PARTICIPATION OF UZBEK WOMEN IN SOCIO-ECONOMICAL AND SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE COUNTRY (ON THE EXAMPLES OF BUKHARA AND NAVOI REGIONS)

Ruzieva Dilsoda Mavlonovna
Independent researcher, Navoi State Pedagogical Institute (NSPI), Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT
The article focuses on the reforms in the protection of women's rights and interests, full support, gender equality, social protection of family, motherhood and childhood, the development of women's entrepreneurship, their employment, improvement of working and living conditions etc. It also analyses the importance of women's participation in socio-economic and cultural processes in Bukhara and Navoi regions.

Keywords: Independence, Uzbekistan, state, politics, society, women, social activity, reforms, family, regions, Bukhara, Navoi

1. Why this topic is important?
During the years of independence, ensuring the rights and interests of women, gender equality, social protection of family, motherhood and childhood, the development of women's entrepreneurship, their employment, improvement of working and living conditions have become a top priority of state policy.

In this regard, it is worth to quote the following words of President Sh. Mirziyoev: “In the current era of globalization, the protection of women rights and freedom and their legitimate interests is becoming increasingly central issue. Above all, increasing the socio-economic and political-legal activity of women is becoming a requirement of the modern time.

2. Literature review
The valuable part of the study of social activity of women in Uzbekistan, their role in the society has already been researched by such historians as D. Alimova, D. Bobojonova, K. Nishonboeva, N. Djuraeva, D. Sobirova etc. during the years of independence.

The issues of the social status of women in the society and their role in the family are thoroughly studied in the D. Alimova's scientific monograph devoted to Central Asian women and many scientific articles on the basis of traditional views and historical principles (Alimova, 1990).

Also, in the research work of Ya. Abdullaeva (Abdullaeva, 2004), N. Juraeva (Juraeva, 2004) and D. Sobirova (Sobirova, 2009) the colonial essence of the policy related to the revolutionary changes in the attitude to women in the Soviet era was scientifically analyzed on the basis of new thinking and the ideology of independence.

3. Methodology
The following generally accepted historical methods were used in the study of processes and events related to women's activities: the principles of historical structural integrity, as well as civilizational approach to the problem and methods of comparative analysis and sociological, historical research, field data and chronological methods.

The issue of women's participation in socio-economic and cultural processes in Navoi and Bukhara regions has not been specifically studied.

4. Research results
The following issues such as increasing the socio-political activity of women, strengthening their role in the government and society, ensuring the employment of women and girls graduating from vocational colleges, their involvement in the entrepreneurial activities, further strengthening the family base have been determined on the basis of the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan of February 7, 2017 PD-4749 “On the Strategy of actions for further development of the Republic of Uzbekistan”. In particular, the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan of February 2, 2018 No. UP-5325 “About measures for
radical enhancement of activities in the sphere of support of women and strengthening of institute of family” was a logical continuation of the work in this direction.

Women's activism has become one of the vital factors in ensuring the effectiveness of the accelerated reforms carried out on the path from national recovery to the national revival in the new stage of development of Uzbekistan. Once the President Sh. Mirziyoev highlighted: “Today, as a result of our large-scale democratic reforms, the participation of our women is growing in political and social life of the country. At present out of 150 deputies 48 or 32% of women were elected to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis. That figure rose to more than 25 percent in the Senate and local councils. It should be noted that for the first time in the history of Uzbekistan, the number of women in the national parliament has reached the level set by the United Nations. The country's parliament has risen to 37th place among 190 national parliaments in the world in terms of the number of women deputies. However, I will ask you to pay attention to this - 5 years ago we were 128th in this regard. ... Today about 28,000 women are receiving practical assistance in entrepreneurship, crafts, retraining and employment. In addition, 21,500 girls were trained in short-term vocational courses under the five social initiatives of the President (http://uza.uz/oz/politics/zbekiston-respublikasi-prezidenti-shavkat-mirziyeev ning-khal-07-03-2020). These indicators show that as a result of the state's care policy, opportunities to increase women's participation have expanded, and women's rights are being protected and their activity is growing on the basis of ongoing reforms.

