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**The role of women social behavior transformation in Public Administration**

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CONTENT

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| NORMATIVE REFERENCES……………………………………………………. | | 3 |
| INTRODUCTION…………………………………………………………………. | | 4 |
| 1 | DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN’S SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS…………………. | 11 |
| 1.1 | Evolution of theories and concepts of feminist movements……………….... | 11 |
| 1.2 | Evolution of women social activism……………………………………….... | 27 |
| 1.3 | Methodology and key approaches to the study of women's social activism… | 39 |
| 2 | THE CURRENT STATE OF WOMEN’S SOCIAL ACTIVISM AND ITS IMPACT ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN KAZAKHSTAN………... | 47 |
| 2.1 | Analysis of development of women social activism in Kazakhstan………… | 47 |
| 2.2 | Education as a factor in the formation of women's social activism in public administration……………………………………………………………….. | 71 |
| 2.3 | Assessment of women social activism and its impact on public administration in Kazakhstan……………………………………………….. | 84 |
| 3 | THE MAIN DIRECTIONS AND MECHANISMS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF KAZAKHSTAN………………………………… | 101 |
| 3.1 | Recommendations in solving the problems of social activism: NGO, education and economic activity……………………………………………. | 101 |
| 3.2 | Mechanisms for the promotion of women's social activism through public administration………………………………………………………………. | 109 |
| 3.3 | State and public mechanisms for the institutionalization of women's activism………………………………………………………………………. | 116 |
| CONCLUSION…………………………………………………………………… | | 121 |
| REFERENCES……………………………………………………………………. | | 127 |
| ANNEX A………………………………………………………………………... | | 136 |
| ANNEX B | | 142 |
| ANNEX C | | 143 |
| ANNEX D | | 145 |
| ANNEX E | | 146 |
| ANNEX F | | 147 |
| ANNEX G | | 148 |
| ANNEX H | | 149 |
| ANNEX I | | 150 |
| ANNEX J | | 151 |
| ANNEX K | | 152 |
| ANNEX L | | 153 |
| ANNEX M | | 154 |
| ANNEX N | | 155 |
| ANNEX O | | 156 |

**NORMATIVE REFERENCES**

Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Public Services", adopted on April 15, 2013, No. 88-V.

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Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan "On Informatization", adopted on January 11, 2007, No. 217-III.

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The State Program for the Development of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan for 2020-2025.

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INTRODUCTION

**Relevance of the research topic.** Public administration is a key area that determines the strategic development of countries, and women's participation in this process is an important indicator of social activity, gender equality and the effectiveness of management decision-making. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the involvement of women in governance processes contributes to improving the quality of public administration, increasing public trust and making more inclusive decisions [OECD, 2023]. A special role in this process is played by women's social activism, which not only contributes to their professional self-realization, but is also an important tool for transforming the management system. The active participation of women in political processes, public initiatives and government institutions expands the agenda of socially significant issues, such as equal access to education and health care, protecting the rights of vulnerable groups, developing family policy and combating gender discrimination. In addition, the social activity of women in public administration is not only a factor in their professional self-realization, but also an important tool for shaping inclusive policies. However, despite the measures taken to ensure gender balance, women still face barriers to occupying leadership positions, and their level of social activism in public administration remains low. According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), women occupy on average only 26.7% of leadership positions in the public sector, with this figure varying depending on the region and level of economic development of the country [WEF, 2023]. In Kazakhstan, according to statistics from the Bureau of National Statistics, the share of women among civil servants is 55.2%, but their representation in senior management remains at 18.7%, indicating a persistent gender gap. This imbalance not only limits women's access to highly paid and promising positions, but also narrows their opportunities for career growth and professional development. Moreover, the insufficient level of social activism of women in public administration hinders the promotion of initiatives aimed at expanding their participation in management processes. As a result, gender imbalances in decision-making persist, slowing down the implementation of inclusive policies.

In the context of Kazakhstan's long-term strategic guidelines laid out in the Kazakhstan 2050 strategy, gender equality and women's empowerment in public administration are seen as integral elements of inclusive development. One of the key priorities of the strategy is to form an effective public administration system based on the principles of meritocracy, transparency and equal opportunities. As a result, women's active participation in governance processes and their social activism are seen not only as a factor of social justice, but also as a tool for improving the efficiency of public administration. In addition, the importance of women's social activism is growing in the context of the need to increase women's participation in the economy, which is especially emphasized in the strategic initiatives set out in the address of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev to the people of Kazakhstan "A Fair Kazakhstan: Law and Order, Economic Growth, Public Optimism" dated September 2, 2024, which notes the importance of eliminating imbalances, as well as creating conditions for equal opportunities and inclusive development of all citizens of Kazakhstan. In this context, the development of effective tools to support women's social activity is becoming an important task for ensuring sustainable development and social justice in Kazakhstan. Based on the above, the relevance of the study is associated with the need not only for a quantitative increase in women's participation in public administration, but also for a qualitative strengthening of women's social activism. Gender equality in public administration remains an important area of ​​public policy, but the underrepresentation of women in decision-making limits the potential for inclusive development. In this context, the study of factors influencing the level of civic activity, as well as the analysis of mechanisms that contribute to the expansion of opportunities for women in management, is of particular importance. Identifying existing barriers and finding effective solutions will help formulate a comprehensive approach aimed at strengthening women's leadership and increasing social involvement.

At the same time, the remaining institutional and social restrictions make it difficult for women to actively participate in governance processes. Despite the measures taken, the uneven distribution of governance resources, the lack of systemic support tools and low involvement in the formation of the state agenda remain significant obstacles. In the context of modernization of public administration and the implementation of strategic priorities of Kazakhstan, special attention should be paid to the development of scientifically based recommendations aimed at eliminating structural barriers and creating a favorable environment for increasing women's social activism. In this regard, a comprehensive analysis of the factors hindering the development of women's social activism, effective mechanisms for stimulating civic engagement is needed, which will enhance the influence of women on public administration processes and will contribute to the implementation of the principles of justice, transparency and equal opportunities.

**The degree of scientific development of the research topic.** The problem of women's participation in public administration and their social activity is the subject of study in various scientific disciplines, including public administration, sociology and gender studies. In recent decades, this topic has acquired particular significance in connection with global trends in ensuring gender equality and expanding the rights and opportunities of women in the public sphere. This study is based on the works of foreign and Kazakh authors, as well as methodological materials devoted to the analysis of women's social activism and its impact on public administration. Theoretical aspects of the formation and development of women's social activism, as well as its influence on decision-making in the public sphere, were considered in the works of Marsh A., Kaase M., Pankhurst K., Crawford E., Schultz J., Sulkunen I., Scott J. W., Covino S., Skard T., Bucknor A.

A huge contribution to the study of the influence of feminist movements on the development of state structures and political culture was made by such authors as Beauvoir S., Friedan B., hooks b., Steinem G., Lorde A., Butler J., Collins P. H. B. In their works, special attention is paid to women's social activism as a tool for transforming the management system and institutional changes. In addition, considerable attention is paid to issues of gender policy in the public administration system, which are studied in the works of Taylor F. W., Fayol H., Scott J., Eagly A. H., Carli L. L., Bourdieu P., Lovell T., Houston C. These studies emphasize the influence of gender stereotypes, leadership models and institutional barriers that impede the equal participation of women in management processes. A significant part of scientific research is devoted to legal reforms and the development of gender-sensitive policies aimed at eliminating structural barriers for women in public administration. In this direction, the works of Laplante B., Melo Vieira J., Barnabé G. C. F. R. R., Menicucci T., Paolucci F., Aiello G., Bonanno A. are important, in which the mechanisms of legislative regulation, institutional reforms and international practices of ensuring gender equality are analyzed.

Despite the broad scientific base, the problem of women's participation in public administration of Kazakhstan remains insufficiently studied. In the Kazakh scientific literature, the issue of female leadership and gender equality was considered in the works of Kireeva A., Nurekenova K., Lipovka A., where the mechanisms of women's advancement in management structures, institutional barriers and the influence of gender stereotypes on professional activities are analyzed. Issues of legal regulation of employment, social protection and gender equality in labor relations are considered in the works of Khassanova G. and 125. Baltabaeva, M. M. Their studies analyze the mechanisms for protecting women's labor rights, the impact of legislation on the elimination of gender discrimination and the compliance of Kazakhstani norms with international standards. Institutional mechanisms for the implementation of gender policy, the influence of international actors and the historical aspects of the transformation of gender roles in Kazakhstan are covered in the studies of Shakirova S., Aldashev G. Their works analyze the influence of gender policy on the formation of state strategy, the influence of the colonial legacy on women's rights, as well as international approaches to the institutionalization of gender equality. However, there are still no studies assessing the impact of women's social activism on the effectiveness of public administration. Thus, this study fills the existing gap by offering a systemic analysis of the impact of women's social activism on decision-making processes and the implementation of inclusive policies in Kazakhstan.

The above emphasizes the relevance of further research in the field of women's social activism and its impact on public administration processes. Insufficient study of this issue in the Kazakhstani context determined the choice of the topic of this study, as well as the setting of the goal and objectives of the dissertation research.

**The object** of the study is the processes of formation and development of social activity of women in public administration.

**The subject** of the study is a set of organizational and economic relations arising in the process of social activism and involvement of women in public administration.

**The purpose** of the dissertation research is to develop recommendations for increasing women's social activism in public administration and their involvement in the implementation of state social programs in Kazakhstan. To achieve this goal, the following tasks were defined.

**Research goals:**

* to study the theoretical foundations of the formation and development of women's social activism in public administration based on the analysis of gender roles;
* to systematize foreign models of development of women's social activism and their involvement in public administration;
* to analyze women's social activism and determine the degree of its influence on public administration in Kazakhstan based on the correlation-regression method (taking into account data standardization by the Z-score method);
* to assess the degree of influence of women's education level on their social activity in public administration;
* to develop institutional mechanisms to support women's social activism and the possibility of its integration into public administration processes;
* to develop recommendations for increasing women's social activity in public administration and their involvement in the implementation of state social programs in Kazakhstan.

**The theoretical and methodological basis** is based on the use of qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis, allowing to assess the impact of social activity of women on public administration processes. The following methods were used in the work:

* correlation and regression analysis based on the use of JASP software for quantitative assessment of the relationship between the levels of education of women and their involvement in public administration processes;
* data standardization (Z-score) to assess the degree of social activity of women and its impact on the effectiveness of public administration;
* qualitative method of semi-structured interviews conducted among three groups of respondents: women with different levels of education (bachelor's, master's, doctoral), representatives of non-profit organizations (NGOs) and government agencies. The interviews included 11 thematic groups of questions developed based on the methodology of Carol Bacchi (2010) and studies by Claxton Oldfield et al. (2010), Acus Acus (2019) and Koper et al. (2018);
* qualitative analysis using Atlas.ti software to process interview data, identify key topics and trends in the perception of women's social activity;
* comparative analysis of institutional mechanisms for supporting women's social activity in Kazakhstan and international experience.

The methodological basis of the study was made up of official materials of state bodies of the Republic of Kazakhstan, including legislative acts, state programs, strategic documents, statistical data and analytical reports of international organizations, as well as research by domestic and foreign scientists devoted to issues of women's social activity, gender equality and public administration.

**Scientific novelty.** This study contributes to the development of the theory and practice of public administration, revealing the mechanisms of women's involvement in governance processes through social activism. The work systematizes existing approaches to defining women's social activism, proposes new methodological tools for its assessment and develops recommendations for its strengthening in state social programs. The main results of the study are as follows:

* the author's interpretation of the definition of women's social activism in public administration as a form of active participation of women in the economic and social development of the country is proposed;
* a methodology for quantitative assessment of women's social activism and its impact on public administration using correlation and regression analysis and data standardization by the Z-score method is developed;
* an economic and mathematical model of the impact of women's social activism on the effectiveness of public administration is developed, allowing for a quantitative assessment of the impact of the level of women's involvement on key indicators of public administration and social development;
* a comparative analysis of the impact of the level of education on the social activity of women in public administration is conducted;
* the process of institutionalization of women's social activism in Kazakhstan was analyzed using the example of the palliative care system, key stages of formation of initiative communities, their interaction with government agencies and mechanisms of influence on decision-making in the social sphere were identified;
* practical recommendations for promotion and support of women's social activism in the implementation of state social programs were developed, taking into account international experience and the specifics of public administration in Kazakhstan.

**The main provisions submitted for defense:**

1. The author's interpretation of "women's social activism" as targeted actions of women promoting changes in society through participation in the economy, social sphere and politics.
2. Application of the Z-score method for quantitative assessment of women's social activism, women's involvement in public and administrative processes, as well as their impact on the implementation of state social programs.
3. Assessment of education as a factor of structural influence on public administration showed that the level of education determines the nature and degree of women's involvement: with an increase in the level of education, the nature of women's involvement changes - from public initiatives to administrative processes and institutional transformations.
4. The model of partnership between the state and civil society based on women's social activism in palliative care consists in filling the shortcomings of the state health care system through the integration of women's initiatives into public administration mechanisms, which makes it applicable in other areas of social policy.
5. The institutionalization of women's social activism in Kazakhstan is justified taking into account the key mechanisms, barriers and incentives that influence the formation of sustainable structures of interaction between women's organizations and state institutions, which must be taken into account when developing strategies to support women's participation in governance.

**Theoretical significance** of the research results.The theoretical significance of the study lies in complementing and expanding existing scientific approaches to the study of women's social activism in the context of public administration. The study expands the conceptual framework of social activism, clarifying its role in the political and socio-economic spheres. Incorporating the gender aspect into broader theories of institutionalization and social movements allows us to complement theoretical developments in the field of political participation, public administration and gender studies. The study offers the author's vision of women's social activism, revealing its influence on the processes of institutional development and implementation of public policy, especially in countries with developing economies.

**Practical significance** of the research results**.** The practical significance of the study lies in its applicability to the development of public policy and governance mechanisms aimed at enhancing gender equality and increasing the role of women in decision-making. The results obtained can be used in developing strategies to increase women's participation in public administration, as well as in the activities of state and non-governmental organizations. The study promotes the integration of women's activism into national programs, including in the areas of social security, healthcare (in particular, palliative care) and entrepreneurship. The identified barriers and opportunities serve as the basis for practical recommendations for the formation of gender-sensitive state programs and the improvement of mechanisms for involving women in governance processes. The results of the study may also be useful for international organizations promoting the implementation of gender policy in Kazakhstan and the harmonization of national strategies with global initiatives, including the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5).

**Approbation and implementation of the results of the dissertation research.** The results of the key findings of the study have undergone approval:

1. at the plenary session of the Third International Scientific and Practical Conference "Actual Problems of Development of Management Economics in Modern Conditions" of the Moscow Economic Institute. Report on the topic: "Project Management in Kazakhstan: Problems and Solutions" (Moscow, Russia, online);
2. within the framework of the Asian Development Bank project "Kazakhstan Women Barriers", based on the results of which a scientific article was published: "Kazakhstani womenʼs participation in online marketplaces: Benefits and barriers". Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies, 9(3), 343-369. https://doi.org/10.1002/app5.361
3. within the framework of the grant project IRN AP14869297 "Priorities and mechanisms for overcoming unequal access of rural women in Kazakhstan to resources", conducted by the Institute of Economics of the Kazakh National University of Health Sciences of the Republic of Kazakhstan, a scientific article was published: "Assessment of the participation of women volunteers in the palliative care system in Kazakhstan" (2022). Management, 20(4), 483-495. http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.20(4).2022.36
4. within the framework of the grant project of the PCF "Strategy for the development of regional potential of Kazakhstan: assessment of the socio-cultural and economic potential, roadmap, models and scenario planning" (IRN BR18574240), implemented at the University of International Business named after Kenzhegali Sagadiev, were published and received:

* monograph: Nurbatsin A.S., Kenzhegulova G.K. “Kazakhstan onyirlik alueutin damytudyn zhana trendteri: alemdik tazhiribe, tuyindi factorlar men strategylar” / e.g.k., kauymdastyrylgan professor K.O. Nurgalievany edition - Almaty: “Arys Baspasy”, K. Sagadiev atyndagy Halykaralyk Business University, 2024. – 240 b. ISBN 978-601-291-636-2;
* Author's certificate: Nurbatsin A. S., Nurgalieva K. O., Kenzhegulova G. K., Eszhanova Zh. Zh., Bekbosinova A. S. Methodological recommendations for rating regional problems and assessing the socio-cultural and economic potential [Text] / A. S. Nurbatsin. - Author's certificate No. 49432 dated 09/04/2024.

Publications. The main results of the dissertation were published in 1 collective monograph, 1 author's certificate and 11 scientific papers, including: 3 - in top-rated journals from the Scopus database list (percentile over 35); 4 - in journals recommended by the Committee on Quality Assurance and Quality of Education; 4 - in the materials of the international scientific and practical conference.

**Structure and scope of the dissertation.** The structure of the dissertation on the logic of quality, the research procedure and the algorithm for solving the problems. The dissertation consists of a table of contents, a note, three chapters, a review, and a list of references. The volume of the dissertation research is 156 pages of typewritten text, including 10 tables and 17 figures. The list of references includes 144 titles.

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1 DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN’S SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FORMATION AND

1.1 Evolution of theories and concepts of feminist movements

In recent decades, there has been an increasing emphasis on gender studies within the field of public administration, reflecting the evolving roles of women in governance structures. Changes in women's status and participation have shaped the development of public administration frameworks, particularly at national and local levels. Historically, the regulation and governance mechanisms were predominantly male-dominated; however, as women’s roles in the economic and social spheres expanded, their influence on public administration policies also grew.

The economic advancement of countries has contributed to a shift in societal perceptions of gender roles, with women playing a more prominent role in decision-making processes. This shift is evident in both national and international governance structures, where women’s participation in public administration has become a key factor in policy formation and implementation. Theoretical and practical approaches to feminist movements have evolved to reflect these changes, focusing not only on women’s rights but also on their participation in public governance.

The concept of women's social activism in public administration gained prominence in the 1990s. By 1993, early studies identified women's increasing involvement in political and civic activities as pivotal to shaping public policy. During this period, the term "Public Administration" gained prominence, encompassing the formal mechanisms through which states address social welfare and governance issues, particularly in local communities [1].

Women's social activism has had a profound impact on public administration, influencing policy development and implementation at various levels of governance. This impact is multifaceted and illustrated in Figure 1, which highlights the key dimensions of women's social activism in the public sector.

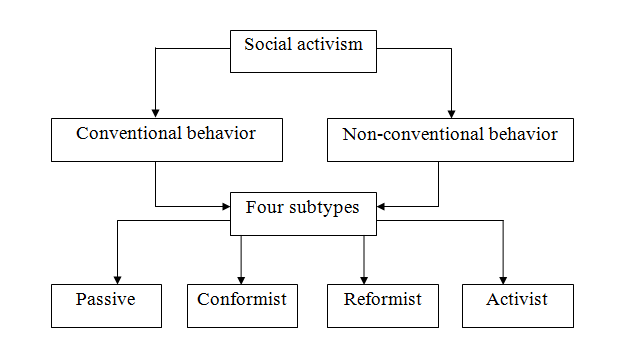


Figure 1 – Social activism aspects

Note: compiled by the author

*The role of social activism in public administration: conventional and non-conventional behavior*

According to the foundational study by Marsh [2] and Kaase and Marsh [3], social activism is rooted in political behavior, which can be divided into two major categories: conventional and non-conventional behavior. These categories represent distinct forms of engagement within public administration processes. Social activism is driven by individuals' desires to participate in decision-making processes that affect both their immediate social environment and broader governance systems.

A significant aspect of this activism is the role of women in public administration, particularly in light of their historical exclusion. Traditionally, public administration has been male-dominated, and the policies developed have often reflected male perspectives. Women’s voices were either marginalized or excluded entirely, resulting in a lack of gender representation in governance. This led to critical gaps in public policies, as women’s unique experiences and needs were often overlooked, particularly in areas such as health, education, and social welfare.

As women began to challenge their exclusion and fight for inclusion in decision-making processes, their social activism evolved, transforming the very nature of public administration. Women's involvement in governance thus took on a dual purpose: advocating for gender equity and reshaping public administration structures to become more inclusive, transparent, and responsive to the needs of all citizens. Historically, the social role of women has been associated with home routine, such as caring for the family. The transformation of women's social behavior in public administration was based on the desire to preserve these basic functions in the changing conditions of public authority, particularly maintaining social stability and protecting public welfare. The expansion of opportunities required new ways to influence decision-making processes. Therefore, interaction with official institutions and alternative forms of activity became crucial. Thus, this transformation expressed the role of women's social behavior in new social tasks, reflecting the desire to promote sustainability, justice, and the development of the social structure.

*Conventional and Non-Conventional Behavior in Public Administration.*

Changes in the strategy of women's participation in governance led to the formation of main models of political behavior, differing in the degree of commitment to traditional institutions and ways of implementing the social function of protection and care.

* *Conventional-passive behavior.* Conventional-passive behavior characterizes a minimal level of involvement in public administration processes. The implementation of the social function is limited to maintaining awareness of ongoing political events through traditional sources of information, such as print media and television. Refusal to participate actively while maintaining interest in public life reflects the desire to maintain social stability through monitoring the activities of government institutions without direct intervention.
* *Conventional-conformist behavior.* Conventional-conformist behavior is expressed in active participation in political processes within the established norms and procedures framework. Support for existing institutions, participation in elections, public discussions, and consultation mechanisms indicate a desire to ensure stability and development of the system through cooperation with government structures. This form of behavior allows for the implementation of traditional care and protection functions in institutionalized civic participation.
* *Reformist behavior within conventional boundaries.* The most active form of conventional behavior is that of reformists, who work within the system but push for changes to policies or governance structures. They believe that public administration can evolve to meet the needs of society better. These activists frequently engage in advocacy, policy reform, and lobbying efforts to promote progressive change. They cooperate with public administration but focus on reforming its practices to make it more equitable and responsive.
* *Non-Conventional Behavior*. In contrast to conventional behavior, non-conventional activism is often characterized by actions that challenge or circumvent formal governance structures. This type of activism typically arises when individuals feel that public administration is failing to address critical social issues or that the established mechanisms for participation are inadequate. Non-conventional behavior often reflects frustration with slow bureaucratic processes and can include forms of protest, civil disobedience, or direct action.
* *Non-conventional passive behavior.* The mildest form of non-conventional behavior may involve activities such as signing petitions or joining social movements that operate outsidethe formal governance framework. These actions are legal but represent a challenge to public administration’s authority by pressuring governments to respond to issues through mass mobilization.
* *Non-conventional active behavior*. In more extreme cases, non-conventional behavior manifests in protests, demonstrations, and other forms of civil disobedience. These actions may challenge the legitimacy of public administration by disrupting its operations. Active participants in non-conventional behavior may engage in strikes, rallies, or even occupations in public spaces. These activities highlight public dissatisfaction with governance and aim to effect change by exerting direct pressure on the government. Specific manifestations of non-conventional active behavior may escalate into actions that violate legal norms, including property damage or unauthorized occupations. Despite the confrontational nature of such forms of activism, they continue to reflect efforts to influence public administration processes, particularly when institutional mechanisms are perceived as ineffective or inaccessible.

Social activism is divided into four types: passive, conformist, reformist, and activist. The division relies on two parameters: the level of engagement in governance processes and the degree of compliance with administrative norms. Passive activism is limited to informational awareness without direct participation. Conformist activism involves cooperation with the government. Reformist activism seeks institutional changes through formal mechanisms. Activist behavior is characterized by using alternative or confrontational strategies. These types reflect distinct approaches to citizen interaction with public authority.

*Theoretical Foundations of Social Constructivist Movements in Public Administration*

Social activism is considered one of the mechanisms of influence on the development of public administration. In the interpretation of Melluci [4], social constructivist movements arise from joint actions of groups aimed at changing existing administrative practices. Such movements create spaces for putting forward public demands and promoting initiatives to change administrative practices, acting as channels of interaction between government agencies, administrative structures, and society in solving social problems.

A feature of social constructivist movements is their focus on interaction with public administration mechanisms for institutional change. An example of this approach is feminist associations that sought through administrative channels the adoption of regulations on equal pay, provision of parental leave, and protection from gender-based violence. These efforts reflect the general strategy of constructivist movements, based on the possibility of transforming the system through institutional resources and improving administrative procedures.

*The Role of International Standards in Social Movements and Public Administration*

Social activism in public administration is not limited to local or national institutions. Many social constructivist movements focus on international standards, promoting norms and practices recognized at the global level. According to Risse [5], such movements seek changes that reflect international standards in human rights, labor legislation, and environmental protection, using administrative mechanisms to implement them at the national and local levels. One example is the work of feminist movements seeking recognition of the principles of gender equality. To support their demands, they often refer to international documents, including the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), to strengthen argumentation and legitimize social demands.

Social activism influences decision-making mechanisms and administrative practices. Forms of political behavior, both conventional and unconventional, reflect the desire of citizens to expand participation in governance and strengthen the principles of justice. Social constructivist movements create additional channels for interaction between society and government structures. Public administration is adapted to modern requirements and standards through these channels, creating conditions for society to interact with state institutions and guiding reform processes.

*Development of women's social activism in public administration: conventional, reformist, and activist behavior*

The problem of women's participation in public administration is reflected in the scientific literature in the context of changes in the structure of public authority. The formation of new approaches is associated with the development of ideas about gender equality and changes in opportunities for women to participate in decision-making processes. The transformation of women's social behavior affects the organization of state institutions and administrative procedures.

Changes in forms of participation are manifested in the transition from traditional models to active strategies of influencing public administration. Social activity through conventional, reformist and activist forms becomes one of the factors of change in public authority. Marsh notes that organized and legal forms of women's social activity are aimed at adjusting existing norms without destroying institutional structures. Changes in the nature of participation are associated with expanding opportunities to influence the development and implementation of public policy. The development of new forms of involvement occurs in the context of social, economic, and political changes, which affect the functioning mechanisms of public administration.

Forms of women's social activism — from moderate initiatives to institutional protest strategies — are interpreted as legal and civil actions aimed at changing norms that limit access to governance, decision-making, and resource allocation. Such activism is associated with demands for revising representation mechanisms, accountability procedures, and principles of equal participation in public policy. Through involvement in administrative and political processes, an impact is exerted on the substantive side of government decisions and the institutional conditions for their implementation.

To analyze the evolution of women's activism in the public sphere, it is necessary to take into account the historical forms of consolidation of gender roles, the degree of normative inclusion of women in governance, and changes in the nature of access to institutional mechanisms of power. The development of social and legal status occurred in stages—from exclusion to formal inclusion, from formal inclusion to substantive participation. Each stage reflected the influence of economic conditions, social expectations, and political shifts.

*Three Waves of the Feminist Movement and Their Impact on Public Administration*

Academic literature identifies three waves of the feminist movement, each of which had a certain impact on the development of public administration institutions. The first wave, "early feminism," covers the mid-19th - early 20th centuries and is associated with the struggle for political rights. The primary focus was ensuring voting rights and legal equality in access to political structures. Participation in elections was seen as a key tool for influencing subsequent reforms in education, labor rights, and family policy. The formation of the first formal participation of women in government resulted from this wave.

The theory of liberal feminism, which emerged during this period, focused on advocating for women's legal rights, including the right to vote, own property, and receive an education. Prominent figures in this movement included Emmeline Pankhurst and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who fought for women’s rights in politics and society. Pankhurst was the pioneer ofn the suffragist movement in the United Kingdom in 1903, an organization that was pivotal in advocating for women’s right to participate in public administration through political involvement. Similarly, Stanton advocated for promotion of the Declaration of Women's Rights, which sought to secure women’s rights to education, property, divorce, political participation, and equal pay with crucial impact in the United States [6, 7].

The suffragist movement began in England but quickly spread to other parts of the world, influencing public administration and governance structures in countries such as France, the United States, and several others across Europe. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Finland became pioneers in granting women the right to vote and hold office in politics. In Finland, for instance, women gained both the right to vote and the right to be elected into public administration roles by 1906. This marked a significant turning point in women’s participation in governance, as they were now actively involved in shaping public policy and administration, not just through voting but also by holding leadership roles in government [8, 9].

*The evolution of women social activism in public administration*

The first wave of feminism formed the basis for expanding women's social activism apart from involvement in political representation. Over time, attention was focused on institutional barriers that limited access to employment, career advancement, and participation in management decisions. The movement's agenda covered issues of gender hierarchy in the professional sphere and the public administration system, including mechanisms of exclusion and normative distribution of roles. Under the influence of these processes, the transformation of women's social behavior began - from adaptation to given restrictions to the formation of new models of inclusion in economic and administrative life. The movement's agenda covered issues of gender hierarchy in the professional sphere and the public administration system, including mechanisms of exclusion and the distribution of roles based on gender. Issues of fixed roles, unequal access, and structural discrimination became part of analyzing the conditions under which public administration operates. The evolution of gender roles in the governance system developed under the influence of economic growth, industrialization, and new forms of social mobilization. Feminist criticism emphasized that ideas about the "natural" role of women were constructed and supported by governance institutions built on a patriarchal model. Such a system reproduced gender hierarchy and ignored women's contribution to the development of the economy and social infrastructure.

Feminist critique of public administration focuses on analyzing normative foundations that perpetuate hierarchical inequality based on gender in the power system. Notions about the subordinate role of women were formed under the influence of religious prescriptions, legal provisions, and social norms. The normative restriction of women's participation in public administration was based on a three-tiered foundation. The first tier consisted of religious prescriptions that consolidated the subordinate position of women as a theologically justified norm. The second tier was formed by legal regulations that excluded women from decision-making mechanisms and did not provide institutional guarantees of equal access. The third tier was determined by socio-cultural attitudes that normalized the division of roles into "male" and "female" and limited women's public presence to the private sphere. The three-component foundation was used to form management procedures, personnel selection systems, and institutional admission mechanisms. As a result, persistent barriers that hindered women's participation in the development and implementation of public policy were reproduced. In response to the entrenched structure of inequality, a direction of gender studies was formed to study the mechanisms of normative and administrative reproduction of gender asymmetry in public authority.

The development of theoretical and methodological tools within the framework of gender analytics provided the opportunity for a systemic analysis of the distribution of management functions, access to decision-making, and institutional barriers to career advancement. Generalization of the results of this analysis became the basis for revising the regulatory framework, introducing gender equality programs, adjusting selection and promotion procedures, and creating monitoring and accountability mechanisms in government bodies. The strengthening of the principle of equal participation in governance resulted from the reassessment of structural constraints and the transition to a more inclusive administrative model.

*The Impact of Social Activism on Public Administration and Local Governance*

Women's social activism has significantly impacted the public administration system, especially at the local government level. Feminist movements have become one of the sources for the formation of management decisions regarding the specific needs of women in the professional, social, and administrative spheres. Therefore, local authorities began to implement measures to ensure gender diversity, equal access to resources (such as equal employment, gender-sensitive working conditions, and participation in decision-making), and the promotion of women in the civil service.

Institutional changes resulted not only from pressure from women's movements but also from the gradual recognition of the importance of women's work, management competencies, and contribution to the development of the public sphere. The development of industrial production in the late 19th - early 20th centuries coincided with the emergence of new management theories focused on understanding the formal and informal processes within the workforce. Approaches developed between 1885 and 1920 incorporated gender into the analysis of work relationships and began to rethink the role structure within organizations.

Recognition of human resources as a key element of labor productivity laid the foundation for more inclusive personnel management, including in government structures [10]. The theoretical concepts of Taylor and Fayol, formulated in the same period, formed the basis for management practices that imply adaptation to gender differences - in ​​recruitment, professional training, and remuneration. Normative approaches to organizing work schedules, remuneration structures, and social protection systems were also proposed. These provisions became the basis for the subsequent formation of mechanisms for gender sensitivity in public administration, including recognition of the value of diversity in the workforce.

*The role of gender in modern public administration*

In the institutional development of the public administration system, concepts formed by feminist movements and gender studies became a structural component of reforms. Criticism and revision of traditional governance models led to the consolidation of normative frameworks to ensure equal conditions for all population categories. Key mechanisms include the introduction of gender quotas in the representation system, developing policies that promote a balance between professional and personal life, and the adoption of norms that exclude discrimination and gender-motivated violence in the work environment. The development of women's social activism has had a long-term impact on the principles of the formation and implementation of public policy. The evolution of views - from the struggle for voting rights to participation in institutional reform led to the change in behavior patterns and the consolidation of the subjective role of women in governance. The development of feminist movements showed that the transformation of women's social behavior led to a more inclusive, structurally balanced, and gender-sensitive model of public administration.

The study of gender roles and their influence on public administration has undergone significant evolution, particularly in the mid-20th century, when traditional views of gender based on biological determinism, dominated societal norms. Until the 1960s, the defining factor of gender roles in both men and women—including their abilities, mental traits, social roles, economic status, and political rights—was primarily determined by their anatomical and physiological structures. This perspective, rooted in patriarchal norms, served as a barrier to women’s access to public administration roles and local governance systems, reinforcing the belief that leadership and decision-making positions were inherently male domains.

However, this perception shifted when Robert Stoller [11] and John Money [12] introduced the concepts of "gender role identity" and "core gender identity" into scientific discourse. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, Money emphasized that gender is not merely a biological fact but a psychological self-identification process that begins in childhood. Stoller [13], meanwhile, made a clear distinction between sex (biological identity as male or female) and gender (a social and psychological identification as man or woman) [14]. These groundbreaking ideas reshaped the understanding of gender, suggesting that the barriers to women’s participation in public administration were socially constructed rather than biologically determined.

This intellectual shift provided fertile ground for the second wave of feminism, which gained momentum during the 1960s and extended into the 1980s. Sometimes referred to as the “women’s renaissance,” this era saw feminist activists expand their focus beyond suffrage and legal rights to address broader socio-economic, cultural, and political issues that impacted women’s lives. During this period, women’s activism in the labor market and their increasing participation in public administration underscored the need for restructuring traditional governance systems. Feminists of the time fought for issues such as equal access to education, reproductive rights, and gender equality in the workplace [15].

A notable example of this activism was seen in Italy, where women’s growing economic influence began to shake traditional patriarchal power structures. Italy, like many countries, witnessed the increasing participation of women in the workforce, which prompted debates about their role in governance and public administration. By the 1960s, Rome had begun to divide into two camps regarding women’s socio-economic participation. Progressive policies introduced by the government granted women rights beyond just voting—rights that empowered them to become business owners and engage in economic decision-making. As a result, women began playing a more prominent role in shaping both the economy and public administration, contributing to Italy’s transformation into a more modern, progressive state [16].

The participation of women in public administration during this period was not without resistance. The second wave of feminism, especially in developed Western countries, was often radical and confrontational. Women sought to dismantle deeply ingrained cultural traditions that defined their roles as secondary to men, confining them to marriage, motherhood, and family duties. Feminist activists challenged the patriarchal systems embedded in governance structures, advocating for the reformation of public administration to include women’s voices and experiences. This wave of feminism gave rise to two distinct movements: the radical liberation movement and the movement for women’s rights, which aimed to secure legal protections and rights for women [17, 18].

The economic participation of women during this era was also crucial to the restructuring of public administration. As women entered the workforce in increasing numbers, they brought new perspectives to governance and decision-making processes. Feminist economists and management scholars emphasized the need for gender-sensitive policies in both the public and private sectors, highlighting the importance of the human factor in management and proposing personnel policies that considered gender roles, recruitment, and employee welfare [19, 20].

Witzel [21], Herrmann [22], and Dostatni and Trojanowska [23] described the evolution of management approaches in which efficiency, productivity, and the human factor became key variables in organizational development. The rethinking of the role of the workforce occurred against the backdrop of the expansion of women's participation in the economy. This expansion called into question the sustainability and universality of traditional management models focused exclusively on male labor. Gantt (1920–1950) proposed taking into account job satisfaction as an element of managerial performance and also outlined the need to adapt working conditions to the psychophysical and gender characteristics of workers. Ideas about fair pay, improving working conditions, and introducing gender-oriented became fundamental for subsequent approaches to the formation of a more inclusive model of public administration.

