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**HUMAN CAPITAL GENDER STRUCTURE AS A FACTOR OF**  
**SOCIO-ECONOMIC REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

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***Abstract***

The efforts undertaken by national and international organizations to the problems of labour equality are not sufficient to overcome occupational segregation and transition to the effective use of human potential in the regional economy. The novelty of this research is the substantiation of the influence of labour resources gender equality in the region on economic growth. The main objective of the study is to substantiate the hypothesis of the influence of gender inequality on the economic growth of the region due to the quantity and quality of economic gender opportunities and their rational distribution. The paper examines the dependencies of the volume of investments in family welfare, including investments in health care and education, and the level of accessibility of economic resources and social needs. The study also addresses the problems of gender equality and its dependence on the level of economic growth of the territories. An important stage of the research is working out the definitions of horizontal and vertical gender segregation in society. The study analysed the factors of low growth in the quality of women's jobs and an increase in their share. Particular attention is paid to the issue of labour migration in Russia. As a result of this study, the mediated influence of gender equality on economic growth was justified, which is caused by the strengthening of competitive tendencies among the workforce, contributing to the establishment of equal opportunities between men and women in the region.

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**Keywords:** Distribution of labour resources, gender asymmetry, human potential, migration flows, professional segregation, socio-economic development.



## 1. Introduction

Currently, most countries, even those with developed market economies, are not able to overcome the barriers that stand in the way of equality between men and women. A similar situation occurs against the background of growing research in this subject area, and not only by enthusiastic scholars, but also by various international organizations who are not indifferent to the problems of gender inequality and the associated professional segregation of women together with underutilization of their human potential and human capital. At the same time, the achievement of gender equality conditions in the present and in the perspective provides for the sustainable regional development, and as a result, the economic growth of the state.

## 2. Problem Statement

As Klasen (2000) points out, gender equality can contribute to economic growth in two ways. This is the family and the market.

Family is an indirect factor, and it is directly related to the contribution that women make to social work. Of course, women invest significant resources in the human capital of children. In perspective, they increase the productivity of the entire next generation of workers. Thus, there is a definite distribution of reproductive responsibilities between women and men.

The market also acts as an indirect factor, but its function is somewhat different: it randomly distributes the innate abilities available to men and women and thus equalizes the gender distribution of resources, using the capabilities of both, and maximizing their productivity and efficiency of use.

These factors are certainly different as to the period of time when their influence is manifested. The market factor manifests itself in a relatively short period of time insofar as gender equality causes such a redistribution of opportunities and corresponding resources in the economy, which will directly depend on the level of development of the human potential of an individual. In addition, this is not related to the manifestation of a set of gender stereotypes and norms. In this regard, we can say that women's access to resources leads to a higher level of investment in human capital through children. At the same time, the materialization of investments in human capital in this way, in terms of its impact on economic growth, is extended over time, since it is impossible until children join the labour force. The influence of this factor is reflected in the increase in the general level of vocational education of the population, and this, in turn, is one of the most important factors contributing to economic growth.

All mentioned above indicates that growing investment in family welfare, including indirectly through investments in health care and education (Melsom & Mastekaasa, 2018), contributes to the better access for women to a number of valuable resources, which include employment, land, and capital. This leads to the conclusion that the correlation between the income of children and their education, as well as the income of their mothers, is much higher than the similar correlation between children and their fathers.

Thus, ensuring gender equality allows women to expand their access to valuable economic resources. According to the neoclassical model, a similar situation will increase the market power of

women within the household, and this guarantees the acquisition of social and household resources, in close connection with women's preferences.

### **3. Research Questions**

The main research objectives are the factors of gender segregation of labour resources, which are manifested in contradicting norms, beliefs and values at the level of individual households. We also study gender relations within the institution of employment, due to gender stereotypes at the level of large socio-economic systems.

