

Derivation of indicators to measure the achievement of equality in the field of employment from a gender perspective: Case study of the Palestinian Territory

Saleh ALKAFRI

Director General of Economic Statistics

Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics

Ramallah, Palestine

saleh@pcbs.gov.ps

Introduction:

The international and regional institutions and local communities issued many resolutions, international conventions and declarations related to the promotion of women's participation in the economic process and empowerment, and promoting gender equality in all aspects of life believing in the role of women in the development process of the economies of the countries. The rapid changes taking place in the world made it a must for communities to cope with them, and take into account in all areas of their lives. The gender equality is considered at the heart of decent work and this is internationally justified. Equity-based right to work is a matter of basic human rights and justice. In addition to the concept of economic efficiency which reflects the possibility for women to play a key role as economist producers who are able to change in societies and economies. And equality is not an intrinsic value in itself, but it is also useful in achieving economic growth and poverty reduction.

Economic empowerment of women is considered suitable for all cultural contexts. It releases their potential social and economic driving force towards development. In this sense, all the resolutions and international agreements related to the fields of employment and social rights stressed on the need of achieving equality between both sexes. Among the most important international conventions ratified by most countries is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women "CEDAW" which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979, which obliges States to take necessary and accepted internationally measures to achieve equal rights for women in all place.

And one of the fields of equality stipulated in the articles of the Convention "CEDAW", was related to the achievement of equality between both sexes in the field of employment for its importance in the development process for all countries. Many countries had approved the Convention, and thus they are required to report periodically to the General Assembly of the United Nations to show the extent of the progress made in achieving gender equality in all fields on the ground. And to monitor the extent to which those countries fulfilled the convention. The official statistical institutions must have an active role in providing what their governments' need of indicators of measuring and monitoring the amount that is comparable between countries and time.

The paper aims at deriving indicators for provision from official surveys and administrative records that are available and calculated in a simplified and achieving the desired result which is based on the reported items in the CEDAW. The indicators will depend on some basic principles and economic theories.

And as a case study, the reality of discrimination in the Palestinian labor market will be studied. The indicators that have been derived in the study of how to achieve equality in the field of employment in the Palestinian territories under the Palestinian government's approval to CEDAW in 2009 are used. And they can be seen as guiding evidence of the study for countries to international comparison of levels of equality from a gender perspective in the field of work.

Challenges:

Many challenges have faced decision makers, planners and the civil society over the past years in their attempt to achieve full equality between both sexes. Some of these are the Israeli actions, through the dismemberment of the population in the West Bank, followed by a cantons' policy, in addition to the blockade imposed on the Gaza Strip. This has resulted in an economic crisis overwhelming the Palestinian territories, a slow growth in the economy and the weak capacity of productive sectors to operate, especially among graduates. This is all clearly manifested in the high unemployment rates, particularly in the Gaza Strip. Moreover, the dominant culture on women's employment and the prevailing stereotypes of the traditional jobs designed for women as well as the absence of a legislative authority to pass laws have intensified these challenges and weakened chances to achieve equality in the field of work.

In parallel with these challenges, there were a lot of points of strength that helped reduce the gap in gender equality over the past ten years. One of these points is the government's awareness of the importance of equality. This awareness is best manifested in the signing of "CEDAW" Convention in 2009, the establishment of the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the addition of a women's unit within the structure of the Civil Service Bureau as well as the adoption of several resolutions supporting gender equality. Moreover, the growing global support for the achievement of gender equality and the international financial support for the Palestinian territories, which sometimes reached more than three-quarters of the government's budget are aspects of these points of strength. Others are the support of gender equality in the employment arena by the Palestinian Labor Law-despite the fact that there are gaps-as well as the Civil Service Law. In other words, the growth of a supporting dominant culture forms the basis of equality. On the other hand, high rates of female graduates roughly equaling the rate of male graduates for the age category (20-34 years old), accompanied by equal rates of participation in the workforce and an expected decrease in the rate of the non-regulating sector through the imposition of severe tax laws while creating high-quality control systems such as "Syada" program are factors that helped to make equality a fact on the ground.

Employment discrimination:

A certain level of gender equality in the labor market resulted from these points of strength and weakness when balanced together. This level hasn't reached a certain point since there are issues that cannot be measured by quantity despite the fact that these are individual cases and may remain as such. By contrast, the accumulation of such cases may result in an outlet that can be measured to some extent by international comparison or comparison with a locally accepted level. Women's abstention from work because of several factors, including discrimination, resulted in their low participation in the workforce. When they do participate, employment discrimination results in a relative distribution of functions between both sexes where women are found in inferior posts if compared to men, thus, having lower wages.

