of one’s own labor looks even more acute for women than for men.

5. Post-conflict reconstruction and employment programs emphasize the importance of systematic gender-based opportunity assessments. Their implementation provides support to both women and men in their efforts to establish new social and economic relationships.

**DISCUSSION**

Equal status of men and women is one of the fundamental values of the modern society. As it has been noted in the 1995 Beijing Declaration, “equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of family responsibilities between men and women, and harmonious partnerships between them are key to their well-being and the welfare of their families” (UN WOMEN, 1995). When analyzing the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1976 (ICCPR), attention is paid to the consolidation of the equality of men and women in marriage and family relations, as well as the legal regulation of the equality of men and women before the law (INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS, 1976).

Within the framework of ICCPR, the obligations of member states in order to ensure gender equality include: the obligation of the state to respect the rights (requirement to refrain from direct or indirect discriminatory actions); the duty of the state to protect rights (requirement to take measures aimed at eradicating stereotypes about the role of men and women); obligation of the state to exercise rights (requirement to take measures for the practical implementation of equality of men and women in national legislation) (INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS,1976).

One of the global goals of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. “Women and girls should enjoy
equal access to quality education, economic resources and opportunities for participation in political life, as well as equal opportunities with men and boys in terms of employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels” (CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN, 1979). Many authors (HOOK and PETTIT, 2016) talk about the self-reproducing nature of occupational segregation. Forasmuch as the decision to choose a profession is made taking into account the expected return from it, the performance of women’s dual function in the society - that is, the employee and the mother - “adjusts” their choice of field in a direction different from the situation that would occur otherwise. It is not just about, undoubtedly, important traditions and ways of life that prevail in the society, when the choice of field of activity is determined by ideas about the typical male and female occupations. Even in non-patriarchal societies, women may prefer to occupy traditionally “female” professions, as it is easier to make a career on these positions due to the fact that in these professions a woman, occupying a leading position, is perceived by the society as adequate one.

Implicit discrimination by employers also mediates employees’ choice of a field of work. As investigations (BLAU; KAHN, 2017) have revealed, strengthening control over the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation increases the likelihood of women working in “male” occupations, thereby helping to reduce segregation. This fact leaves an imprint not only on the initial choice of profession, but also on the process of professional mobility.

Fundamental human rights are invaluable for the development of the society, social, political and economic relations. Gender policy is based on the use of such important tools as gender education and enlightenment; they are aimed at mastering the system of knowledge, skills, abilities that can be applied both in everyday life and in professional activities. The most important conditions for the implementation of the principles of gender equality are a comprehensive study, consideration, open discussion and development of policy documents related to this issue (GENDER EQUALITY GLOSSARY, 2016).

The categories of discrimination on the basis of gender and discrimination against women are closely related to the concept of gender equality. Direct and indirect discrimination are distinguished (Theorell, Jood, Järnholm, Vingård, Perk, Östergren, 2016). Direct discrimination takes place when the difference in treatment towards a person directly depends on discrepancies based solely on his or her gender, characteristics of men or women, which cannot be objectively justified. Indirect discrimination occurs when a piece of legislation, policy or program is gender neutral but has a discriminatory effect as a result of its implementation (VERMUNT; MAGIDSON, 2016). Gender indices reveal those changes in the society that indicate a change in the status and roles of women and men (WORLD BANK, 2020).

Achieving gender equality is not accidentally a priority of international intergovernmental organizations (Artazcoz, Cortès, Benavides, Escribà-Aguir, Bartoll, Vargas, 2016). On a global scale, it is necessary to state the existence of numerous gender stereotypes that significantly affect the situation of women and girls; they are more vulnerable in the economic, social, cultural context (PANDE; TOPALOVA, 2013). Skilled labour force is a necessary condition for ensuring the inclusiveness of economic growth, competitiveness and viability of enterprises (GOLDIN, 2015).