The study examines the processes of labour migration and the formation of centres of attraction of migration flows.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The main goal of this study is to substantiate the following hypothesis: the basic factor that allows assessing the impact (direct or reverse) of gender inequality on the regional economic growth is connected with the presence or absence of the quantity and quality of economic gender opportunities and their distribution. It is also important to define the role of the state and the declared state policy, which is capable of increasing gender inequality or neutralizing it in order to generate new opportunities for the economically active population.

### **5. Research Methods**

The study employs the hypothetical-deductive method of scientific knowledge, based on the deductive derivation of the consequences of the formulated hypotheses.

Taking into account the hypothesis of the influence of gender inequality on the economic growth of the region through increasing economic gender opportunities and their rational distribution, the study seeks to establish the investigative conclusions of the factors of economic growth associated with the growth of women's employment in the real economy and their economic activity. It is gender equality based on the transition to an egalitarian model of relations at the household level, that can become the key factor in economic growth.

### **6. Findings**

Speaking about the essence of economic growth, which is important for further understanding of the essence of our research, we can define economic growth as the increase in the volume of goods and services produced in the reporting period in the region or state. At the same time, economic growth is estimated only in relation to those goods and services that become objects of sale and purchase at market prices. Economic activity in this regard can be defined as the actual production of goods and services, which are the object of sale.

Considering the aspect of the influence posed by gender equality and its relationship with the economic growth of territories, we can trace a direct connection between them. At the same time, inverse

dependence may be manifested less clearly, drawn-out in time, and, as a rule, it is characteristic of regions and countries with a high level of socio-economic development. The origins of gender inequality, in our opinion, are contradictions that take shape in norms, beliefs, and values at the level of individual households. It is gender relations within the given institution, that later give rise to gender stereotypes at the level of large socio-economic systems.

Thus, models of gender inequality are formed at the household level, within which dominant gender stereotypes are defined. The stereotype of equality is possible within the framework of an egalitarian society that ensures gender equality in the division of labour. Equal division of labour in this aspect implies the need to take into account such labour of women, which is not paid in connection with the reproductive function they perform, and in this regard, there is a naturally greater contribution of men to gross domestic product (GDP), and, accordingly, their greater contribution to the economic growth of the state.

Consequently, one can speak of a clear gender asymmetry, which is observed in the contribution of both sexes to the economic growth of the region and, accordingly, of the state. It is men who are currently making the greatest contribution to economic activity and as a result ensuring economic growth. This happens due to the fact that, based on the suggested above definitions of economic activity and economic growth, the goods and services that are produced by unpaid domestic work are not subject to sale in the market and are intended for use and consumption in the family. This type of labour also includes women's reproductive labour aimed at reproducing human capital (Anopchenko, Grinenko, Edalova, Zadorozhnyaya, & Murzin, 2018).

Therefore, from the definition of "economic activity" it follows that such work falls into the category of "economic inactivity".

The definition of economic growth in the most commonly used form excludes household unpaid work. At the same time, the latter occupies a large share in social labour and can be defined as "economic inactivity". The combination of factors that allow assessing the relationship between gender equality and economic growth is determined by a particular country and region. The existing political regime and religion can play a leading role in this regard.

An additional factor that affects economic growth is the study of gender differences in the conditions of realization of economic capital in the market in terms of vertical and horizontal segregation in the labour market.

Gender segregation is a multidimensional phenomenon and must be distinguished from the concept of "gender discrimination" because they are not identical. Gender segregation is influenced by external constraints for both women and men and can manifest at the same time as the result of free choice of areas and forms of employment, taking into account individual preferences.

Horizontal gender segregation is defined as the uneven distribution between the sexes. Vertical gender segregation implies a kind of "glass ceiling", or, in other words, a certain level of career hierarchy, which is inaccessible for women, above which they do not have the opportunity to rise due to their gender. The presence of both phenomena can be explained by the manifestation of discrimination based on sex, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, by voluntary choice of occupations, which not least can be attributed to the difference in the distribution of household responsibilities between men and women.