Working conditions can be easily measured but still depend on the jobs occupied by women and the policy followed in the institutions. In order to achieve comparability and meticulous assessment, **relative representation of women's participation in the workforce was used as an acceptable standard of comparison in measuring employment discrimination.** The following are the main conclusions:

Women's low participation and limited options in the workforce compared to men, such as their inability to work in the Israeli labor market, and self-employment clearly avoided by women in spite of the many organizations that support women to start a family business, resulted in a very low level of women's participation in the paid employment which did not exceed 16% in 2009, although it did not exceed 12% in 1999. Reaching equal ratio between men and women in their contribution to those jobs was impossible twenty years ago before raising women's participation in the workforce which is known as the supply. Working on raising women's participation in paid jobs can't be achieved unless they demand so, and this requires raising their participation in parallel with raising their share of the concerned jobs. This can't be applied to women who had experienced more than 40 years without being employed or formerly involved in the workforce. Therefore working with young women, particularly graduates, who determine the form of their future participation, becomes a necessity. Equipping those graduates with the needed qualifications will automatically raise their workforce participation, and consequently, raise their contribution in the paid jobs alongside with young males. However, it turns out that these young women graduates who participate in the workforce side by side with young males suffer from a high level of unemployment compared to young males. This is an indication of discrimination against that category of young females, considerably, either through the availability of low-status jobs, or not being accepted in many institutions.

Discrimination in terms of quantity in the government sector (civil service) has not been detected due to the fact that women at this sector demand inferior positions. However, in relation to quality, women occupy low level government jobs (1-12) unlike men who occupy supervisory positions, in particular, managerial positions and other higher ones. The reason may be of a cultural type.

On the other hand, the private sector, which is not generally governed by laws, shows a clear discrimination in the provision of employment opportunities by providing few jobs of a low level, leaving not many options for women.

In other sectors, such as UNRWA, non-governmental organizations and international institutions women are much more recruited than men. However, these sectors' jobs do not contribute to more than 4% of the total professions.

In the overall, the inputs of the labor market start with the manpower human development, and thus, discrimination policies against females continuing their education is not made obvious, therefore there is a tendency in the society towards females' education.

The real problem is in the quality of education and in females confining to traditional education not supplemented by training to join the labor market, specially since they are more restricted in pursuing higher education.

As an example of using the principle of **relative representation for each category to measure the level of quantitative discrimination**, which stems from the belief that it's not reasonable to overtake recruitment of proportional representation in any category, the following is the analysis of a demonstration to measure the level of discrimination from a gender perspective in the Palestinian labor market:

The institutions which provide job opportunities for the workforce are divided into three sectors that differ in their recruitment policy, namely: The government sector which is governed by laws and regulations, employment in this sector is often central by the General Personnel Council which has recently begun gradually transferring its authorities to government institutions since the year 2009. The local private sector (private sector's institutions which do not include self employment in its multi-forms whether in self-employment or unpaid family employment , in addition to excluding the Israeli labor market), which is governed by the Labour Law No. (7) issued in 2000, but often not applied due to workers ignorance of their rights or because of blackmail, or the illegality of a number of institutions /special projects that fall under the informal sector, estimated as the half as well as other various institutions such as international organizations, relief agencies (UNRWA) and other United Nations organizations, international bodies and non-governmental organizations.

Through (Table 1), we try to indicate the level of participation of women and men in the labor market, and the corresponding level of employment by sector, while evaluating the balance in employment between both in the light of the shortage of jobs that appear through the amount of unemployment. The supply does not show the characteristics of jobs required by the workforce, but it shows the properties of job seekers themselves. Apart from the characteristics of the workforce some of which were mentioned above, it is clear that the participation rate of women is very low. The table shows the activity of 100 people in the labor market, including 17 women participating in the workforce compared to 83 men, 76 of them got job opportunities, 8 in Israel and Israeli settlements, and 19 of them created jobs for themselves (creative thinking or inheritance from a family member), and 6 worked in the family without being paid; that is 33 people out of 76 got a job, either outside the local market (almost all men), through self employment or in the family. In 2009, women have formed 18% of these, mostly working in the family.

