

Sociological position of women in the context of cultural development

Shahrbano Chatri

phD student of Sociology , Department of Social Philosophy, Academy of Sciences of Tajikistan
shchatri@yahoo.com

Abstract: UN Development Plan of 1993 linked the concept of development to human development. UN believes that development should include human dimension. Human development means investment in human abilities and competences through educational and skills development programs. Human development involves providing opportunities for participation. Human participation is the core of UN views (UNDP - 1993). This study examines the relation between female development variables. These variables are female share of or participation in employment, parliament seats, legislature, education, sciences, technology, and health. The variables are studied in the context of female development in Iran and developed countries. This study uses tables provided in UN Human Development Report in search of answers to questions relevant to female development indexes. This study attempts to find the standing of women in Iran and compares it to another country. A sustainable and comprehensive development program requires careful examinations of economic, social, political, and cultural development. The findings of this study indicated that Iran ranked 88 among 187 countries as a developing country based on human development indexes of 2011. Sweden is ranked 10 as a developed country. Sweden was randomly selected from top 25 developed countries for comparison.

[Shahrbano Chatri. **Sociological position of women in the context of cultural development.** *Life Sci J* 2012;9(4):4289-4290] (ISSN:1097-8135). <http://www.lifesciencesite.com>. 642

Keywords: Development, Human Development Index, Economic Development, Political Development, Social Development, Cultural Development, High Human Development, Medium Human Development.

Introduction

Development has many definitions and interpretations. The common point in all of them is the establishment of desirable and suitable conditions in a society in support of growth and utilization in all possible dimensions. Development involves changes in the direction of human growth perspectives.

Human resource is one of the main development sources. Women not only make half of this resource, but also take the role of educating and directing both half of this resource. Women have important role in laying the foundation of human development. This role may have positive or negative consequences (Azkia, 1386/2007).

Development sociology or sociological analysis of developing countries may be studied and evaluated versus developed countries. Our objective in this comparison is to find out the Iranian women standing based on UN human development indexes.

Findings

There are two reasons for the importance of indexes used for economic, political, and status of women.

1. If society fails to utilize the potential contributions of women, it will deprive itself from participation of a half of creative resource in the development process.
2. An employed woman benefits from the sense of satisfaction and identification that come with active participation in the development activities.

She finds opportunities to become familiar with many problems one may face outside home. This activity increases women awareness.

- 2.1. An employed woman feels responsible and respects achievement of social objectives because of being a part of social development.
- 2.2. A woman turns into a serious and determined person with real identity and social status by participating in social activities and accepting responsibilities.
- 2.3. An employed woman participates in decision making, planning, and policy making processes (Abot, 1380/2001).

Women are responsible for cultural development and education. When they are fully aware of their role, they may undertake to educate their children, family, and relatives directing them to become members of a dynamic and active society. An up-to-date woman may play a constructive role and contribute toward social development.

Woman's role in the development of science, technology, and education revealed new realities of human mental qualities. Women turned into practical idealism in an endeavor to reach mental superiority by pushing aside traditional values and qualities. Women started serious changes based on their ideal educational systems in order to achieve their objectives. Humans grow out of family and school system prepared to enter the industrial world.

Quantitative development as industrial needs of the century born out of unrealistic needs became the ultimate activity. Female gender which was once belittled became subject of new evaluation for rational activities (Gidenz, 1386/2007).

The cultural role of women in achieving developmental objectives - In the study of the effective factors in growth of the new sciences, woman is recognized as the center of cultural innovations. Woman can also be considered as an influential element in creation of modern civilization with directed scientific ethic. The reality is that women responsibilities have always taken into account the future perspective. Women have safeguarded the basic values. These values can show the potential grounds for social maturity (Faslnameh, 1388/2009).

Education enjoys a special standing. It can improve human capabilities including knowledge, skills, power, and self-confidence. Education is a prerequisite for active and effective participation of individuals in a society.

Indirect Role of Women in Social Maturity

- 1- Women devote themselves to families. They focus their activities to achieve higher efficiency.
- 2- Women facilitate cooperation and communication among family members through provision of tranquility and peace. They provide a ground for the development of hidden talents of family members.
- 3- Women learn to perform the basic and long term activities such as education with no immediate outcome. These activities are continual and infrastructural although their outcome may not be observed during one's lifetime.
- 4- Women rely on no economic motivations for their activities.
- 5- Women are the main protector of tradition and values. They undertake to defend human respect.
- 6- Women assist men in their endeavors to conquer the frontiers of science and technology. Women act as men's partners facilitating a platform for their success by providing cooperation and collaboration.
- 7- Women play as the critical link to culture. They may play a differentiating role in cultural arena. Women are carriers and interpreters of culture. Realization of gender equality has an inseparable connection with identity and power.

Conclusion

The results of developed countries are compared with the results obtained for Iran as a developing country. Sweden was randomly selected out of 15

top developed countries for comparison. UN Human Development Report of 2011 was used as the base for the comparisons carried out in this study.

1- Women's Role in Economic Development

Percent of participating women in economic activities

Sweden: 62.5% Iran: 29%

2- Women's Role in Economic Development

Percent of parliament seats taken by women:

Sweden: 45.3% Iran: 4.1%

3- Women's Role in Social Development

Life expectancy at birth:

Sweden: 83% Iran: 71.2%

4- Women's Role in Cultural Development

Elementary, intermediary, and high school enrolment index:

Sweden: 95.3% Iran: 72.8%

Resources

1. Abot, P. and Wallas, M. (2001) *Sociology of Women* (Najm Araghi, M., Trans.) Tehran: Ney Publishing.
2. Azkia, M. and Ghaffari, Gh. (2007). *Sociology of Development*, 6th edition, Tehran: Keyhan Publishing.
3. Davies, A. and Quinlivan, G. (2006), A Panel Data Analysis of the Impact of Trade on Human Development, *Journal of Socioeconomics*
4. Gidenz, S. (2007). *Sociology* (Saboori, M. Trans.), 19th edition, Tehran: Ney Publishing.
5. Piro, A. (2001). *Social Science Dictionary*, (Sarookhani, B., Trans.), 4th Edition, Tehran: Keyhan Publishing.
6. Ritters, G. (2005). *Contemporary Sociology*, (Salathi, M., Trans.), 9th Edition, Tehran: Elmi Publishing.
7. Seyfollahi, S. (2002). *Iran Social Problems*, Tehran: Jame'eh Pajooohan Sina Publishing.
8. UN Development Program (2011) *Human Development Report: Speech by Prime Minister Jean Chretien to the National Forum*
9. UN Development Program (2011), *Human Development Report* (Chatri, Sh. Trans.)
10. *Women Cultural Social Quarterly* (2009). Vs 17-18.

9/4/2012