In Italy, the change in women's behavior was manifested through the growth of economic independence, primarily in the field of entrepreneurship. Thus, state policies changed and started supporting women's economic activity and the desire for financial independence. The number of women-led enterprises increased. Professional training programs, financing access, and business network participation allowed women to go beyond traditional economic roles. Integration into management processes was accompanied by the spread of alternative decision-making models based on horizontal connections, cooperation, and openness. Women's leadership contributed to introducing new management practices, and their contribution to the economy was expressed in GDP growth and a qualitative change in public administration [24].

In the second wave of feminism, the emphasis was on eliminating institutional barriers to access to politics and administrative resources. Women's organizations in Italy and Western European countries sought reforms to remove restrictions that excluded women from decision-making, including the introduction of legal mechanisms for representation, discriminatory practices in personnel selection, and the incompatibility of working conditions with the reproductive burden. Thus, adopting the Family Planning Law in 1970 became crucial, providing reproductive rights and the possibility of women's active participation in public life and leading to a redefinition of the forms and content of the involvement of women in the public sphere [25].

The expansion of economic activity, inclusion in the management structure, and legal protection became components of behavioral transformation, which was expressed in the transition from adaptation to the structure to participation in its formation. Public administration began to perceive women's participation not as a deviation from the norm but as a resource for institutional modernization. Thus, transforming women's behavior is a structural process that continues to shape the modern management model [26].

The transition from entrenched social subordination to subjective economic and managerial activity determined the nature of changes in the public administration system in Italy. The transformation of women's behavior has been expressed in the expansion of institutional presence, the acquisition of leadership positions, and the formation of political demands related to social justice and the elimination of structural inequalities. Participation in entrepreneurship has become an economic phenomenon and a channel of institutional influence. Women's management practices have improved the quality of administrative decisions, strengthened the focus on results, and ensured a variety of approaches in public policy. The consistent removal of barriers in the public and private sectors reflects the sustainability of the transformation process, which is based on a change in women's social role and behavioral strategy in the context of a modernizing state.

Moreover, there was increasing cooperation between women’s organizations and public administration. The government launched initiatives to promote entrepreneurship among women and support their career opportunities through access to leadership positions within the public sector. These initiatives have not only empowered women economically but have also enhanced their role in governance. The inclusion of women’s perspectives and lived experiences in public administration has resulted in more comprehensive representation and a deeper understanding of women's specific needs and concerns [27]. This growing partnership between public administration and women's movements has contributed to a public governance structure that is more inclusive, diverse, and responsive to social inequalities.

The synergy between women’s social activism and public administration in Italy has played a crucial role in advancing gender equality and social justice. The collaboration between women's organizations and public administration has led to progressive changes that have not only benefited women but also society as a whole by fostering a more equitable and inclusive governance system. These achievements underscore the pivotal role that women's leadership and activism play in shaping public policy and governance.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the scientific community was not as rich in gender-focused research as it is today. However, the emergence of women’s studies during this period, spurred by the growth of feminism, began to shift the focus of academia towards gender equality. In the 70s, feminist scholars and activists in the West began to draw from literary and philosophical works to support their arguments for gender equality. Writers and poets were also considered key figures in the development of feminist thought due to their influence on societal attitudes. For instance, in France, philosophers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Denis Diderot, and in Germany, Theodor Gippel utilized their works to discuss issues of gender equality and equal rights for men and women [28].

The positions of 18th-century philosophers on equality differed. In Rousseau's philosophy, the idea of ​​equality had a limited application: civil rights and participation in public life, in his view, were reserved exclusively for men. Women were seen as biologically and socially oriented toward the family, and their involvement in government or the public sphere was considered incompatible with "women's natural destiny." Participation in government, entrepreneurship, or the public sphere was seen as deviating from the so-called "natural female destiny," motherhood and housekeeping. His texts reinforced the division of spheres: the private sphere of family and care was attributed to women, while administrative, political, and economic activity was considered a male prerogative [29]. This idea received social legitimation and was perceived by many women as an acceptable and contemporary model.

In contrast to this view, Theodor Hippel denied biological predetermination and advocated legal equality between men and women. He considered the basis for equality to be the identity of mental abilities, logical thinking, and rationality, which, in his opinion, do not depend on gender. He perceived support for women's rights as a task for educated men capable of overcoming the absurdity of the existing system, where inequality was institutionalized. Hippel interpreted the construction of biological superiority as a social construct subject to dismantling within the framework of building a just state structure [30]. His works strengthened the theoretical basis for discussing women's participation in public life, including politics and management.

For centuries, the idea of ​​women's cognitive and managerial inferiority had taken root, which supported the conviction that it was impossible to change the existing order. Criticism of such views received institutional development in the 1970s when feminist research and human rights initiatives consistently destroyed biological arguments and defended the idea of ​​equal opportunities. The theoretical justification and practical movement of the second wave of feminism contributed to the formation of new foundations of management, in which the recognition of the value of women's leadership and participation became not an exception but an element of a stable administrative model.

The study of gender roles has been closely intertwined with the concept of gender identification, a topic that has been particularly prominent in the field of psychology. Scholars such as LaTorre and Gregoire [31] defined gender roles as being linked to gender itself. In contrast, gender identification was described as an internal sensation wherein individuals may feel a desire to align with the opposite gender. For instance, men may express traditionally feminine qualities, or women may demonstrate traditionally masculine characteristics. This notion of fluidity in gender roles laid the groundwork for a more nuanced understanding of social roles within both the family and public administration.

Talcott Parsons, the founder of the structural-functional approach, which later became known as the sex-role theory, contributed to this field by focusing on the distinction between men's and women’s roles in society. According to Parsons, men played an instrumental role in regulating social relations, both within the family and in public domains, often assuming the responsibilities of economic provider and protector. In contrast, women were perceived to play an expressive role, which involved caring for the emotional well-being of the family [32]. This early view of gender roles also influenced the structure of public administration, where these deeply ingrained societal norms often justified male dominance in leadership roles.

Building on the work of Durkheim, the concept of role stereotypes emerged from the process of socialization, where external societal norms were internalized, becoming moral imperatives that shaped individual behavior. Social institutions played a crucial role in reinforcing cultural norms and values, which in turn influenced the development of gendered identities. The stereotypes and standards of masculine and feminine behavior were thus considered under the framework of cultural norms, significantly affecting the participation of men and women in both public and private spheres [33]. Durkheim also explored the changes in gender relations as part of broader societal development, linking these shifts to the growth of civilization. He controversially argued that the desire of women to participate in governance represented a regression of society, a view echoed by other scholars, such as Weininger, who held that women were inherently a regressive influence in public life [34].

The gender approach to understanding social roles evolved from these earlier perspectives, particularly as society began to recognize the limitations of biologically determined roles. As the feminist movement gained momentum, the status of women in society—both in the family and in public administration—began to shift. Feminism was driven by a desire to eliminate gender inequality and improve the socio-economic standing of women. The feminist movement challenged the traditional roles of women as wives, mothers, and daughters, arguing for their equal participation in both the economy and governance. This shift toward social behavior that prioritized gender equality played a crucial role in the emergence of women in leadership positions, including those within public administration and local governance.

The presented conceptual framework allows us to interpret the spontaneity and unpredictability of the feminist movement as a result of continuous changes in public ideas about gender roles. These changes accompany structural shifts in social organization and institutions of power.

Nietzsche's philosophical position is opposed to this trend. In his works, women are presented primarily as objects of desire, and their social function is reduced to aesthetics and empathy. Women's independence and educational aspirations were seen as a threat to the established order, within which men occupied dominant positions in both family and administrative structures. The criticism of feminism recorded in his works reflects the fear of the destruction of the patriarchal model of power distribution [39–41].

Despite ideological resistance, the influence of the feminist movement on public administration and local government proved to be sustainable. Demands for equal representation and the rejection of role stereotypes led to a revision of the principles of forming management personnel, opening access to leadership positions and taking into account the gender dimension in politics. The involvement of women in administrative processes was accompanied by institutional changes, expressed in an increase in the quality of decisions and the inclusion of alternative points of view in the management system.

Social behavior, in the feminist context, was characterized by actions aimed at benefiting society without personal gain. These actions encompassed the fight for gender equality, campaigns against violence, and efforts to address social issues such as poverty, education, and healthcare. The economic participation of women expanded through these social movements, as gender equality came to be seen as not just a family issue but a broader societal one, with implications for public administration, governance, and policy-making [35]. During the 20th century, the study of political power, gained prominence among scholars such as F. Nietzsche and M. Foucault. Foucault’s concept of power was particularly influential in understanding how societal power is exercised and managed. Foucault argued that power exists everywhere—in the family, at work, and in society—and that it continuously evolves in response to changing conditions. Moreover, power relations shape social structures, including public administration, and that shifts in power dynamics could lead to changes in gender roles, fostering greater gender equality over time [36-38]. An analysis of gender roles from the standpoint of psychology and sociology made it possible to reveal the mechanisms of reproduction of inequality and simultaneously outlined the directions for institutional transformation. The approaches formulated by Parsons, Durkheim and Foucault became the basis for rethinking the norms regulating the distribution of power and participation. The evolution of the feminist agenda demonstrated the need for sustainable efforts to eliminate barriers that limit women's participation in all aspects of governance and social development.

In the second half of the 20th century, there was a surge in the study of gender issues related to women's active participation in politics and public administration. The focus shifted to understanding the social status of individuals involved in gender relations—both men and women—where the differences in social roles were explained through social, cultural, and psychological factors.

Although Karl Marx did not extensively engage in gender studies, his focus on economic structures led to the recognition that women represent a vital part of the workforce. According to Marx, women constitute "the second half of the working population," and their labor potential was essential for economic growth. Radical feminists later built upon this premise to advocate for greater participation of women in public administration and political life [42].

Cultural differences between countries also played a role in shaping gender relations. Pierre Bourdieu and Kate Millett, both prominent representatives of radical feminism, examined the deeply ingrained nature of oppression and the secondary status of women as perpetuated by cultural norms and family education. Bourdieu connected women’s subordination to the status ascribed to them within the gender hierarchy, viewing women as tools for capital enhancement and, in some cases, a form of currency exchanged between men. He argued that in male-dominated societies, women were confined to fulfilling specific roles, particularly household labor and caregiving, thus reinforcing their secondary position in both society and public administration [43].

Kate Millett, in her work Sexual Politics, delved into the subordinate status of women by analyzing their roles from a cultural perspective. She posited that women's oppression was not maintained through rigid authoritarian systems but through subtle mechanisms such as social conditioning and internalization of gender norms. Socialization processes shaped women's identities in line with societal expectations, creating stereotypes about their role as homemakers and caregivers. This internalization of gender roles meant that women often accepted these stereotypes as natural, reinforcing their oppression within both public and private spheres [44].

According to Millett, the social conditioning of women’s roles was a key factor in shaping women's psychology and explaining their position in society. The development of the women's movement during the 1960s and 1980s led to a deeper understanding of this social phenomenon, particularly its implications for public administration. By challenging patriarchal structures, the feminist movement paved the way for women’s active involvement in local governance and public decision-making.

The third wave of feminism, which emerged in the late 1980s and early 1990s, was characterized by the recognition of women’s movements as integral to socio-political transformation. In many newly independent states, the role and status of women were re-evaluated, and women’s organizations began to take shape. These movements were fueled by political system transformations and socio-economic changes, leading to a shift in political culture and the mobilization of diverse sectors of society—including women—who actively defended their rights. This shift significantly impacted women’s participation in public administration, enhancing their involvement in policy-making processes.

With the rise of feminism, several primary research directions emerged, including women's studies within the framework of liberal feminism (the sex-role theory) and radical feminism within the broader scope of social constructivism and gender studies. These movements challenged traditional views on gender roles and sought to redefine women’s participation in both the family and public administration [45].

The distinction between sex and gender also evolved, carrying different connotations and applications. Sex traditionally referred to the biological differences between men and women, drawing from Freud’s theories, which suggested that men’s domination of women stemmed from women’s lack of reproductive ability. On the other hand, gender became a more nuanced term that encompassed psychological, social, and cultural differences between the sexes. By the 1980s and 1990s, sex had acquired both biological and social dimensions, with gender studies focusing on the social construction of gender roles and their implications for public administration [46].

Modern gender studies examine various issues, including women's participation in the labor market, the balance between family and professional responsibilities, and women’s roles in multiple sectors of the economy. The study of women's political participation and their involvement in public administration is critical. Research in this area explores the mechanisms that enable or hinder women's participation as both consumers and providers of public services. Moreover, it examines the barriers women encounter when attempting to advance into leadership positions within government, addressing issues such as healthcare, labor markets, education, and economic crises [47, 48]. Behavioral economics explores how politics and human actions reflect societal changes and economic evolution, showing how norms shape individual behavior and extend their impact on public administration and the arts. Many developed countries now promote gender equality through policies advancing women’s economic and political participation. Key theories in gender studies, such as stratification and social construction, demonstrate that society creates frameworks influencing social reality and gender relations within public administration [49, 50]. Garfinkel, West, and Zimmerman expanded this concept by interpreting gender as a social relations model constructed through institutions such as the family, media, and labor systems. Gender inequality is formed under social institutions' influence and reinforced in everyday practices. Educational, family, and work structures transmit normative expectations regarding the behavior of men and women, and individual actions reinforce their reproduction. This combination of institutional pressure and everyday adjustments forms stable patterns of interaction between the sexes. In these conditions, public administration tools acquire decisive significance: it is through personnel policy, legal norms, and management mechanisms that it is possible to equalize the conditions of participation, redistribute opportunities, and eliminate systemic barriers. Promoting gender equality in the public requires political will and a revision of the procedures that shape access to power, resources, and institutional influence.

The theory of stratification, on the other hand, views gender as a hierarchical category that shapes political and social relations alongside factors like class, race, and age. Joan Scott, a pioneer of this approach, argued that gender relations are deeply embedded in political structures and function as a system of governance. She identified four key ways in which gender differences are expressed in socio-political contexts: through cultural symbols, normative concepts in political theories, gender-based division of labor, and individual perceptions of gender identity [51].

The study of gender relations and their impact on public administration has evolved through various waves of feminist thought, from radical feminism to modern gender studies. As society continues to redefine gender roles, public administration and local governance must adapt to incorporate more inclusive policies and frameworks that promote gender equality in political participation, economic empowerment, and leadership roles.

The formation of social roles for men and women has been significantly influenced by the process of industrialization, which has reshaped how women perceive their roles in society. This evolution has progressed through three key stages:

* Awareness and prioritization. Women began to assert their rights, emphasizing their capabilities and skills, which led to greater recognition of their potential in public administration and beyond.
* Radical actions for independence. This phase involved women taking radical actions to achieve autonomy and acquire power in both public and private domains. Management levers were identified as a key tool for achieving the common good, with women seeking to free themselves from male dominance, thus asserting their roles in decision-making processes within local governance and the broader public sphere.
* Restructuring of society. The final stage involved the formation of women's associations and the establishment of female leadership structures. However, this evolution has not been uniform worldwide; many developing countries have yet to fully embrace the redefinition of gender roles and the transformation of women's status to one of equality with men. Countries like Kazakhstan, for instance, embarked on the path toward gender equality only 40 years after signing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Cross-cultural representations of gender roles continue to be shaped by stereotypical views. In many societies, men are perceived as the breadwinners, while women are regarded as the primary family caretakers. Interestingly, in some cultures, such as India, women are expected to support their husbands, whereas men often dominate gender relations [52]. In the theory of gender behavior, significant factors that shape gender roles include biological influences and cognitive processes. Patterns of gender behavior, shaped during childhood through parenting and socialization, highlight the observational learning mechanisms through which children absorb information about the behaviors expected of men and women [53].

Despite the persistent interest in biological factors and gender stereotypes, many feminist theorists have shifted away from focusing on material issues, such as employment and the unequal division of labor, and instead emphasize the cultural and discursive manifestations of gender roles. In public administration, women are often relegated to stereotypical roles such as "keepers of the earth," which has led to their predominance in sectors like education and medicine. These fields are often perceived as "female professions," which restricts women's participation in higher-level governance roles (ANNEX A).

The three waves of feminism have contributed significantly to advancing the role of women in public administration. First-wave feminism, which emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, was primarily focused on women's suffrage and political rights. Early feminist figures, such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, advocated for women's right to vote and to run for political office, arguing that women's unique perspectives were essential for creating a just and representative government [54, 55]. In The Second Sex, Simone de Beauvoir explored the social and cultural construction of gender, asserting that women had been systematically oppressed and excluded from positions of power [56]. Second-wave feminism, which took root in the 1960s and 70s, broadened its focus to include reproductive rights, workplace discrimination, and gender-based violence. Feminist scholars such as Audre Lorde and Gloria Steinem emphasized the intersectionality of gender with race, class, and sexuality [57]. They advocated for a more radical transformation of public administration, proposing policies that would dismantle the patriarchal structures perpetuating inequality [58]. The third wave of feminism, beginning in the 1990s, has focused on intersectionality, body positivity, and the celebration of diverse experiences of womanhood [59]. Feminist thinkers such as Patricia Hill Collins and Judith Butler have emphasized the importance of recognizing multiple, overlapping forms of oppression and advocating for policies that promote gender equity and social justice [60, 61]. Feminist scholars in this wave argue for policies such as affirmative action, mentorship programs, and gender sensitization training within public administration to promote gender equity and increase women's representation in decision-making positions.

Female leaders continue to face unique challenges and gender-based discrimination in public administration. Studies indicate that female leaders are often subjected to intense scrutiny and are criticized more harshly for their decisions compared to their male counterparts. Skard highlights strategies used by women leaders, such as building coalitions, promoting gender equality policies, and working to challenge gender stereotypes and cultural norms [62]. The experiences of female political leaders reveal the importance of representation and diversity in political leadership, underscoring the need for continued efforts to promote gender equality in public administration and governance [63, 64].

Throughout the three waves of feminism, women's social activism has had a significant impact on public administration. The women's fight for better representation, equal pay, and the dismantling of gender stereotypes has improved the structure of local governance and decision-making processes. The first wave focused on securing political representation, while the second wave aimed to dismantle cultural and societal barriers that hindered women's advancement. The third wave continues to push for inclusion and diversity, highlighting the unique perspectives women bring to public policy and administration.

The conducted analysis of existing studies highlighted the challenges women face, including discrimination, gender stereotypes, and underrepresentation, as well as the challenges to traditional gender roles and the need for more opportunities for women in public administration. At the same time, there were also examples of significant contributions that women make to public governance, with increased gender diversity leading to more equitable policies and a more representative government. Promoting women social activism in public administration should, therefore, remain a priority for policymakers, academics, and practitioners.

summarizes feminist perspectives from the first, second, and third waves of feminism regarding women's roles in public administration. Each author’s definition of gender roles, goals for achieving gender equality, and strategies for achieving these goals are included. Many of these scholars emphasize the need for intersectional approaches to feminist public administration, recognizing that gender intersects with race, class, and sexuality to create unique challenges for women. (ANNEX B)

In conclusion, the historical evolution of women's roles in public administration has involved a transition from domestic roles to positions of power and influence. As this review suggests, feminist scholarship has played a crucial role in advocating for structural changes that promote gender equality and diversity within public administration and local governance. Promoting women's leadership and addressing gender disparities in public administration will contribute to a more equitable, representative, and responsive government with far-reaching benefits for society.

## **1.2 Evolution of women social activism**

Social activism in the context of state and local governance can be categorized into four main components: activism, commitment, centralization, and culture. Activism serves as a vital mechanism for community integration, often extending its influence beyond specific timeframes in an individual's life. Commitment involves the willingness of individuals to continue pursuing necessary actions despite personal sacrifices, thereby maintaining collective challenges across different stages of mass mobilization. Research has extensively examined the incentives that drive individuals to commit to movements initially; however, questions have emerged regarding why individuals maintain radical or unpopular beliefs over time. Studies indicate that the nature and incentives for commitment evolve depending on a movement's stage in the mobilization process. Additionally, research shows that groups characterized by a high level of commitment are more likely to retain participants and ensure long-term sustainability.

While individuals often join activist movements for material or solidarity incentives, continued participation typically hinges on a profound commitment to the movement’s goals and strategies. Centralization within organizations varies: some movements are centralized around a singular source of power, while others distribute power among subunits. Although decentralization is linked to maintaining direct-action tactics, it can also lead to organizational instability. By contrast, centralization contributes to stability, coordination, and the expertise necessary for the survival of social movements. Culture within a social movement embodies collective emotions, beliefs, and actions. All movements create and propagate culture, yet each differs in complexity and character. Research suggests that social movements rarely cease to exist entirely; instead, they scale down or adapt to the changing political climate, with dedicated participants devising strategies to navigate external challenges.

In the realm of public administration, problems surrounding human motivation and management are essential, as the effectiveness of educational, labor, and social endeavors largely depends on individuals' level of activity. Calls for increasing social activism do not always produce straightforward results, sometimes exacerbating societal tensions. Various methodological approaches have been employed to explore the dynamics of social activism.

The key characteristic of social activism is the practical implementation of collective initiatives to solve socially significant problems. Unlike broad social involvement, including participation in trade unions, volunteering, and other forms of civic behavior, social activism focuses on targeted actions of individuals and organizations in the context of current challenges. Research literature distinguishes two types of activism: civic activism, which manifests as intensive but short-term mobilization - a "social sprint" associated with achieving political or economic goals, and sustainable activism, based on long-term involvement in volunteer, cultural, and local initiatives. The distinction between forms of activism emphasizes the importance of informal mechanisms of self-government, including civil initiative outside party structures, volunteer activities, and involvement in local communities. Mobilization at the level of basic public associations—both political and non-political—is essential in expanding women's participation in the public administration system. Such forms of involvement help to develop civic competencies, social connections, and perceived signals that influence participation in decision-making processes. Local activism is a channel for influencing governing bodies, from social support to charity, regardless of the activity topic. Organizations involving women may be focused not only on the gender agenda but also on solving a wider range of social problems. Activism in such structures takes the form of collective self-organization, public actions, and situational mobilization aimed at eliminating specific local challenges. Such practices are formed primarily at the community level and, despite their spontaneous nature, have a tangible impact on local governance mechanisms.

Social activism focuses on social change, which manifests itself in both everyday and institutional forms. Activism responds to established norms and rules through individual or collective actions expressing a civic position. In the context of state and local government, activism functions as a channel for representing public interests and a mechanism for interaction with government institutions. Often, such involvement develops within the framework of initiatives launched from above when administrative bodies provide opportunities for participation in the discussion and development of political decisions. A pattern has been established: as the intensity of the involvement increases, civil initiatives' degree of organization and professionalism increases.

In recent years, women's activism has increasingly focused on specific social objectives, including fostering partnerships with governmental and non-profit organizations. Women's organizations have also prioritized the development of national mechanisms to promote gender equality and ensure equal opportunities for men and women, addressing pressing issues such as healthcare, safety, and access to resources.

Women's social activism has evolved, as has the idea of a woman's role in society. As a result, new forms of women's activism are emerging, sometimes far from feminist ideas. These include charitable organizations, cultural and educational institutions, and Orthodox women's organizations, among others. Table 1 shows the development of women's social activism.

Table 1 – Women's social activism development process

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Feminist wave | Activists | The main goal and idea of the movement | The results of the achievement of the movement |
| 1st | Abigail Adam Smith, Olympia de Gouges, Mary Wollstonecraft Emmeline Pankhurst, Elizabeth Cady Stanton | Right for education; social and political equality of women; | USA: Right for education.  UK: Social and political equality of women |
| 2nd | Simone de Beauvoir, Julie-Victoire Daubié | Property rights, access to higher, mixed /hybrid education, right to work | USA: "Married Women's Property Act" in 1860 in the USA;  UK: Right for education. Access to higher education, mixed /hybrid education  Europe: The right to work In 1848, the first organizations of women workers appeared in Europe |
| 3rd | Caitlin Moran, Alice Walker | Women rights (including minorities), individuality | Feminity, individuality. Protecting the rights of women, including minorities: people with disabilities, housewives, people of color, sex workers, members of the LGBT community, etc. |

The early periods of the feminist movement had a profound influence on Western societies. From the late 1700s to the early 1900s, feminism in its nascent form was rooted in egalitarian principles, with women demanding recognition of their rights on par with those of men, particularly the right to vote [70]. In every country, the rise of the feminist movement marked the beginning of a new era in its political history, often characterized by women gaining access to the right to vote. However, the timeline of these developments varied between states, reflecting each country’s unique political and social context.

It is essential to note that women in the United States raised the earliest demands for gender equality during the Revolutionary War (1775-1783). Abigail Adams, often regarded as one of the first American feminists, famously urged her husband, John Adams, to "remember the ladies" in the new laws being drafted. She declared: “We will not be subject to laws in the adoption of which we did not participate, and authorities that do not represent our interests” [71]. This sentiment foreshadowed the broader movement that would emerge in the decades to come.

The Age of Enlightenment catalyzed the feminist movement by introducing the concept of parity between men and women, grounded in the broader Enlightenment theory of "natural rights and freedoms" applicable to all citizens. This theory found its first legal embodiment in the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen," adopted in France in 1789. Inspired by this revolutionary spirit, French women began establishing clubs and actively participating in social and political life. Yet, despite their efforts, the 1791 French Constitution denied them both the right to vote and the right to property ownership. Olympia de Gouges, a prominent figure in the feminist movement, authored the "Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizen" and presented it to the National Assembly, advocating for social and political equality for women [72, 73]. Unfortunately, her call was ignored. French women were subsequently banned from public events, their clubs were shut down, and de Gouges herself was executed via guillotine, a grim reminder of the oppressive societal forces they were up against [74, 75]. Her famous assertion, "If a woman is worthy to ascend the scaffold, then she is worthy to enter parliament," continues to resonate as a powerful statement of gender equality.

Although feminism is not bound to any one nation, the United Kingdom is often regarded as its birthplace, as it was here that early philosophical reflections on women’s place in society began to crystallize into a coherent movement. Mary Wollstonecraft, often hailed as the "mother of feminism," was a key figure in the UK’s feminist discourse. In 1792, she published her landmark essay, "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: With Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects." Wollstonecraft argued that women should be educated under their social status, as they were crucial to the nation due to their role in raising children and could be faithful companions for their husbands rather than mere subordinates [76]. She believed that women deserved the same fundamental rights as men, and her work condemned a social structure that systematically marginalized women both economically and socially. Her ideas about mixed education, women’s suffrage, and the right to pursue professional careers were considered radical at the time. Yet many of the issues she raised have since been addressed in numerous countries. Furthermore, her vision of planetary solidarity among the oppressed—whether based on gender, race, wealth, or religion—remains pertinent today as movements fight against inequality not only for women but also for sexual minorities, ethnic minorities, migrants, and other marginalized groups [77].

By the 19th century, the central political demand of women's organizations became the right to vote, a cause that came to define the suffragist movement. This period is often referred to as the age of suffragism, as women across the world organized and fought for political equality with men. In 1848, the "Declaration of Sentiments" was adopted at the Seneca Falls Convention in the United States, marking a pivotal moment in the movement’s history. This declaration addressed key issues such as equality in property rights, marriage, the free choice of profession, and access to education [78]. The suffragettes, as they came to be known, were a formidable public policy movement, leveraging their collective strength to secure fundamental rights. In 1920, the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granted women the right to vote, affirming that gender could not be used as a basis for excluding individuals from participating in the political life of the nation, particularly in elections [79].

The suffragette movement became a key factor in launching legislative reforms granting women the right to higher education and professional employment. The laws adopted were not limited to the educational or labor spheres — they created institutional conditions for the inclusion of women in administrative and managerial processes. Access to the civil service system and local government structures has been ensured. As the feminist agenda has developed, the emphasis has shifted from a narrow legal struggle to a comprehensive critique of social inequality. The second wave of feminism in the 20th century combined issues of reproductive rights, labor discrimination, and the normative consolidation of gender roles. Unlike the previous stage, which focused on legal emancipation, the subsequent movement touched upon inequality's cultural and institutional foundations. The preconditions for putting forward modern demands for gender balance in governance, parity representation, and meaningful participation of women in the formation of public policy have been formed.

Feminist dynamics developed at the intersection of social mobilization and the reform of management institutions. The shift from demands for civil equality to structural influence on governance mechanisms turned feminism into an instrument of institutional transformation. The theoretical foundation laid in the works of Abigail Adams, Olympe de Gouges, and Mary Wollstonecraft provided the basis for subsequent changes in the distribution of power and the development of accountability procedures.

The ideas of human rights, social justice, and institutional equality are embedded in the modern paradigm of public administration. Strengthening human rights, principles of social justice, and equal institutional access determined the renewal of public administration systems. In response to the increased participation of women in politics and administration, mechanisms for taking into account social diversity began to be introduced, approaches to assessing effectiveness were adjusted, and norms of access to managerial positions were revised. The second wave of feminism saw a shift from local political demands to criticism of the social structure as a source of inequality. The emphasis shifted to institutional restrictions, including the normative consolidation of motherhood as the primary female function, isolation within the framework of unpaid domestic work, and blocked career trajectories. Rethinking these attitudes formed the basis for recognizing women as independent subjects in governance and provided arguments for equal access to decision-making mechanisms.

Despite its profound impact, the second wave did not fully achieve its objectives. Many of the issues that feminists addressed in the 1960s persist today. Theorists and activists of the second wave criticized the notion that women’s roles should be confined to housekeeping and raising children, and they emphasized that violence and suppression of women extended beyond the political sphere, infiltrating everyday relationships, work, culture, and leisure. The second wave thus heralded a social revolution, particularly in the West, where women began entering the workforce in large numbers. This shift not only transformed the economic landscape, contributing to a significant increase in societal wealth, but it also challenged the prevailing notions of gender politics. Second-wave feminists also emphasized the need for profound cultural transformations, focusing on the development of a free and autonomous female identity.

One of the significant legislative victories during this period was the passage of the Married Women’s Property Act in the United States in 1860. Before this act, married women were under the complete control of their husbands; they had no right to sign contracts, control their finances, or retain custody of their children after a divorce [80]. This act guaranteed women the right to manage their earnings and share custody of their children, marking a significant shift in women's legal rights.

The fight for educational rights also marked a pivotal moment in the second wave of the feminist movement. A notable episode in the history of education occurred in 1861 when Julie-Victoire Daubie, a French journalist and feminist, became the first woman to graduate from the University of Lyon. Her achievement opened doors for women to access higher education across France, though her legacy remains relatively unknown outside her home country [81]. Thanks to the efforts of Daubie and her contemporaries, French women gained the right to take university exams in 1866, a significant step toward achieving gender equality in education [82].

The fight for the right to work was another cornerstone of the second-wave feminist movement. In 1848, the first women's workers' organizations began forming in Europe, marking a shift toward women's participation in the formal labor market. This effort aligned with the broader feminist demand for women to not only participate in elections but also to enter political power structures [83]. By the second half of the 1970s, particularly in the United States, feminism had become a mass movement. Numerous actions were organized to defend women's rights, leading to the establishment of both formal and informal groups aimed at addressing gender inequalities [84].

However, the second wave was fraught with internal contradictions. Various feminist currents emerged, each with differing theoretical and practical approaches. These ideas were met with criticism from several perspectives, including antifeminism, postmodernism, postfeminism, intersectionality theory (also referred to as "color feminism" or mosaic identity theory), feminist postcolonial theory, and critiques from so-called dissident feminists and younger feminist scholars. Some of the critiques centered around the perception that second-wave feminists portrayed women as victims of patriarchy and demanded ideological uniformity. However, this portrayal is often considered a distortion of the ideas presented by second-wave theorists. While radical feminists did argue that patriarchal culture victimized women, they also urged women not to accept this role passively but to resist the systems of oppression. Moreover, contrary to popular belief, second-wave feminists did not advocate sexual repression; in fact, they were among the first to emphasize women's right to sexuality, rejecting traditional gender norms that subordinated women to male sexual interests.

Despite these achievements, some of the more recent feminist movements have diverged from the ideals of the second wave. Today, elements of "new" feminism seem to embrace traditional notions of femininity and glamour, in contrast to the second wave’s rejection of these ideals. However, second-wave feminists’ theoretical work—particularly the idea that women’s bodies serve as a site of social control—remains a valuable contribution to feminist thought.

One of the key intellectual contributions of the second wave was the introduction of the concept of "gender" as an analytical tool. Feminist scholars began to argue that gender is not merely a biological characteristic but a set of social and cultural norms that society imposes on individuals based on their sex. Gender, in this context, is not a random characteristic, such as eye color; it is a core element of a person’s social and political identity. Gender influences every aspect of life—biological, social, cultural—and is deeply embedded in societal structures. Feminist theorists of the second wave emphasized that gender is not a peripheral issue but central to understanding the complexities of social and political life.

The third wave of feminism, which began in the 1990s and has gradually transitioned into what is now recognized as fourth-wave feminism, introduced a more diverse and inclusive approach to gender equality. At the origins of this movement stands British writer Caitlin Moran, who challenged societal stereotypes surrounding femininity and masculinity. Moran sought to make feminism accessible to all women, distancing it from radicalism and transforming it into a tool for self-expression and self-realization. She tackled relevant issues such as teenage challenges, motherhood, aging, childbirth, abortion, beauty standards, plastic surgery, fashion, and women’s careers [85].

Another prominent figure, Alice Walker, emphasized the importance of creating spaces where women could fully express their femininity, whether at work or within the family. For Walker, the relationship between women and men was no longer the central focus as the third wave shifted attention toward intersectionality and individual empowerment [87].

A key characteristic of third-wave feminism is its rejection of the universalism of previous waves. It is less white, less bourgeois, and less Western, acknowledging that not all issues are experienced equally across different contexts. The third wave advocates for the rights of women but includes marginalized groups such as people with disabilities, housewives, people of color, sex workers, and members of the LGBTQ+ community. This broader scope of inclusion has brought attention to movements like Afro-feminism, which highlights the specific oppressions faced by women of African descent, who are discriminated against not only as women but also based on race.

The concept of privilege has also become central in contemporary feminism, with an increasing awareness of the geopolitical and socio-economic contexts that shape individual experiences. For example, while women in Western countries may take certain freedoms for granted, in countries like Saudi Arabia, where women gained the right to drive only in 2018, the struggle for basic rights continues under a very different set of cultural and political conditions.

In the context of public administration, the influence of women has been transformative. Feminism’s focus on gender equality has brought new perspectives and diverse experiences into governance structures, contributing to more inclusive and progressive policies. Women's participation in public administration has been critical in shifting away from narratives that portray them as victims of patriarchy, instead positioning them as active agents of change. Their leadership has challenged traditional models of subordination and played a crucial role in advocating for gender equality in decision-making processes, policy formulation, and implementation. Moreover, women have put forward the recognition of their right to sexuality, rejecting outdated societal norms that seek to control their bodies and choices as the primary goal.

Intersectional feminism—which considers the overlapping systems of oppression that impact women based on gender, race, disability, and other factors—has had a profound impact on public administration as well. Women from diverse backgrounds, including women of color and women with disabilities, have brought nuanced perspectives to policymaking. This has led to more inclusive policies that address the unique challenges faced by marginalized women (women who are excluded or limited in access to resources, rights, opportunities or participation in society due to various factors including low levels of education and lack of political representation), ensuring that decision-making processes reflect the needs of all members of society.