At the same time, there was a need to radically change the mechanism of work aimed at supporting women and providing them with legal support in strengthening their families.

In particular, the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan of February 18, 2020 “On measures to improve the spiritual environment in society, further support the institution of the community and bring the system of working with families and women to a new level” was an important document for reinforcing women position in the society, strengthening the guarantees of protection of women rights and their legitimate interests, radically reforming the organizational and legal mechanisms to ensure a healthy and stable socio-spiritual environment and peace, harmony and tranquility in society and the family, and bringing the system of work with family and women to a new level. The decree defines the following main tasks: to pursue the idea of “Healthy family - healthy society”, a unified state policy, aimed at strengthening the institution of the family and to organize the targeted assistance to problematic and troubled families; to ensure the effective implementation of state policy to support women, protect their rights and legitimate interests, increase their role and activity in the socio-political life of the country, ensure equal rights and opportunities for both women and men; to timely identify the women's problems, women in need of help and in difficult social situations, including the provision of social, legal, psychological and financial assistance to women with disabilities;

These include comprehensive support for women's employment, improving working conditions, and the widespread involvement of women, especially young girls in rural areas, in family and private entrepreneurship and handicrafts ( Mirziyoev.2020).

Taking into account the given role to the makhalla institutes in the socio-spiritual life of the society, the establishment of the positions of Deputy Chairman of the Citizens' Assembly (self-government units) for issues of Family, Women and Socio-Spiritual Affairs, a specialist in family and women's issues and the Commission for Strengthening Family Values serves to strengthen families and resolve effectively the social problems of women (lex.uz. 2020).

According to the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoev, the following tasks will remain important: to further enhance the prestige of women in our socio-political life, who play an invaluable role in strengthening the peace and harmony in our society, bringing up the younger generation healthy and harmoniously, creating new jobs, strengthening their health, realizing their talents and abilities etc. Therefore, special emphasis is placed on increasing the focus on women and increasing their employment. The five social initiatives of the President Sh. Mirziyoev are a key basis for this. It is known that the fifth initiative focuses on women's employment. In this regard, a lot of work is being done in our country. Indeed, the participation of women in all spheres of public life and the effectiveness of consistent reforms is largely due to the active participation of women (Djuraeva, 2020). Although extensive work such as increasing women’s socio-political activity, ensuring their rights and legitimate interests, providing full support to motherhood and childhood, creating conditions for the realization of their potential in various fields and
sectors, as well as strengthening their families, there are still a number of systemic problems and shortcomings that hinder women support, the organization of targeted work with them, the strengthening of the spiritual and moral environment in families and the creation of an effective mechanism for health. This determines the relevance of the topic and it can be explained by the following aspects:

First, world experience shows that the future of the nation, society and state largely depends on the spiritual development of women and their full functioning activities, the effectiveness of socio-economic and cultural reforms requires a thorough investigation of women's participation in the society;

Second, it is important to study the contribution of entrepreneurship, handicrafts and farming to the economic development of the republic and the place and role of women in Navoi and Bukhara regions in these sectors;

Third, it is vital to conduct historical analysis of the women role in education, science, family stability, the formation of a modern model family and its role in strengthening the spiritual and moral foundations and traditional family values to resolve the pitfalls of national spirituality and culture.

Fourth, the need to radically change the mechanism of working with women, to bring the relations with women, family, community to a new stage and to analyse them scientifically on the example of Navoi and Bukhara regions shows the actuality of the topic.

In particular, in Navoi region, special attention is paid to enhancing the role and potential of women in the economic, socio-political life of the country, further enhancing women’s prestige in the spiritual and cultural life of the society.

There are 501,727 women in Navoi region which constitutes 51% of the population.

During 2019, the activities of 526 primary organizations of the Regional Women's Committee were organised in an exemplary manner, and primary organizations were established in 65 newly opened enterprises and institutions. A total of 844 women leaders carried out advocacy work to increase women's participation in the 2019 elections to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis and regional, district and city councils. As a result of the elections, 2 women (40%) were elected to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis, 23 women (38%) to the regional Council, and 92 women (32.3%) to the district (city) Councils. Of the 307 reserved women, 97 are under the age of 30.