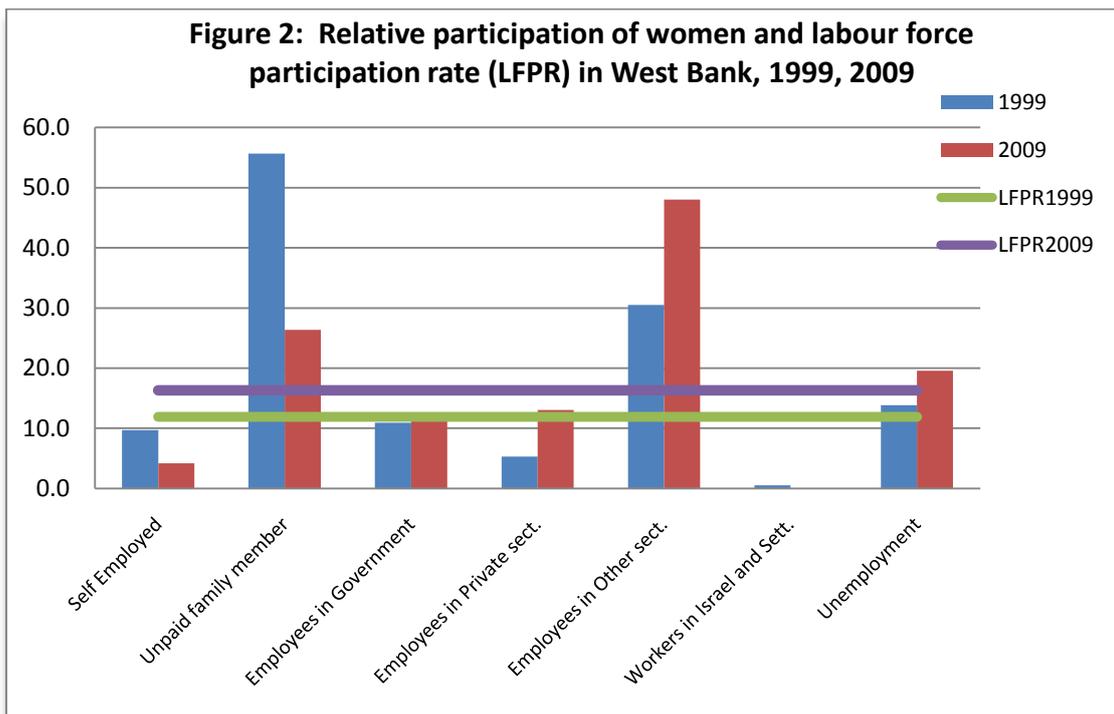
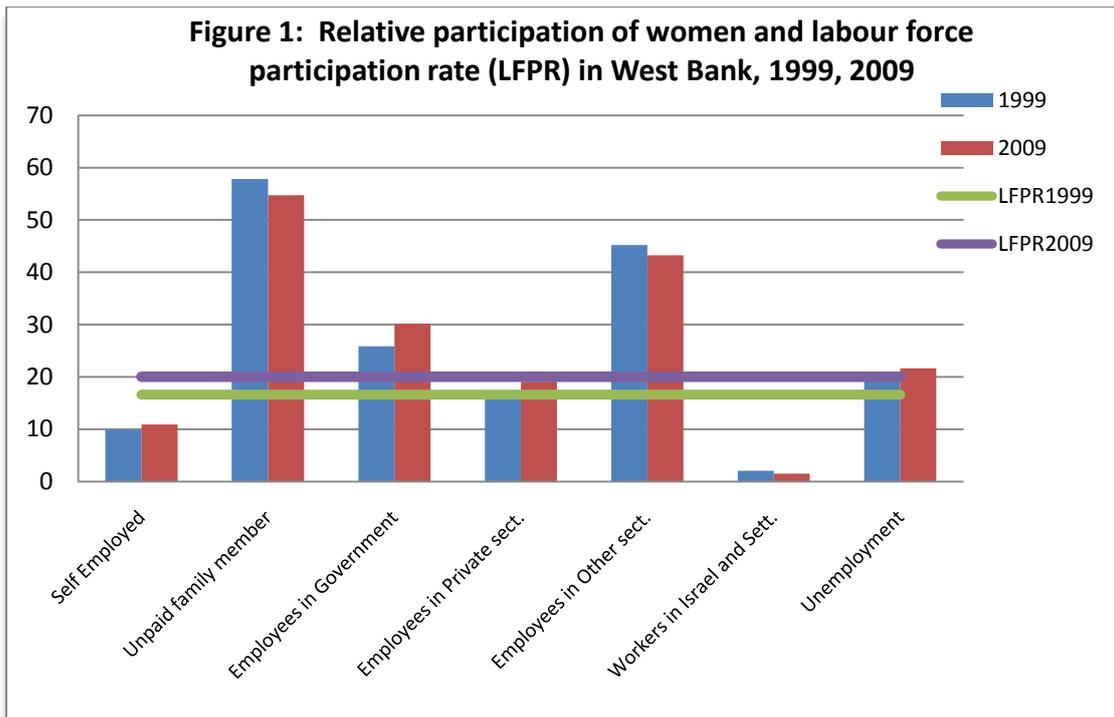
The government employed 25%, the private sector employed 28%, and the other sectors employed 4% of the total workforce (see table 1). Thus, the Co-operators are the government and the private sector, the percentage of women employed by the government is 21% of the total employees (permanent or temporarily), compared to 18% in the private sector. But is the low employment rate reflects the lack of private and public sectors for gender equality in employment? This question is one of the fundamental key themes of the report. If we make a comparison between supply and demand sides, as shown in table (1); meaning any comparison of proportional representation for women from the supply side of proportional representation to them from the demand side, which is supposed at least to be matched to achieve gender equality in employment, we note that the contribution of women in government jobs is higher than the participation rate; meaning higher than the proportional representation of the supply side (17%). This is a compensation for the lack of ability to work in Israel and settlements.