However, as feminism has evolved, so too have critiques of its various waves. Post-feminists argue that the state should withdraw from regulating issues in the "personal" sphere, such as prostitution, protection from sexual harassment, and domestic violence. They argue that women no longer require a collective political movement to achieve freedom, advocating instead for a more individualistic approach to feminism. This shift is reflected in the post-feminist slogan, "If I can't dance, it's not my revolution," which suggests a departure from the second wave’s more structured activism toward a celebratory and optimistic movement focused on personal autonomy.

Post-feminism also critiques the second wave’s mantra, “the personal is political,” interpreting it as an overreach into personal choices. This slogan initially intended to highlight how personal life is deeply intertwined with power dynamics and politics, challenging the notion that private matters are separate from political influence. As third-wave feminists reject the mass movement model of earlier waves, they emphasize individualism with the attitude of “I am free to be myself.” However, merely asserting this freedom does not automatically align with feminist goals, as it sometimes shifts the focus away from broader social activism.

Throughout its evolution, feminism has continuously adapted to the needs of the time, influenced by societal challenges and state policies. First-wave feminism focused on securing fundamental rights, including the right to vote, education, and property ownership. Once these basic rights were secured, the focus shifted toward achieving financial independence and empowerment. As women gained access to the workforce and political spheres, their activism expanded to address broader social issues, including their role in shaping society and their contributions to public life.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the evolution of women’s social activism are clear: the first wave fought for liberation from male dominance, the right to self-determination over their bodies, and the right to education. Later, as women gained these rights, they sought further empowerment through access to property and financial independence. Today, women’s activism is increasingly focused on their surrounding environment and their societal roles, particularly within public administration and governance structures.

In summary, third-wave feminism has expanded the conversation around gender equality, incorporating previously overlooked groups and highlighting the importance of intersectionality. It emphasizes personal freedom, individualism, and the right to self-expression, while also addressing the broader socio-political context in which these freedoms are exercised. As women’s participation in public administration continues to grow, their influence in shaping more inclusive policies and practices becomes increasingly important in ensuring social justice for all.

Mary Wollstonecraft and her followers opened doors for future generations of women, particularly in areas of education and professional careers. While the early feminists of the first wave could only dream of such achievements, they laid the groundwork for the opportunities that later waves of feminism would build upon. Wollstonecraft, through her seminal work A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, argued for the equality of men and women, especially in intellectual pursuits, stating that women deserved the same access to education as men. In many ways, these early feminists were pioneers, advocating for women's independence and the ability to earn a living, laying the foundation for the later fight for professional rights and economic independence [88].

First and second-wave feminists faced significant opposition, grappling with rigid socio-political structures that limited women’s access to public spaces and resources. They also lacked the communication tools that third-wave feminists later used to mobilize broader support for gender equality. Despite differences in goals and tactics, the core essence of feminism across all waves has remained the same: the struggle against any form of discrimination and oppression of women as individuals.

By the early 1600s, industrial districts in sectors like silk and fabric production, as well as cutlery manufacturing, had begun to develop, particularly in regions like the United States and parts of Europe. These industries were closely tied to the stereotype of the "ideal wife"—a woman who managed the household, raised children, and engaged in textile production. These stereotypes shaped the economic roles available to women, particularly in small businesses, which benefited from the flexibility of small-scale production over mass production, especially in industries like fabric and silk, where fashion trends shifted frequently. Women were deeply involved in these industries, often as farmers, traders, and handicraft workers. Many of these small businesses were family-run, with women inheriting businesses or acting as deputies for their husbands when necessary, as seen in the famous case of Rebecca Lukens, who took over her husband's steel business in 1825 after his death [89 -92].

As urbanization and economic growth accelerated, women found more opportunities to act as entrepreneurs and property owners. Although social stereotypes continued to restrict women's participation in some areas, many women from the lower-middle class began running their own small businesses, especially in cities. These small shops and businesses, often related to food, clothing, and lodging, allowed women to contribute to their family incomes and, in some cases, achieve higher profits than their male counterparts [93, 94]. These sectors continue to be significant areas of female entrepreneurship today. While in the United States and many parts of Europe, women were more likely to be involved in such businesses, the situation in France was quite different. In France, women’s participation in business was less gendered, and women engaged in business often did so without the gendered expectations seen in other parts of Europe. However, they still faced numerous gender-related barriers, such as legal constraints and job market discrimination.

Interestingly, in the French business landscape of the 1830s, industries like the food and clothing sectors—which were predominantly female-dominated in the United States—were overwhelmingly controlled by men in France (86% male-dominated in the 1830s, increasing to 79% by the 1880s). By contrast, in the United States, women made up 42% of these industries in the 1830s, rising to 60% by the 1880s. As a result, women in France occupied more low-end markets, with the exception of tailoring, where women were highly successful. This success in certain markets illustrates how women were able to thrive in areas where men struggled, particularly in low-end businesses, which saw a rise from 69% to 74% between 1852 and 1886 in the French market [95-97].

Research on formal and informal institutions has shed light on their mixed impact on women's economic empowerment. On the one hand, informal social restrictions can limit women’s freedom of action, especially when family traditions or rules set by family members conflict with the goals of women's businesses. On the other hand, in some regions, the development of women’s microenterprises has allowed women to increase their economic independence and improve their social standing within their families [98]. In cases where women successfully increased their business profits, they gained more authority in making family decisions, such as those related to children’s education, fertility, and other significant matters. This empowerment even extended to a redistribution of domestic responsibilities, with some women delegating childcare duties to their husbands.

Expanding women's entrepreneurship did not always lead to increased economic autonomy. In some cases, as the business grew, control passed to husbands or other men in the family, which reduced the founders' level of independence: management was lost, and women effectively became hired workers in their enterprises. Income was distributed within the family without providing individual access to profits. Despite the increased confidence associated with business achievements, legal recognition of property and managerial autonomy were often absent. For men, on the contrary, success was accompanied by strengthening leadership positions. At the same time, wives were included in the activities of enterprises in a subordinate status, without the status of equal partners [99].

The third wave of feminism expanded the agenda by including previously excluded groups - women with disabilities, ethnic minorities, LGBTQ+ representatives, homemakers, and sex workers. A differentiated agenda was formed considering social status, race, sexual orientation, and other factors. The focus was not only on legal restrictions but also on cultural barriers that reinforced the status of women as dependent subjects. Given the differences in national contexts - from the struggle for career prospects in developed countries to the fight for fundamental freedoms in more conservative societies - feminist theory moved to a multi-level analysis of inequality and adaptive participation strategies.

An important area of ​​transformation was women's participation in public administration. Through involvement in decision-making mechanisms, patriarchal ideas about the passivity and secondary nature of women's roles were challenged. The administrative practice began to include equal representation, social justice, and institutional inclusion principles. Social activity, which was formed outside political institutions, moved into formal governance and influenced institutional reforms. Thus, women's participation in government bodies increased and contributed to protecting vulnerable groups, redistributing resources, and overcoming structural discrimination.

The fourth wave of feminism took shape against the backdrop of the digitalization of public life and the emergence of online activism. Unlike previous stages, the emphasis shifted from institutional struggles for formal rights to everyday self-organization, network solidarity, and instant mobilization practices. However, fundamental in the early movements remained: the demand for equality, criticism of discriminatory structures, and the protection of women's interests in the social and political spheres. Unlike the second wave, which focused on legal changes, the fourth wave relies on flexible and decentralized forms of action, including digital campaigns, local initiatives, and horizontal support communities.

The expansion of women's participation in the economy has become one of the expressions of the transformation of social behavior. Involvement in trade and entrepreneurship has made it possible to compensate for institutional gaps in an unstable economic environment and has also ensured adaptation to changes in market demand [96]. The development of small and medium-sized enterprises under female leadership contributed to creating jobs, strengthening financial independence, and increasing women's contribution to the private sector [100]. Entrepreneurial activity ceased to be perceived as auxiliary, having become a key resource for economic growth.

Women's social activity was formed not only in the economy. Since the beginning of the 20th century, attempts have been made to include them in political processes, expand access to education, and obtain legal status in labor [101, 102]. As basic legal goals were achieved, the agenda shifted towards eliminating hidden discrimination and structural inequality. Activism ceased to be aimed exclusively at protecting individual interests and turned into a mechanism of institutional pressure to revise the conditions of women's participation as a social group.

Women's social activity is a set of practices aimed at solving significant social problems—from expanding access to education and health care to strengthening the social protection system and stimulating economic inclusion. Women's involvement in these areas became the basis for launching initiatives aimed at eliminating inequality and correcting imbalances in the provision of public services.

Formal and informal institutions have become the basis for women’s economic self-realization, providing access to entrepreneurship, employment, and management practices. Participation in public administration mechanisms has made it possible to influence the content of decisions, from social measures to regulations aimed at gender balance. Access to education and economic autonomy of women contributed to their active participation in decision-making. Thus, institutional mechanisms began to take into account gender experiences when developing normative approaches and programs with an orientation towards social status and gender differences.

Strengthening women's position in administrative structures made it possible to identify systemic problems: discriminatory practices, unequal access to resources, and ignoring the needs of certain groups. In response, gender budgeting tools, new performance measurement standards, and service delivery schemes based on the needs of different population categories were introduced. A gender-sensitive approach became part of health, education, and social services management planning.

The increase in the number of women in management positions accompanied a rethinking of traditional role distribution models. Female leaders stepped up the agenda related to reproductive health, social infrastructure, and educational inequality. At the same time, demands for transparency and accountability of government decisions increased, which was reflected in the expansion of open governance and civic monitoring practices.

Women's political activism led to the launch of programs aimed at protecting the interests of vulnerable groups—women with disabilities, representatives of ethnic minorities, and participants in the informal economy. Approaches that take into account multiple forms of vulnerability (social, economic, cultural) made it possible to build policies focused not only on gender balance but also on overcoming aggregate inequality.

The transition from the exclusion model to the subject participation model was accompanied by the institutionalization of women's leadership in the management system. Practical experience gained through participation in local initiatives, volunteer associations, and professional communities became the basis for introducing updated management approaches. Such involvement contributed to the systematic consolidation of the gender agenda in strategic mechanisms of state planning. The management model, adapted to social and economic heterogeneity, acquired the ability to consider the specifics of women's participation and respond to differences formed by the institutional environment.

The history of women's social activism shows that the central goal was not merely the pursuit of political power but rather the right to participate in political processes and decision-making, ensuring that women had a voice in the governance of their societies. This push for inclusion in the decision-making process extended beyond politics to the pursuit of economic empowerment through access to education, finance, and property rights. The first two waves of feminism achieved significant victories in securing women's right to formal education, moving away from traditional hybrid education systems that restricted their participation. Subsequently, the focus shifted toward achieving economic independence, with women fighting for the right to own property and secure financial stability, allowing them to run their businesses and no longer depend on men for economic support.

In conclusion, women's involvement in public administration has been transformative. Their contributions have advanced their rights and played a crucial role in promoting gender equality and addressing broader societal issues such as social justice, economic development, and inclusive governance. By advocating for gender-responsive policies and ensuring that gender-sensitive public services are in place, women have helped shape a more equitable and just society. The evolution of women's social activism, from gaining fundamental political and educational rights to becoming key players in public administration, demonstrates women's critical role in shaping modern governance systems. Continued participation of women in governance will be essential in ensuring that public administration remains inclusive and responsive to the needs of all citizens, particularly women and marginalized groups.

In Figure 2, the vision of author definition of features of women social activism with impact on public administration is provided:

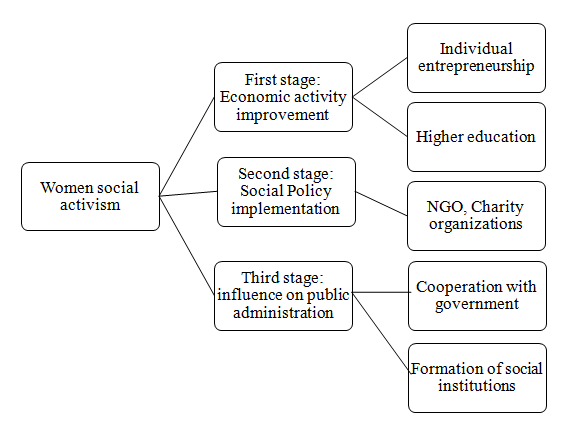


Figure 2 – Author’s vision of women social activism in public administration

Note: compiled by the author

The social activism of women is defined as active engagement of women in three fields, that is in the economic and social development of a country with its impact on public administration. Social activism of women is a movement which is characterized by the crucial involvement of women driven by general idea and vision in economic activities, expressed in active development of individual enterpreveurship. Next, social activism of women is regarded as active involvement in addressing social concerns resulting in promotion of social change through three main avenues. Firstly, women's economic activity is evident in two forms: increased participation of women in higher education, both as students and in leadership roles, and the growing number of women-led individual entrepreneurial ventures. Secondly, women seek to implement and improve social policies, often through collaboration with/ through NGOs. Thus, women exert influence and contribute to the shaping of social institutions.

*Therefore, author interpretation of “women’s social activism” is regarded as targeted actions of women that contribute to changes in society through participation in the economy, social sphere and politics.*

## **1.3 Methodology and key approaches to the study of women's social activism.**

The women's rights movement in Kazakhstan began in the late 19th century, initially tied to the broader Russian movement for women's access to education and employment. By 1896, five schools for girls had opened, with 211 girls enrolled. In the early 20th century, Kazakh girls began studying Russian and other languages in new schools. Prominent Kazakh figures like Alikhan Bukeikhanov and Akhmet Baitursynov laid the theoretical foundations for women's emancipation. Notably, Khusnijamal Nuralykhanova, the first Kazakh female teacher, opened a school for girls, and Gulsum Asfendiarova became the first female doctor in 1908. However, these advances were limited mainly to urban areas. After the February Revolution, the Alash party and other supporters of women's rights emerged, and gender equality was formally established by the Bolsheviks in 1918 [103-106].

Women's social activism in Kazakhstan has become an essential resource for promoting gender equality and improving the quality of public administration. Non-governmental organizations working in education, maternal and child health, healthcare, and equal rights in the labor sphere play a key role in these processes. Structures such as the Women's Union of the Kazakh National University, named after Al-Farabi, and the Association of Parents of Children with Disabilities influence the expansion of women's rights and the development of mechanisms for participation in local government. The crisis centers "Podrugi" and "Nezabudka" provide support to victims of violence. At the same time, the League of Women Lawyers is engaged in removing legal barriers and promoting legislative reforms [107-115].

Along with the achieved results, significant problems remain. The fight against violence against women and the fight against human trafficking remain priorities for public administration bodies. Despite joint initiatives with government agencies, cooperation with law enforcement continues to cause difficulties. Social and cultural barriers, especially in rural areas, limit women's participation in governance and impede career growth in the public sector.

Promoting gender quotas, including initiatives to secure 30% of women's representation in government, has acquired an organized form. The coalition "Women's Electoral Initiatives" influences the political agenda, but institutional barriers limit access to decision-making positions. The emergence of informal women's associations such as "Feminita" and "KazFem," which belong to the third wave of feminism, has drawn attention to the problems of gender violence and the lack of equal access to managerial positions in the public sphere.

Traditional gender roles entrenched in society, especially in agricultural regions, remain a severe limitation for women's political and managerial activity. At the same time, Kazakhstan has taken several institutional steps to overcome structural inequality. The Law "On State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women" (2009) formally prohibits discrimination based on gender in the labor sphere, education, and healthcare system. The Gender Equality Strategy for 2021–2025 reinforces these provisions, including support for women's leadership and measures to prevent gender-based violence.

There has been an increase in women's representation in Kazakhstan's public administration system. Women hold 27% of seats in parliament and some key administrative positions, including akims and ministers. At the same time, rural areas remain lagging due to persistent social attitudes and limited access to educational and human resources. Non-governmental organizations continue to play an active role in eliminating these differences, ensuring women's interests are represented in the public policy implementation system and at the local government level.

Women's NGOs have significantly shaped public demand for women's participation in governance processes. Currently, more than 200 organizations in the country are working on topics related to violence prevention, reproductive and psychosocial health, and women's access to decision-making. These organizations' participation improves public administration's effectiveness, especially in conditions with no stable human resource institutions. However, there are still areas where women's participation is not sufficiently institutionalized, particularly in palliative care, where there is a shortage of trained specialists and limited access to services.

Kazakhstan's legislative framework forms the basis for systemic regulation of gender aspects in public administration. The Laws "On Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities" and "On the Prevention of Domestic Violence" create legal mechanisms for protection. Still, their implementation faces problems at the execution level, especially in regions with low levels of institutional development. Overcoming these limitations requires legal instruments and sustainable mechanisms for the political and administrative inclusion of women in governance at all levels.

The women's movement in Kazakhstan emerged in the late 19th century as part of processes aimed at expanding access to education and employment. In the modern period, women's social activism promoting gender equality and participation in management practices has acquired a significant role. Non-governmental organizations focus on specific areas - education, maternity protection, health care, and protection of labor rights. In rural areas, social restrictions hinder women's participation in public and political life. Since the early 2000s, a regulatory framework has been formed regulating equality issues and women's participation in public administration. The laws introduced cover the areas of employment, social protection, and prevention of violence and discrimination. Table 2 records the main legislative acts aimed at institutionally strengthening women's rights and eliminating barriers in the public sphere.

Table 2 – Introduced Laws in Kazakhstan for Gender Equality

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year | Law Title |
| 1998 | Law on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women |
| 1998 | Law on Family and Marriage |
| 2009 | Law on the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence |
| 2009 | Law on the Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons |
| 2009 | Law on Gender Equality |
| 2015 | Law on Employment |
| 2016 | Law on Amendments and Additions to Some Legislative Acts on Improving the Status of Women |
| 2018 | Law on Social and Legal Protection of Military Servicemen and Their Families |
| 2019 | Law on the Rights of the Child |
| Note: compiled by the author | |

The adopted legislative acts formed the legal basis for enshrining the principles of gender equality in education, employment, and public administration. The Law on State Guarantees of Equal Rights and Equal Opportunities for Men and Women (1998) became an essential normative step in ensuring women's equal access to participation in management and political processes. The Law on Equality of Men and Women (2009) established the principles of expanding women's representation in local government bodies and decision-making structures at all levels of public administration.

Strengthening the legislative framework contributed to institutionalizing women's social activity. The adoption of laws on gender equality and combating domestic violence and human trafficking ensured the normative consolidation of legal guarantees and the introduction of specific mechanisms for institutional response. Standards on the mandatory investigation of cases of violence have been introduced, the procedure for contacting crisis centers has been simplified, and legal conditions have been created for the functioning of support services for victims. Legislative consolidation of quotas and provisions on the inadmissibility of discrimination in admission to the civil service has increased the number of women in leadership positions in central and local government bodies. Mandatory gender justification in strategic programs, introduced in the 2010s, has become the basis for women's participation in developing and monitoring government decisions. These measures have ensured the transition from symbolic participation to inclusion in forming and implementing policies at the ministries, animals, and parliamentary committees. The most significant results were achieved in urbanized regions, while barriers limiting equal access to administrative functions remain in rural areas.

The development of the regulatory environment has created conditions for women's participation in governance at the local and national levels. Inclusion in governance processes contributes to increased institutional effectiveness, improved quality of regulation, and increased efficiency of implemented policies. Increased involvement of women in formal and informal governance mechanisms influences decision-making and the overall vector of modernization of the public administration system. Educational training is considered in scientific research as a factor influencing women's inclusion in public administration processes. Higher education, especially in master's and postgraduate training programs, is interpreted as a condition for forming managerial competencies necessary for participation in politics, development of regulatory decisions, and administrative activities. Several theoretical approaches emphasize that the presence of education expands access to positions related to decision-making and contributes to the formation of sustainable channels of participation in the public sphere.

Education has long been recognized as a catalyst for personal empowerment and a powerful determinant of socio-political engagement. Research across different countries and contexts has shown that the higher a woman’s educational attainment, the more likely she is to participate actively in public decision-making and contribute to governance [116, 117]. Educational attainment is a key variable in women's ability to navigate and influence Public Service Delivery, Local Government Administration, and Policy Implementation.

*Educational Attainment and Its Role in Public Administration*

This study places a specific focus on women across three educational tiers—bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees—and explores how each level influences women's ability to engage in Public Governance and make significant contributions to Public Sector Management. It aims to identify key differences in how women with varying levels of education contribute to Public Policy development, governance structures, and the broader landscape of Democratic Governance in Kazakhstan.

Women holding a bachelor’s degree often find themselves participating in community-based initiatives or local governance projects, where they engage in grassroots organizing or work with NGOs. These women are essential in connecting communities with government resources and helping to address social issues that affect local populations, such as education, healthcare access, and social welfare. However, their influence may be limited to local or regional governance, as they typically occupy entry-level positions or junior administrative roles within government bodies [118, 119].

A comparative analysis of three levels of educational preparation — bachelor's, master's, and doctoral — allows us to establish differences in the degree and form of women's participation in public administration. A bachelor's degree provides basic professional qualifications sufficient for entry-level and auxiliary positions in the administrative system. This level of training ensures involvement in technical and executive functions but is not associated with access to levels where management decisions are made.

A master's degree, unlike a bachelor's degree, develops a set of management and analytical skills necessary for designing and implementing public policy. Having a master's degree creates institutional and professional conditions for taking up positions included in the strategic planning process, as well as participation in expert and advisory bodies. Women with this level of education are more often part of working groups at ministries and animals, supervise the implementation of programs, participate in assessing the effectiveness of institutions, and develop regulatory decisions [120–123].

Doctoral studies provide access to positions related to developing conceptual foundations for reforms, developing long-term management models, and participating in international cooperation formats. This level of training allows for the formation of a substantive agenda in the field of Regulatory Quality and Rule of Law, as well as participation in institutional design, the transformation of performance assessment systems, the development of public-private partnership mechanisms, and the improvement of accountability principles [124, 125].

Thus, an increase in the level of education is associated with expanding the set of professional competencies and with a change like involvement in public administration. Basic education allows for the performance of operational functions, a master's degree allows participation in implementing policies and process management, and a doctoral degree provides for forming regulatory frameworks and management decisions. With increased educational training, the scale of women's influence on the institutional parameters of public policy increases.

*Why Educational Attainment Matters in Public Administration*

The level of education is considered one of the key factors determining the nature, depth, and sustainability of women's participation in the public administration system. Empirical studies have documented the connection between educational training and forming managerial competencies, expanding professional and expert connections, and effectively operating in complex institutional structures. In conditions where gender roles are socially limited, such as in Kazakhstan, education serves as an institutional resource that allows overcoming barriers to access to governance and participation in the formation of public policy.

At the bachelor's level, basic knowledge is formed in policy analysis, local governance, and the organization of public services. Graduates of this level are more often involved in local government bodies, especially in rural and sparsely populated areas, where tasks are addressed to ensure the availability and quality of public services. However, career growth in centralized management structures is difficult due to restrictions in professional specialization and access to personnel elevators.

Master's degree training forms the qualification base for participation in strategic management, development of state programs, and implementation of institutional reforms. The connection between the processes of assessing the effectiveness of institutions, administration of transformations, and formation of regulatory mechanisms can be traced precisely to this level of education. Participation in public policy design, including Regulatory Quality and Government Effectiveness, is acquired on a systemic basis. The greatest concentration of involvement in anti-corruption initiatives, development of legal instruments, and ensuring political sustainability is observed among women with a master's degree. Master's degree is recorded as the level with the most significant contribution to the parameters of Democratic Governance, including the formalization of accountability and institutional sustainability.

Doctoral studies open access to positions related to long-term management forecasting, analysis of systemic risks, and participation in forming a conceptual framework for public reforms. Women with doctoral degrees are involved in scientific research, think tanks, international projects, and advisory structures for government bodies. Competencies in institutional analysis, design of Public-Private Partnership systems, and assessment of the regulatory framework make it possible to participate in the structural transformation of governance. This group is more often involved in developing strategies for modernizing administrative models and strengthening the legal support of state functions.

Each level of educational preparation sets professional frameworks and the management vertical, according to which real participation in decision-making is formed. The higher the level of education, the more significant the institutional weight, influence on the political agenda, and contribution to the sustainability of public administration.

Comparison of different levels of education allows us to analyze how educational preparation influences the formation of women's leadership positions in the public administration system. An analysis of three educational groups reveals the relationship between the level of training and opportunities for women to participate in management processes, the implementation of public policy, and the promotion of gender equality in public administration.

*Palliative Care as a Case Study in Women's Participation in Public Administration*

Palliative care is another critical area where women’s social activism intersects with Public Administration. In developing economies like Kazakhstan, palliative care has emerged as an increasingly relevant public policy issue, particularly given the uneven access to comprehensive healthcare services in rural and underserved areas. The inclusion of palliative care in this study is justified by its growing relevance in Public Administration, its alignment with healthcare governance, and the urgent need for governance mechanisms to improve the distribution of healthcare services.

Palliative care intersects with multiple public policy areas, including health, social welfare, and local governance, making it an ideal case for examining the role of women’s social activism in public sector management. Women’s involvement in palliative care through NGOs and local initiatives has been instrumental in shaping policy reforms and advocating for the expansion of palliative services within the public healthcare system.

Furthermore, palliative care is inherently linked to social activism, as it addresses vulnerable populations, including those facing terminal illnesses and chronic diseases. The social and ethical issues surrounding palliative care—such as equitable access to pain management, psychological support, and family-centered care—make it a critical area for women’s involvement in advocacy and Public Governance. Women in palliative care settings often play key roles as caregivers, organizers, and policy advocates, influencing both the local administration of services and broader national healthcare policy.

The inclusion of palliative care as a focal area in this study provides valuable insights into how women’s leadership and activism can influence public sector management. In regions where government support for palliative care is limited, women-led organizations have stepped in to fill the gap, advocating for policy changes, funding, and resource allocation. This highlights the significant potential of women’s activism to influence Government Effectiveness, particularly in addressing complex healthcare challenges in a socially and culturally sensitive manner.

Palliative care also aligns with broader themes in local governance, particularly in rural and underserved communities. As a field that relies heavily on community-based support, palliative care illustrates how decentralization in governance can enhance Public Sector Outcomes by engaging local actors, including women, in service delivery and policy implementation. Women’s involvement in these local networks helps bridge the gap between local needs and national health policies, thereby contributing to a more inclusive approach to Public Sector Management.

*Rationale for the Research Methodology*

The examination of women’s social activism and its influence on public administration has predominantly employed qualitative research methods across various studies. These methods are well-suited to capture the complexity and context-specific experiences of women in different domains such as education and healthcare. While the objectives and settings of these studies vary, the central aim has been to understand how women's participation in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social activism, and public governance shapes the development and implementation of public policies.

In alignment with these methodologies, our research adopts a qualitative approach to explore the nuanced roles that education and NGO participation play in shaping women's influence on public administration in Kazakhstan. The study aims to fill a critical gap in the current literature by addressing two central aspects: (1) the impact of different levels of education on women's contributions to governance and public service delivery, and (2) how women's involvement in NGOs, particularly in sectors like palliative care, facilitates the realization of social and governmental policies.

Unlike prior international studies that primarily gather data from the general public or patients when analyzing the influence of women on social and governmental policy implementation, our research provides a novel contribution by focusing on the women themselves. Through conducting in-depth interviews with women actively engaged in NGOs and public service, we aim to understand the structure of their cooperation with government institutions and how their activism contributes to public administration effectiveness.

*Education as a Factor in the Formation of Women’s Social Activism in Public Administration*

The foundation for this research lies in the results of a regression analysis that identified women with a master’s degree as having a significant impact on public administration and government effectiveness. This raised the need for a more detailed exploration of the factors contributing to the stronger influence of women with master’s degrees on governance, including key indicators such as control of corruption, rule of law, and political stability.

To achieve this, a qualitative approach was adopted through semi-structured interviews conducted with women at different educational levels: undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral. The interviews were designed based on Barsou’s [125] framework, which explores women’s perceptions of higher education and its impact. Unlike previous studies, however, this research emphasizes the role of women in the context of government effectiveness and public sector management.

The research methodology sought to uncover why women with master’s degrees play a more prominent role in governance, particularly in local government administration, policy implementation, and public service delivery. The questions were designed to reveal key factors and experiences that contribute to their influence on public administration processes. This allows us to identify how education shapes women's contributions to public governance.

*Palliative Care as a Case Study of Women’s Participation in Public Administration*

The second part of the study focuses on the involvement of women in palliative care, which has become an increasingly important issue in Kazakhstan. Unlike education, palliative care is closely linked to women's social activism, especially in the healthcare sector and volunteer work. This research diverges from earlier studies by centering on the perspectives and experiences of volunteers rather than medical staff, aiming to assess the contributions of women to public policy development and implementation in palliative care.

The research methodology for this part of the study is grounded in Carol Bacchi’s [126] framework, as well as Bacci’s (2019) work on problem representation and solutions in public administration. The study employed semi-structured interviews with both women volunteers and medical staff, focusing on how women’s involvement in volunteer work influences public administration and the delivery of palliative care services. The methodology was structured into three key stages: (1) the development of interview questions, (2) the analysis of the results, and (3) the evaluation of the influence of individual entrepreneurship (IE) on public administration. These questions were grouped into 11 categories, capturing distinct dimensions of women’s social activism in three critical areas: education, palliative care, and individual entrepreneurship. Each category focused on understanding how women’s participation across these fields interacts with public administration representatives, shaping governance processes. This approach allowed for a comprehensive analysis of how women’s social activism in education, palliative care, and entrepreneurship contributes to public service delivery and policy implementation, offering valuable insights into the broader impact of women on public administration effectiveness.

2 ANALYSES OF THE CURRENT STATE OF WOMEN’S SOCIAL ACTIVISM AND ITS IMPACT ON PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN KAZAKHSTAN

2.1 Analysis of the influence of women's social activism on governance in Kazakhstan

The research aimed to explore the influence of women’s higher education and involvement in individual entrepreneurship on government effectiveness. Two key hypotheses guided the analysis: (1) women with higher education had a significant positive impact on government effectiveness and management, and (2) women engaged in individual entrepreneurship had a significant positive influence on government effectiveness.

Data were collected for the period from 2012 to 2022, covering a variety of indicators grouped into relevant categories [127, 128]. The first category included educational indicators, such as the number of women with a master's degree, which was considered a key factor in understanding the relationship between education and governance. The second category focused on entrepreneurship indicators, specifically the number of women involved in individual entrepreneurship, hypothesized to correlate with effective government performance. In addition, data on women’s involvement in political and administrative spheres were included to assess the broader impact of women's participation in public life on governance. Indicators such as the number of women in political positions and women employed as administrative civil servants were also considered. Governance indicators such as Government Effectiveness Estimate, Regulatory Quality Estimate, Voice and Accountability Estimate, and Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Estimate were used to evaluate various aspects of government performance. The complete list of indicators is presented in the ANNEX C.

The dynamics of higher education indicators among men and women from 2012 to 2022 reveal significant differences and trends across various metrics (Figure 3).

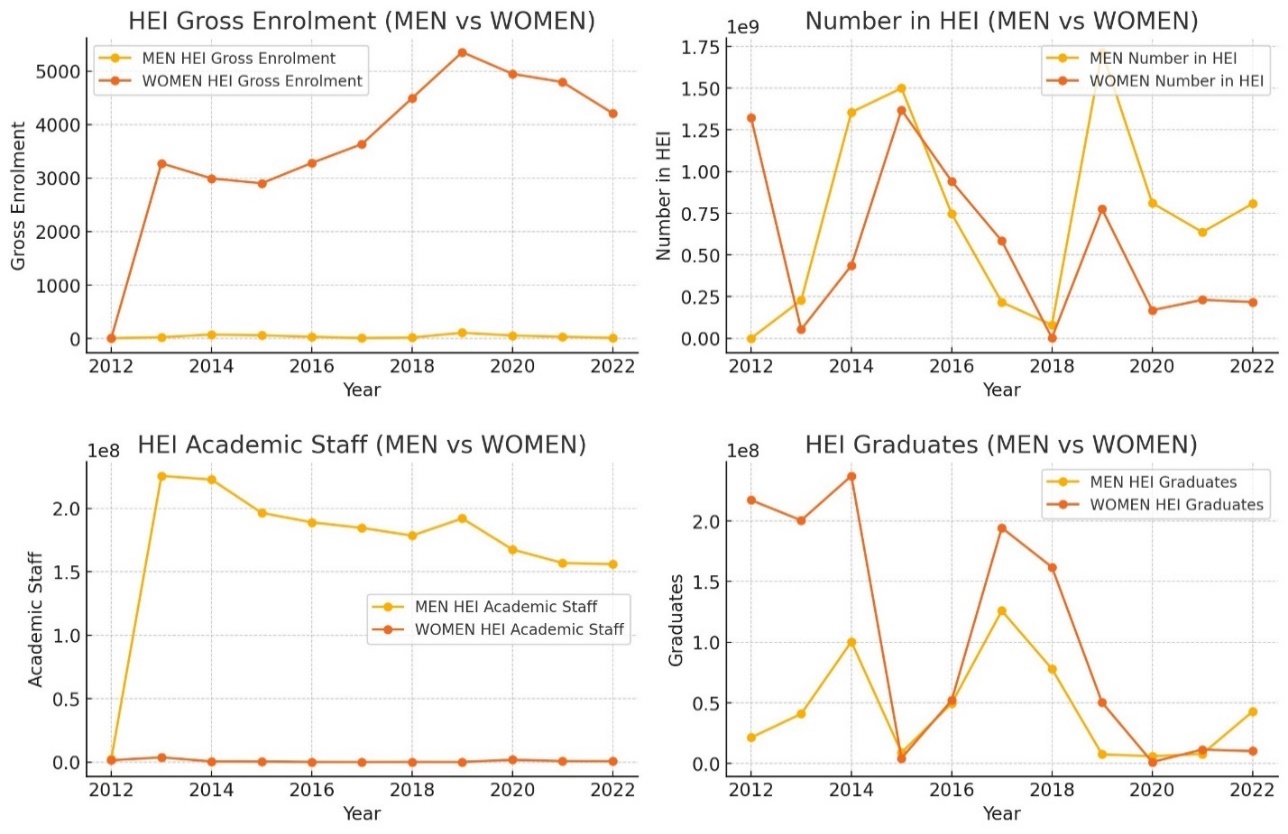


Figure 3 – Women in higher education

Note: compiled by the author based on calculations

*Higher Education Institutions Gross Enrolment*

Over the past decade, the gender structure of enrolment in higher education institutions has been formed with a stable numerical predominance of women. After 2014, there was an active increase in the indicators among women, which peaked in 2018–2019 and remained at a high level in the subsequent periods. Throughout the period, men participated in the higher education system to a lesser extent than women. Changes in their numbers were uneven and did not lead to a convergence of indicators. The predominance of women was already formed at the stage of admission to universities and was maintained during further education, including completion of programs and graduation. The structural difference between the sexes was maintained due to the stable demand from the female contingent and a stable focus on obtaining higher education as the main channel for professional advancement. Asymmetry was formed at the entry stage and persisted until the end of the educational cycle. The stable superiority of women in the level of enrolment in higher education did not reflect a temporary fluctuation but an entrenched institutional trend.

*Number of Students in Higher Education Institutions (Number of Students in HEI)*

The total number of students in higher education institutions demonstrated a pronounced dominance of the female contingent. Even during sharp surges recorded in 2012 and 2019 among the male population, there was a lag in absolute values. The female component of students was more stable and grew evenly. The ratio between men and women in the number of students was formed not due to short-term changes but based on a long-term shift in educational trajectories. The strengthening of women's positions occurred in the context of stable demand for higher education from the female part of the youth and high involvement in educational institutions.