Employers are concerned about the shortage of qualified personnel and point to the need to harmonize the specialties in demand in the labor market with the general education and vocational training system in order to retain personnel and improve their qualifications. The importance of social dialogue in matters of professional training, expanding opportunities for advanced training at an early stage, lifelong learning in order to preserve the opportunities of employees in the field of employment, increase their earnings in the face of technological change and changes in the labor market are emphasized (ATKINSON, 2015).

Gender discrimination in the field of professional development is a common phenomenon, which leads to lower wages and occupational segregation of women (EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, 2013). The focus on gender equality is extremely important in apprenticeship programs, community-based training, and the recognition of informally acquired skills (KREINER, NIELSEN, SERENA, 2018). In addition, states should promote equal opportunities for women and men in education, training and lifelong learning. Particular attention is paid to
infrastructure programs that include gender-sensitive strategies and lead to increased employment (AGUIRRE, HOTEIT, RUPP, AND SABBAGH, 2012).

At the same time, women are actively implementing themselves in various areas of employment. Thus, the right to work is becoming more universal for both genders; women are getting more and more opportunities to fulfill themselves in those areas which traditionally have been previously occupied mostly by men (military, civil aviation, law enforcement, etc.).

International labor standards are an effective tool to improve working and living conditions and to promote equality for all employees in the workplace.

CONCLUSION
The term “gender equality” should be understood comprehensively. According to the position of the Committee on Economic and Social Rights, as well as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, international treaties have been considered; they consolidate formal and de facto equality of men and women in various spheres of public life. Formal equality implies that gender equality is achieved if a law provides the neutral treatment towards men and women.

De facto equality between men and women cannot be achieved through the adoption of laws or measures that are prima facie (at first glance - Latin) gender-neutral. It provides the practical implementation of equality between women and men. Formal equality and de facto equality (equality in essence) are different but interrelated concepts. Currently, we observe discrimination against women at all stages of human resource management in all countries of the world. Most often, it is the male candidate that is preferred when filling a vacancy. Also, women’s wages differ to a lesser extent from men’s wages in almost all sectors of the economy. In addition, stereotypes have developed the idea of traditionally “male” industries, such as production, gas and oil refining, design, construction. It is incredibly difficult for women to break into positions in such areas, and it is even more difficult to achieve leadership positions. It is also important to emphasize that for the same job, position, women, according to statistics, lower wages are paid.

REFERENCES


Analysis of gender equality in professional activities

The purpose of the research is to analyze the state of gender equality in the labor sphere. The research methods are as follows: system and logical analysis, comparative analysis, generalization and systematization and a number of others. An analysis of current issues in the labor market in the gender dimension has been conducted. In gender relations, a very important problem has not been resolved yet: a significant difference in the average wage of men and women. The Women in Work Index has shown that Iceland and Sweden remain in the top two in terms of the gender gap in OECD member countries, while Slovenia ranks the third place. The Women Business and the Law Index for 2000-2019 among 190 countries in the world, covering eight indicators related to women’s economic participation, has been analyzed. The employment rate of women and men in recent decades has shown that the share of women in labor markets is increasing worldwide.

Keywords: Gender equality, Employment rate. Occupational segregation. Legal equality.

Resumen

El propósito de la investigación es analizar el estado de la igualdad de género en el ámbito laboral. Los métodos de investigación son los siguientes: análisis lógico y de sistema, análisis comparativo, generalización y sistematización y varios otros. En las relaciones de género, todavía no se ha resuelto un problema muy importante: una diferencia significativa en el salario medio de hombres y mujeres. El Índice de Mujeres en el Trabajo ha demostrado que Islandia y Suecia se mantienen entre los dos primeros en términos de la brecha de género en los países miembros de la OCDE, mientras que Eslovenia ocupa el tercer lugar. Se ha analizado el Índice de Mujeres Empresa y Derecho para 2000-2019 entre 190 países del mundo, que abarca ocho indicadores relacionados con la participación económica de las mujeres. La tasa de empleo de mujeres y hombres en las últimas décadas ha demostrado que la proporción de mujeres en los mercados laborales está aumentando en todo el mundo.