Table (1): the balance between demand and supply and the difference between them as a result of the imbalance (unemployment) for individuals aged 18 years and over in terms of sex and sector (mainly the distribution of 100 persons): 2009

Supply	Demand	Difference between them (unemployment)
100 persons willing and seeking work (economically active) 83%men ,17%women	Government sector : 25% of the total employees -21% women	24 unemployed 21% women
	Private sector : 28% of the total employees -18 % women	
	Other sectors : 4% of the total employees -46% women	
	Israel / settlements: 10% of the total workforce -2% women	
	Self employment : 25% of the total employees -10% women	
	Without pay: 7% of the total workforce -51% women	

The private sector met its share of women's employment; it employed what equals the proportion of representation of the supply side. The other sectors showed no interest to the proportional representation of women from the supply side and paid a ratio closer to parity between men and women. In the absence of women's ability to find themselves a job and their incapability to work in Israel and the settlements the unemployment rate appeared higher than the proportional representation of women from the supply side which shows a lack of equality between the sexes in employment on the public level.

Figures 1 and 2 shows clearly a gap of gender equality in each case / sector in both Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and the comparison between 1999 and 2009. Figure (1) Shows that the proportional representation of women among the unemployed in the West Bank declined over the past ten years, compared with their relative representation in the economic participation, and this is a positive indicator, although it remained slightly higher than the level of participation, with the knowledge that we are here only talking about the level of discrimination in employment, but we would like to note that the unemployment rate is very high on the overall level and for both sexes.



At the level of employment in the sectors, it is clear that there have been improvements over the past decade in the West Bank, and particularly in the government sector, where the share of women from government jobs raised by 17%, but did not rise in line with the rise in the proportion of the contribution of women in the workforce, which rose by 20%, with the knowledge that the governmental functions which is referred to here are civil and military posts, temporary and permanent. Regarding permanent and registered official jobs in the General Personnel Council (Civil Service), the council report for 2009 shows that the total jobs in the West Bank amounted to 49 194 jobs, women's contribution ratio reached 44.8%. And

therefore by the amount, the government achieved employment equity in the West Bank, and the proportion rose slightly in 2009 compared with 2004, while women's contribution percentage in the private sector increased by less than the percentage of contribution in the workforce (13.6%) which is considered as a decline in the performance of the private sector in achieving gender equality in employment.

In the Gaza Strip the overall situation is worse (Figure 2) than what happened in the West Bank and this is relevant in the overall rate that indicates the existence of a gap in the achievement of equality. Some positive changes were achieved over the past decade in the private sector, but these remained below the level, where women's ratio of contribution in the workforce is already low, and the number of female participants increased in the past 10 years by 36% which quantum leap is considering the circumstances in Gaza strip. That relatively active raise suffered low and slow responses for labor market's absorption for new female participants, especially the government and private sector response to absorb the new female workforce, which resulted in a significant increase in its contribution to unemployment; this forms a future threat on women's economic participation in the event of the continuation of the case.

UNRWA, international bodies, and non-governmental organizations are the only sectors that improve the level of employment for women, and women's employment achieved higher ratio than men but women's contribution in the labor market remains low. In contrast, women contribute in 29.4% of the total employees in the civil service in permanent jobs, numbering 30,870 employees; there has been no change since 2004.