In the region, 84 women were awarded honorary titles and orders, 22 talented girls are the laureates of Zulfiya State Prize, 64,560 girls were involved in various events as members of the “Girls' Club”.

The provincial women’s committee also provided assistance to women in difficult social situations in the province.

This year, 1,461 women in difficult living conditions received medical care, while 3,016 women received financial assistance worth 2 billion 619 million 570 thousand soums. Also 580 women have been provided with wheelchairs, mobility rehabilitation aids and hearing aids by the Public Fund for Women and Family Support and sponsorship. The Public Fund has paid 1 billion 040 million 857 thousand soums to 54 women in need of housing and in difficult social conditions, providing them with housing payments and housing. In addition, in order to provide housing for 185 people with disabilities, about 5 billion soums were paid as initial payments, and 190 disabled people were provided with housing.

34 women in difficult social situations, with disabilities, in need of housing and single mothers were provided housing in a newly reconstructed building in Navoi at the initiative of women of the region and under the sponsorship of the khakim (regional governor). 11 Women's Social Adaptation Centers have been established in districts and cities, and the statutes of the centers have been registered by the Department of Justice.

All centers were fully equipped with psychologists, doctors, children's rooms, as well as kitchens and bathrooms by the regional authorities. During this period, 710 people applied to social adaptation centers, 131 of them received medical assistance, 214 - psychological, 189 - legal assistance, 67 - employment, 26 - credit, 106 of them solved their family problems.

Employees of Women's Social Adaptation Rehabilitation Centers in Bukhara are using Ucell company’s high-speed mobile internet modems to solve women's problems in an innovative way. Women who come to the center for help with any problem, such as enrolling their child in kindergarten, employment or legal
advice to start a business, were able to solve their problems quickly, conveniently and easily using Ucell mobile internet modems. For this purpose, the company provided 12 USB-modems connected to the Internet free of charge. This event became a highlight of the conference held on February 3 on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Bukhara regional headquarters of Ucell. The event, which took place at the Women's Entrepreneurship Center in Bukhara, welcomed the official bodies of the Women's Committee of the regional administration, city and district women's committees, company representatives, the media and bloggers. It was noted that the cooperation between the company and the Women's Committee will facilitate the work of social rehabilitation centers in the exchange of electronic information, as well as a more specific approach to solving the problems of women in the regions, taking into account the latest trends in mobile technology. Ucell officials were thanked for their impartial cooperation (https://www.wcu.uz/uz/news/).

In order to prevent women unemployment in the region and systematically organize their employment in 2019, 10,406 unemployed women were registered in the employment centers, 1,833 in the process of door-to-door visit, a total of 12,239 unemployed women, of which 10,774 or 88.0% were provided with work. 1429 women were involved in vocational training, 2995 of them in paid public works and 1468 people were issued unemployment benefits. In addition, 734 women were employed through the establishment of 202 small enterprises, 1,638 women were involved in handicrafts and 721 in home-based work on the base of the Teacher-Apprentice Policy, and 841 women were involved in the establishment of 267 family kindergartens. During the year, 2,353 women were registered as entrepreneurs, creating 2,855 new work places. With the participation of women's committees and experts, the real conditions of women were thoroughly studied and in 2019 at the expense of 5 billion soums from the Public Fund for Women and Family Support were allocated soft loans for 105 women interested in entrepreneurship and 804 new work places were created for them. These funds were used for self-employment of 18 women, 31 for handicrafts, 10 for gardening, 6 for small production units and 40 for services.

Commercial banks allocated 286 billion 773 million soums to 20,747 women. Unemployed 595 women living in difficult conditions, including young women, registered in the Employment State Program were provided with jobs.