*HEI Academic Staff*

The staff structure of the higher education institution maintained the same pattern. Women formed the basis of the academic staff throughout all years. Even after the general reduction in the number of teachers since 2013, the gender composition remained unchanged: the quantitative dominance of the female contingent remained. The distribution was not limited to individual disciplines or positions but covered the entire academic vertical. The female advantage was not due to temporary campaigns or external incentives but because of an entrenched employment pattern in higher education. Increased representation was accompanied by increased participation in the academic environment's organizational, expert, and managerial structures.

*HEI Graduates*

The gender distribution of graduates reflected the same dynamics. Women consistently outnumbered men in the number of completed educational programs. Even during periods of decline in the overall number of graduates, the proportion of women remained high. There were fluctuations among men, but these did not change the overall pattern. This distribution indicated a stable educational advantage consolidated at the end of the education process. Graduation, as the final stage of the academic trajectory, served as an indicator of quantitative participation and the completion of the female educational route, which affected access to skilled employment.

The entrenched quantitative superiority of women in the higher education system reflected internal changes in the structure of educational demand and a broader socio-economic context. Since the mid-2010s, Kazakhstan has seen a reorientation of the labor market, accompanied by a decrease in the attractiveness of traditionally male-dominated sectors - primarily industry, construction, and the extractive sector - against the backdrop of slowing economic growth and declining export revenues. The strengthening role of the service sector, the expansion of administrative and educational spheres, the development of social programs, and public administration created a stable demand for qualified personnel with higher education. Women adapted to these structural shifts faster, more actively integrated into educational channels of upward mobility, and formed a stable base for professional realization in the new conditions. Differences in educational trajectories reflected the peculiarities of institutional access and the adaptation to economic changes. The decline in demand for unskilled labor and the reduction of stable jobs without the requirement for formal education increased the importance of higher education as the main condition for obtaining employment with acceptable conditions and career prospects. Women were quicker to navigate the new structure of opportunities and began to use the higher education system more actively as a social and professional mobility tool.

The prevalence of women in the higher education system forms the basis for the subsequent analysis of participation in economic activity. Completed education and accumulated qualification potential are reflected in the levels of involvement in entrepreneurial initiatives, primarily in small and individual businesses. The expansion of economic presence is accompanied by a change in the structure of access to financial resources, including the volume and frequency of lending. Below, in Figure 4 there are presented the quantitative parameters of women's participation in the small and individual entrepreneurship segment and the related financial indicators.

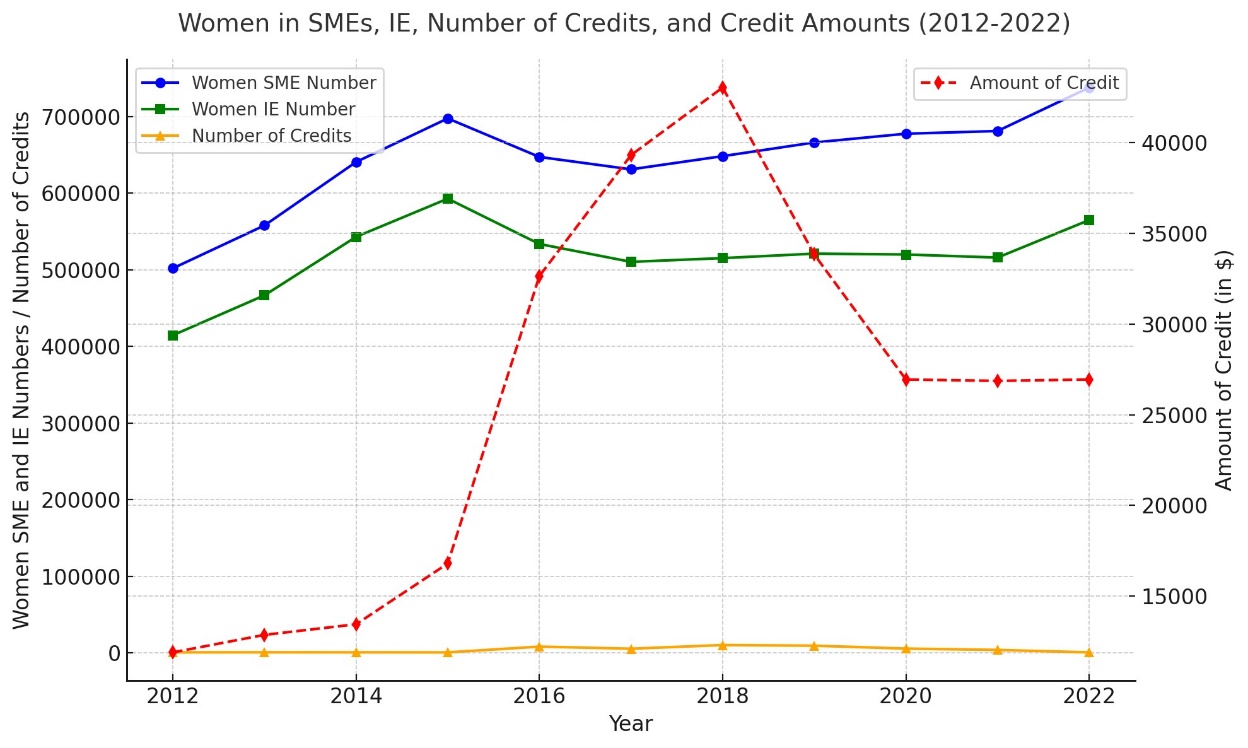


Figure 4 – Women in SMEs and IE

Note: compiled by the author based on calculations

From 2012–2022, there was a steady increase in women involved in small and medium-sized businesses and individual entrepreneurship. The number of SMEs with female participation increased from 501,791 to 737,653. A similar increase was recorded among individual entrepreneurs — from 414,458 to 564,751. Despite the difference in growth rates between the two forms of business activity, women's participation in the entrepreneurial sector remained stable and noticeable. Minor fluctuations in indicators in individual years did not change the overall picture: women were entrenched in formally registered businesses as one of the key groups. This allowed us to talk about gradually expanding women's entrepreneurial resources, especially in urban centers and areas that do not require large-scale initial investments.

Lending to women entrepreneurs was accompanied by more complex and unstable dynamics. In 2012, 703 loans were issued, but by 2016, this figure had increased more than tenfold, reaching 8,223. Subsequent years were characterized by a decline: by 2021, the number of loans had decreased to 3,893. This meant that an adequate expansion of access to financial resources did not support the active growth in the number of women in entrepreneurship. On the contrary, the opportunities for obtaining external financing began to decline. Such a discrepancy between the registration of business entities and the volume of credit support may be due to tightening the terms of loans, a reduction in target programs, or a general change in banking strategies for small businesses. The women's entrepreneurship sector found itself where a uniform increase in financial opportunities did not accompany the expansion of numbers.

The volume of loans issued to women has developed along a different line than the number of credit transactions. In 2012, the total volume was $11,897; by 2018, it had almost quadrupled, reaching $43,050. After 2018, a gradual decline began: by 2021, volumes had decreased to $26,871 and remained at this level. The total volume growth with a simultaneous decrease in the number of issued loans indicates a change in lending conditions. The increase in the average amount of one loan reflects the transition to servicing more expensive entrepreneurial initiatives in terms of investment volume. In such years, the women's entrepreneurship sector focused mainly on large borrowings, while the opportunities for obtaining small, start-up loans narrowed significantly. The decrease in the availability of small amounts for a broad group of borrowers limited the influx of new participants in the segment, increasing dependence on external sources with strict entry conditions. Financial support was concentrated within a limited number of transactions with a higher amount, which could indicate a reorientation of the banking sector to servicing the medium and large segment within women's businesses. The reduced volume of small loans has limited the opportunities for women to start a business without collateral and stable financial income.

An analysis of credit activity against the backdrop of an increase in the number of women in entrepreneurship shows a discrepancy between the growth of economic involvement and the limited financial support mechanisms. The expansion of the registration base and a stable presence in small businesses were accompanied by limited development of a financial infrastructure capable of servicing a wide range of borrowers. An increase in average loan amounts against a decrease in recipients reflects the internal stratification process in women's entrepreneurship. Some entities gain access to significant investment resources, while others are limited in entering the sector due to reduced available credit products. This creates the basis for forming a narrow group of stable support recipients and the simultaneous displacement of vulnerable participants from the economically active zone.

Along with the expansion of women's participation in entrepreneurship and the educational system, there remains a need to analyze their representation in public authorities. Considering the dynamics of the number of women in political and administrative-state positions allows us to identify the features of participation in decision-making processes and the public administration system (Figure 5).

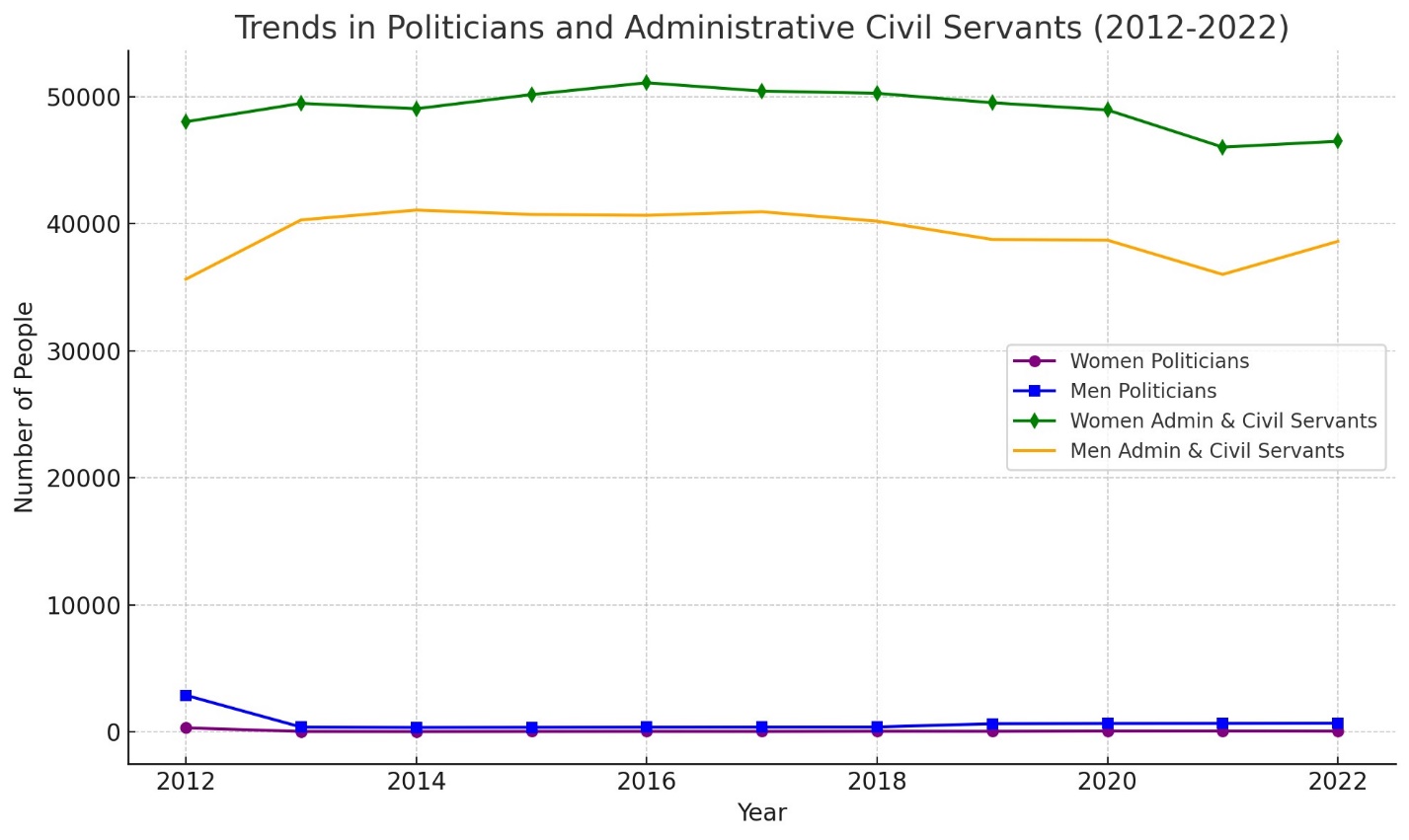


Figure 5 – Women in public administration

Note: compiled by the author based on calculations

From 2012 to 2022, the gender distribution in political and administrative positions remained significantly different. Women in politics remained significantly underrepresented: in 2012, the number was 321, after which they fluctuated between 30 and 70. Since 2018, a steady increase has begun, but the figures did not approach equal participation even by the end of the period. Men in politics demonstrated the opposite dynamics: in 2012, the number was 2,886, and in the following years, there was a decrease of more than four times. After 2018, the values ​​​​stabilized at 600-700. Despite the decline in men, the overall ratio between the sexes remained unbalanced. The data indicate that political representation continues to develop with the persistence of structural barriers for women. The sharp decline in the male share may be due to a reduction in the number of positions, a change in the nomination format, or rotation of personnel, but was not accompanied by a mirrored increase in the number of women. The administrative civil service maintained a stable numerical advantage over women. The number ranged from 48,000 to 50,000 without sharp changes throughout the period. The indicators demonstrated the stability characteristic of the established personnel model. The slight decrease recorded in 2021 could be due to a reduction in staff, changes in the employment structure, or the effects of economic restrictions. Men in similar positions demonstrated figures in the range of 35,000 to 41,000, gradually decreasing towards the end of the period. Comparative analysis confirms that, in contrast to political structures, the administrative sphere is characterized by a higher numerical representation of women, which lower entry thresholds, formalized procedures, and less dependence on political channels of influence can explain.

The gap between women and men in political representation remains quantitatively and structurally. While administrative positions are filled with a greater degree of gender balance, participation in decision-making processes through political mechanisms remains limited. The delineation of access to administrative and political positions indicates institutional differences in the channels for forming managerial resources. In the political sphere, closed inclusion formats and personal nomination mechanisms remain, while the administrative system is formed through open competitive procedures and standard personnel routes.

A correlation analysis assessed the relationships between women's participation in various spheres - education, entrepreneurship, and public authority. The study included indicators of the number of women in higher education, individual entrepreneurship, civil service, and politics. Calculations revealed a strong correlation between several variables, which indicated duplication of information and possible distortion of results when including these variables in one model. Based on the data obtained, the model was cleaned: all indicators with excessive interdependence and low explanatory power were excluded. The resulting structure provided a sound basis for conducting regression analysis without the threat of multicollinearity while maintaining meaningful interpretation.

A standardization procedure based on the Z-transformation was used to eliminate incomparability between variables expressed in different scales and units of measurement. Each indicator was transformed so that its mathematical expectation became equal to zero, and the standard deviation became equal to one. Such a transformation allowed us to align the values ​​of the variables on the scale and ensure equal participation of each indicator in the subsequent analysis. Z-normalization was necessary to prevent the dominance of variables with high absolute values ​​and increase the correctness of statistical conclusions.

The Z-score for each value was calculated using the following formula (1):

(1)

Where:

Z is the standardized value.

X is the original data point.

\ mu is the mean of the variable,

\sigma is the standard deviation of the variable.

The variables that underwent standardization were categorized into three primary groups: governance and corruption indicators, higher education indicators, and entrepreneurship indicators (ANNEX C).

After conducting Z-score standardization of the collected governance and corruption data, the results for the period from 2012 to 2022 have been calculated and are provided in ANNEX D, ANNEX E, ANNEX F. This approach allowed for normalization of the data, enabling comparison across indicators and years by removing the effects of differing scales. The standardized results offer insights into the dynamic changes in public administration, governance quality, and corruption perceptions over time.

*The Z-score analysis reveals several trends*

*Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)*

Over the observed period, CPI shows a steady improvement, with negative Z-scores in the early years (e.g., -0.91 in 2012 and -1.42 in 2013) reflecting high perceived corruption. By 2022, the CPI reached a positive Z-score of 1.14, indicating significant progress in controlling corruption and improving public perception of anti-corruption efforts. This improvement reflects a continuous upward trajectory throughout the last decade.

*Voice and Accountability Estimate*

The voice and accountability indicator fluctuated during the analyzed period. Early years such as 2013 (-1.19) demonstrated limitations in public participation and freedom of expression, while later years (e.g., 2021 and 2022, with Z-scores of 1.07 and 2.38, respectively) show improvements. However, intermittent negative scores, such as in 2016 (-0.44), suggest that gains in public accountability have not been entirely consistent, and challenges remain.

*Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism*

The values ​​of the political stability indicator varied widely. In 2015, the maximum value of the Z-score was recorded—3.16, which reflects a period of relative institutional calm. In subsequent years, a decrease was observed. In 2021 and 2022, the values ​​​​dropped to negative marks (-0.33 and -0.38), which indicates an increase in internal risks, increased uncertainty in the political system, and a decrease in resilience to destabilizing factors.

*Government Effectiveness Estimate*

In 2012 and 2013, the values ​​​​of the government effectiveness indicator were in the negative zone (-1.75 and -2.15), reflecting a low level of process organization, weak coordination between institutions, and limited capacity to implement tasks. Beginning in the middle of the period, a gradual increase began. By 2022, the Z-score reached 1.11. The increase in values ​​may be associated with improved quality of administrative procedures, expansion of digital solutions, and increased enforcement.

*Regulatory Quality Estimate*

The regulatory quality indicator showed negative values ​​at the beginning of the period (–1.70 in 2012, –1.62 in 2013), corresponding to a weak regulatory framework, fragmented enforcement mechanisms, and low decision-making predictability. By 2022, a positive value of 0.29 was achieved. The increase in values ​​reflects the streamlining of rules and a clearer organization of procedures related to regulation. The number of ineffective requirements gradually decreased, the pressure from excessive norms decreased, and it became easier to fulfill formal conditions. Such changes indicate a transition to a more stable and understandable system in which rules do not interfere but ensure work.

*Rule of Law Estimate*

In 2012, the Z-score for the rule of law component was –2.25. Such values ​​reflect the instability of legal norms, selective application of legislation, and a lack of institutional guarantees. In 2022, the value reached 0.80, corresponding to strengthening law enforcement mechanisms, expanded access to legal protection, and greater formalization of legal procedures.

*Control of Corruption Estimate*

The control of corruption indicator increased from -1.06 in 2012 to 1.53 in 2022. In the initial period, the level of transparency was low, limited application of accountability measures was recorded, and a high degree of informal influence was recorded. Over time, changes in the anti-corruption monitoring system, revision of regulations, and an increase in the level of institutional control were recorded. Positive values ​​at the end of the period reflect the strengthening of administrative instruments aimed at reducing corrupt practices.

*Summary of Z-Score Dynamics*

Most management indicators showed improvement. Values ​​increased in efficiency, regulatory policy, law enforcement, and anti-corruption control. Negative values ​​at the beginning of the period were replaced by positive ones, corresponding to a change in the conditions for making and implementing decisions. Political stability remains the least stable component. A decrease in indicators in recent years highlights this component as an area of ​​​​the greatest vulnerability. The overall picture shows the unevenness of institutional changes: while administrative mechanisms are being strengthened, instability in the area of ​​political reliability remains.

*Z-Score Analysis of Higher Education Indicators (2012–2022)*

The normalization of key indicators of higher education in Kazakhstan for 2012–2022 was carried out using the Z-transformation method, in which the values ​​of variables are reduced to a scale with a mean value of zero and a standard deviation of one. This procedure made it possible to record deviations from the average level in a unified form and ensure comparability between indicators expressed in different units and ranges. Using standardized deviations made it possible to assess the degree of change in the position of men and women in the higher education system and identify areas of sustainable growth and structural shifts. Full calculations are provided in appendices ANNEX G, ANNEX H, and ANNEX I.

*Gross Enrollment in Higher Education (MEN\_HEI\_GROSS\_ENROL and WOMEN\_HEI\_GROSS\_ENROL)*

In 2012, the Z-score for male enrollment in higher education was –0.26, reflecting enrollment levels below the long-term average. In 2014, the Z-score was -1.40, which recorded a sharp decline in male enrolment in higher education relative to the baseline. In 2019, the score rose to 1.70, the highest value for the analyzed period. By 2022, the Z-score returned to zero, indicating that growth has ceased and the number of male students has stabilized at the average level. Stabilization occurred against the backdrop of consistently higher rates for women, confirming a change in the structure of educational demand. The weakening of educational activity among men, while women's participation is simultaneously increasing, indicates a shift in the trajectories of professional development, in which the female group forms the basis for the reproduction of personnel in areas oriented toward a high level of formalized competencies.

Female participation demonstrated stability throughout the period: Z-scores fluctuated within the range of ±0.5 without significant drops or jumps. In 2022, the indicator was 0.04, which confirms the maintenance of a stable and moderately elevated level of involvement. Throughout the period under review, women's participation level in higher education remained higher than that of men, indicating an entrenched model of educational behavior and a focus on institutionally formalized trajectories of preparation for professional activity. The predominance of the female contingent in participation creates the preconditions for a change in the gender structure in sectors where higher education is a necessary entry requirement.

*Number of Students in Higher Education (MEN\_NUMBER\_IN\_HEI and WOMEN\_NUMBER\_IN\_HEI)*

In 2014, the number of men in higher education reached a minimum value (Z = -1.36), reflecting a sharp decrease in the inflow or an increase in the outflow of students. Since 2017, an upward trend has been recorded, reaching a value of 1.05 in 2020 and remaining at this level in 2022. The growth in numbers is a result of the adaptation of educational policy and an increase in the attractiveness of higher education against the backdrop of shrinking opportunities in the informal and low-skilled segment of the labor market.

The dynamics of women developed similarly. In 2014, a value of -0.89 was recorded, corresponding to the decline in numbers. The maximum indicator (1.18) was noted in 2019. Positive values ​​in 2020-2022 indicate a stable demand for higher education from the female contingent. The consolidation of this trend has a significant impact on the structure of professional distribution and confirms the economic rationality of obtaining higher education as an investment in labor mobility and protection from the risks of unstable employment.

*Academic Staff in Higher Education (MEN\_HEI\_ACADEMIC\_STAFF and WOMEN\_HEI\_ACADEMIC\_STAFF*)

The male academic staff showed stable values: the fluctuations of the Z-scores did not exceed ±0.5, which indicates no significant changes in the number of male faculty. The female academic staff in 2013 reached the maximum Z-score value (2.09), which reflects the peak of female involvement in teaching. Since 2017, there has been a steady decline, culminating in a negative value of -0.93 in 2021. The decrease in the number of women on the academic staff against the background of their expanding educational achievements has recorded a discrepancy between the scale of training and the opportunities for professional realization. The revealed imbalance limits the reproduction of qualified personnel in higher education, weakens institutional potential, and hinders the inclusion of women in management and research structures.

*Graduation Rates in Higher Education (MEN\_HEI\_GRAD and WOMEN\_HEI\_GRAD)*

In 2014, the graduation rate for men reached 1.50, after which a series of negative values ​​were observed in 2015–2018, indicating a decline in the share of those who completed their studies. In 2021, an increase to 0.42 was recorded, corresponding to the recovery of the graduation rate. Similar peaks and troughs characterized the female trajectory. 2014, the value was 1.51; in 2018, it was -1.25. Only in 2021 was a transition to positive dynamics recorded. These cycles demonstrate the vulnerability of educational completion trajectories to external economic or institutional fluctuations. High volatility of education completion on both sides indicates the risk of educational programs not matching the expectations and needs of students, especially in the context of labor market instability.

*Master’s Degree Graduates (MEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD and WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD)*

In 2012, the number of male Master’s degree graduates was -1.98, reflecting limited participation in second-level higher education programs. By 2020, an increase to 1.34 was recorded, confirming the development of a professional orientation towards advanced education.

The female figure in 2012 was -2.05, reflecting an even lower initial number of graduates. The constant excess of the average annual level of women's participation in Master's programs reflects a stable tendency to consolidate extended educational behavior. The observed dynamics indicate not a short-term deviation but the formation of a new model of professional orientation based on the systematic selection of advanced qualification programs. Such a change suggests a transformation of educational strategies and the consolidation of the female contingent in segments requiring highly formalized competencies. The growth in female graduates forms the talent pool for high-skill industries and increases the influence of women in segments that require specialized knowledge, including education, management, analytics, and public policy. The increasing share of female Master’s degree graduates forms the talent base for sectors focused on project management, data analytics, public administration, and education.

*PhD Graduates (MEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_GRAD and WOMEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_GRAD)*

The Z-score for the number of men who completed PhD programs was -1.03 in 2012. By 2021, there was an increase to 2.62, which indicates an expansion of the training of highly qualified scientific and managerial personnel. A similar increase was observed for women: from -1.05 in 2012 to 2.44 in 2021. Such high figures confirm the growing share of women in the academic elite, which has long-term consequences for forming a new composition of scientific and educational institutions and expert structures. The intensification of the graduation of PhDs among women reflects the transformation of gender behavior toward sustainable professionalization and a scientific career.

*Summary of Findings*

The results of the Z-transformation record a steady increase in quantitative participation in the higher education system, especially in the Master's and PhD segments. The female contingent demonstrated a systematic advantage in coverage, number of students, and graduation. A simultaneous increase in graduates of master's and postgraduate programs indicates the instability of the academic staff, which means a potential imbalance between training and employment.

The trend of expanding women's educational involvement is accompanied by an institutional restructuring of the participation model: a new structure of female behavior is being formed, focused not on compensation in the household but on consolidation in highly qualified sectors. The growth of women's education level increases the density of human resources in management, science, education, and services, reduces vulnerability to informal employment, and forms the basis for changing the socio-economic situation regarding gender equality.

*Z-Score Analysis of Women's Participation in SMEs, Individual Entrepreneurship, and Credit Access (2012–2022)*

The growth of entrepreneurial and financial activity among the female population in 2012–2022 is reflected in changes in Z-scores in key areas: participation in small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), development of individual entrepreneurship (IE), and access to bank loans. These indicators reflect institutional shifts and the consolidation of new behavior patterns in the economic sphere. The calculation results are presented in ANNEX J, ANNEX K, and ANNEX L.

*Women's Participation in SMEs (WOMEN\_SME\_NUMBER)*

The increase in the Z-score from -2.29 in 2012 to 1.51 in 2022 is accompanied by an increase in the share of women among registered SMEs. Forming sustainable positions in this sector is associated with institutional incentives, including tax preferences, government support programs, and simplified registration procedures. Increased business activity is associated with improved business conditions and a change in behavioral attitudes that encourage participation in entrepreneurship as a sustainable form of social implementation. Fluctuations in the standard deviation by year reflect the transition from initial instability to uniform consolidation of activity in economic structures.

*Women's Participation in Individual Entrepreneurship (WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER)*

The transition from a Z-score of -2.31 in 2012 to 1.05 in 2022 for the individual entrepreneurship indicator records the growth of autonomous economic strategies among women. The structure of employment has changed due to the spread of microenterprises in the service and retail sectors, characterized by a low entry threshold and minimal start-up costs. A simplified registration regime, the absence of institutional restrictions, the ability to combine with family responsibilities, and flexibility of schedule have contributed to the consolidation of individual entrepreneurship as a sustainable channel for economic inclusion. Moderate standard deviation values over the years indicate an even distribution of growth without sharp deviations or institutional failures.

*Women's Access to Credit (WOMEN\_NUMER\_CREDIT, WOMEN\_AMOUNT\_CREDIT)*

*Number of loans (WOMEN\_NUMER\_CREDIT)*

The change in the Z-score from -0.94 in 2012 to 1.65 in 2018 and stabilization at positive values ​​after 2016 confirm the expansion of access to bank loans. The increase in the number of loans issued is associated with institutional mechanisms for supporting entrepreneurship, the expansion of microfinance programs, and changes in risk assessment policies on the part of lenders. The expansion of the credit base for women is due not to changes in formal procedures but to an increase in trust in their business solvency. The dynamics confirm the redistribution of financial resources towards previously inaccessible groups.

*Loan volume (WOMEN\_AMOUNT\_CREDIT)*

The growth in lending volumes is accompanied by a transition from microfinance to more capital-intensive formats. The increase in the Z-score from -0.90 in 2012 to 1.54 in 2018, with subsequent stabilization by 2021, coincides with strengthening the investment component in women's initiatives. The expansion of the amount of borrowings records not only the quantitative growth of projects but also an increase in the scale of responsibility and a transition to more professionalized business models. The terms of credit products began to consider the specifics of women's entrepreneurship as an independent category in financial planning.

*Summary*

The observed change in the indicators of women's participation in small businesses, individual employment, and credit activity for 2012–2022 confirms the formation of sustainable practices of economic behavior. The reduction in the initial gap in Z-scores and the subsequent growth to positive values ​​in aggregate indicate the consolidation of entrepreneurship in the structure of social self-realization. Systemic expansion of access to financing, an increase in economic entities, and the transition to large borrowing formats reflect changes in the institutional environment and daily activity patterns. Increasing women's involvement in the economy creates conditions for the redistribution of roles and expands the influence of regional development directions*.*

*Z-Score Analysis of Women's and Men's Participation in Politics and Civil Services (2012–2022)*

Z-scores for four indicators record changes in the degree of participation of women and men in politics and administrative civil service over 2012–2022. A standardized scale made it possible to identify deviations from average annual values ​​and determine increased or decreased involvement periods. Detailed data are presented in ANNEX M, ANNEX N, and ANNEX O.

*1. Women's Participation in Politics (WOMEN\_POLITICIAN)*

The maximum participation was recorded in 2012 (Z = 3.13), after which a transition to stable negative values ​​was observed. From 2014 to 2021, the level did not exceed -0.10. Such dynamics reflect the institutional instability of women's political representation and the absence of a fixed participation mechanism. In 2022, the values stabilized but did not recover to the 2012 level. Gender representation in politics remains at a level that does not exceed the average statistical deviation over the decade.

*2. Men's Participation in Politics (MEN\_POLITICIAN)*

The 2012 Z-score was 3.10, followed by a consistent decline to negative values. From 2013 to 2022, the participation rate was consistently below the average. A relative decrease in the dominant position of men was recorded while maintaining numerical superiority. The change in distribution is due to the adjustment of the representation structure and the redistribution of seats. The nature of the deviations confirms a shift in the participation model without sharp institutional breaks.

*3. Women's Participation in Administrative Civil Services (WOMEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV)*

A steady increase was observed from 2013 to 2018, reaching a maximum in 2016 (Z = 1.33). The 2012 figure was -0.66. Since 2019, a consistent decline has been observed: the minimum value was reached in 2021 (Z = -1.96). The decrease in participation occurred after a period of consolidation, indicating the cessation of processes of expanding representation. A rollback to the values ​​characteristic of the initial analysis stage was recorded. The structure of inclusion in administrative positions did not ensure the sustainability of participation.

*4. Men's Participation in Administrative Civil Services (MEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV)*

The initial value in 2012 was -1.97; then, from 2013 to 2017, there was an increase to a maximum (Z = 0.93), followed by a decline that continued until the end of the period. The minimum was reached in 2021 (Z = -1.76). The dynamics are identical to the female indicator: a period of recovery followed by a decline. The simultaneous decrease in the participation rate of both groups confirms the presence of external constraints affecting the overall personnel structure in the civil service. Variations independent of gender were recorded, with a uniform response to changes in the institutional environment.

*5. Summary of Findings*

Women's politics and civil service participation in 2012–2022 was not progressive. Rollbacks to negative values followed the increase in indicators in the middle of the period without reaching sustainable growth. A one-time excess of the average annual level was recorded in the political sector. Still, it was not supported institutionally, nor by fixed quotas, personnel programs, or mechanisms for reproducing participation. In the administrative sphere, positive dynamics from 2013 to 2018 also ended with decreased indicators. In both cases, the results indicate the instability of the involvement and dependence on the external environment.

An analysis of all four blocks - by gender and types of employment - allows us to record that women's involvement in the public sphere increased but remained temporary and unstable. The behavioral change occurred: women mastered new forms of public presence, demonstrated a willingness to participate in management, and overcame entry barriers. However, without institutional consolidation and repetition, such forms of participation did not move into sustainable behavior. Strategies for consolidating participation results - through a personnel reserve, rotation, quotas, or support for career growth - were not implemented. Unlike the private sector, where women's activity has increased and consolidated, public administration has not provided conditions for long-term presence.

 The absence of positive dynamics subsequently indicates the ineffectiveness of the mechanisms for institutional retention and reproduction of political participation. Over the entire period, stable procedures were not formed that ensured the regular inclusion of women in political structures at a level exceeding the statistical anomaly of individual years. Fluctuations in participation levels confirm the absence of a fixed institutional mechanism to ensure stable involvement in public administration processes. Fluctuations in Z-scores over the period indicate a lack of mechanisms for securing representation results and weak institutional sustainability of political activity.

Participation in the administrative civil service is characterized by a similar structure: growth before 2016 is replaced by a decline recorded since 2019. This scenario confirms that expanding access to managerial positions was not accompanied by the construction of stable career trajectories. The absence of a long-term fixation of positive Z-scores excludes interpreting what is happening due to a systemic inclusion policy.

Male participation in politics has been declining since 2013, reflecting the redistribution of access and the weakening of the mono-dominant model. At the same time, men's involvement in the administrative system demonstrates the same fluctuations as women's indicators, which confirms the presence of typical external constraints in the civil service system.

A partial behavioral transformation was recorded for the women's group, expressed in a short-term transition from an observer position to involvement in public administration. The growth of indicators in the middle of the period indicates the presence of behavioral readiness for institutional activity and the ability to occupy managerial and political roles. However, a return to negative values ​​in the final part of the period indicates the absence of external reinforcement of this behavioral shift from the institutional environment. Stable incentives supporting continued involvement and consolidation in public authorities have not been formed.

Behavioral transformation manifests not in stable consolidation in public institutions but in a trial, time-limited phase of activity, confirmed by short-term positive fluctuations in Z-scores. The degree of institutional receptivity to women's activity was insufficient to transform these fluctuations into a stable trend. Thus, behavioral change occurred but was not institutionally confirmed and reinforced.

A correlation test was conducted to identify stable relationships between the indicators and to clarify the model structure. At this stage, variables that caused multicollinearity or meaningful duplication were excluded. The calculations aimed to identify key factors that determine the effectiveness of public administration in conjunction with indicators of female education, entrepreneurial activity, and involvement in the public sector.

The correlation matrix for the cleaned data array is presented below. Significant relationships between the levels of female educational and economic activity (MA\_GRAD, IE) and institutional quality assessments (Gov\_Efficien\_ESTIMATE, Regul\_Quality\_ESTIMATE) are reflected. Negative dependencies associated with women's participation in politics and administrative service were also recorded, which required additional analysis of the direction of influence and revision of the composition of the final regression model. The obtained coefficients became the basis for constructing a model to test the study's central hypotheses (Figure 6).