Generally the achievement of employment equality remains a relative manner, and therefore, according to the above mentioned evaluation mechanism, it showed that the situation in the West Bank is much better when compared with Gaza Strip, which suffers from a tight blockade, despite the fact that women represent half of the population, but not necessarily represent half of the employees, since it is linked with women's relative contribution in the workforce.

The comparison and evaluation carried on individuals aging 18 and over showed a general picture of the level of gender employment discrimination which depends mostly on the start of employment that took place more than 15 years ago. The older ages have had the opportunity to work for a period of time and still holding onto it until the moment which reduces the accuracy of this comparison. Thus, if we move to the youth category (18-34 years old) that got the job recently, or still looking for jobs, or young graduates, will show the most accurate picture of the extent of discrimination. For young people, it showed that despite the high proportion of the contribution of females in the workforce, the proportion of representation of females in the major sectors rose as the level of participation in the workforce, and therefore do not need to go deeper

As for other categories of young graduates who are invested in their education often by their families, waiting for returns to cover some of what was spent on education. Table (2) shows the significant gap experienced by female graduates, who have been the real victims of discrimination in employment between them and young male graduates. While being educated in the same universities and having the same

certificates as young males, these women graduates did not find equality in the job sector and faced discrimination either intentionally or randomly.

Female graduate contribution ratio in the workforce equaled young males. But their representation among the unemployed has risen to 65% of the total unemployed. The difference clearly shows the extent and magnitude of the challenges faced by female graduate.

Table (2) shows that the proportion of the female graduate contribution Amounted 40% of the total graduates who were employed in the government sector despite the fact that young people have greater choice, particularly in self-employment. The government sector followed the private sector which female graduate ratio did not exceed 44%; meaning its contribution ratio in the workforce did not reach the minimum level.

Other sectors tried to absorb the surplus of female graduate by raising females' contribution ratio to 69%, but because of the relative representation for these sectors which did not exceed 10% of the available total jobs/job opportunities.

Table (2): the balance between demand and supply sides and the difference between them as a result of the imbalance (unemployment) for young graduates (20-34 years) by sex and sector (mainly the distribution of 100 persons): 2009

Supply	demand	Difference between them
100 persons willing and seeking work(economically active) 50% male 50% female	Government sector : 43.1% of the total workers -40% girls (40% women)	38 unemployed -65% girls
	Private sector :34 % of the total workers -44% women	
	Other sectors : 9.7 % of the total workers – 69% women	
	%04(Israel / settlements: 2.2% of the total staff - there are no girls	
	Self employed :7.9% of the total workforce -9% women	
	Without pay : 3.1 % of the total workforce -23% women	

"CEDAW" convention discussed the right to have employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria regarding employment matters. In public, there is no criterion for hiring that shows any distinction between men and women, but many institutions, including the government give to the members of interview commissions a margin of the proportion of the mark for the overall impression which is the exit for discrimination which can't be quantified but the above results measures the employment results.

Wages Discrimination:

By comparing the average wage earned by graduates for the first time in the private sector (in his/her first job in the first month) a discrepancy appeared which shows explicit discrimination in wages. The most influential factors regarding this matter is

not that women's wages are less than men's in the same job but because of the occupation or the position given to women such as , secretarial or administrative assistant, or nursing, or teaching , using the same comparison the same results will be provided.

A great contrast appeared in the ratio of the average wages of women to men, but that ratio decreases in more qualified females. In the intermediate qualifications (diploma) the gap is less due to the convergence of professions and career s positions for both men and women. But for those with a bachelor degree the gap increases between women and men, and this is because the females take lower jobs than males and thus appear that gap clearly.

Job Security:

Law includes everyone, but in the absence of law and social security system, job security is automatically absent in the private sector especially in the small and medium businesses which represents the higher percentage in the economy. The contrast appears between men and women due to the contrast in the jobs occupied by them. Job security mostly comes from the institution itself. So if women were mostly employed in institutions that provide protection for their employees, this will be reflected on the overall course. And because women especially graduates prefer working in the government sector , major companies and international institutions unlike men , it is noticeable that unemployment among women is higher , but on the other hand women occupy positions in the best institutions in spite of the low level of the job itself. This is a widespread phenomenon, where in many cases females accept only working in safe jobs which allows them to leave the labor market after a while of seeking job without finding one .On the other hand and due to the need and want, the girls accept unsecured jobs which are not subject to laws and regulation, and thus complaint cases of blackmail raises. Many cases of sexual harassment which women sometimes endure for living appeared and there are many documented stories.