On the basis of 5 social initiatives outlined in the statement of the video conference held on March 19, 2019 under the leadership of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, lists of 1,200 unemployed women were compiled for placement in knitwear production and sewing shops which will be built in Konimekh, Navbakhor, Nurota and Khatirchi districts and 160 recruited women were trained by the Employment Centers. In addition, the pilot project of Navoi region included a total of 10 makhallas located in Khatirchi, Navbahor districts and Navoi city, in which a “road map” of the fifth initiative was developed and directed for implementation. At the initiative of the district khakims (governors), some land plots were allocated for the construction of 2 sewing shops in Kyzyltepa district (300 work places), 2 in Karmana district (200 work places) and 2 (270 work places) in Khatirchi district and total 770 work places will be created for local women. At the initiative of the Women's Committee, a sewing workshop “Farovon Tekstil Nazir” was opened in a vacant building in Abay makhalla of Uchkuduk district. The district khakim provided 10 sewing machines for free use, and 10 women were employed (Current archive recording of 2012 of Navoi Region’s Women Committee). A number of measures have been taken to prevent crime and delinquency among women as well. A total of 119 women who had committed crimes or had previous convictions have also been employed, 128 women received medical care and 135 received financial assistance. A total of 283 problematic families were registered and 247 of them were reconciled with the involvement of the public authorities. 104 women with a predisposition to crime were identified and attached to women activists and leaders in districts and cities, as well as local council members (Archive data of Women’s Committee of Navoi Region. 2012). The Navoi Specialized Prosecutor's Office pays special attention to the legal protection of women's rights in the state enterprise Navoi Mining and Metallurgical Combine (NMMC) and its subordinate enterprises.

In particular, the monitoring of the provision of benefits to workers and employees of the Central Material and Technical Base of the State Enterprise NMMC, the Southern Mining Department, Navoi Machine-Building Plant, Zarafshan Construction Department was carried out under the Labor Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Indeed, the highest values, such as the rule of law, human rights and freedom, are the cornerstone of the development and stability of any society (Astonov, 2012).

5291 advocacy events were organized on the prevention of women's delinquency and crime in the existing makhallas of the region and have been broadcasted 81 times on television.
The chairmen of the women’s committees participated in 44 trials, assisted in mitigating the sentences of 14 women, and provided full medical examinations and employment to 23 women who had returned from prisons. (Current archive recording of 2013 of Navoi Region’s Women Committee)

Also, in order to improve the socio-spiritual environment among women, 11 community-based spirituality advocacy groups were established in the region, 250 were started in districts and cities. In 2019, 2436 families were carefully studied by 30 working groups of women's committees and community specialists on family studies, as a result of the investigation 1441 problems were identified and resolved by working groups, 370 by makhalla citizens’ assemblies, 553 by district khakimiyats (regional administration department), and 72 of them were included in the agenda of the Regional Council. 11,347 households were visited, advocacy work was carried out to promote a healthy lifestyle, improving the socio-spiritual environment, and a number of women’s problems were studied and practical assistance was provided for them. 176,712 women of childbearing age underwent medical examination, and about 14,323 pregnant women underwent in-depth screening. In the region, 98,000 families, 44,600 women were involved in sports competitions, and 201,900 were involved in morning physical training. (Current archive recording of 2019 of Khakimiyat of Navoi Region)

More than 468,000 women currently living in Navoi region are actively involved in the process of economic reforms, spiritual renewal and make a worthy contribution to the development of the country. (Current archive recording of 2020 of Khakimiyat of Navoi Region)

5. Conclusions and suggestions
Emphasis should be placed on finding and implementing opportunities to organize part-time work for women.

There is a need for regular legal advocacy among women, especially in districts, villages and cities, as well as the revitalization of non-governmental non-profit organizations that protect the rights and interests of women.

It is necessary to further increase makhallas’ responsibility and self-government bodies in studying, analyzing and monitoring the socio-spiritual and domestic problems of women.

In short, the study of the role of women in socio-economic and cultural processes in Navoi region makes a huge contribution to the creation of a modern history of socio-economic and cultural life of the region.

During the years of independence, as a result of the state's care policy, opportunities to increase women's activism have expanded. These opportunities are reflected in the fact that women's rights are protected on the basis of ongoing reforms in the country and the growth of women's activity.

References:


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[12] Current archive recording of 2012 of Navoi Region’s Women Committee

[13] Current archive recording of 2013 of Navoi Region’s Women Committee

[14] Current archive recording of 2019 of Khakimiyat of Navoi Region