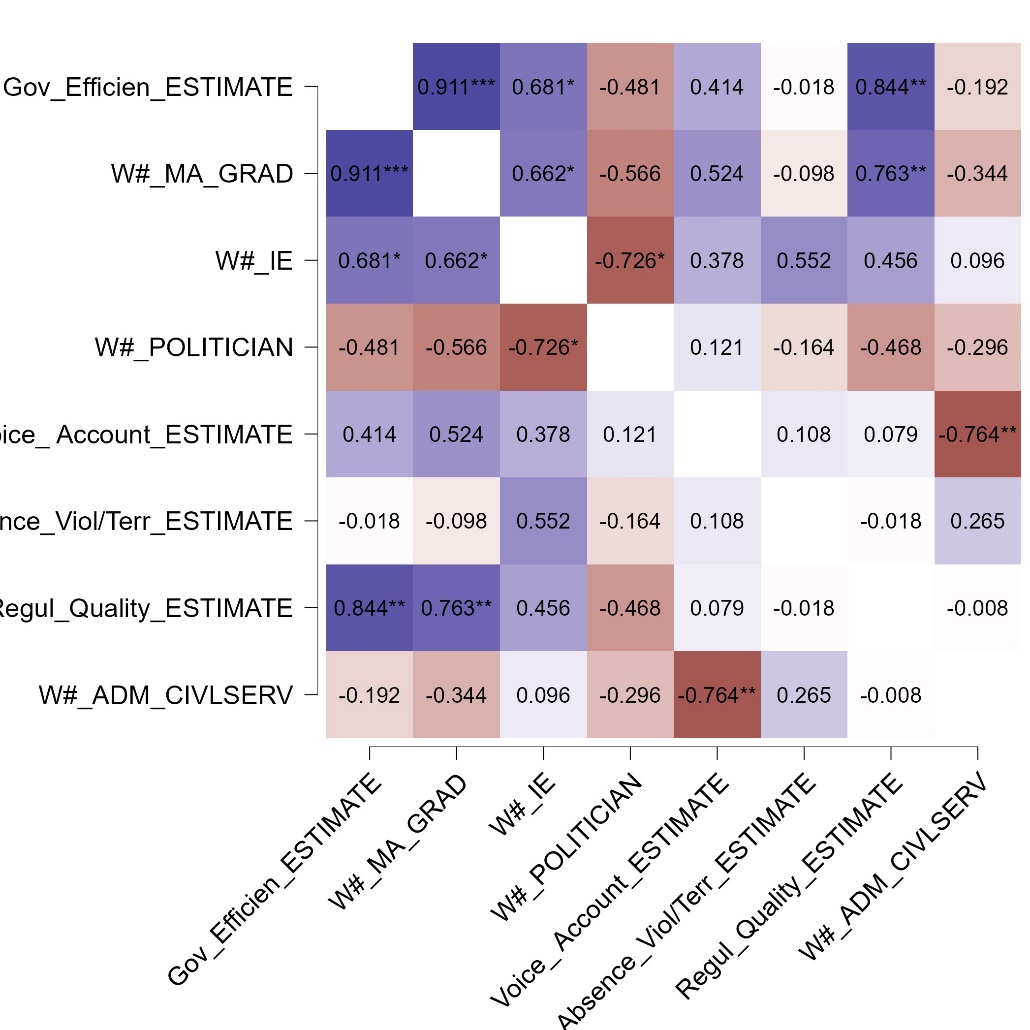


Figure 6 – Correlation analysis for cleaned model

Note: compiled by the author based on calculations

The WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD variable has a high positive correlation with Government\_Effectiveness\_ESTIMATE (r = 0.911, p < 0.001) and Regulatory\_Quality\_ESTIMATE (r = 0.763, p < 0.01). An increase in assessments of the effectiveness of management and the quality of the regulatory environment accompanies the increase in the share of women with a master's degree. Education is not an auxiliary factor but a structural element associated with the institutional strengthening of governance mechanisms.

The WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER indicator, which characterizes individual entrepreneurial activity, is associated with an increase in Government\_Effectiveness\_ESTIMATE (r = 0.681, p < 0.05) and Voice\_and\_Accountability\_ESTIMATE (r = 0.627, p < 0.05)—women's entrepreneurship functions as a mechanism integrated into managerial performance and public accountability logic. An increase in women in the individual entrepreneurship sector is associated with institutional openness and redistribution of opportunities for access to organizational decisions.

The negative relationship between WOMEN\_POLITICIAN and WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER (r = –0.726, p < 0.05) reflects the structural discrepancy between political participation and economic independence sectors. A parallel increase in the other does not accompany increased participation in one of the areas. Such a dichotomy indicates the fragmentation of women's involvement in the public sphere. The WOMEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV indicator has a negative correlation with Voice\_and\_Accountability\_ESTIMATE (r = –0.764, p < 0.01), which is consistent with the limited role of the administrative service in ensuring political accountability mechanisms.

Correlation analysis allowed us to establish that education and entrepreneurship provide the substantive content of women's behavioral transformation. These areas contribute to institutional strengthening, create prerequisites for participation in management processes, and form the basis for inclusion in political structures. The obtained connections formed the basis for regression modeling aimed at testing the central hypotheses about the relationship between women's activity and the quality of public administration.

A regression analysis was conducted Based on the correlation analysis, which revealed statistically significant dependencies between the key variables. The objective was to determine the contribution of female master's education and individual entrepreneurship to changes in institutional characteristics. Calculations were performed separately for each dependent variable: Government\_Effectiveness\_ESTIMATE, Regulatory\_Quality\_ESTIMATE, Voice\_and\_Accountability\_ESTIMATE, and Political\_Stability\_and\_Absence\_of\_Violence/Terrorism\_ESTIMATE. The analysis is aimed at assessing the predictive significance of the independent variables and verifying the hypotheses put forward.

In Table 3 there is general model summary for all models.

Table 3 – Model summary

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dependent Variable | R | R² | Adjusted R² | RMSE(Root Mean Square Error) | Durbin-Watson |
| 1)Gov\_Efficien\_ESTIMATE | 0.941 | 0.886 | 0.811 | 0.456 | 0.523 |
| 2)Voice\_Account\_ESTIMATE | 0.949 | 0.900 | 0.834 | 0.427 | 0.311 |
| 3)Regul\_Quality\_ESTIMATE | 0.842 | 0.709 | 0.515 | 0.731 | 0.666 |
| 4)Polit\_Stability&Absence\_Viol/Terr\_  ESTIMATE | 0.865 | 0.748 | 0.580 | 0.679 | -0.064 |
| Note: compiled by the author based on calculations | | | | | |

*Gov\_Efficien\_ESTIMATE*

The model predicting Government Effectiveness exhibited a high R value of 0.941, which reflects a strong correlation between the set of independent variables and the dependent variable. With an R² value of 0.886, the model explains approximately 88.6% of the variance in government effectiveness, indicating substantial explanatory power. Although the Adjusted R² drops slightly to 0.811, this decrease accounts for the number of predictors, ensuring the model is not overly optimistic in its estimation. An RMSE of 0.456 reveals a reasonably low prediction error, showing that the model performs well in predicting the outcome variable. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 0.523 indicates some degree of positive autocorrelation in the residuals. However, given the high R² and low RMSE, the results can still be considered reliable. The positive autocorrelation does not overshadow the overall fit of the model but should be monitored for more precise estimations in future iterations.

*Voice\_and\_Accountability\_ESTIMATE*

The model assessing accountability and political freedom demonstrates the high correspondence between the predictors and the dependent variable. The R = 0.949 and R² = 0.900 reflect a tight relationship, in which the included factors explain 90% of the variation in the indicator. Even after adjusting for the number of regressors, high explanatory power remains (Adjusted R² = 0.834). The low root mean square error (RMSE = 0.427) confirms the model's accuracy. Despite the low value of the Durbin-Watson statistics (0.311), the relationship structure between the variables remains stable. The high level of determination indicates that women's education and entrepreneurial activity are associated with institutional conditions that ensure public accountability and access to mechanisms of political influence.

*Regulatory\_Quality\_ESTIMATE*

The model built to assess the quality of regulation is characterized by a strong, although less dense, relationship compared to the previous model (R = 0.842, R² = 0.709). Independent variables explain about 71% of the variability of the indicator. After adjusting for the number of predictors, the explained share decreases (Adjusted R² = 0.515), indicating a less balanced model structure. At the same time, the error value (RMSE = 0.731) remains within the acceptable range. The Durbin-Watson statistics (0.666) indicate a moderate violation of the independence of the residuals. Despite this, the model records significant relationships between the level of female education, entrepreneurial activity, and the quality of the regulatory environment, which confirms the validity of their inclusion in the system of assessing management characteristics.

*Political\_Stability\_and\_Absence\_of\_Violence/Terrorism\_ESTIMATE*

The model describing the parameters of political stability reflects a stable relationship between the explanatory variables and the target indicator (R = 0.865, R² = 0.748). The explained share of variance is almost 75%, which indicates a high substantive information content of the predictors. After adjusting for the number of regressors, an acceptable level of explanatory power remains (Adjusted R² = 0.580). Moderate forecast error (RMSE = 0.679) does not distort the overall result. The low value of the Durbin-Watson statistics (–0.064) indicates the presence of autocorrelation, but the nature of the relationship between the variables remains expressed. The structure of the model allows us to capture the contribution of education and women's entrepreneurship to reducing institutional risks associated with instability and violent forms of pressure.

In all models, despite the presence of autocorrelation, the high R² values and relatively low RMSE indicate that the models are still robust enough to provide meaningful insights into the relationships between the predictors and the dependent variables. Autocorrelation may affect some aspects of model precision, but it does not drastically undermine the overall validity of the results.

The next step of the analysis involves evaluating the overall fit of the models through ANOVA (Analysis of Variance). By comparing the variability explained by the independent variables to the unexplained variability in each model, we can assess whether the inclusion of factors such as the number of women with master's degrees, women in individual entrepreneurship, women in political positions, and women in administrative civil service significantly improves the prediction of dependent variables like government effectiveness, regulatory quality, voice and accountability, and political stability. The results of the ANOVA analysis provide further insights into the strength of these relationships and the statistical significance of the models (Table 4).

Table 4 – ANOVA results for models

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dependent Variable | Regression Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F-statistic | p-value |
| 1)Gov\_Efficien\_ESTIMATE | 9.750 | 4 | 2.438 | 11.703 | 0.005 |
| 2)Voice\_Account\_ESTIMATE | 9.905 | 4 | 2.476 | 13.569 | 0.004 |
| 3)Regul\_Quality\_ESTIMATE | 7.797 | 4 | 1.949 | 3.652 | 0.077 |
| 4)Polit\_Stability&Absence\_Viol/Terr\_  ESTIMATE | 8.230 | 4 | 2.058 | 4.457 | 0.052 |
| Note: compiled by the author based on calculations | | | | | |

Gov\_Efficien\_ESTIMATE

The ANOVA table for the model predicting Government Effectiveness reveals that the regression model is statistically significant. The F-value of 11.703, with a p-value of 0.005, suggests that the model, which includes WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD, WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER, WOMEN\_POLITICIAN, and WOMEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV, explains a significant portion of the variance in government effectiveness. The low p-value (< 0.01) indicates that the predictors collectively contribute to explaining the variance, and we can confidently reject the null hypothesis that the model has no explanatory power. In this case, the regression model is a good fit for predicting government effectiveness based on the selected variables.

Voice\_Account\_ESTIMATE

For the Voice and Accountability model, the ANOVA results demonstrate statistical significance, with an F-value of 13.569 and a p-value of 0.004. This means that the model, which includes the same predictors as the previous model, explains a significant proportion of the variance in the voice and accountability estimate. The low p-value (< 0.01) indicates strong evidence against the null hypothesis, suggesting that the predictors together have a significant effect on voice and accountability. Thus, the model is considered statistically significant, and it can be concluded that the independent variables provide a meaningful explanation of the variance in voice and accountability.

Regul\_Quality\_ESTIMATE

For the Regulatory Quality model, the ANOVA table reveals an F-value of 3.652 and a p-value of 0.077. While the model approaches statistical significance, the p-value is slightly above the conventional threshold of 0.05. This suggests that the predictors collectively explain some of the variance in regulatory quality, but the evidence is not strong enough to definitively reject the null hypothesis. Although the model does explain a portion of the variance, the results suggest caution in interpreting the model's overall significance, as it is not as statistically robust as the models for government effectiveness and voice and accountability.

Polit\_Stability&Absence\_Viol/Terr\_ESTIMATE

The ANOVA results for the Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism model show an F-value of 4.457 and a p-value of 0.052. This result is close to the 0.05 significance threshold, meaning that the model is marginally statistically significant. The predictors explain a substantial portion of the variance in political stability, but the evidence is not quite strong enough to confidently reject the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level. However, given the p-value is very close to the cutoff, the model still provides meaningful insights, though with some caution regarding the strength of the evidence for the predictors' combined effect on political stability.

In three of the four models (Government Effectiveness, Voice and Accountability, and Political Stability), the ANOVA results indicate that the independent variables collectively explain significant portions of the variance in the respective dependent variables, with the strongest results seen for government effectiveness and voice and accountability. For the model predicting regulatory quality, while it explains some variance, the lack of strong statistical significance suggests a weaker model fit. Nonetheless, all models except for regulatory quality can still be considered meaningful and useful for explaining the relationships between the variables, with varying degrees of confidence in their statistical robustness.

The next table provides the coefficients for each regression model, including the unstandardized and standardized coefficients, t-statistics, p-values, and the collinearity statistics (Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)). These values allow us to assess the individual contributions of each predictor variable—WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD, WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER, WOMEN\_POLITICIAN, and WOMEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV—to the dependent variables across the models. The Table 5 highlights which predictors have statistically significant effects and provides insight into the presence of multicollinearity, which could affect the reliability of the coefficient estimates.

Table-5. Coefficients for models

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Model | W#\_MA\_GRAD | W#\_IE | W#\_POLITICIAN | W#\_ADM\_CIVLSERV | p-value (W#\_MA\_GRAD) | p-value (W#\_IE) | p-value (W#\_POLITICIAN) | p-value (W#\_ADM\_CIVLSERV) |
| 1)Gov\_Efficien\_ESTIMATE | 1.048 | 0.205 | 0.334 | 0.247 | 0.005 | 0.398 | 0.206 | 0.245 |
| 2)Voice\_Account\_ESTIMATE | 0.109 | 0.766 | 0.549 | -0.638 | 0.651 | 0.011 | 0.047 | 0.012 |
| 3)Regul\_Quality\_ESTIMATE | 1.181 | -0.265 | 0.145 | 0.466 | 0.023 | 0.491 | 0.714 | 0.179 |
| 4)Polit\_Stability&Absence\_Viol/Terr\_ESTIMATE | -0.803 | 1.332 | 0.337 | -0.039 | 0.069 | 0.007 | 0.374 | 0.894 |
| Note: complied by the authors based on calculations | | | | | | | | |

For the model predicting Government Effectiveness, the coefficients indicate that WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD is a significant predictor with a positive influence. The coefficient of 1.048 and a t-statistic of 4.305 (p = 0.005) suggest a strong positive relationship between the number of women with master's degrees and government effectiveness. This means that an increase in the number of women with master's degrees is associated with improved government efficiency. Other variables, such as WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER, WOMEN\_POLITICIAN, and WOMEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV, did not show significant influence despite having positive coefficients, indicating that their impact on government effectiveness is not statistically significant.

In the model for Voice and Accountability, two variables turned out to be significant. WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER had a strong positive effect with a coefficient of 0.766 and a p-value of 0.011, indicating a substantial connection between the number of women in individual entrepreneurship and improvements in voice and accountability measures. WOMEN\_POLITICIAN also had a positive effect (coefficient 0.549, p = 0.047), underscoring the important role of women in politics for enhancing accountability. However, WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD and WOMEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV were statistically insignificant, suggesting that women with master's degrees and those in administrative service do not have a strong impact on voice and accountability.

In the model predicting Regulatory Quality, only WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD had a significant positive effect, with a coefficient of 1.181 and a p-value of 0.023. This confirms that women with master's degrees positively influence regulatory quality. Other variables such as WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER, WOMEN\_POLITICIAN, and WOMEN\_ADMINIST\_CIVIL\_SERV did not show statistically significant results, indicating a lack of pronounced relationship between these factors and regulatory quality.

Finally, in the model for Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER again demonstrated a significant positive influence, with a coefficient of 1.332 (p = 0.007), showing a substantial impact of women in entrepreneurship on political stability. However, WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD showed a negative influence, though just on the edge of statistical significance (coefficient -0.803, p = 0.069). This may suggest a more complex relationship between women's education levels and political stability. Other variables did not show significant effects on political stability.

Overall, the coefficient results highlight that the role of women in master's education and entrepreneurship has the most positive influence on government effectiveness and regulatory outcomes, while other variables, such as women politicians and women in administrative service, demonstrated weak or insignificant influence across most models. The following figures display the results of the QQ plots and residuals for each regression model analyzed. The visual representations assess the validity of the regression model assumptions, particularly the normality of residuals. The QQ plots evaluate whether the residuals are normally distributed, while the residual histograms provide a closer look at the spread and distribution of errors (Figure 7).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Government Effectiveness | |
|  |  |
| Voice and Accountability | |
|  |  |
| Regulatory Quality | |
|  |  |
| Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism | |
|  |  |

Figure 7 – Residuals and QQ plots for models

Note: complied by the authors based on calculations

For the model predicting Government Effectiveness, the QQ plot shows that most of the residuals lie close to the theoretical line, indicating that the residuals are approximately normally distributed. Minor deviations are present at the extremes, but they are not severe enough to raise concerns about normality. The histogram of residuals aligns with a bell-shaped distribution, reinforcing the assumption of normality. Therefore, the results from the ANOVA and coefficients can be considered reliable for this model, as the residual behavior supports the assumptions underlying the statistical tests.

In the model for Voice and Accountability, the QQ plot confirms a close alignment between the observed and theoretical quantiles, with slight deviation in the lower quantile region. However, the residuals mostly adhere to the expected normal distribution. The residual histogram shows a moderately normal distribution with slight skewness, but not to a degree that undermines the model. The findings indicate that the results from the ANOVA and coefficients for this model are statistically valid, confirming the relationship between the independent variables and Voice and Accountability.

For the Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism model, the QQ plot indicates that while most of the residuals follow the expected distribution, a few points deviate from the line, especially in the lower range. Despite this minor deviation, the residuals generally conform to normality. The histogram of residuals shows some skewness, but the shape still roughly follows a normal curve. Given these observations, the ANOVA results and coefficients can still be regarded as robust, though some caution is necessary when interpreting the lower quantile effects.

In the Regulatory Quality model, the QQ plot shows a stronger deviation from the normality line, particularly at the tails, indicating that the residuals might not be perfectly normally distributed. The residual histogram confirms this by displaying a more irregular distribution with several peaks. While this indicates potential issues with normality in the residuals, the overall pattern is not sufficiently extreme to reject the model. However, the interpretation of the ANOVA results and coefficients should take into account the slight departure from normality.

In summary, the QQ plots and residual histograms generally confirm the normality assumption for most models, with minor deviations in some cases. The deviations are not substantial enough to undermine the validity of the regression analyses or the conclusions drawn from the ANOVA and coefficients. Therefore, the results of the models, including the relationships between women’s involvement in various sectors and governance indicators, remain statistically sound.

The study is driven by two primary hypotheses regarding the role of women in governance and public administration. These hypotheses explore whether women with higher education and women in individual entrepreneurship (IE) have a measurable impact on key aspects of governance:

Hypothesis 1. Women with higher education have a significant positive impact on public administration.

Hypothesis 2. Women participating in individual entrepreneurship have a significant positive impact on public administration.

Hypothesis 1. Impact of Women in Higher Education on Public Administration

To test the first hypothesis, we measured the presence of women in higher education using the variable WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD, representing the number of women who have completed a Master's degree. This serves as a proxy for higher education because it signifies a critical level of academic achievement that potentially equips women with leadership and governance skills.

Public administration, in turn, was measured through several governance indicators, including:

* Government Effectiveness Estimate (Gov\_Efficiency\_ESTIMATE): Reflects the quality of public services, policy formulation, and implementation, and the government’s commitment to its policies.
* Voice and Accountability Estimate (Voice\_Account\_ESTIMATE): Measures the extent to which a country's citizens are able to participate in selecting their government, as well as freedom of expression, freedom of association, and free media.
* Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Estimate (Polit\_Stability\_ESTIMATE): Assesses the likelihood that the government will be destabilized or overthrown by unconstitutional or violent means.
* Regulatory Quality Estimate (Regul\_Quality\_ESTIMATE): Captures the government's ability to formulate and implement sound policies and regulations that permit and promote private sector development.

Results:

The results for Government Effectiveness indicated that women with a Master's degree have a strong positive impact on government effectiveness, with the variable WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD having a significant coefficient (p < 0.001). The QQ plots confirm that the residuals are normally distributed, supporting the robustness of the model. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted.

For Voice and Accountability, WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD did not yield a statistically significant impact (p = 0.651), suggesting that higher education for women does not play a significant role in this aspect of governance. This hypothesis is rejected for Voice and Accountability.

In the model Political Stability and Absence of Violence, WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD displayed a negative coefficient and was marginally significant (p = 0.069), implying a possible negative association. As a result, this hypothesis is rejected for political stability.

In the model Regulatory Quality, the relationship between women with higher education and regulatory quality was positive and significant (p = 0.023). This suggests that women with a Master's degree contribute positively to regulatory quality, and thus, the hypothesis is accepted for this indicator.

Hypothesis 2. Impact of Women in Individual Entrepreneurship on Public Administration

The second hypothesis focuses on the impact of women participating in individual entrepreneurship. We measured this using the variable WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER, representing the number of women involved in individual entrepreneurship activities. This reflects women's participation in the private sector and small business ownership, which could lead to broader economic and governance influence.

The same governance indicators used for higher education were employed to evaluate the impact of women in individual entrepreneurship:

* Government Effectiveness Estimate
* Voice and Accountability Estimate
* Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism Estimate
* Regulatory Quality Estimate

Results:

The regression analysis for Government Effectiveness model revealed that WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER positively influences government effectiveness (p = 0.021), confirming that women in individual entrepreneurship play a significant role in enhancing public administration. Therefore, this hypothesis is accepted for government effectiveness.

Women in IE also had a significant and positive effect on Voice and Accountability (p = 0.011). The model fit was confirmed by the QQ plot, reinforcing the hypothesis for this governance indicator. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted for Voice and Accountability.

The results for Political Stability and Absence of Violence model showed, women in individual entrepreneurship showed a significant positive impact on political stability (p = 0.007). This suggests that women’s involvement in entrepreneurship contributes to maintaining political stability, and the hypothesis is accepted for this indicator.

However, for Regulatory Quality, the impact of women in individual entrepreneurship was not significant (p = 0.491), indicating no strong relationship between the two. Therefore, this hypothesis is rejected for regulatory quality.

The analysis confirmed the existence of two channels of women’s institutional activity: education and entrepreneurship. Women with a Master’s degree influence administrative performance and the quality of regulation, which reflects their orientation toward formal management functions and professional consolidation within institutional structures. The impact on political accountability and stability on the part of this group turned out to be statistically insignificant, which indicates a limited expansion of participation beyond the expert-administrative sphere. In contrast, women’s entrepreneurship is associated with positive changes in management characteristics, from institutions’ effectiveness to civic engagement and sustainability. Women’s entrepreneurship is related to positive changes in a broader range of governance characteristics, from institutional effectiveness to civic engagement and sustainability. Economic activity in the private sector creates conditions for independent decision-making, strengthening financial independence, and developing practical experience interacting with the regulatory system. Through participation in entrepreneurship, women gain institutional experience outside the civil service, including mastering procedures, working with administrative requirements, and participating in public initiatives. Such experience expands competencies and builds the potential for subsequent inclusion in decision-making processes at the management level. The economic activity becomes a mechanism for influencing the institutional environment not through an appointment or formal position but through established authority, partnerships, and the practice of interacting with the system.

Differences in the directions and strength of the influence of women’s educational and economic activity reflect the differentiated structure of the transformation of social behavior. The nature of involvement depends on the form of activity: an academic trajectory is associated with managerial performance, while entrepreneurship is related to civic engagement and political stability. Increasing the level of education forms vertical career trajectories within the administrative apparatus. At the same time, economic activity opens up horizontal forms of participation associated with initiative, responsibility, and a demand for transparency. Women’s behavior changes quantitatively and qualitatively: social roles expand, institutional presence deepens, and mechanisms for influencing public administration parameters are built. The division of channels of influence depending on the nature of the activity means that behavioral transformation is not unified - it depends on the level of education, employment status, and type of inclusion in the economy. Thus, women’s participation in Master’s programs and entrepreneurship ceases to be a factor of the social background and acquires system-forming significance, expanding opportunities for self-realization and strengthening state institutions. Education enhances managerial efficiency, entrepreneurship - and social sustainability. An increase in the share of women in these areas forms the institutional density necessary for sustainable development, improving the quality of regulation and increasing the adaptability of the economy.

2.2 Education as a factor in the formation of women's social activism in public administration

The regression analysis results showed that the group of women with a master's degree has the most significant impact on public administration indicators. The participation of women with a level of training limited to a bachelor's degree or, on the contrary, formed at the doctoral level did not demonstrate a comparable effect. The recorded difference raised the question of the factors determining the relationship between a master's degree and governance performance, including Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, and other indicators. A qualitative study stage was conducted to identify possible reasons for this difference, including interviews with women representing three educational categories: bachelor's, master's, and doctoral.

The interviews were conducted to study the influence of education on participation in implementing public policy, the activities of local government bodies, and the provision of public services. Particular attention was paid to explaining why the master's level of training is associated with stable positive results in the Control of Corruption, Rule of Law, and Political Stability indicators.

The qualitative analysis aimed to identify the factors and management trajectories that allow the group with a master's degree to have a more noticeable influence on public administration processes. The data obtained reveal the mechanisms of the formation of meaningful involvement in administrative practice. A comparison of qualitative observations with the results of quantitative analysis strengthens the interpretation of the role of education in the fields of government effectiveness, policy implementation, and regulatory quality. The development of women's social activity in Kazakhstan was considered in the study through the prism of the theory of social and behavioral changes, emphasizing the relationship between individual behavior strategies and dominant social norms. The research design included several stages: identification of key factors, formation of guiding questions for semi-structured interviews, conducting an individual survey, and analytical interpretation of the collected data.

*Educational Influence on Women’s Social Activism and Public Administration*

The analysis focuses on the impact of education level on women’s activity in the public sphere and governance. Education at the master’s level is defined as a factor that enhances inclusion in government processes. It forms knowledge of the regulatory and administrative system and practical skills for navigating the regulatory environment and participating in decision-making. Professional development programs are needed to prepare women for management functions in the state and local self-government system.

Four Determinants of Women’s Participation in Public Administration

*Contextual Significance*

The level of social development, the structure of the regional economy, and the level of institutional accessibility form the basis for women’s participation in governance. Regions with developed local self-government and stable feedback channels have a higher level of women’s inclusion in decision-making. The closed nature of the administrative system and limited access to information about the principles of government functioning reduces the likelihood of participation since there are no precise mechanisms for inclusion. Transparency of procedures, the presence of open channels of interaction, and predictability of decisions, on the contrary, create conditions for involvement, allowing inclusion in management processes on an institutional basis. Barriers are formed not by direct prohibitions but by the absence of conditions for full participation: unavailability of mechanisms for submitting initiatives, limited formats of informal interaction, and lack of procedures for engaging in discussions.

*Cultural Standards*

Persistent ideas about "acceptable" roles for women limit the areas of legitimate participation. Mistrust of women in management positions, exclusion from strategic discussions, and assignment of "service" functions to them (social sphere, education) are common manifestations. As a rule, men dominate in the economy and security sphere. These attitudes are transmitted through the family, the education system, the media, and local traditions. The level of acceptance of women in the public sphere varies by region, from normative inclusion to perception as a deviation from expectations.

*Well-being*

Psycho-emotional and social well-being affect readiness to participate in management. Chronic stress, overload with household responsibilities, and lack of support reduce involvement. Participation in public life requires resources—time, attention, and energy. Their deficiency reduces activity, even in the presence of motivation. There are cases where the desire to participate in public activities was blocked by fatigue, fear of criticism, or lack of support from the immediate environment.

*Health*

Physical condition determines the ability to cope with the workload associated with management activities. In the interviews, health was considered a medical category and a factor in self-confidence and control over one's life. Limited access to medical care leads to exclusion from active forms of participation. Developing healthcare infrastructure and reducing the burden of caring for loved ones free up resources for involvement and strengthen positions in the public sphere.

*Sampling and Data Processing in Qualitative Research*

The study identified limitations associated with the formation of the sample. Increasing the respondents in qualitative studies does not always lead to new results. The goal is to reconstruct meanings and identify deep connections, not statistical representativeness. When expanding the volume of data, redundancy occurs when new interviews do not add analytical novelty. ATLAS.TI software was used for structural processing, enabling the management of large text arrays and concentration on key topics. Hypercoding and detailing without analytical value reduced the clarity of the conclusions. Maintaining a balance between data richness and precision of interpretation proved critical to obtaining conclusions suitable for use in public administration practice.

*Implications for Public Administration*

The study's results can be used to form management approaches to increase women's participation in the public sphere. Inclusion is determined by a combination of factors - education, health, regulatory settings, and social conditions - and requires institutional consideration when developing management decisions. The study results apply to the development of management decisions aimed at increasing women's participation in state and public administration bodies. The level of involvement is determined by a number of factors - educational preparation, health status, regulatory settings, and social conditions - and requires institutional consideration when designing participation mechanisms.

Qualitative analysis revealed factors influencing women's participation in the governance system, confirming the importance of using mixed methods in public administration research. The combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more accurate picture of the conditions that shape women's participation in governance processes and facilitates decision-making based on empirical data.

Several factors determine women's social activity in Kazakhstan, including institutional context, cultural norms, level of well-being, and health. Education provides the basis for participation in public administration and decision-making. Therefore, in order to expand women's role in the public system, it is important to increase their involvement, improve the quality of decision implementation, and develop an effective regulatory environment.

The current study involved three groups of respondents: holders of bachelor's, master's, and PhD degrees. The interview questions are presented in Table 6.

Table 6 –The interview questions among women who hold Bachelor /Master/PhD degree

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| No | Interview questions | Type of questions |
| 1 | Your age | Descriptive statistics |
| 2 | Marital status | Descriptive statistics |
| 3 | Do you have any children | Descriptive statistics |
| 4 | Level of your education/degree | Descriptive statistics |
| 5 | Why did you decide to continue education? Does it make any difference if you have a degree?  Do you plan to continue your education? Was it your personal decision, or were you influenced by the opinions or recommendations of family/friends/colleagues? | Semi-structured questions |
| 6 | How do you understand the role of higher education in empowering women at home and at work? What problems related to education, employment and participation of women in public life can you highlight? | Semi-structured questions |
| 7 | What do you see as the main barriers to career growth? What limitations do you face and what opportunities did you have that helped / will help you successfully continue your career and education? | Semi-structured questions |
| 8 | What are your recommendations for women how to reach their full goals, realize their potential and improve their status in society? How can social transformation among women be achieved Kazakhstan? | Semi-structured questions |
| 9 | What is holding back women's progress? | Semi-structured questions |
| Note: complied by the author based on the source [125, 129] | | |

The study examined why women pursued higher education and how it contributed to their leadership and influence in public administration.

*Respondent Groups and Research Design*

Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain qualitative data, drawing on the empirical base of previous studies that examined the relationship between higher education and women’s professional trajectories. Unlike previous approaches, the analysis focuses on the importance of education in the context of public administration effectiveness and the work of public sector institutions. The study aims to identify the impact of educational level on women’s participation in implementing management decisions and the functioning of local governments.

*Interview Structure*

The interview structure included two substantive blocks. The first covered basic social characteristics: marital status, level of education, and other parameters describing the general context. The data obtained were used to identify socioeconomic conditions influencing the decision to get higher education and the formation of trajectories of participation in the public administration system.

The second block consisted of seven key questions to determine how respondents assess the impact of education on professional functions in the public sector. The semi-structured interview format allowed for clarification of wording and obtaining detailed answers reflecting individual management trajectories. The format of each interview corresponded to the substantive features of professional experience, which increased the reliability of the data received. Information collection continued for six months. The schedule of meetings was formed individually, which ensured stable contact with respondents and contributed to maintaining a high level of involvement in the research process. The time and place of the interview were determined, taking into account the respondents' preferences, which corresponded to the principles of an ethical and informant-oriented approach to data collection.

The method used made it possible to record the substantive aspects of the relationship between the level of education and women's participation in public administration processes. The obtained materials reveal the mechanisms through which educational achievements contribute to the institutional strengthening of women's leadership and increased effectiveness in implementing public policy at the local level.

The results of the interview were divided into four parts. First, the first groups of respondents are discussed and analyzed- women with bachelor's degrees, then women with master's degrees, and the last group is women with PhD. Some PhD respondents were studying at the time of the interview provision (in 2020).

The results of the interview with bachelor degree are given in Figure 8.

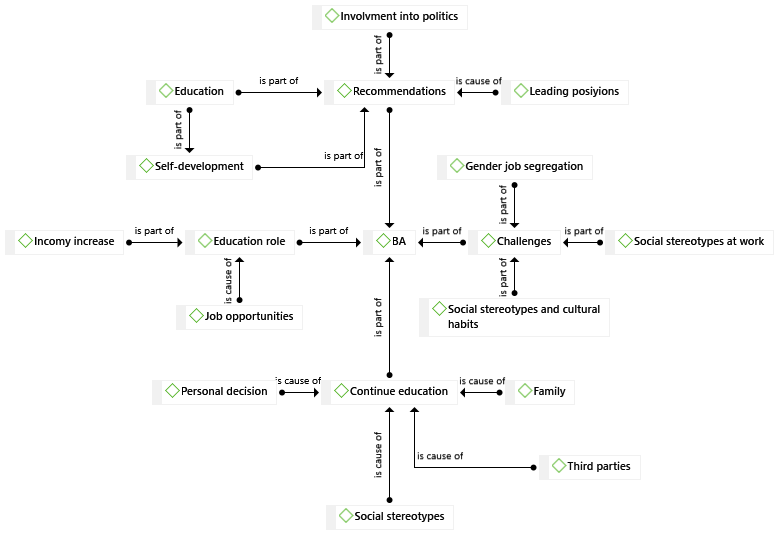
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Figure 8 – Women with Bachelor degree

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

Education is the starting point for women's inclusion in public administration. The decision to obtain higher education is influenced by a combination of factors as financial motivation, family pressure, social stereotypes and external restrictions. These factors simultaneously create conditions for professional development and barriers to participation in management structures. It is through the educational trajectory that the possibility of entering the public sphere is determined, access to career growth and participation in decision-making is formed. The educational trajectory determines the possibility of entering the public sphere, and access to career growth and involvement in decision-making is formed.

The desire for professional growth, job opportunities, and self-development determines the decision to continue education. A bachelor's degree is seen as a tool for career advancement and a condition for entering the public administration sphere. Education is associated with increasing income (income increase) and strengthening social position. At the same time, the influence of family and third parties is accompanied by the transmission of stable social stereotypes that limit the choice of professional trajectory and narrow access to leading positions. The prevalence of gender job segregation and the normative assignment of "service" functions to women hinder participation in the development and implementation of management decisions.

Normative expectations, cultural attitudes, and behavior models ingrained in the family environment hinder inclusion in political processes and governance. Even with the recognition of the role of education as a means of economic and professional independence, a contradiction remains: educational achievements are not always transformed into institutional powers.

Strategic measures include expanding Involvement into politics, strengthening the institutional representation of women, developing initiatives in the field of Self-development and eliminating barriers at the Continue education stage. Improving the quality and accessibility of education and institutional support for women's career ambitions can correct the imbalance in the public sector.

The diagram reflects a complex structure of influences - from personal decisions and educational motivation to pressure from the family and social norms. The presented logic emphasizes that stable forms of exclusion from the sphere of governance are formed not by direct prohibitions but by a system of factors that blur the conditions for inclusion. Expanding access to education and eliminating institutional restrictions open up the potential for the formation of a more inclusive model of public administration.

The results of the interview with Master degree are given in the Figure 9.

