

**THE ROLE OF GENDER EQUALITY IN REALIZING HUMAN POTENTIAL
BASED ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract. This article examines the role and significance of gender equality in fully realizing human potential within the framework of sustainable development. It substantiates that creating equal opportunities for women and men is a key factor in ensuring the socio-economic development of society. Gender equality is analyzed as a fundamental condition for the development of human capital in the fields of education, employment, healthcare, and governance.

Keywords: sustainable development, gender equality, human potential, equal opportunities, social justice, human capital, women's and men's rights, socio-economic development.

In the modern era, humanity is entering a new stage of development—an information society and the process of digitalization, where information, knowledge, and interactive communication constitute the main factors of production. Their implementation and application in human life and activity determine a country's development both socially and politically. At the same time, the formation of an information society aims to improve living standards, develop the socio-economic aspects of life and activity, and enhance public administration. In this process, knowledge becomes the driving force of development.

As emphasized by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. Mirziyoyev, "In recent years, ensuring the rights and interests of women, achieving gender equality, protecting family, motherhood and childhood, developing women's entrepreneurship, creating new jobs for women, and improving their working and living conditions have become priority areas of state policy." [1]

Over the past four years, large-scale reforms have been implemented to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and men, guarantee their equal participation in the management of society and state affairs, provide social and legal support for women, and protect women from oppression and violence. Gender equality has been elevated to the level of state policy, and 25 legislative acts in this field have been adopted. In particular, Sustainable Development Goal 5—achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls—aligns with the reforms aimed at ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in our country.[2]

Gender equality is one of the key indicators of national and universal values. It implies the equal assessment of people's rights and opportunities. Gender inequality in society is especially evident in education, employment opportunities, and social roles between women and men. A deeper examination of this issue requires discussing strategic approaches to ensure justice and equality. Moreover, promoting gender equality contributes to economic growth and social stability. Implementing these changes is a responsibility shared by all members of society. [3]

Gender equality is not limited to ensuring equal rights between women and men; rather, it is a phenomenon capable of transforming the entire system of social relations. Gender equality cannot be built upon old social relations; instead, it encourages humanity to create a new system of social relations, as emphasized by scholars. [4, p.14]

In the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and ensuring social equality within the framework of other goals occupy a leading position. Uzbekistan, like many other countries, is an active supporter of the Sustainable Development Goals and has developed a system of national indicators for their implementation by 2030. This system envisages measures that are consistent with global standards while also reflecting national specificities, aimed at providing women with equal opportunities to men in education, employment, and all other areas of activity.

The German psychologist, sociologist, and one of the founders of neo-Freudianism, Erich Seligman Fromm, in his work “Man and Woman”, wrote: “Every individual, as a representative of the human species, should have the freedom to develop their individual characteristics and uniqueness.” Indeed, the roles of men and women in society are often shaped by traditions and values. In many cultures, the notion has long prevailed that men should earn money, while women should stay at home and take care of household duties and childcare. However, women also possess unique abilities and talents in various fields and have the right to demonstrate them and find their place not only within the family but also in society. The principles of gender equality address precisely these aspects, aiming to eliminate social barriers and stereotypes and to create equal social opportunities for women and men in all spheres so that every individual can fully realize themselves as a person.[5]

Conclusion. Gender equality is a crucial condition for fully realizing human potential in ensuring sustainable development. Creating equal rights and opportunities for women and men accelerates the socio-economic development of society, enhances the quality of human capital, and strengthens social stability. The widespread implementation of gender equality principles in education, the labor market, healthcare, and governance systems plays a significant role in achieving sustainable development goals.

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