Many cases of law circumvention came to the public, for example, recruitment of girls for a period of one year minus a day to avoid compensating for the end of the service. This is immoral fraud, and there are many cases regarding this issue and it became common and reached the public sector and the international institutions. The issue of employment by contracts or on the basis of projects is widespread in order to avoid social security and additional costs on employers including the owners of non-governmental organizations, so to speak.

Health Insurance and Safety:

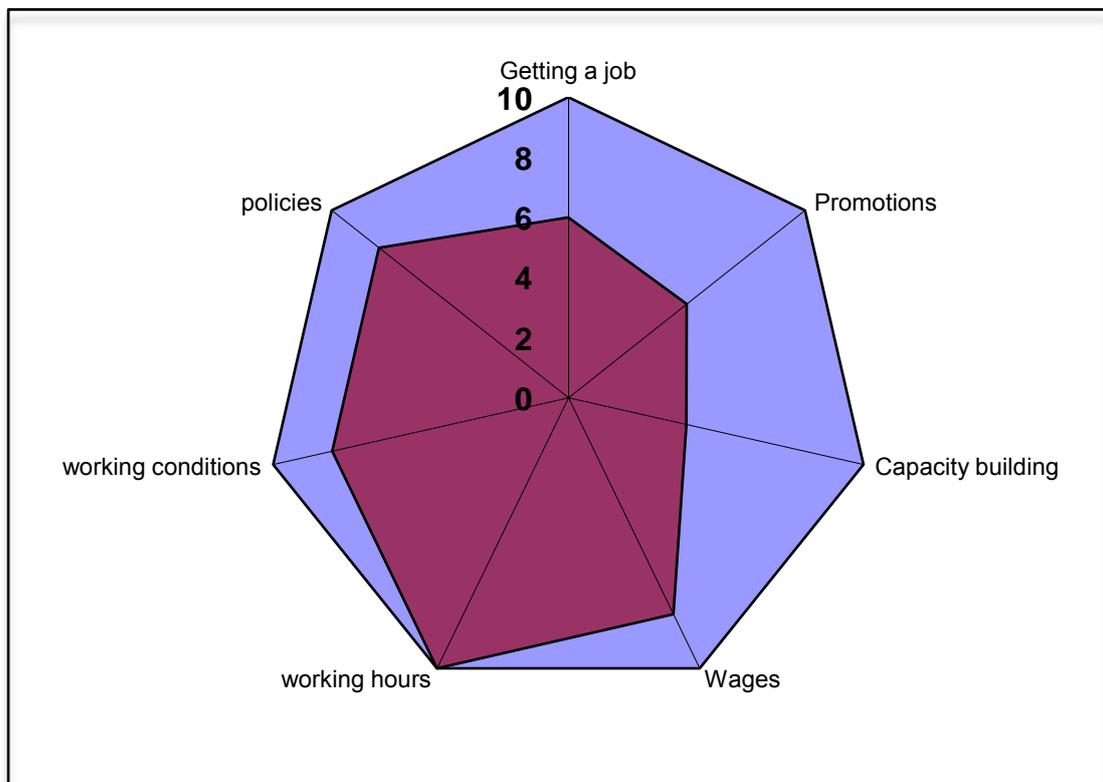
Women in the private sector suffer- due to the absence of law- unfair dismissal due to pregnancy and childbirth but these are individual cases that did not appear through statistics but its outcomes appeared during the reluctance of women to work in the private sector .The proportions of women who receive the privileges of the paid holidays of all kinds is higher than men, but remain low in total. The reason why the working conditions of women are better than men is due to the nature of the professions occupied by men.

The report demonstrates many cases of individual cases of complaints against employers, either because of the unfair dismissal of women, or sexual harassment, either because of women's inability to take their right to promotions or career burden

but its amount cannot be estimated because of the lack of specialized surveys regarding this manner.

Evaluation Form:

The following is a proximal assessment of the reality of discrimination against women by some of the items. The calculation was an estimate of the ratios that have been drawn. The exercise shows promotions to be the largest gap, which is the entrance to the wage. The Figure shows the general assessment of the levels of discrimination against women in the labor market as a final result of the foregoing analysis, Where assessment is a future tool to monitor the facts of discrimination and quantification of a gender perspective in the labor market and evaluate the progress of the Government in reducing the gap, based on seven key themes of the assessment as it appears through the figure.



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