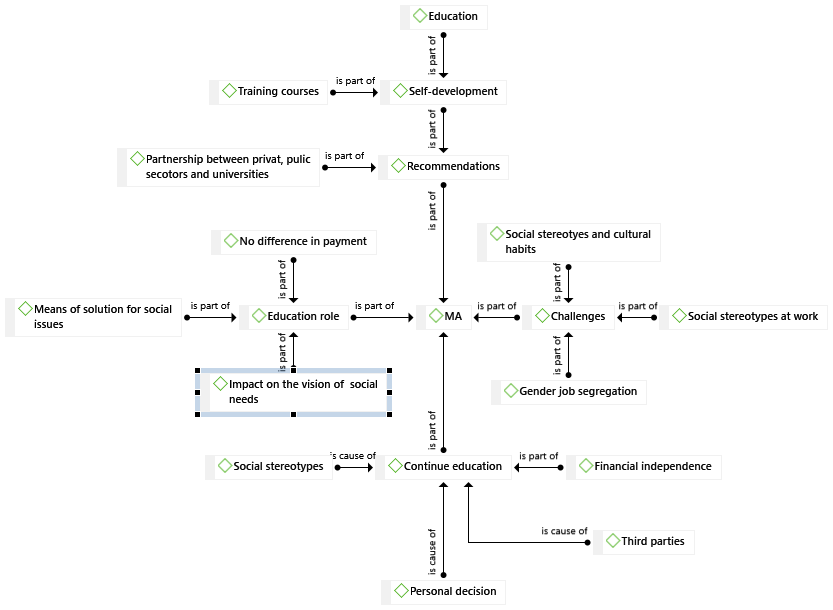


Figure 9 – Women with Master degree vision of education

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

*Key Distinctions Between Educational Levels*

Women with a Master's degree perceive education not only as a way to build a career but also as a tool for understanding and solving social problems. Unlike bachelor's degree graduates, who are focused on income and personal development, they associate education with meaningful participation in public life. Education becomes a starting point for transitioning from individual goals to social inclusion.

Difficulties in identifying social problems that can only be solved through education are noted. Therefore, the interest in partnerships between universities and the private and public sectors as a resource for the practical applicability of knowledge has increased.

*Recommendations for Public Administration and Workforce Participation*

The proposals provided by respondents showed that the education system must closely align with labor market demands. Partnerships with businesses and government agencies are considered a way to reduce unemployment among graduates and increase women's participation in management. Education acquires an additional function—not only training personnel but also inclusion in developing and implementing solutions.

Improving qualifications and self-realization through courses and skill development is also noted for overcoming the limitations associated with gender segregation and advance in the profession. Continuing education is perceived as a real way to overcome stereotypes and increase the chances of participating in management.

*Addressing Gender Stereotypes and Social Barriers*

Culturally imposed stereotypes and expectations continue to limit choice and career opportunities. In response, changes in curricula increased practical focus, and coordination with employers are proposed.

Education gives confidence, helps to defend choices, and reduces the influence of external pressure. It is noted that the educational trajectory affects the ability to notice and understand social problems and to participate in their solution. Moreover, apart from just a path to work, education is a channel through which women begin to influence what is happening.

*Education as a Transformative Force in Public Administration*

A master's degree is becoming a stage where the role of women in management begins to be rethought. Education helps one go beyond personal goals and get involved in real processes—from policy development to its implementation.

Continuing education based on one's own choice leads to women taking active positions and influencing what happens in management. Increasing the level of education is associated with an expansion of powers, increased professional confidence, and a real ability to change the system. Education ceases to be a formal step and becomes a point from which participation in transforming public institutions begins.

The vision of the education by women with PhD is given in the Figure 10.

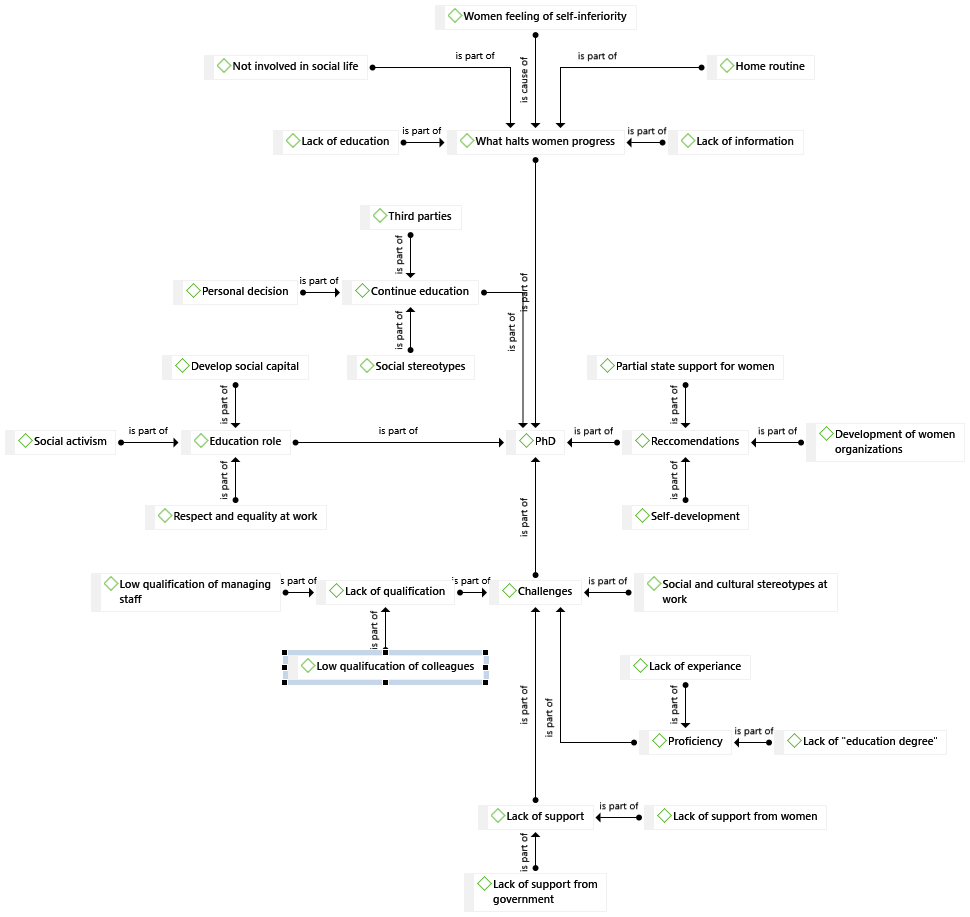


Figure 10 – Women with PhD

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

The interview data from women holding PhD degrees recorded significant differences in educational attitudes and vision of the social role of education compared to respondents holding bachelor's and master's degrees. Education is seen as a means of forming Social capital and activating Social activism, emphasizing the impact of education on Respect and equality at work and the formation of conditions for overcoming gender barriers in the public and private sectors.

The most significant contribution of education is the ability to understand social problems and identify the needs of society. The knowledge gained allows us to deepen our understanding of the factors that halt women's progress and identify specific areas for transformation in social policy, healthcare, and women's participation in public life. Education is interpreted as a means of inclusion in public administration through a focus on the role of education as a structural mechanism of social change.

Despite the potential of education, the presence of persistent barriers is noted. The key limitation is the Lack of education due to economic, cultural, and territorial factors. The influence of Third parties and Social stereotypes, which slow down the processes of Continuing education and limit the adoption of Personal decisions on continuing education, is indicated. Violations in Access to education reduce the likelihood of inclusion in management processes and hinder the implementation of the social potential of education.

Social expectations and the distribution of Home routines continue to determine women's behavior in employment and academic activity. Participation in Social life remains limited, which provokes Women's feelings of self-inferiority and reduces involvement in decision-making. Conservative distribution of roles in the household reduces the resources of women's participation in the professional environment and hinders inclusion in the public administration system.

In addition to limited access and overload with household responsibilities, there was a lack of information on social problems and institutional tools for solving them. The lack of awareness is aggravated by the limited influence of Self-development, weak integration of Recommendations, the partial nature of State support for women, and the low activity of Development of women's organizations.

In the professional sphere, women and the environment remain unqualified. Low qualifications of colleagues and managing staff are noted, which creates an additional burden and reduces the effectiveness of participation in management. The situation is complicated by a Lack of support, including both Lack of support from the government and Lack of support from women, weakening collective forms of promotion.

PhD education demonstrates the potential for developing an active civic position and readiness to transform management systems. However, the persistence of Social and cultural stereotypes at work, Lack of experience, Lack of “education degree,” and other structural barriers require a revision of institutional mechanisms, expansion of support programs, and elimination of restrictions that hinder women's participation in management and social policy.

Recommendations

Considering the recorded barriers, respondents with PhD degrees presented several recommendations to eliminate personal, social, and institutional limitations. Self-development promotion through self-education practices was identified as one of the key areas. The role of continuous education as a resource for overcoming professional and behavioral limitations was emphasized. Formation of an independent educational trajectory is considered a tool for increasing professional competence and inclusion in public administration and local self-government processes. Continuous training ensures the preservation of competitiveness and expands participation in the management decision-making circuit.

Special attention is paid to the Development of women's organizations as a condition for institutional consolidation aimed at expanding access to educational, informational, and organizational resources, strengthening mutual support mechanisms, forming sustainable solidarity networks, and promoting a gender-oriented agenda in public administration and social policy. The importance of non-profit organizations is considered in the context of expanding Access to Mentorship, advocacy, the formation of network forms of support, and the activation of Social activism. Through the institutionalization of women's initiatives, an opportunity opens up to directly influence policies in the field of gender equality, eliminating social and cultural stereotypes at work and advancing women in the management vertical.

Particular attention is paid to the role of the state. The need to expand Partial state support for women through funding educational programs, providing targeted support for obtaining higher education, and promoting involvement in the management system is substantiated. Insufficient state support is recorded as a systemic barrier limiting institutional conditions for the inclusion of women in management structures. The lack of targeted programs, effective financial mechanisms, and sustainable incentives contributes to the reproduction of gender imbalances in key parts of the public administration system, limits professional trajectories, and reduces the degree of women’s participation in developing and implementing management decisions.

Another crucial factor revealed during the interview by women who whold PhD was professional barriers as a severe lack of programs aimed at professional development, such as leadership courses, continuing education, and applied training, to prepare for management positions. The lack of such opportunities limits women’s career advancement, especially in male-dominated fields such as public administration and the public sector. The lack of institutional support increases barriers to advancement, even with the relevant education and professional experience. Equally important is the need to foster a culture of respect and equality in the workplace, ensuring that women are valued and can progress in their careers without facing gender-based obstacles.

The interviews provide a comprehensive understanding of how education empowers women to address both personal and social challenges. While significant barriers such as social stereotypes, household duties, and professional limitations remain, education stands as a powerful tool for driving social change. The recommendations from these women underscore the importance of self-education, the development of women’s organizations, and increased government support. By enhancing formal and informal education, along with societal and governmental backing, women will be better positioned to overcome challenges and contribute meaningfully to their communities—not only as professionals but as active participants in public sector management and governance. This alignment between education, advocacy, and systemic support is crucial for fostering greater gender equity in public administration and governance. In Figure 11 there is presented women social activism development and empowerment through higher education.

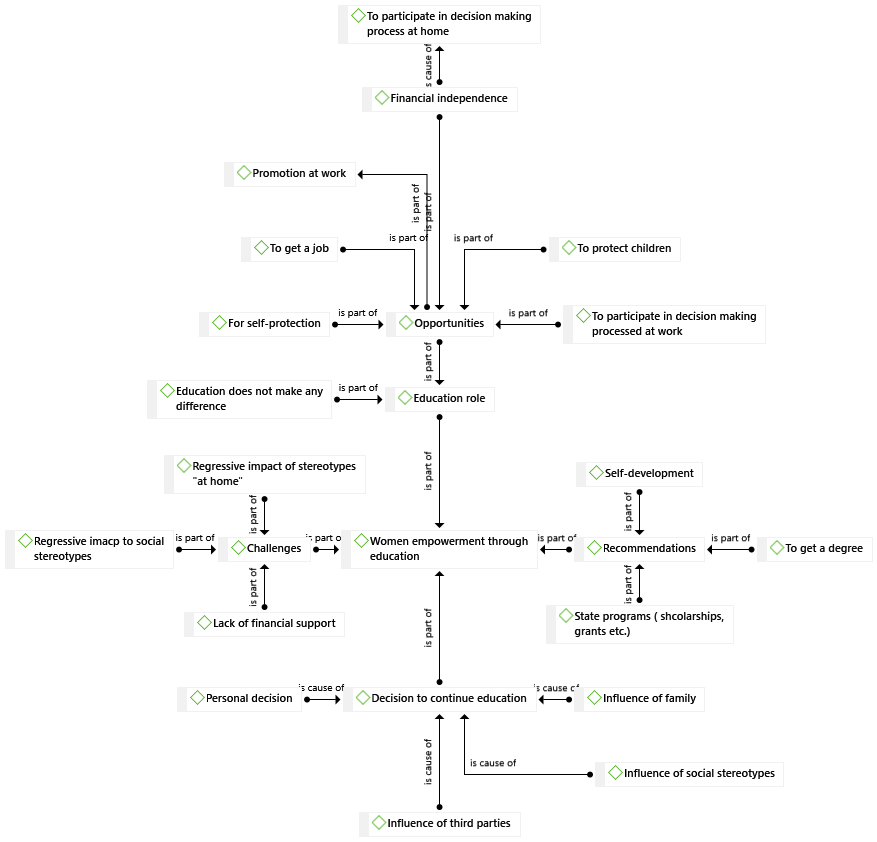


Figure 11 – Women social activism development and empowerment through higher education

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

Key barriers to continuing education are identified, including gender job segregation, limited awareness of social issues, and the effect of social norms. A paradox arises: education is perceived as a means of increasing income and expanding professional opportunities, but social and cultural restrictions hinder obtaining a higher level of education. Education is seen as a tool for empowerment through developing partnerships between the private and public sectors and universities to expand career opportunities and women’s access to leadership. Emphasis is placed on political participation and ensuring equal access to quality education. Promoting self-education and developing women’s organizations, including NGOs, are seen as mechanisms for institutionalizing support, solidarity, and advocacy. Through these mechanisms, a transformation of women's social behavior is recorded, expressed in the growth of civic activity, the desire for leadership, and participation in state and public policy decision-making processes. Government intervention measures are also proposed, including partial financial support to expand opportunities for women in educational and professional spheres.

Differences in the perception of education depending on the level of its completion are found. Women with a Master's degree associate the importance of education with increasing income, influencing public perceptions, and solving social problems. At the same time, they acknowledge the difficulty in identifying specific issues that can only be solved through education. Women with PhD degrees demonstrated a deep understanding of the structure of social challenges and population needs while pointing to persistent barriers, including the uneven distribution of household responsibilities, the operation of social norms, and limited levels of information. The vector of their recommendations is focused on self-education, the institutionalization of women's organizations, and the development of state initiatives to support the advancement of women in public administration and other sectors.

Education forms not only competencies but also the right to participate in decision-making. The relationship between the level of education, the structure of social barriers, and the degree of women's involvement in management shows that without a systemic transformation of conditions, access to education does not lead to a fundamental change in the situation. The gap between educational achievements and institutional opportunities continues to be reproduced. The lack of career mechanisms, function segregation, cultural restrictions, and weak politics will limit women's influence on government processes.

The respondents outlined specific steps: the introduction of specialized leadership and project management courses for women, the development of mentoring programs, the inclusion of gender expertise in educational standards, the creation of quotas and target trajectories for competitive procedures in the public sector, the launch of regional programs to promote women to local government bodies. The need to build sustainable links between universities, government agencies, and non-profit organizations is highlighted. Such coordination does not imply formal interaction but rather the joint implementation of professional development programs for women, including workshops, internships, expert sessions, research projects, and exchange of experience. Universities take on the training function, NGOs - the support and advocacy function, and government agencies - the function of institutionalizing career paths, forming a closed support cycle from the educational base to career implementation in management. Emphasis is also placed on reviewing working conditions in the state and public sectors. The need to review working conditions in the state and public sectors as an element of systemic transformation is also emphasized. It is proposed that transparent and open career advancement procedures based on professional competencies rather than gender attitudes be introduced, which will help eliminate hidden mechanisms of exclusion. The need for regulatory instruments that ensure protection against discrimination in hiring, certification, and distribution of functional responsibilities is also identified. Solving the problem of stereotyping requires an institutional response: mandatory gender training for managers, the introduction of regulations to prevent bias, and the creation of independent channels for recording violations. Thus, the reform of working conditions is interpreted not as a private measure but as a necessary condition for dismantling structural barriers and building an environment where women have equal opportunities to occupy leadership positions and participate in management.

These measures do not aim to adapt to existing restrictions but to eliminate them. In this context, education ceases to be an auxiliary element and becomes an instrument for the redistribution of access, resources, and influence. The results obtained can be used to develop institutional solutions and programs aimed at creating equal conditions for women's participation in management at all levels.

2.3 Assessment of women social activism and its impact on public administration in Kazakhstan

The development of women's social activism in Kazakhstan has significantly impacted the public administration system, especially in areas where state mechanisms failed to address social issues advocating for gender equality and shaped the agenda in areas such as healthcare, education, and social protection. Women activists' participation in public initiatives and the work of non-profit organizations contributed to constructing a more open and responsive public administration system.

Women's leadership in volunteer movements and social organizations has become a source of real assistance, often complementing or replacing state functions. This section examines how women's participation in social activism has influenced the development and implementation of social state policies in healthcare, social protection, and community development. It also analyzes the consequences of activism for the public administration system, primarily in terms of promoting inclusive and population-oriented solutions. Thus, women's initiatives from public associations, organizations, and volunteer movements sometimes became a reason for adjusting state priorities and launching new social programs.

Women activists advocated for the expansion of rights and opportunities and contributed to solving specific problems in healthcare, education, and social protection. Through participation in the activities of non-profit organizations, they built communication between the population and government bodies, promoted bills, initiated public discussions, and provided expert assessments of current policies. Such organizations became not just a channel for participation but a mechanism for establishing a dialog and collecting information on the real needs of the population, working directly with vulnerable groups, and achieving systemic changes. Women in this role act as mediators – connecting state institutions with society, transmitting requests from below, and helping build a more open, flexible, and socially oriented governance model.

The following key aspects can be highlighted in the discussion of this timeline:

*1. State-Led Initiation (2005–2014)*

Since 2005, the Ministry of Health of Kazakhstan began to take steps to institutionalize palliative care. The department order, which defined the rules for providing palliative care, secured the recognition of the problem at the level of the state healthcare system. The vector shifted from the biomedical model to consider the quality of life of patients with severe and chronic diseases. In 2012, the National Center for Palliative Care was created in Almaty – a structure that performed the functions of training personnel, methodological support, and coordination. The decision to make a specialized center and launch its activities confirmed that palliative care is considered an independent area requiring personnel training and organizational development at the state policy level. The state program, approved in 2014, set out key tasks: expanding the network of institutions, ensuring the availability of services, and introducing uniform standards of professional training. The vector of the state strategy was aimed at building a sustainable system and including palliative care in the contours of social policy.

*2. Institutional Support and Expansion (2017–2019)*

The establishment of the National Association of Hospices and Palliative Care of Kazakhstan in 2017 was evidence of the strengthening of public initiative and the transition to more active participation of non-governmental actors in developing the social sphere. The formation of the association became a crucial stage in the consolidation of volunteer initiatives, consolidation of the professional community, and building sustainable interaction between society and government agencies. The creation of the association was not limited to the palliative care framework; it became a turning point for developing mechanisms of interaction between the professional community, non-profit organizations, and government agencies. The initiative marked the beginning of new forms of partnership in the healthcare system, expanded the participation of the civil sector in decision-making, and set a benchmark for similar processes in other areas of social policy. The association emerged as a professional community uniting medical specialists, representatives of non-profit organizations, and patients' families. Through the coordination of efforts and public advocacy, it has become one of the active instruments for promoting changes in approaches to the provision of palliative care and expanding the participation of non-governmental actors in developing specialized policies. The Association united medical specialists, relatives of patients, and representatives of non-profit organizations, becoming a tool for promoting changes in the field of palliative care. The emergence of the first hospice in Nur-Sultan (2019) consolidated the infrastructure's expansion not at the declaration level but through practical implementation. Priority was given to pain relief, the quality of daily care, and focus on the patient's needs as a fundamental principle of state health policy.

*3. Role of Women in Palliative Care Development*

The development of palliative care in Kazakhstan is impossible without taking into account the activity of women. Gulzhakhan Omarova and Raushan Dosmagambetova became the initiators of systemic changes – not only as organizers of institutions but also as actors who achieved a revision of management decisions. Establishing a hospice in Astana and creating a national palliative care center resulted from targeted activities based on practical experience, patient interaction, and systemic advocacy. Women's initiative goes beyond the care sphere and becomes a mechanism for shaping the political agenda in social protection and healthcare. Participation in the development of palliative care involves the transformation of the model of women's social behavior – from the private performance of care to the public role of organizer, expert, and coordinator of systemic decisions. Such a transition forms a meaningful connection between everyday social activity and public administration.

*4. Ongoing Challenges*

Nevertheless, the palliative care system continues to face limitations including beds and trained specialists remain insufficient, especially in regions outside large cities. Mechanisms for practical implementation and interdepartmental coordination do not support the adopted regulatory framework. The formally adopted regulatory framework is not accompanied by mechanisms for implementation and coordination. The infrastructure is poorly integrated into a single system; there is a gap between the state system and the initiatives implemented by volunteers and NGOs.

*Women as Key Actors in Palliative Care Advocacy*

Women's volunteer initiatives fill institutional gaps in providing palliative care, covering medical care and psychological, social, and everyday support for seriously and terminally ill patients. The formation of children's and specialized hospices, the launch of targeted family support programs, and the active promotion of the palliative agenda in the public space have created the preconditions for revising existing social and medical care models.

*Impact of Volunteer Movements on Local Public Administration*

Non-governmental initiatives ' influence on social policy content has increased based on the practice aimed at filling the gap in available services and building a sustainable public dialogue. Increased public participation, development of local initiatives, and attention to the needs of vulnerable groups have increased recognition of palliative care as a priority area. The transformation of social behavior emphasizes the importance of civic engagement in forming social policy. The creation of the Aigerim hospice and the society's activities for supporting children with disabilities in the regions have become instruments of pressure on local authorities and mechanisms for forming fundamental changes in the distribution of resources. Volunteer practice has shown that participation in assisting is not only care but also a mechanism for institutional influence*.*

*Role of Volunteers in Shaping Public Policy*

The lack of systemic integration of volunteers into the state healthcare model leads to fragmentation of care. Women volunteers continue to perform socially significant un-institutionalized functions, and their contribution remains outside the contours of official management accounting. Contradictions between the independent activities of volunteers and the state system require the development of channels for coordination, joint planning, and recognition of equal status in the provision of social services.

*Challenges in Cooperation Between Volunteers and Public Institutions*

The practice of volunteers, especially women, forms a field for specific solutions for modernizing the system. Monitoring the dynamics of requests, analyzing care practices, working with vulnerable groups, and participating in resource mobilization allows accumulating experience applicable to policy development. Women's everyday participation in palliative care ceases to be informal care and becomes a source of content for institutional reforms. Bottom-up strategies allow for linking social reality with administrative mechanisms and ensure sustainable development of the palliative care sector in Kazakhstan.

*Women's Influence on Public Administration Through Social Activism*

Women's leadership in the development of palliative care expanded the forms of civic involvement and influenced public institutions through concrete actions — organizing hospices, launching support initiatives, and engaging with decision-making structures. Participation in these processes connected the practical needs of seriously ill patients and their families with state-level policy, reinforcing the role of public initiatives in shaping approaches to social governance.

Women's social activism played a key role in drawing attention to areas of social policy that had long remained outside the scope of government priorities. Participation in the development of palliative care, protection of the rights of people with disabilities, and the fight against poverty contributed to strengthening public control, developing new forms of service provision, and adjusting management decisions. Thanks to consistent actions, women's initiatives ensured the transition from fragmented measures to the formation of sustainable support mechanisms focused on the real needs of the population. Through volunteer communities and informal associations, access to medical and social services was improved, especially in conditions of limited resources at the local level. The development of palliative care in Kazakhstan illustrates the institutional significance of social activism, which links the professional community, government bodies, and the population. Standards of care, human rights campaigns, and forms of consultative interaction with government agencies were formed, which increased the sensitivity of management to local requests and made it possible to introduce more flexible and inclusive solutions. Social activity is formed in places of residence and is directly involved in the problem, which determines its effectiveness as a compensatory mechanism with limited accessibility to official institutions. Women's initiatives, as a rule, arise and develop in the social space where everyday life takes place due to the desire to ensure the stability and safety of the immediate environment. Such territorial rootedness allows for establishing direct links with local authorities, educational and medical institutions, and social support organizations. Due to regular participation in solving specific problems and consistent interaction with institutions, initiatives can integrate into existing governance mechanisms and, over time, become established at the level of official policy. The repeatability, local focus, and biosocial nature of women's motivation create the basis for institutional recognition of these practices as an integral part of sustainable territorial development. Support and inclusion of such forms of participation in the regional policy system opens up opportunities for sustainable partnerships between civil society and public authorities in the social and medical spheres.

The research design social activism of women impact on on public administration is of two stages: development of interview questions, processing and analysing of interview results. The research framework is based on the methodology of Carol Bacchi: 11 groups of semi-structured interview questions (Table 7) [130].

The questions developed for this study were derived from previous research, including studies by Claxton Oldfield et al. [130], Acus A [131], and Koper et al. [132], which informed the structure of the interviews. These studies guided the creation of 11 thematic groups, each focusing on different aspects of the issue under examination. The questions ranged from 2 to 5 per group, designed to address the core issues identified in palliative care delivery and to align with Bacchi Carol's [126] method, which focuses on understanding how problems are represented and how different solutions impact various stakeholders. This methodological approach ensures that the analysis remains centered on the experiences of the volunteers and participants engaged in palliative care delivery in Kazakhstan.

Table 7 – Interview questions

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| No | Interview questions |
| 1 | What rules do you need to follow when visiting patients in the hospital? How often do you visit patients in the hospital? How often do families of patients turn to you for help? How often do patients themselves turn to you for help? What kind of care do you provide to patients and if it is necessary for their patients. |
| 2 | Are there rules for working with patients for volunteers, as well as rules for working with families? Are there rules or restrictions in working with patients and their families, if necessary, by the state or is it an initiative of medical personnel? |
| 3 | When working with patients or their families, do you sometimes have to address certain questions to medical staff on behalf of patients and their families regarding the medical care provided? |
| 4 | Does the medical staff contact you for help or additional information about patients? Does the medical staff turn to you for help if necessary to convey information to patients or parents of patients? |
| 5 | Do you know when palliative care is usually recommended to patients? When is information about palliative care usually provided to patients? |
| 6 | Does the palliative system currently have acute problems? If yes, which ones? |
| 7 | How can medical staff help improve the delivery of palliative care? How can medical staff help improve the delivery of palliative care? How can medical staff help improve care for patients with cancer? How can medical staff help improve care for patients with cancer? Are there additional mechanisms for providing assistance to patients and their families? |
| 8 | Do you face difficulties in cooperating with medical staff in helping patients? Do you face difficulties in cooperating with medical staff in helping patients' families? Does it happen that patients or families complain about the care provided? Do you share your opinions or recommendations with medical staff regarding the care of patients and their families? How does the medical staff perceive your recommendations? |
| 9 | How often do medical staff turn to you for help? Under what circumstances do they usually contact you? How often do you need the help of medical personnel in providing care to patients (help of any nature: material, moral etc.). Are there any problems you face or issues that you need to solve, and you need to involve medical personnel or their help? |
| 10 | What are your recommendations for improving palliative care delivery? What are your recommendations for improving the care of patients with cancer? What is your opinion about the social policy of "Healthcare" of Kazakhstan and the Code "On the Health of the Nation ..."? |
| 11 | What is your vision for the development of palliative care in the next 5-10 years? |
| Note: complied by the author based on resources [130-133] | |

The first two groups of questions addressed procedural aspects that interviewees must follow when visiting patients or their families, effectively capturing the interaction between service providers and recipients. This section also collected data on any rules or limitations regarding visiting protocols, a critical area for understanding the scope of volunteer support. The third and fourth groups delved into the challenges faced by both interviewees and support recipients, focusing on the nature of the assistance provided to patients and their families.

Questions from groups five to seven gathered recommendations for improving the healthcare system, particularly in palliative care, and discussed the qualifications and experiences of those working in the field. The eighth and ninth groups shifted attention to the challenges of cooperation, specifically between volunteers, charity organizations, and medical staff. This section revealed the existing gaps and inefficiencies in collaboration that can hinder the effective delivery of palliative care services. Group ten circled back to recommendations, providing interviewees an opportunity to offer their views on improving palliative care management. Finally, the last question, group eleven, invited respondents to share their vision for the future development of healthcare policy in Kazakhstan, particularly in the realm of palliative care.

The study involved two key respondent groups: volunteers and professionals (from medical institutions and charity organizations). Ten respondents were interviewed, and the study population was selected based on two primary factors: the field in which the volunteers operated and their role in supporting public administration efforts. The analysis of the charity foundations involved in palliative care delivery revealed two subgroups of organizations: those focused on financial support through donations and fundraising, and those providing daily assistance directly to medical staff and patients. This distinction informed the choice of foundations for the semi-structured interviews.

Location was another significant factor in the selection process. Almaty, as the pioneering city for hospice care development in Kazakhstan, remains the center of palliative care services in the country. Foundations located in Almaty play a central role, offering free services to patients, with volunteers contributing both professionally and in their personal time without compensation. Based on publicly available data from the Palliative Care Association in Kazakhstan, three charity foundations were chosen for this study.

The government of Kazakhstan has taken both direct and indirect approaches to formalize palliative care services. The "Order of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Kazakhstan No. 632," issued in 2009, laid the groundwork by establishing official guidelines for palliative care delivery. Further legislative progress was made with the adoption of the “Standard of Provision of Palliative Care to the Population” in November 2020. Institutionalization of palliative care reduces public uncertainty and ensures that specific guidelines are followed, which helps to predict the outcomes of the system. However, the role of international organizations has been more proactive in shaping the sector than domestic policymakers, indicating a need for more involvement from local governance to ensure these services reach remote and economically vulnerable regions.

Despite the legislative measures taken, the palliative care system in Kazakhstan is characterized by a pronounced infrastructural deficiency. In 2018, the country had 4,115 beds, with the minimum recommended by the World Bank indicator of 4,595. In 2019, an increase of only 129 beds did not affect the overall deficit. According to the Palliative Care Association of Kazakhstan report, only 349 beds met the established requirements for adequate care. Thus, the healthcare system suffers from a weak institutional base, the absence of uniform standards, and insufficient integration of palliative care into state social and medical policy priorities. Private hospices perform a compensatory function, providing both inpatient and outpatient care, but the volume of services offered is significantly lower than the level of real demand. The main burden falls on non-profit organizations and patients' families, while the healthcare system maintains a fragmented and reactive response. The shortage of personnel limits the development of palliative care. The lack of trained specialists hinders the sustainable operation of the sector, and the lack of systematic training makes it difficult to create a professional environment for stable and high-quality care. To overcome the existing limitations, structural changes are needed: revision of financing schemes, expansion of professional training programs, regulatory consolidation of care standards, and the development of a sustainable model of interaction between state and non-state participants. Without such solutions, palliative care will remain inaccessible to a significant part of the population and will not meet the real needs of society.

Funds created and supported by voluntary donations partially take on functions the state system cannot handle. In 2021, the Voluntary Society Charity Foundation allocated 768 million tenge to conduct operations, purchase medicines, and provide medical equipment. The Zhuldyz Foundation spent more than 8.6 million tenge on direct medical assistance programs. The financial activity reports are open access as the fund acts by transparency strategy and the significance of their contribution to healthcare. At the same time, palliative care in Kazakhstan remains insufficient: there is no centralized accounting of requests, which makes it difficult to assess the absolute scale of need. Most medical institutions are not equipped with specialized departments, and specialized personnel - oncopsychologists, caregivers, nurses - are represented in isolated cases and without uniform training standards. Legislative documents have been adopted, but control mechanisms do not support them and are not fully implemented. In some regions, volunteer groups cooperating with NGOs and hospices are taking the initiative. During the study, individual interviews were conducted with activists, doctors, foundation coordinators, and patients' relatives. All interviews were confidential; some were not recorded due to noise, the respondent’s refusal, or limited conditions. Each dialogue lasted from 40 minutes to two hours. Based on the collected material, a diagram of key stages in the development of palliative care was drawn up, and the specific roles of the participants were analyzed. Female volunteers, doctors from private hospices, and NGO employees were leading the way in promoting the palliative agenda and creating support mechanisms that work on the ground.

The palliative care system in Kazakhstan requires further changes due to persistent problems at the level of infrastructure, personnel, and intersectoral interaction. Development is possible through the modernization of medical institutions' material base, expansion of specialists' training, and building a sustainable partnership between government agencies, non-profit organizations, and volunteer associations. Participation of women, whose initiative in the care field and promotion of palliative care influenced the content of the management agenda, plays a special role in developing the direction. Women's participation in the development of palliative care is not limited to formal involvement and performs a transformative function. Through participation in volunteer activities, care organization, fundraising, dialogue with government agencies, and promotion of regulatory changes, a new type of social behavior is formed - active, aimed at solving systemic problems and inclusion in management processes. Women's initiative influences the content of the care provided and institutional priorities, expanding the boundaries of socially acceptable roles and participation models. Such a transformation demonstrates a direct connection between everyday social activity and decision-making mechanisms, in which personal experience and practical action become a source of change in the structure of social policy. Regulatory documents in the field of palliative care have been developed, but systemic barriers, including the lack of control mechanisms, weak coordination at the regional level, limited funding, and uneven distribution of resources, limit implementation. The practical experience of volunteers, especially women, forms the basis for reconsidering approaches to care organization, as it allows for identifying real needs, management deficits, and systemic gaps that hinder sustainable development. Volunteer practice is a source of specific solutions for developing palliative and social care policies.

The process of palliative care policy development in Kazakhstan is described in Figure 12.

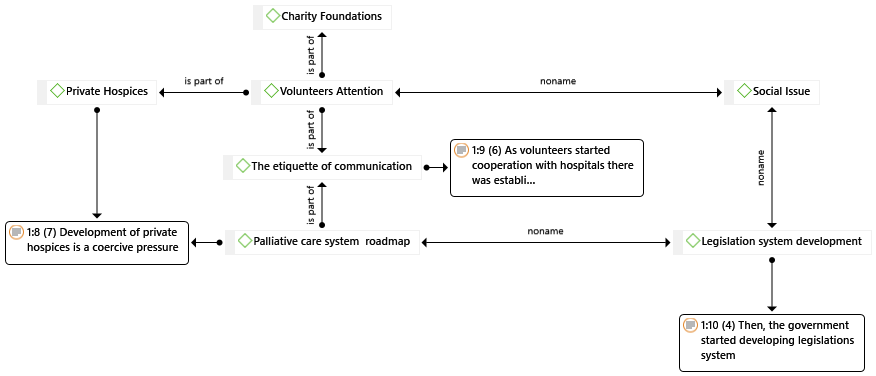


Figure 12 – Women social activism: palliative care policy development process

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

The development of palliative care in Kazakhstan was primarily a result of the activities of women volunteers who cared for seriously ill patients and supported their families without systemic state assistance. Social activity was expressed in educational events, fundraising, the creation of initiative associations, and direct interaction with government bodies on issues of institutional recognition of the palliative care problem. The initiatives that were formed attracted the attention of the professional community, the public, and the public sector representatives, contributing to the institutionalization of palliative care. Women's volunteer groups became the basis for creating charitable foundations, including "Mama's House," "Dara," and regional organizations focused on helping cancer and seriously ill patients. The activities of the foundations covered financial support, family support, training of volunteers, provision of legal advice, and individual solutions for organizing care. A sustainable support infrastructure began to form based on charitable structures: hotlines, psychological services, information resources, online platforms, and mutual aid groups. The funds compensated for institutional gaps and provided a link between the population, medical institutions, and government bodies. Women operating within these associations acted as intermediaries, defending the interests of patients before government structures, hospital administration, and local executive bodies. They became an essential channel of dialogue between citizens and government agencies in the absence of a palliative care system. Women activists acted as intermediaries between patients' families and representatives of government bodies - medical workers, social services, government agencies, and businesses. This position strengthened the feedback: patients' problems and requests became the subject of attention of officials, which contributed to a gradual response to needs. Private companies were also involved in the process, for which participation in social initiatives became part of corporate responsibility. Following government requirements and ethical standards, business structures supported local communities, complementing the efforts of volunteers and organizations. In this way, private organizations also contributed to public administration efforts, and women volunteers played an instrumental role in ensuring these resources were channeled appropriately. An essential stage in developing the women-led volunteer movement was the creation of private hospices. Volunteers, doctors, and hospital representatives sought recognition of palliative care as a separate area in the healthcare system and insisted on implementing international standards. As a result of this work, protocols for interaction between medical personnel, patients, and volunteers were developed based on the principles of communication ethics. Regulation of communication made it possible to improve the quality of care provided and move the topic of palliative care from a purely medical plane to a broader social context.