The importance of such a factor influencing economic growth, as the difference in pay for male and female labour (Oostendorp, 2009) cannot be overestimated.

Thus, we may admit that ensuring gender equality indirectly affects economic growth. In our opinion, the above-mentioned facts may indicate that competitive forces arising and developing in the wake of economic growth promote and will promote gender equality and equal opportunities between men and women. At the same time, economic growth also increases the level of family income, which also contributes to ensuring gender equality. Otherwise, a different kind of dependence is observed, because a low level of household income forces discrimination against less productive members of the family in terms of their contribution.

As Kapsos (2006) notes, ensuring global economic growth subsequently leads to equality between men and women in terms of their access to resources, and, accordingly, opportunities in the labour market. There is a positive correlation between the economic growth of the export-oriented economy and the employment of women. This is especially true for countries with medium and low per capita incomes. Braunstein & Seguino (2018) note that, on the other hand, an increase in employment among the female population in countries with export-oriented economic growth may significantly depend on what type of goods, works, or services are exported.

The presence of economic growth in the primary and tertiary sectors of the economy, namely, the manufacturing sector of the national economy and the services sector, also increases the level of employment for women. However, with an increase in the share of products of the secondary sector (agriculture), including in the structure of the export-oriented economy, often leads to a decrease in the dynamics of growth of female employment.

If economic growth is ensured through growth in the primary sector, including the export of products from capital-intensive industries (mining and oil), the employment rate of women is usually not increased. It happens because these industries are mostly characterized by employment, which provides work for the male population.

Studies show that in most countries, the growth of female employment has a positive trend. However, it is in no way related to quality which still remains at a low level. Thus, it can be stated that there is a decrease in horizontal gender segregation in the labour market with vertical gender segregation remaining at the same level.

Studies of Oostendorp (2009) revealed the following: gender differences in wages lead to an increase in GDP per capita and growing trade in the event of a reduction in the gender gap in the wage factor. At the same time, this pattern is typical for countries with a developed market economy and, accordingly, a high level of income. However, a reduction in the gender pay gap can often be associated with a decrease in wages for the male population, rather than an increase in wages for women.

Let us analyse the factors that could explain the low dynamics of improving the quality of women's jobs and the simultaneous increase in their share of the labour market. First, this may be due to the fact that women's labour is properly attracted to less profitable sectors of the economy (Roper, 2018). The presence of horizontal gender segregation in the labour market limits the access of female labour to those sectors of the economy that have historically been characterized by high incomes.

Another factor that explains this phenomenon is the presence of a high level of capital mobility in highly profitable sectors of the economy. The efforts of women in this sector in terms of acquiring more favourable conditions lead to capital outflows through informal employment, or lower wages, and the complete or partial absence of a social package.

Discussing the problem of the gender structure of human potential, we should give our due to ensuring the level of development of those elements that make up the state structure and play an important role in assessing the gender structure mentioned above. In this regard, let us consider the migration flows that take place in the Russian Federation.

First, we should say that, analysing the socio-economic development of the regions from the point of view of migration aspects, it is currently possible to single out a number of migration centres that ensure an adequate level of socio-economic development. It should be noted that such a study shows both the unevenness of the socio-economic development of regions, and the unevenness of the existing migration flows. Often, the centres of attraction of migration flows may not correspond to the centres of socio-economic development.

For example, in the Russian Federation, the centres of socio-economic development include: the Central Federal District (CFD) and the Southern Federal District (SFD). The centres of attraction of migration flows are as follows: the Urals Federal District (UFD) and the Far Eastern Federal District (DFO). One of the districts, namely the North-West Federal District (NWFD), acts as both a centre for socio-economic development and a centre of attraction for migration flows.