Women volunteers, acting through partnerships with hospitals and public pressure, achieved recognition of oncological diseases as a priority area in the healthcare system. Their activity led to developing a national plan for the development of palliative care, which defined the stages of expansion and improvement of the quality of services. The steps taken laid the foundation for developing a regulatory framework establishing the procedure for organizing palliative care in Kazakhstan. The involvement of medical organizations and government agencies increased the importance of the topic and secured it at the level of official state policy. Women volunteers acted not only as initiators of changes but also as participants in their practical implementation through the mechanisms of state policy aimed at protecting the rights of patients and their family members. As a result, palliative care was an integral component of social policy, combining medical and social aspects of care. Women's activity in this area demonstrated how the solution of a specific social problem becomes the basis for institutional changes and the formation of a public administration model that is more responsive to the population's needs.

Further, there is presented the process of palliative care institutionalization in Figure 13.

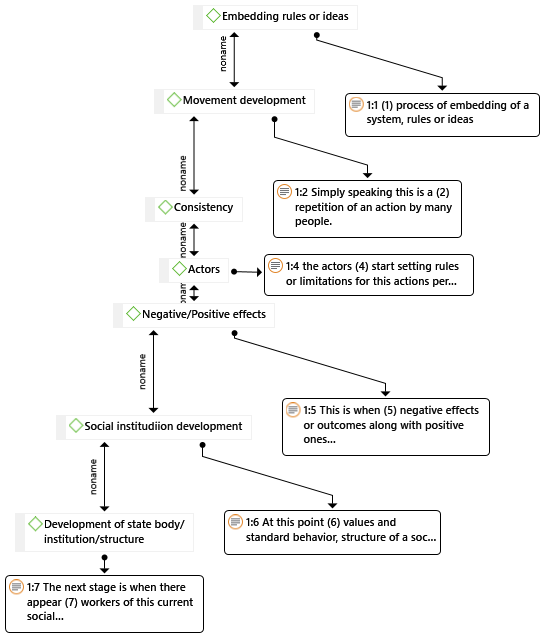


Figure 13 – Women social activism: the process of institutionalization

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

The analysis of interviews conducted with women involved in social activism has demonstrated that their activities align closely with the theory of institutionalization. This theory explains how social practices, norms, and behaviors become embedded in the formal structures of society. In the case of women’s social activism in Kazakhstan, women’s efforts are focused on addressing social issues that are either ignored or inadequately managed by the government. These are often issues not recognized as urgent by the broader public, yet their deterioration signals a need for immediate intervention.

Women's social activism has led to the creation of non-governmental organizations focused on issues that have long been ignored on the state agenda, including palliative care. Non-governmental organizations have placed topics related to vulnerable categories of the population at the center of discussions and initiated the introduction of standards and regulations that ensure the quality of social and medical support. Women's voluntary participation in the context of limited state resources has ensured the constant presence of assistance in the most sensitive areas. Forms of interaction built at the level of local communities have become a link between the population and professional, medical, social, and administrative structures.

Institutionalization of social activity is manifested in consolidating procedures for interaction between volunteers and medical institutions, which is confirmed by the content of the first two interview questions, which present the established rules for visiting patients and communicating with medical personnel. The regulations developed in practical activities became the basis for sustainable interaction between non-governmental organizations and healthcare institutions based on international standards. With the expansion of palliative care practice, the number of charitable foundations, private donors, and volunteers involved in assisting has increased. The development of the participation structure was accompanied by the formation of a functional distribution of roles: communications coordinators, organizers of healthcare projects, and participants providing physical support to patients. The division of roles within volunteer associations developed clear and structured coordination of actions. Thus, working procedures for interaction with medical institutions were established. Constant participation in joint activities allowed a stable and transparent communication system between volunteer structures and healthcare institutions. At the same time, the development of a regulatory framework at the international and national levels has led to new restrictions, including cases of reduced access of volunteers to patients and limitations on the volume of assistance provided. The consolidation of social practices within an institutional framework is accompanied by increased regulation and transparency and the emergence of barriers that hinder informal forms of participation.

Women's activism in healthcare in Kazakhstan demonstrates how practices that originate at the level of everyday care and local interactions are transformed into sustainable institutional forms. The introduction of international standards, formalization of procedures, and accumulation of organizational experience became the basis for transforming an informal initiative into a recognized social institution. The development of palliative care based on volunteer participation led to changes in management approaches and influenced the content of state policy in healthcare. The transition from informal actions aimed at helping those in need to sustainable participation in social and volunteer initiatives has led to the consolidation of women's activity in the practice of social policy. Women's social activism in palliative care and care for vulnerable groups has led to forming a sustainable system based not on spontaneous actions but on full-scale organizational work. Voluntary initiatives have been consistently formalized into a structure with established procedures agreed upon with medical institutions and administrative bodies. In the process of practical implementation, regulations have been developed that meet both the requirements of international standards and the regulatory framework of Kazakhstan. Such a system has become an integral part of social mechanisms, functioning based on a clear distribution of roles, responsibilities, and standards of interaction between civil society and public institutions.

Next, there is given information about main participants of the palliative care system and the nature of their assistance in Figure 14.

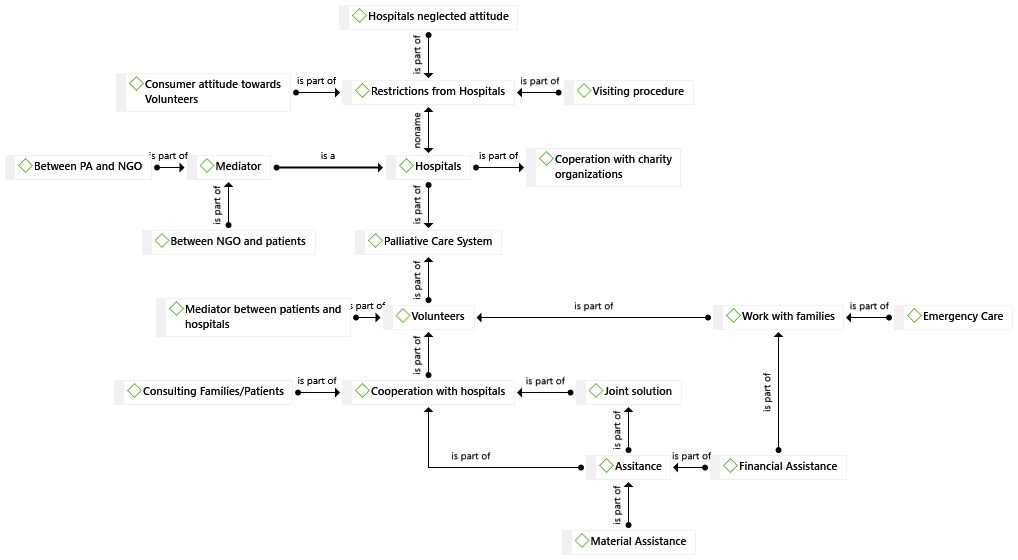


Figure 14 – Women social activism: participants of palliative care policy in Kazakhstan

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

The interviews conducted during the research revealed two main participants in the implementation of palliative care policy: volunteers and hospitals. Volunteers play a crucial role in the system, providing three essential functions: assisting patients and their families, cooperating with hospitals, and serving as mediators between hospitals, patients, and their families. This mediation often becomes critical in ensuring effective communication, particularly when there are barriers related to complex treatment procedures or psychological support, such as the involvement of oncologists or psychologists.

Charity organizations, which work closely with hospitals, provide indispensable support in the form of financial assistance, material donations (including medical supplies like bandages and diapers), and consultation services. These organizations help patients and families navigate the complexities of the healthcare system, advising on both paid and free services, and informing them about medicines and treatments available to palliative care patients. This support system not only addresses immediate needs but also builds a bridge between patients and public administration, as women volunteers’ step into the role of advocating for the patients and guiding them through the healthcare system.

Women's social activism has brought topics that government agencies have long ignored to the public agenda. Issues of palliative care, disability, and social vulnerability have become the subject of public pressure and professional discussion thanks to the efforts of civil initiatives. Instead of fragmentary and formal solutions, sustainable approaches focused on the real needs of the population began to form. The impact on the management system was expressed not in symbolic participation but in transforming the content and priorities of social policy. The experience of developing palliative care and volunteer movements in Kazakhstan demonstrates how local initiatives, given a lack of state resources, can initiate institutional changes. Women involved in both professional medical structures and informal associations have achieved specific improvements in providing care, standardization of services, and recognition of social rights. Against the backdrop of limited administrative response, it is through organized civil efforts that working models of interaction are formed that are capable of filling systemic gaps and setting directions for change.

By continuing to support and recognize the contributions of women in public administration, Kazakhstan can further enhance its healthcare and social welfare systems, ensuring that the needs of all citizens are met. The collaboration between civil society and public institutions, as demonstrated through women's activism, is essential for creating a more equitable and effective system of governance.

Women as social activists have played an essential role in delivering and improving social policies. This is becoming especially prominent in fields where the government is failing to provide the service or situation, and it is becoming increasingly alarming. However, it must be mentioned that women’s social activism is spread around the area of their habitat. That is, women become socially active in the place of their origin or the place where they live.

In Figure 15, there is provided the contribution of palliative care policy participants.

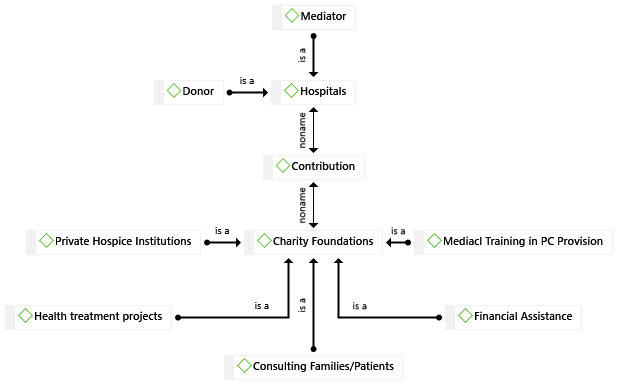


Figure 15 – Women social activism: the contribution of palliative care policy participants

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

Women's social activism has played a key role in shaping palliative care policy (institutional changes, the mobilization of social resources, and the expansion of medical care beyond the state system) in Kazakhstan. The impact can be categorized into five distinct pathways, each illustrating the structural importance of women's engagement in public governance.

*Counseling and advocacy support.* Women activists and volunteers act as counselors, providing patients and their families with information on rights, treatment options, and legal aspects of receiving palliative care, including access to pain medications such as morphine. Volunteer mediation in situations of emotional instability or language barriers, especially when interacting with patients from rural areas, helps overcome communication difficulties between medical personnel and recipients of palliative care. Implementing this mediation function strengthens the instruments of state social policy in healthcare, ensuring access to support and forming institutional mechanisms aimed at equitable distribution of care and organizational sustainability.

*Financial support and targeted assistance.* Women who lead charities raise funds to purchase vital medications, specialized food, clothing, and communication equipment for families in need. In some cases, funding for treatment abroad is provided, including selection of clinics, specialists, logistics, and travel coordination. Thus, targeted support covers gaps in the public assistance system and strengthens the reach of social policy.

*Treatment organization projects.* Women's charitable foundations implement comprehensive projects to organize treatment for patients outside of Kazakhstan, including recruiting specialists, raising funds, and supporting medical procedures. Such initiatives form alternative channels for providing medical care, ensuring the implementation of public health objectives, and filling structural gaps in state systems.

*Training of health workers.* Thanks to the active participation of women volunteers, training and master classes with international palliative care specialists are held in Kazakhstan. Cooperation with medical institutions and charitable foundations helps to introduce global standards into local practice. These initiatives contribute to the institutional strengthening of the healthcare system, advanced training of doctors, and the sustainability of palliative care mechanisms.

*Development of private hospices.* Women activists are driving the transformation of palliative care by creating private hospices and overcoming the limited infrastructure in public institutions. The network is expanded through the involvement of private donors and the formation of sustainable financing models, which contributes to the institutionalization of new forms of care and changes in approaches to social policy in the healthcare field. Activity in this area has increased the state's attention to the problem, contributing to the development of regulations and the institutionalization of private forms of palliative care.

*Institutionalization of women's participation in health policy.* Women's social activism influenced the formation of palliative care policy, including participation in developing specialized legislation. Systemic involvement ensured the recognition of palliative care as a priority of state social policy. Activists acted as independent subjects of reform, orienting administrative decisions to the needs of vulnerable groups and increasing the effectiveness of reforms in the healthcare system. Women have worked as full-fledged subjects of reforms, ensuring that administrative decisions are focused on the real needs of vulnerable groups and increasing the effectiveness of reforms in health care.

The transformation of women's social behavior is expressed in institutionalized forms of civic participation, one of which is women's non-governmental organizations that emerged as a sustainable result of activist self-organization. Within the framework of this transformation, activism performs a mediating function between medical institutions and the government. Interaction with hospitals eliminates systemic deficits in palliative care and promotes structural changes. Support from medical organizations strengthens the institutional positions of women's NGOs, including the creation of hospices and participation in developing a national roadmap. The formed partnership reflects the transition from disparate initiatives to sustainable mechanisms for influencing health policy.

Women's social activism has become one of the factors contributing to the transformation of palliative care policy in Kazakhstan and the institutional strengthening of their role in the management system. Through the organization of public initiatives, it was possible to mobilize resources, promote legislative changes, and expand access to medical care in socially vulnerable regions. The participation of women made it possible to take into account the needs of vulnerable groups in the formation and implementation of social state programs, contributed to changes in management practices, and increased the effectiveness of social policy.

In Figure 16, there is shown the system of palliative care in Kazakhstan.There are highlighted existing issues of public administration and reccomendations provided by women in NGO, in particular in provision of palliative care roadmap to improve the system of palliative care provision in Kazakhstan.

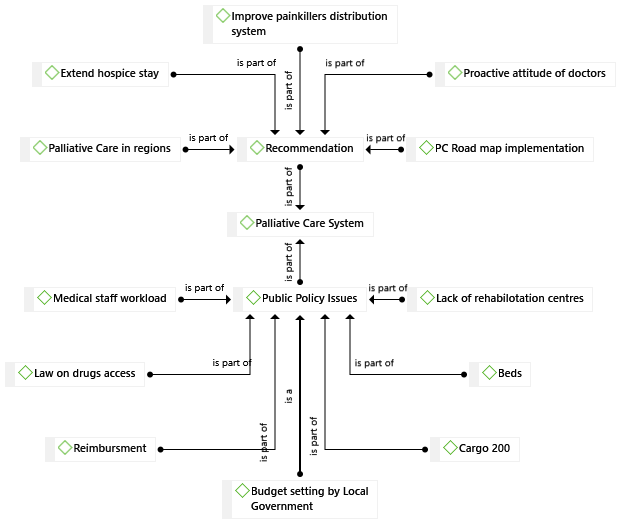


Figure 16 – Women social activism: palliative care system, public policy issues and recommendations

Note: compiled by the author based on research results

The development of the public care system in Kazakhstan, including palliative care, reflects the influence of women's social activism on public administration processes. Despite the results achieved, systemic problems remain, the elimination of which requires strengthening the state's role and improving the quality of governance in the public sector.

*Lack of rehabilitation centers.* The lack of rehabilitation centers remains one of the most pressing problems. Formally existing palliative care departments at regional hospitals operate with low efficiency, directly related to the shortage of qualified medical personnel, especially oncopsychologists. Thus, care for seriously ill patients is carried out at home without professional support and consultations. The resulting overload of family caregivers who are not prepared for such conditions reflects a structural gap in the system and indicates the managerial failure of local authorities.

*Access to painkillers.* Significant difficulties are associated with legal and organizational restrictions in obtaining painkillers, including morphine. Medical institutions often do not have the necessary forms for dispensing drugs, even if the drugs themselves are available. Delays arise due to staff shortages and administrative inconsistencies, which leads to delays in prescribing treatment and increased patient suffering. In addition, the practice of intramuscular administration of morphine is accompanied by physical discomfort, especially with prolonged use. The lack of tablet forms, more convenient for both patients and accompanying persons, indicates the need toreview the procedures for prescribing and forms of providing drugs. The current situation emphasizes the need to adjust the regulatory framework at the regional and national levels.

*Financing from local budgets.* The decentralized budgeting system in Kazakhstan gives local authorities the right to distribute funds independently by regional priorities. However, in some cases, significant expenses, such as transportation of the deceased (cargo 200), are systematically ignored. In the context of the high prevalence of socially significant diseases in some areas of Kazakhstan, a critical imbalance is revealed between the real needs of the population and the structure of local budgets. The lack of targeted funding for related expenses - including transportation of the bodies of the deceased, home care, and purchase of medicines - leads to a significant financial burden on families. The inability to receive support within the state system forces the population to turn to non-governmental and charitable organizations, thereby forming a stable dependence on external sources of assistance. Consequently, management failures are recorded in the mechanisms of planning and distribution of budgetary resources at the local level. The current situation requires an institutional review of priorities in the healthcare field and the introduction of mechanisms capable of ensuring timely and targeted funding of vital areas of social support.

*Palliative care in the regions and the importance of hospices.* Expanding palliative infrastructure in the regions remains a key area for overcoming inequality between urban and rural areas. Despite the increase in beds, territorial differences in the quality and availability of services remain. In the case of contacting clinics in Almaty or Pavlodar, patients face difficulties in obtaining painkillers after discharge since prescriptions are issued only upon return to their home region. Such delays are due to gaps in the regulatory framework and administrative fragmentation, which requires a systematic review of the rules for prescribing and receiving drugs for palliative patients.

*Workload and staff shortages.* Medical personnel's initiative largely ensures the partial functioning of the palliative care system. However, the growing workload, especially among mid-level staff, decreases the quality of care. There are cases of errors in chemotherapy, including overdoses in children. The observed violations indicate the need for the redistribution of resources, advanced training of specialists, and improving working conditions to sustain palliative care services.

*Contribution of NGOs and women activists.* Women's non-governmental organizations and volunteer associations have been key in developing palliative care in Kazakhstan. Activism has ensured the dissemination of information about palliative care as a priority social and medical problem and contributed to the formation of new professional areas, including oncopsychology. Women's associations help protect care recipients' rights and promote institutional change through mediation between patients, medical institutions, and authorities.

*Problems of interaction between hospitals and NGOs.* The interaction between medical institutions and volunteer organizations is characterized by varying degrees of sustainability. In some cases, limited willingness to cooperate on the part of hospitals leads to a slowdown in providing key support, including financial and psychological support for families. The lack of coordination indicates institutional costs in the health care management system and emphasizes the need for an integrated approach to organizing palliative care—recommendations for improving palliative care policies. Current problems require systemic solutions. Ensuring timely access to painkillers and other vital medications involves reviewing current distribution procedures. Removing administrative barriers and creating precise regulatory mechanisms are necessary for the stable receipt of medicines. The solution to this problem should be accompanied by an expansion of the network of rehabilitation institutions and an increase in human resources in palliative care. Particular attention should be paid to rural and remote regions, where infrastructure limitations and a shortage of specialists significantly reduce the availability of medical support. Budget planning at the level of local executive bodies should provide for expenses on key elements of palliative infrastructure, including transportation of the bodies of the deceased and related services. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the role of medical personnel by improving working conditions, optimizing the workload, and improving the quality of care provided.

*Impact on public administration.* Women's participation in promoting palliative care issues has significantly impacted the development of public administration mechanisms in Kazakhstan. The emphasis on structural gaps in healthcare and targeted efforts to institutionalize palliative care have led to the inclusion of this topic in the priority agenda of social policy. Activism contributed to adapting solutions to the needs of vulnerable population groups and increased managerial efficiency in the medical sphere. The development of this sphere was accompanied by an increase in the sensitivity of administrative structures to social needs, which increased the overall effectiveness of the public sector.

Women's social activism has become a system-forming factor in forming palliative care policy in Kazakhstan. Addressing infrastructural, human resources, and regulatory deficiencies — including the absence of specialized institutions, a shortage of specialized specialists, limited access to pain medications, and weak intersectoral coordination — formed the basis for mobilizing resources and promoting targeted reforms. The changes that have been implemented have contributed to the institutionalization of palliative care and increased public administration effectiveness, especially at the regional level. Institutional participation of the civil sector, which has formed sustainable practices of palliative care support, remains a key condition for the stable functioning and development of the system. Continuing the active work of non-governmental and volunteer organizations ensures coverage of those categories of the population that are least protected within the framework of formal structures - primarily residents of remote areas and socially vulnerable groups. The formation of a fair and equally accessible mechanism of assistance is impossible without the inclusion of these actors in long-term management and planning models.

3 THE MAIN DIRECTIONS AND MECHANISMS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN'S SOCIAL ACTIVISM IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OF KAZAKHSTAN

* 1. Recommendations in solving the problems of social activism: NGO, education and economic activity

The importance of informal initiatives, including volunteer practices, self-organization, and local unions, is increasing in transforming governance models. The solution to the problem of transforming women's social behavior is of key importance for the sustainable development of state and local governance in Kazakhstan. Participation in initiatives related to palliative care, support for persons with disabilities, and support for chronic patients forms channels of horizontal influence on decision-making. It acts as a compensatory mechanism in the event of insufficient effectiveness of formal structures. Through the regular performance of functions previously not assigned to the state, norms of collective responsibility, expectations on the part of the population, and institutional routes for seeking support are formed. Behavior previously interpreted as an exception or private concern acquires features of public significance and begins to be perceived as an integral element of social policy. In this way, the prerequisites for forming a new social institution are based not on formal legal fixation but on repeatability, recognition, and social usefulness. Such an institution begins to perform functions similar to those of the state: mitigating inequality, protecting the vulnerable, and filling the service gap. Integrating such structures into the governance system requires rethinking the interaction principles between civil society and the authorities - not as a vertical of accountability but as a spatial coordination of efforts. In this context, institutional modernization is needed to eliminate inefficiencies and include socially significant initiatives in governance architecture. Adopting the State Planning System (SPS) introduced a hierarchy of National Priorities, including economic diversification, human capital development, spatial equity, digitalization, and improved public services. These priorities are operationalized through national projects targeting sectoral interventions—education, healthcare, transport, and social protection—and are implemented with a focus on territorial differentiation. Within the framework of the State Planning System, the Territorial Development Plan coordinates investment policy between the central and regional levels of government, eliminates programmatic discrepancies, and equalizes access to infrastructure and basic services throughout the country. Regions with higher per capita investment in social infrastructure demonstrate significantly improved poverty outcomes and lower vulnerability levels, particularly in rural areas [139].

Despite these reforms, pronounced disparities persist in regional competitiveness, economic participation, and access to institutional resources. Differences in the level of socio-economic development between the regions of Kazakhstan are persistent and are expressed in unequal access to basic infrastructure and differences in the level of investment, employment, and budget provision. The inconsistency between regional programs and national development goals aggravates such territorial asymmetry. The lack of sustainable coordination mechanisms between central and local authorities, limited powers at the akimat level, and a significant gap in the infrastructure equipment of the territories make it challenging to implement a unified state policy and increase disproportions between the regions. Southern and western regions demonstrate lower levels of economic diversification, slower absorption of development funding, and insufficient institutional density. The structural configuration of subnational governance is further complicated by the absence of diagnostic tools and performance frameworks capable of addressing local development dynamics. Differentiated spatial policy, grounded in regional typologies and endogenous development logic, constitutes a necessary condition for balanced territorial growth and institutional resilience [140].

Within this framework, gender-based inequalities remain one of the most persistent and structurally embedded forms of exclusion in rural Kazakhstan. Disparities in land ownership, access to credit, and participation in formal employment are amplified by the limited availability of localized support infrastructure. Rural women face systemic barriers to institutional interaction due to administrative centralization, digital inaccessibility, and the absence of inclusive service delivery models. In Zhambyl, Mangystau, and Atyrau regions, the lowest female participation rates in formal economic activity coincide with the weakest penetration of employment services, entrepreneurial support programs, and public resources. Institutional and infrastructural inaccessibility reinforce economic dependency and limit the transformative potential of women’s civic engagement. Differences in the level of gender inequality between regions suggest the integration of quantitative and qualitative indicators characterizing the situation of women into the territorial planning system. It is necessary to train personnel at the local level, strengthen the institutional framework, allocate targeted resources, and consolidate mechanisms for including women in developing and implementing regional policies [141].

Expanding women's social activity requires transitioning from episodic initiatives to institutionalized forms of participation enshrined in regional governance mechanisms. Sustainable forms of civil self-organization around care, palliative care, disability, and social vulnerability demand state recognition and inclusion in the strategic planning system. Cooperation with women's non-governmental associations allows the expansion of channels for citizen participation in the development and promotion of social solutions and the assurance of women's representation in regional policy, strengthening the role of local communities in the feedback system. Developing entrepreneurial activity based on such associations becomes a logical continuation of institutionalization: it boosts local economies, creates jobs, and forms a stable tax base. State support is needed to implement the tasks related to the sustainable growth of women's entrepreneurship, including access to financial instruments, professional training programs, and organizational support mechanisms. Thus, institutional support presupposes the presence of a regulatory framework and the integration of women's initiatives into territorial socio-economic development programs. Consequently, the status of women should be considered for the consolidation as an independent and recognized element of regional policy.

Women's social activity is manifested in charity, volunteer projects, and local associations that support those in need. Participation in such initiatives helps solve specific social problems at the local level and forms mechanisms of targeted assistance for vulnerable categories of the population. Women's participation in social initiatives is a meaningful and established practice that solves problems in ​​reducing social inequality, providing aid, organizing care, and protecting the rights of socially vulnerable groups. Persistent gender stereotypes and social attitudes limit the development of such practices and make it difficult for them to be recognized within the framework of official institutional policy. Still, the accumulated experience and a stable interaction structure with communities require institutionalization and recognition at the public policy level. The proposal to create a fourth coordination center should be considered not as an additional support mechanism but a tool for the systemic inclusion of women's activity in regional development and territorial governance. The main task of such a center is to overcome institutional barriers and ensure resource access, professional support, and organizational integration of women's initiatives into regional strategies. These measures expand women's participation in the decision-making system, consolidate their status as full-fledged subjects of development, and create preconditions for the inclusion of new forms of social policy in the architecture of the state planning system. The inclusion of women's activity in the goal-setting and management system, as well as institutional support for local initiatives, make it possible to expand the social base of sustainable development and increase the sensitivity of state policy to territorial differences and social risks.

Women's non-governmental organizations in Kazakhstan are involved in protecting rights and promoting gender equality, acting in such areas as preventing violence against women, developing entrepreneurship, and ensuring equal conditions in employment. Activities are carried out at the local, regional, and national levels through developing and implementing programs, conducting sociological research, organizing training and information events, and establishing working links with government agencies. Among the most active associations are the National Association of Women of Kazakhstan, the Association of Business Women, and the Women for the Future of Kazakhstan association. Working practices are formed within the framework of current legislation, including the provisions of the Constitution on equal rights and the prohibition of discrimination based on gender, as well as legal norms governing the activities of non-profit organizations. The legislative framework forms the legal basis for the institutional development of women's associations, opens access to participation in the development of decisions in the field of social policy, and creates a mechanism for promoting initiatives aimed at expanding the rights and opportunities of women.

Women's non-governmental organizations in Kazakhstan build interaction with government agencies at the local, regional, and national levels, participating in the formation and implementation of gender policy. Cooperation is carried out through participation in public hearings, expert consultations, and the development of regulations, as well as through inclusion in working groups, councils, and committees dealing with gender equality issues. Interaction formats include official correspondence, appeals, petitions, and expert opinions. Through participation in public administration, the gender agenda is promoted, proposals are put forward to improve legislation, and the implementation of obligations in women's rights is monitored. Substantial recommendations and policy decisions are developed using analytical materials and research reflecting real barriers and needs. Educational and informational work aims to form public support for gender-oriented policies. Interests are represented nationally and internationally, including participation in forums, partnership initiatives, and network coalitions. The activities of women's NGOs have become an essential component of the institutional system responsible for promoting equal rights and opportunities in Kazakhstan.

The creation of the fourth coordination center, focused on supporting women's social activity, is a tool for systematically including women in implementing priority areas of state policy. The potential of women's participation can enhance the results of national projects, especially in areas with a deficit of administrative, resource, and personnel solutions. As part of the Healthy Nation project, the center can promote the development of women's entrepreneurship in healthcare, train specialists, open new medical points, and expand the coverage of services in remote regions. In education, women's participation through training programs and mentoring initiatives will allow the launching of regional projects within the framework of the Quality Education project, eliminating territorial gaps in access to knowledge.

Support for women's entrepreneurial initiatives in socially vulnerable and economically unstable areas is consistent with the objectives of the national project for the development of small and medium-sized businesses, as well as the strategic goals of introducing project management in public administration. By supporting initiatives, organizing educational programs, and providing access to financing and inclusion in the partnership mechanism with public and private structures, the fourth coordination center will ensure the institutional consolidation of women's participation in transformation processes at the regional and national levels. The development of this format involves a transition from local and episodic forms of activity to systemic practices included in the structure of territorial management, sectoral planning, and implementation of state programs. Having received an institutional framework, women's social activity becomes a full-fledged mechanism for influencing social, economic, and managerial results, including changing regional balances, forming new employment models, and strengthening social integration.

Support for women's entrepreneurship and the development of social activity in socially vulnerable and economically unstable areas corresponds to the objectives of state policy to strengthen human capital, equalize regional inequality, and develop rural areas. Within the framework of the current program "Aul - El belgisi," aimed at modernizing infrastructure and improving living conditions in villages, it is possible to implement initiatives in which women's projects will become an element of the sustainable development of local communities. The fourth coordination center can provide institutional and resource support for such projects - through training, mentoring, and infrastructure support, as well as the inclusion of women in budget planning and project management at the local level. The increased involvement of women in entrepreneurship and management activities creates social sustainability based on expanding public participation and considering the interests of various population groups in strategic decisions. Activity focused on the local level helps to identify current problems and form initiatives focused on the real needs of territories. Institutionalization of local initiatives allows for the inclusion of territorially oriented decisions in state planning mechanisms, eliminating the structural gap between the center and the regions and increasing the adaptability of policies to the conditions of specific communities. Women's participation in development and governance ensures the transition from local experiences to practical application at the level of public policy. Initiatives based on the real needs of communities are transformed into decisions taken within the framework of national planning, which increases the meaningfulness and feasibility of governance approaches. Institutionalization of such activity forms a new element of the development system, capable of influencing social, economic, and management processes, especially in regions with a pronounced deficit of state support.

Thus, the fourth center dedicated to promoting women's activism can significantly contribute to successfully implementing multiple national projects in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The center will address existing public administration gaps while fostering women's active participation in societal development by focusing on economic growth, improving the quality of life, and enhancing citizens' well-being.

One key activity of the fourth coordination center will be to facilitate the solution of systemic problems in Kazakhstan's public administration sphere. Despite the reforms aimed at professionalization and increasing transparency, the hierarchical management model inherited from the command-administrative system of the Soviet period remains. Local executive bodies continue to function within the framework of this outdated structure, which leads to excessive centralization of management decisions and the reproduction of the authoritarian management style. To overcome the institutional inertial mechanism, normative and organizational support for decentralization processes is necessary, including fully implementing the Concept of Development of Local Self-Government in the Republic of Kazakhstan. Reforming the role of local authorities should be based on a reorientation from the performance of centralized functions to working with the requests and needs of the population at the regional level. Implementing a wide range of powers proves difficult in the context of limited political, administrative, and financial powers. The potential of the fourth center lies in using the resources of women's activism and the non-governmental sector to build a project approach to management and develop partnership models between the state and local executive bodies, NGOs, and businesses. Such a model will ensure more flexible, targeted, and coordinated management adapted to the conditions of specific territories.

The introduction of project management will become a key element of the fourth coordination center, ensuring rational distribution of resources, clear definition of goals, and systematic monitoring of results. Focusing on project formats will allow flexible management decisions to overcome excessive centralization and increase the sensitivity of management structure to local demands. Such a model will create conditions for decentralization, strengthen horizontal interaction, and expand civil initiatives' participation in the development and implementation of policies. Developing a project approach expands women’s participation in management processes at various levels. Moreover, women's presence strengthens the principles of gender equality and provides access to tools for effective interaction with the public administration system. Support for women's leadership and the development of grassroots initiatives will strengthen ties between the population and government bodies, which is especially important for socially vulnerable and underdeveloped regions where institutional deficits are most pronounced. The formation of new management practices through participation and responsibility will increase the adaptability and openness of public policy.

The creation of the fourth center is a tool for solving key problems in the public administration system of Kazakhstan, institutional strengthening of women's social activity, and forming the foundations of a decentralized management model. Implementing the project approach creates conditions for sustainable economic growth, improving the quality of life and strengthening the population's well-being. Structural management changes aimed at eliminating excessive centralization and expanding community participation ensure women and local initiatives are included in national development processes.

Figure 17 shows the project management structure that reflects the organization and functioning of women's social activity.