In this regard, at present, the process of polarization has developed, or in other words, the emergence of leading centres with advanced development. Such centres are cities of federal significance - Moscow and St. Petersburg. At the same time, it can be said that each of the federal districts incorporates the centres of gravity of migration flows. For example, Moscow and the Moscow region are the centres for the Central Federal District; St. Petersburg is the centre for the North-West Federal District; the Krasnodar Territory is the centre for the Southern Federal District; the Stavropol Territory is the centre for the North Caucasian Federal District; the Republic of Bashkortostan is the centre for the North-Caucasian Federal District; the Tyumen Region is the centre for the Ural Federal District, etc. (Regions of Russia, 2015).

The structure of migration flows in each of the federal districts is different: in some districts one share accounts for more than 50% of the migration flow, while in others the structure is more diversified, which indicates the uneven distribution of migration flows within federal districts, i.e. a certain imbalance exists both at the level of federal districts and at the level of individual subjects (Regions of Russia, 2015).

Speaking of numbers, we note that the largest share of the migration flow in 2017 in the Central Federal District are flows to the Moscow Region (MR) and the city of Moscow - 33%. As we can see, these flows are equivalent. In our opinion, it can be explained by the fact that migrants tend to reduce costs, and a great role in this regard is played by renting or buying housing, which is significantly lower outside the city of federal significance. The newly arrived population is ready to sacrifice their time for a rather long journey to the workplace. However, the level of socio-economic development of the region is

considerably lower than that of the centre itself, which has become a stereotype and a certain norm (Orupabo, 2018).

Centres like Moscow attract the population of the regions of the South of Russia, and provide stable internal Russian migration from other regions. These centres are leading in a number of socio-economic indicators, they have a low unemployment rate and are characterized by high rates of cultural development and education, as well as dynamic trends in the human development index.

If we analyse the migration flow in the Southern Federal District in the context of the regions, then the largest share belongs to the Krasnodar Territory (61%), followed by the Rostov region and Volgograd region – 19 % and 8%, respectively. The other entities that are members of the SFD account for the remaining 12% (Regions of Russia, 2015).

However, we note that internal migration may be caused not only by socio-economic factors, but by environmental-geographical factors. The regions of the Siberian and Far Eastern federal districts, in spite of the current policy of stabilizing the migration flow to these centres and being sufficiently attractive from the point of view of socio-economic development, are also known by their harsh natural conditions. Such natural phenomena as earthquakes, prolonged and severe winters, floods and forest fires following them, contribute to the growth of migration to other, more attractive regions in terms of living.

Speaking about the process of polarization, it is necessary to mention its negative impact on the development and reproduction of human capital (Anopchenko, et al., 2018). Gender gaps are of major importance here. Unfortunately, differences in the development of the regions become the reason why it is not profitable for the state to invest in the development of human capital in territories that are characterized by a relatively high outflow of population to other regions, more attractive from the economic and environmental point of view. Despite their favourable geographical position, negative trends affect the development of the regions of Southern Russia.

## **7. Conclusion**

As a result of the study, a number of conclusions of a theoretical and applied nature can be made. Gender equality, based on the transition to an egalitarian model of relations, primarily at the household level, becomes a factor of economic growth associated with the growth of women's employment in the real economy and their economic activity. Actually, the driving force of positive changes in the economy is the increase in the share of women in economic activity.

At the same time, the dependence of the influence of economic growth on gender equality proper reveals a weak correlation. This is due to the lack of an appropriate link between the rates of economic growth and the gender distribution of opportunities, as well as the need for government intervention in ensuring gender growth. Thus, we can say that the presence of economic growth contributes to the development of a gender egalitarian model of relations. However, this condition is necessary, but not sufficient.

The development of regions according to the centre-periphery model has a negative impact on the level of their socio-economic development. This can be discussed not only in the context of the development of a separate federal district, but also of the development of the Russian Federation as a whole. The emergence of centres of attraction in the field of education leads to the disqualification of the

population in peripheral regions. Reducing the skills of workers leads to low wages, which causes the polarization of income. All this, in turn, plays an important role in the emergence of a wider gender gap and failure in the attempts to build an egalitarian society that ensures gender equality in the division of labour.

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