Project management

Goal orientation

Short term

Long term

Planning and control

Progress monitoring

Resources distribution

Stakeholders

State bodies

Public organizations

Private sector

Minorities

Figure 17 – Project management structure

Note: compiled by the author

The transition to project management in the sphere of women's social activity allows us to overcome the spontaneity of initiatives by building a structured, manageable, and reproducible work model. A clear organizational chart, division of functions, agreed goals, and realistic ways of achieving them ensure the manageability of processes and the possibility of objective assessment of results. The model of activity built on such a basis creates conditions for institutional recognition of women's initiatives and consolidation of their role in the public administration system. Charitable and social associations operating based on project logic can participate in management processes not occasionally but as permanent partners, integrating into existing mechanisms for developing and implementing decisions. Clearly defined stages, implementation logic, resource planning, and control over achieving goals allow for the organization of processes to be more coordinated and transparent. In developing women's initiatives in socially significant areas, the project approach has several advantages that contribute to the sustainability and scalability of such forms of participation:

* *Defining clear goals and sustainable solutions*. Defining clear goals and developing sustainable solutions are key to effectively implementing social initiatives. Using a project approach set priorities in education, healthcare, women's rights protection, and entrepreneurship development. Within the project logic, initiatives are classified by time horizons: short-term projects are aimed at rapid response. In contrast, long-term ones are focused on achieving sustainable effects and institutional changes. The implementation of long-term projects solves current problems and forms the basis for structural changes that affect the position of women in society.
* *Structured Resource Planning and Risk Management.* Project management provides a systematic approach to resource allocation and risk management, which is especially relevant for women's non-governmental organizations implementing social initiatives at the regional and local levels. Using project principles allows for developing effective mechanisms for working with financial, material, and human resources.
* *Financial resources*. Clear financial planning opens access to participation in budget allocation processes at the regional level and helps attract funding for initiatives aimed at creating socially significant facilities, such as private hospices, shelters, and support centers. Such projects fill gaps in social infrastructure and provide assistance to socially vulnerable groups.
* *Material resources.* Non-governmental organizations are key in providing material support, especially in hard-to-reach and sparsely populated areas. This includes providing medical supplies, technical rehabilitation equipment, and basic care conditions for people in need of palliative care. Thus, the burden on public institutions is reduced, and the coverage of health and social services is expanded.
* *Human Resources.* The analysis confirms the contribution of women's non-governmental organizations to the development of human capital by providing physical and psychological assistance to socially vulnerable categories of the population. Implementing such activities requires constant coordination of work with volunteers, medical personnel, and specialists in social support. Organizing interaction with these participants confirms the importance of women's associations in ensuring the personnel sustainability of the system for the provision of social and medical services..
* *Engaging stakeholders for inclusive development.* Implementation of projects based on the principles of engagement requires the active participation of all stakeholders at the planning and implementation stage of social initiatives. Women's organizations can unite the efforts of vulnerable groups, civil society institutions, government agencies, and the private sector to find solutions in the social sphere. The mechanism for the participation of all parties ensures that the views of the least represented groups are taken into account and allows for the adaptation of initiatives to specific conditions. An example is the joint work of women's charitable associations with local authorities to expand access to medical and educational services in underserved regions, accompanied by the attraction of private capital to finance infrastructure solutions.
* *Building sustainable partnerships for national development*. Achieving sustainable development to improve the quality of life is impossible without strong interaction between government agencies, civil society, and business. Project management principles form the normative and organizational basis for the coordinated participation of government agencies, civil society, and businesses in the implementation of social tasks. The suggested interaction model ensures transparent distribution of responsibility, optimization of resources, and the possibility of long-term planning. In Kazakhstan, the project approach opens up prospects for including women's non-governmental organizations in public administration, creating conditions for improving management effectiveness and developing socially oriented solutions at the regional level.

The use of project management methods in women's organizations allows for achieving higher results in implementing individual initiatives and contributing to the development of the public administration system. This approach makes it possible to work with complex social tasks based on partnership, adequate resource allocation, and long-term planning, thereby strengthening the potential of the public sector. Project logic forms a management culture in which women's social activity becomes a significant factor in national development and the promotion of gender equality in Kazakhstan.

The integration of project management into the public sector system covers key areas of practical implementation:

*Trilateral cooperation.* Cooperation between government agencies, the private sector, and civil society institutions forms the basis for the distribution of responsibility and the sharing of resources, which helps to improve the effectiveness of social policy implementation at different levels of government. The state program "Paryz" can be considered as one of the options for implementing trilateral cooperation in Kazakhstan. The initiative aims to support low-income communities, develop territorial projects, and hold charity events. The peculiarity of the program is that volunteers do not simply participate in events but act as intermediaries between businesses and government agencies. Thus, transparency of actions and control are ensured. Despite the importance of such participation, the role of volunteers remains weakly expressed in the institutional structure of the civil sector. Still, this activity provides a practical link between charitable projects and government support mechanisms.

*Close collaboration between the public sector and research institutes.* Cooperation between the public sector — in particular, project offices — and research institutions, including the Ministry of Education and research organizations, is a strategic direction for improving the quality of planning and implementation of public projects. The practice of attracting scientific expertise, demonstrated by the example of EXPO-format events, shows how the combined efforts of government agencies, businesses, and the scientific community make it possible to form large-scale initiatives at the national level. The integration of research institutes is another way to increase the efficiency of project planning and implementation. Business structures act as contractors or investors, reducing the burden on the state budget and stimulating the introduction of innovations. Both models — tripartite interaction and cooperation with research institutions — have a similar logical structure based on the coordination and distribution of functions but differ in their advantages. The comprehensive use of such models helps reduce project failure risks and build sustainable communication channels between government agencies and other participants in the process. Involvement of all key sectors — public, private, and civil — enhances management potential, while academic resources provide an expert basis for developing project solutions.

*Enhancing public administration through project management.* Introducing project management into Kazakhstan's public administration system creates the precondition for abandoning a rigid hierarchy in favor of result-oriented models. The main principles of the project approach are setting clear goals and justified resource allocation. Project management uses deadlines, risk controls, and reporting to track progress at each implementation stage. Replacing traditional administrative functions with implementing initiatives with measurable social and economic results increases the effectiveness of public policy and strengthens trust in the management system. The dissemination of project logic contributes to forming a management culture based on results. The potential for interaction with external actors, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and civil society institutions, is expanding.

Project management facilitates the practical implementation of state policy and creates conditions for progressive changes in Kazakhstan's public administration system. Project-based governance practices enable functional alignment across departments and reduce overlap in administrative operations. Streamlined coordination lowers institutional costs and opens channels for broader stakeholder involvement. Decision-making efficiency improves through the consolidation of roles and the elimination of redundant procedures. Improved coherence in management has increased the quality of social services provided and formed the basis for sustainable development.

3.2 Mechanisms for the promotion of women's social activism through public administration

The development of mechanisms to support and develop women's social activism through public administration is driven by the need to eliminate systemic barriers that limit women's participation in public life. In Kazakhstan, significant regional differences remain in access to basic social services, digital connectivity, and the degree of women's involvement in decision-making and implementation. In conditions where some territories are characterized by limited infrastructure and weak institutional support, public engagement has no sustainable channels. At the same time, it is in the areas of education, healthcare, and social support, where the role of women is most noticeable, that there are pockets of local activity that require consolidation at the level of formal governance instruments [142, 143]. Spatial heterogeneity in institutional readiness reinforces the need for mechanisms adapted to the conditions of specific regions that can consider local resources and constraints. In addition, in several economic sectors, such as agriculture and construction, there is a pronounced gender asymmetry in the distribution of workload and access to environmentally friendly working conditions, which requires a targeted approach to institutional support [144]. The development of such mechanisms is becoming an integral part of state policy aimed at social sustainability, equal opportunities, and the effective participation of women in regional development.

*Institutionalization and Women's Social Activism.* Increasing women's participation in public life requires sustainable mechanisms capable of entrenching new forms of social behavior in the public administration system. Women's social activity in health care, education, and social support goes beyond individual initiatives and is increasingly becoming more organized. Without official status, women's activity is not included in the management system and remains outside institutional support. In this case, the institutionalization approach becomes a key condition for sustainable and systemic participation of women in decision-making. It involves the legal registration of initiatives and the consolidation of new norms, values ​​, and behavior patterns that become part of everyday administrative practice. This means creating conditions under which women's activism receives the status of a significant participant in the management process, is integrated into the decision-making system, and influences social policy on an ongoing basis. The transition from isolated initiatives to a sustainable and systemic participation model is ensured by including women's organizations in public councils, working groups, resource distribution procedures, and other officially established forms of interaction with government bodies.

*The Role of Social Activism in Public Administration.* Women's activism plays an important role in complementing and strengthening those areas of public policy that are insufficiently covered by traditional management structures. Women's initiatives often raise problems of access to health and educational services, the needs of low-income families, and issues of social protection and equality. Their practical focus, sensitivity to the needs of vulnerable groups, and focus on specific changes allow them to identify institutional gaps and propose ways to overcome them. Including women's social activism in the governance system makes decision-making processes more flexible and responsive to social risks. The administrative reforms in Kazakhstan, aimed at increasing transparency, efficiency, and accountability, create conditions for the institutional inclusion of women's participation in governance. The local level is particularly important, where women are most often involved in solving specific social problems and have the practical experience necessary for adapting policies to real conditions. Systemic participation of women's associations in the formation and implementation of decisions can strengthen the social orientation of policy, increase trust in government institutions, and improve the quality of services provided.

*Mechanism for institutionalizing women's activism.* Achieving sustainable participation instead of episodic forms of activity requires the creation of a mechanism that includes legal support, integration into governance structures, and measures to strengthen the capacity of women's initiatives. The normative component involves legally securing the rights of women and women's organizations to participate in the development and monitoring of the implementation of public policy. The organizational level includes creating consultative platforms, including women's associations in the monitoring and evaluation system and the availability of ongoing feedback mechanisms. Capacity development involves training, methodological and resource support, and expanding access to digital platforms and information necessary for effective participation. Particular attention should be paid to the regional level when developing the mechanism - where the main barriers to access are recorded. At the same time, real participation practices are concentrated. Institutionalizing women's activism as a sustainable governance practice requires flexibility, sensitivity to regional contexts, and consistent state support.

Table 8 outlines a step-by-step framework for developing such a mechanism in alignment with these principles.

Table 8 – Mechanism for institutionalizing women’s social activism

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Step | Key Actions |
| Step 1: Establish a Legal Framework | - Amend existing laws to explicitly recognize women’s activism in areas like healthcare, education, and economic development.  - Introduce a “Women’s Social Activism Act” mandating women's involvement in decision-making processes.  - Ensure compliance with international conventions on gender equality. |
| Step 2: Formal Integration into Governance | - Establish advisory councils within government institutions for women activists and NGO input at national and local levels.  - Facilitate collaboration between government bodies and women’s NGOs to use grassroots expertise in public policy. |
| Step 3: Capacity Building for Women Activists | - Provide training on leadership, policy advocacy, and project management for women activists and NGO leaders.  - Develop educational programs to encourage civic engagement among young women, fostering future leaders in governance. |
| Step 4: Support for Women’s NGOs | - Provide financial support to women’s NGOs via government grants, partnerships, and international donors.  - Ensure women’s NGOs access government platforms to advocate for policy changes and influence public programs. |
| Step 5: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework | - Track the impact of policies and initiatives involving women’s activism.  - Establish feedback loops between the government and civil society to adapt policies based on evolving needs of women activists and their communities. |
| Note: compiled by the author | |

Institutionalizing women's activism opens up opportunities for sustainable expansion of civic participation and gradual change in social behavior patterns. Activity, previously concentrated in family or volunteer initiatives, receives organizational design and recognition as an essential element of public life. Women's participation acquires a systemic character, and a basis for continuous dialogue with management institutions is formed, strengthening the value of competence, initiative, and responsibility in solving socially significant problems. Including women in management processes through institutional mechanisms strengthens the activism and the social perception of women's leadership as the norm, not the exception.

The manifestation and concentration of women's activism in certain regions can signal the weakness or ineffectiveness of individual areas of state policy. Local activism, as a rule, arises in response to a management deficit - lack of access to health services, uneven distribution of educational resources, and limited social protection programs. Thus, local initiatives perform a dual function: on the one hand, they compensate for the shortcomings of formal structures, and on the other, they identify points of institutional tension. Analysis of the focus and geography of women's activism can be used as a tool for territorial diagnostics, allowing one to assess where and to what extent government programs do not achieve the expected result.

The transformation of women's social activism into a full-fledged element of the management system requires a regulatory framework and organizational support and the formation of sustainable feedback between active groups and government structures. Interaction between government agencies and women's initiatives increases the effectiveness of local solutions and allows for the real living conditions of the population to be taken into account. Social activism also serves as a feedback function, identifying problems that are not reflected in reporting and directing managers' attention to areas requiring improvement or additional support.

*Institutionalization of Women's Activism through Project Management: A New Model of Sustainable Participation.* In the context of the need for long-term inclusion of women's activism in the public administration system, project management is considered a tool capable of ensuring clear organization, traceability of results, and coordination of actions between participants in the process. The previous stages of the analysis outlined the institutional and territorial conditions that make using the project approach in women's activism possible. The increasing importance of this tool is associated with the need to move from experimental initiatives to reproducible management mechanisms that ensure long-term social action and structural sustainability of solutions.

Project management in women's activism ensures consistency and structure of actions - from the formulation of tasks to the final assessment. Planning stages, clear distribution of roles, and monitoring of the implementation progress create conditions for the sustainability of initiatives, allow timely response to difficulties, and adapt solutions to changing conditions. This approach makes social initiatives predictable, manageable, and adaptive to the conditions of specific communities. The introduction of project logic into the practice of women's initiatives increases the effectiveness of the programs being implemented and ensures institutional recognition of their contribution to social policy development. The project approach sets a structure within which coordination between various sectors is possible, including government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector.

Integrating project management into women's activism allows us to build sustainable schemes for solving specific problems, from diagnosing local social issues to implementing comprehensive programs in healthcare, education, social protection, and local economic development. Project tools such as logical-structural matrices, initiative passports, monitoring indicators, and formalized management cycles ensure high process manageability and the accountability necessary for institutional support. In some cases, activating women's initiatives in specific sectors or territories is a marker of management deficits - for example, in matters of palliative care, inaccessibility of primary education, and lack of systemic support for motherhood and reproductive health. Such activity records areas where formal mechanisms fail to cope with tasks and can be considered a form of early diagnostics of the ineffectiveness of public programs.

*Proposed structure: The Fourth Center for Supporting Women's Social Activism.* For the sustainable institutionalization of the project approach and the consolidation of women's activism in the public administration system, it is proposed to create a special structure - the Fourth Center for Supporting Women's Social Activism. Unlike classic advisory bodies or social policy departments, this center is designed as an intersectoral mechanism for coordinating, implementing, supporting, and monitoring women's initiatives with administrative and resource support. The center's architecture includes three functional blocks:

* The intersectoral interaction block implements ongoing coordination between executive authorities, women's non-governmental organizations, and business community representatives. Partnership projects are formed on this platform, social policy priorities are discussed, and budgets and impact assessment procedures are agreed upon. This block ensures the integration of civil initiatives into the state policy agenda based on mutual recognition and transparent procedures.
* The project implementation and monitoring block organizes systemic support for programs to strengthen women's participation in governance and social transformation. At this stage, technical descriptions of projects are developed, step-by-step implementation schedules are formed, and target indicators and mechanisms for ongoing monitoring are established. A procedure for independent evaluation of results and collection of feedback from the population is also provided, which allows for adapting project solutions to the conditions of specific territories and ensuring the manageability of initiatives in the long term.
* The educational and resource program block aims to develop institutional and leadership potential among women activists. Advanced training programs, social design training, courses on public policy, partnership management, and resource raising are being implemented. Access to a database of competitions, grants, information-analytical materials, and consulting services is also provided. The block aims to support organizations operating in remote and resource-limited regions, ensuring the equalization of institutional opportunities.

*Institutional effects: from a deficit indicator to a mechanism for managerial partnership.* The formation of the Fourth Center is a step towards a new interaction model between state institutions and civil initiatives. Women's activism is transformed from a practice of situational response into a systemic form of participation with administrative support, institutional recognition, and a stable resource base. Structuring and mapping initiatives received through the Center's mechanisms allows us to identify persistent deficits in the system of implementing state programs: lack of access to basic services, weak localization of solutions, and inconsistency between levels of government. Thus, activism becomes not only a social practice but also a tool for management analysis, based on which development strategies and budget priorities can be adjusted.

Project management in the context of women's activism ceases to be a technical procedure. It acquires the status of a mechanism of participatory management based on trust, responsibility, and feedback. Through project logic, not only is the interaction between sectors built, but a culture of inclusion is formed, in which civil initiatives become a source of data, knowledge, and solutions that complement and strengthen government actions. The formation of the Fourth Center as an institution that consolidates these connections opens up the possibility for a qualitative renewal of local development models and an increase in the efficiency of the entire public administration system.

Creating a sustainable financial base is an important area of ​​institutionalizing women's activism. The lack of stable funding limits planning horizons reduces the scale of initiatives, and hinders the development of sustainable forms of participation. The formation of an autonomous system of resource support based on state grants, partnerships with the private sector, and the involvement of international donors allows for the transition from episodic actions to long-term social programs. Financial independence changes the nature of involvement: instead of situational support, organized forms of coordination, planning, and responsibility appear. Women's associations, having gained access to stable funding, master new roles - initiators, operators, and managers of socially significant processes. The transition is accompanied by a profound transformation of social behavior, during which the focus on collective subjectivity, institutional thinking, and readiness to influence the public agenda are strengthened. Financial sustainability is thus viewed not as a technical element of support but as an instrument for structural change in the position of women in the management system.

Sustainable access to financing allows women's organizations to implement projects and change behavioral practices—from the role of beneficiary to the position of organizer, coordinator, and bearer of socially significant changes. Expanding resource independence transforms women's social behavior toward active institutional involvement, responsibility for results, and the ability to influence the priorities of the public agenda. Creating such financial channels eliminates dependence on unstable sources and allows for the development of long-term projects in the social sphere.

Along with financial instruments, the proposed model provides for formally including women's non-governmental organizations in public decision-making procedures. Establishing advisory councils and working committees with the participation of women's association representatives helps represent the interests of vulnerable groups at all levels of government. Formal participation in the development and examination of policies allows women's organizations to structurally influence the formation of the agenda, especially in health care and social protection, where the practical experience of such associations has already proven its effectiveness.

An additional element of the institutionalization mechanism is the introduction of project management as a tool for increasing efficiency and operational sustainability. Stage-by-stage planning, measurable goals, and a monitoring system create conditions for effectively implementing short-term and long-term initiatives. Integrating project logic into the activities of women's organizations not only helps streamline processes but also increases their strategic importance — projects become reproducible, controllable, and effective in terms of social and economic impact.

The implementation of the proposed mechanism aims not only at changing intra-organizational practices but also at redistributing management resources in favor of the regions. Strengthening the independence of local authorities through decentralization of powers and expansion of the financial base creates conditions for productive interaction with women's organizations. Additionally, specifics of local requests will be the focus of the attention of public authorities, strengthen local initiatives, and ensure more precise policy adjustment in response to the real living conditions of the population.

Institutionalizing women's social activism in the public administration system opens up the possibility for a comprehensive transformation of public policy. Structural support, inclusion in decision-making mechanisms, and the use of management technologies allow women's associations to solve urgent socio-economic problems effectively. The result is a new governance configuration that combines transparency, inclusiveness, and results-orientedness, which is especially important for sensitive areas such as healthcare, education, and social support.

Below is an outlined plan, illustrating how project management and the establishment of the Fourth Center can support and institutionalize women's social activism, contributing to the effective delivery of public services and stronger governance (Table 9).

Table 9 – Mechanism for institutionalizing women’s social activism – fourth center

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Step | Description | Impact |
| Institutionalization Through Project Management | Project management can institutionalize women's activism by providing structure, clear goal-setting, and accountability. This approach facilitates resource allocation and sustainability of both short- and long-term projects. | Women's NGOs can use project management tools to ensure initiatives are well-organized and impactful, contributing to lasting social and economic improvements in healthcare, education, etc. |
| Proposed Structure: The Fourth Center for Women’s Social Activism | A Fourth Center within the government would serve as a dedicated body to promote and institutionalize women's activism. It will act as a liaison between the government, NGOs, and the private sector. | By centralizing efforts to promote women's social activism, the Fourth Center ensures better coordination, resource provision, and integration of women’s efforts into public administration. |
| Key Responsibilities of the Fourth Center | 1. Serve as a liaison between the government, NGOs, and the private sector. 2. Oversee the implementation of projects that support women’s activism (healthcare, education, economic development). 3. Provide training and capacity-building resources to help women activists influence policy. | This center will strengthen the role of women in decision-making processes, enabling them to contribute meaningfully to national projects and policy development in crucial sectors. |
| Increased Representation in Public Administration | Formalizing the role of women activists in public administration, through this center and structured projects, will ensure that women’s voices are included in governance. | This will make public administration more inclusive, encouraging the participation of women and marginalized groups in policy-making and ensuring more comprehensive representation. |
| Improved Public Services | By institutionalizing women's activism in critical sectors such as healthcare, education, and social welfare, public services will be enhanced, especially in rural areas. | Women’s activism, supported by project management tools, can address gaps in public services, particularly improving access to healthcare, education, and social programs in underserved communities. |
| Stronger Local Governance | Women's activism can address local community issues by working through the Fourth Center to ensure local governments are more responsive and representative of citizens' needs. | Enhanced local governance will be achieved by prioritizing social issues at the community level, promoting transparency, responsiveness, and inclusiveness in local public administration. |
| Note: compiled by the author based on sources [133 -135] | | |

Institutionalizing women’s social activism through project management and the creation of the Fourth Center will strengthen the participation of women in governance and public administration. Women's NGOs and activists, empowered with project management tools, can drive sustainable projects that address critical social issues like healthcare, education, and economic development. This institutionalization will lead to improved public services, increased representation in decision-making, and stronger local governance, making the administration more responsive to the needs of all citizens. The focus on long-term planning and sustainability ensures that these positive impacts will endure, promoting continuous social improvement and inclusion across

By utilizing project management principles and establishing a dedicated Fourth Center within the government, Kazakhstan can effectively institutionalize women's social activism. This approach will enhance women’s participation in governance, leading to more inclusive decision-making processes and improved public services. Women's NGOs and activists will be empowered to drive sustainable projects that address critical social issues such as healthcare, education, and economic development. This institutionalization will not only improve public services, particularly in underserved areas, but also foster stronger local governance. The Fourth Center will act as a bridge between women’s NGOs, the government, and the private sector, ensuring that women's activism becomes a core component of public administration, thus promoting social inclusion, representation, and lasting improvements in community welfare.

3.3 State and public mechanisms for the institutionalization of women's activism

Studying women's social activism issues allowed us to identify key barriers limiting women's involvement in public administration. The study identified a number of factors that hinder the development of women's participation in public administration, including insufficient legislative support, the absence of effective organizational structures that promote the active involvement of women in governance processes, as well as a lack of financial resources and limited educational opportunities. These limitations create barriers that prevent women from fully realizing their potential in solving social and economic problems.

Sustainable conditions for expanding women's participation in social and economic development, forming mechanisms to support women's leadership, and ensuring equal access to governance processes are at the top of the agenda. Thus, the institutionalization process is the system that provides women with equal opportunities to participate in socio-economic development and management of state processes. This means that women's social activism should be a spontaneous initiative of individual civil groups and a structure built into state mechanisms. Based on that, it is important to develop systems to support women's leadership, form mechanisms to protect women's rights in the management sphere, and ensure equal access to tools to influence decision-making. In the long term, this will lead to more balanced social development and sustainability of public administration due to the more active participation of women in socio-economic processes.

One of the central areas of institutionalization is the legislative consolidation of women's social activism to officially recognize women's contribution to society's development and establish precise legal mechanisms to ensure the protection of their rights and their full participation in management and economic processes. Legislative consolidation of women's social activism will mean that women's initiatives will no longer depend solely on volunteer movements and can count on support from government structures and authorities.

At present, the legislation of many countries, including Kazakhstan, does not contain clear rules defining the legal status of women's organizations and their participation in governance processes.

Entrepreneurial activity based on women's social participation is consolidated as a sustainable form of influence on local development processes. The use of business models with social content contributes to the expansion of the economic base and the formation of new channels of public participation. The development of medium-sized entrepreneurship focused on solving socially significant problems requires the introduction of financial mechanisms adapted to the specifics of projects with social content. Access to credit and investment resources is difficult due to the lack of gender-specific programs, limited guarantee instruments, and the inconsistency of the existing financial infrastructure with the parameters of project activities in the social sphere. The solution to these problems is possible through the launch of targeted credit lines, the introduction of tax incentives, and the expansion of grant support to strengthen entrepreneurial practices in the segment of women's activism. To eliminate these barriers, it is necessary to develop forms of venture financing, create grant mechanisms, and introduce tax incentives for women's entrepreneurial initiatives in the social sphere. An additional area of ​​support is the digitalization of education and business and expanding women's access to online markets, which is especially relevant for forms of the pandemic in regions where traditional entrepreneurship is limited.  Education and entrepreneurship are central to developing the competencies necessary for women's active economic and management participation.

     Financial stability remains one of the key conditions and despite the existence of state programs providing grants and subsidies, the volume of support and level of accessibility are insufficient for the implementation of sustainable initiatives. Expanding the system of state guarantees, creating specialized financial funds, and connecting international assistance mechanisms make it possible to reduce barriers to access to resources and increase the effectiveness of socially oriented projects. Thus, Kazakhstan is moving towards strengthening women's participation in governance and social activism, but several key aspects require further development.

In addition, it is necessary to create mechanisms that will ensure the sustainability of women's organizations, allow them to go beyond individual initiatives and become full-fledged partners of the state in solving public issues. It is proposed that specialized centres be created that will coordinate and support women's initiatives. Such centres can become a link between government agencies, businesses and non-profit organizations, promote the development of women's entrepreneurship, and provide consulting and educational services. In addition, an important task is the integration of project management approach in the sphere of public activity, which will increase the effectiveness of the initiatives being implemented, ensure their transparency and take into account the interests of target groups. Another important area of ​​institutionalization is the inclusion of women's activism in the existing public administration system. Through such systems, there will beimplemented the provision of support to women's initiatives, ensuring coordination between different levels of government, NGOs, and the private sector. These centres will be able to provide women with resources and tools for participation in public processes and strengthen their positions in state and economic institutions. Such organizations can work in several areas: legal and educational support, assistance in obtaining financing, and consulting on project management and entrepreneurship.

Financing is one of the key factors for the successful institutionalization of women's social activism. Currently, many women's initiatives are developed solely through voluntary donations and grants, which makes them highly vulnerable in the long term. To solve this problem, it is necessary to develop a system of state support that includes several mechanisms as:

* grant programs aimed at supporting women's initiatives;
* preferential lending and simplified access to financial instruments for women entrepreneurs;
* public-private partnership (PPP) programs allow businesses to invest in the development of women's entrepreneurship and social projects;
* creation of funds to support women's initiatives operating at the regional level and provide stable funding for local projects.

At the same time, it is necessary to develop public-private partnership (PPP) mechanisms that attract private investment in social projects and create funds to support women entrepreneurs in developing small and medium businesses. Women have limited opportunities for quality education, especially in rural areas. Expanding educational programs in management skills, digital tools, and project planning is a key condition for improving the quality of participation in social activity. The development of online courses and distance learning aimed at a wide range of women interested in inclusion in social processes is of priority importance. Expanding access to educational resources ensures equal opportunities for involvement in management, especially in conditions of territorial remoteness and limited access to traditional forms of training.

Institutionalizing women's social activism is a complex, multi-level process requiring an integrated approach. Comprehensive institutionalization of women's activism requires changes in legislation, the creation of specialized organizational structures, the introduction of financing mechanisms, the expansion of educational programs, and the construction of a monitoring system. Systematic monitoring of results, analysis of social effects, and prompt adjustment of management decisions based on factual information enhance the impact of implemented initiatives and ensure compliance with the dynamics of social change. In addition, public control and open reporting will create conditions for more active participation of citizens in the development of social initiatives. The institutionalization of women's activism relies on five key components: a legal framework, organizational structures, financial mechanisms, educational programs, and a monitoring system.

*Model of institutionalization of women's social activism through volunteer and public initiatives in the social sphere*

Women's social activism in Kazakhstan is developing in a unique context that differs from Western practices and models of volunteering. In countries with an Anglo-Saxon legal system, volunteer activity is limited by regulations, involves a clear delineation of functions and rarely intersects with state processes. In Kazakhstan, women's social activism often performs a broader range of functions, including advocacy, legal advice, participation in developing social initiatives and interaction with government agencies.

Thus, traditional Western models of volunteering, based on voluntary assistance in free time, cannot fully reflect the specifics of women's activism in Kazakhstan. While in Western countries, volunteers are mainly engaged in direct assistance to those in need (for example, support for the elderly homeless and environmental campaigns), in Kazakhstan, volunteer initiatives often take on an institutional character, are integrated into public processes, and actively participate in solving socially significant issues at the state and societal levels.

In this regard, we propose a model for institutionalising women's social activism that will consider the specifics of Kazakhstani society and combine public, scientific and state mechanisms for the sustainable development of women's initiatives.

*Key differences between the model and Western analogues*

1. Expanded powers of volunteers and public activists

Unlike Western practices, where volunteers provide only basic assistance, in Kazakhstan, they can consult the population, lobby for bills and negotiate with government agencies and businesses.

For example, in the field of palliative care, volunteers not only care for the sick, but also help families fill out the necessary documents, consult on health insurance issues, and interact with government agencies to change the legal status of patients.

1. Hybrid format of participation

In Kazakhstan, women's activism is not limited to official volunteer organizations - women can participate in initiative groups without having the formal status of a volunteer.

Many public initiatives arise spontaneously in response to social problems but are then integrated into the system of public administration and partnership programs.

1. Institutionalization through education and science

One of the key mechanisms for institutionalizing women's activism is the development of educational programs and partner research aimed at expanding women's competencies in the field of management, law and social policy.

Women involved in volunteer activities often seek to improve their qualifications, participate in grant programs and continue their education in doctoral studies to expand their opportunities to influence social processes.

1. Integration with government programs

Unlike Western models, where volunteers act separately from government agencies, the Kazakhstani model involves close interaction between activists and government agencies. For example, volunteer organizations negotiate with government agencies, participate in the development of regulations, and offer alternative solutions to social problems. This allows not only to respond to current challenges, but also to make long-term changes to legislation and the system of social services.

In Table 10 there are presented structurel elements of the proposed model.

Table 10 – Structural elements of the institutionalization model of women's activism

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Component | Description | Expected Effects |
| Education and Science | Development of partnership grant programs, advanced training of volunteers through online courses, doctoral studies, research projects. | Improving the professional level of activists, strengthening the scientific basis for their proposals, expanding international cooperation. |
| Legal Integration | Development of legislation regulating volunteer and public activities; creation of legal mechanisms for interaction between NGOs and the state. | Legitimization of public initiatives, expansion of the legal field for women's activism, reduction of bureaucratic barriers. |
| State Support | Introduction of grant programs, tax incentives, lending for socially oriented women's initiatives. | Reduction of financial restrictions, ensuring sustainability of projects. |
| Lobbying and Advocacy | Participation in the development of regulations, promotion of changes in social legislation (for example, in the field of palliative care, guardianship, access to medical services). | Increasing the effectiveness of social policy, reducing bureaucratic barriers for socially vulnerable groups. |
| Development of Digital Technologies | Implementation of online platforms for interaction between activists, government agencies and the population; digitalization of social project management. | Increasing transparency, accessibility of information, acceleration of decision-making. |
| Note: compiled by the author based on sources [133, 136, 137, 138,] | | |

In Kazakhstan, women's social activism is important in addressing significant public issues, complementing government initiatives and filling gaps in social policy. Volunteering is one of the ways social activism is provided, but it differs based on the region. Western models of social activism regard volunteering as a side assistance, limited in various aspects such as consulting, medical help or assistance, and fundraising. In contrast, in Kazakhstan, this notion often includes active participation in legislative initiatives, human rights activities, and negotiations with government agencies and businesses. Therefore, women involved in NGO act as mediators. The significant barrier is the lack of a clear institutional structure and sustainable support mechanisms. Unclear function hinders the effective development of women's public initiatives. Therefore, they have to constantly address existing legislation and regulations in order not to violate the law and, at the same time, provide quality assistance. The proposed model of women's social activism institutionalisation aims to develop a comprehensive approach that includes legal, educational, scientific and financial mechanisms that will increase the importance of women's activism in the system of public administration and social policy.

Why is this model important for Kazakhstan?

1. *Takes into account the specifics of national women's social activism*

Kazakh women's social activism is not based on the Western model, but is a hybrid format that combines public activity, lobbying and interaction with government agencies. The introduction of a clear institutional structure will streamline initiatives and increase their effectiveness.

2. *Allows women and activists to influence social policy through participation in decision-making at the state level*

Developing the legal status of women in public activities will expand their powers. The existing experiance of palliative care system development in Kazakhstan act as a fine illustration where women activists already act as consultants, but without official recognition of their status.

3. *Promotes a scientific approach to solving social problems*

The inclusion of women in scientific research and participation in international grant programs contributes to the growth of the professional level in the social sphere. It expands financial opportunities for the implementation of socially significant projects. Activists' participation in research activities on social development issues can become the basis for revising current legislation and developing new mechanisms for social policy.

4. *Creates sustainable financing mechanisms*

Instead of one-time budget subsidies, the institutionalization model involves building sustainable financial mechanisms through the development of partnerships between government agencies and businesses, expanding access to international grant funding, and applying tax incentives for enterprises with a social mission. The systematic use of these instruments forms the basis for the long-term financial sustainability of women's projects and their stable activities in social policy.

The proposed model of institutionalizing women's activism aims to form a sustainable system of support for public initiatives, including women's organizations in state and scientific structures and developing educational and digital tools. Unlike Western approaches, the model considers Kazakhstan's specifics, where women in the public sector perform both social and expert human rights and representative functions. Implementing this model creates conditions for expanding the influence of women's participation on the content of social policy, development of legislation, and improvement of management mechanisms.

**CONCLUSION**

The research conducted in this dissertation allowed us to make generalizations concerning the role of women's social activism in the public administration system of Kazakhstan. A comprehensive analysis of the development, impact, and institutionalization of activist practices confirmed the importance of women's participation in solving priority tasks of social policy. Particular attention was paid to the mechanisms for including initiatives in formal management structures and the conditions under which activism is transformed from informal civic participation into sustainable management practice. The work substantiates the mechanisms for including women's activism in formal governance structures, emphasizing systemic sustainability, institutional integration, and multi-level coordination. The historical transformation of women's social roles is traced from functions concentrated in the family and household sphere to active participation in public areas, including educational, medical, and entrepreneurial activities. Long-term involvement in caring for social well-being has formed a strong connection between women and maintaining the viability of local communities. In the context of governance gaps or ineffective functioning of state mechanisms, women's initiatives become the basis for civil mobilization aimed at solving priority social problems. This relationship between social sustainability and the active inclusion of women in the public sphere is confirmed by international experience and is directly reflected in Kazakhstani practice.

*Historical Context and Social Impact*

Historical analysis has shown that women's social activism developed in close connection with the main stages of socio-political transformations. The expansion of participation in management processes was accompanied by an increase in economic activity and an increase in the number of women with higher education. The persistence of regulatory restrictions, persistent social stereotypes, and the lack of official recognition mechanisms hinder the integration of women's participation into the sphere of governance. The clash with institutional closure makes it impossible to move from point initiatives to long-term social solutions capable of changing the interaction structure between society and the state. In the Kazakhstani context, women's activism is concentrated mainly in healthcare, education, and entrepreneurship. In these areas, non-governmental organizations headed by women are especially active, promoting the agenda of gender equality, accessibility of health services, and economic self-realization. However, the current public administration system does not fully utilize these structures' expert and practical potential. In most cases, involvement remains informal, which reduces the sustainability, scale, and reproducibility of the effects achieved.

The study confirmed that economic activity is key to women's social participation. Расширение занятости, увеличение доли женщин с высшим образованием и рост представленности в управленческих структурах подтверждают значительный потенциал женского участия в качестве движущего ресурса социально-экономических преобразований. Participation in the development and implementation of social policy carried out in partnership with NGOs and the form of independent civil initiatives plays an important role. This activity has acquired a pronounced character of social power but remains poorly institutionalized and not integrated into decision-making mechanisms at all levels.

*Analysis of Palliative Care and Social Services*

The institutionalization of women's social activism in the healthcare system of Kazakhstan, especially in the palliative care sector, demonstrates the meaningful opportunities for civil initiatives to participate in solving structural problems. In resource shortages, legal uncertainty, and territorial inequality in access to social and medical services, women's associations have formed volunteer networks, mechanisms for targeted financial support, and information and educational campaigns. These forms of activity aim to improve the quality of palliative and social care, primarily in rural and sparsely populated areas, where the most significant vulnerability and slow feedback characterize traditional administrative response mechanisms.

A significant discrepancy has been identified between the actual needs for palliative care and the existing management tools. Insufficient coordination, a weak regulatory framework, and the absence of institutionalized forms of interaction with civil initiatives hinder the construction of a sustainable and fair model of aid distribution. The weakness of the regulatory framework, especially in ​​providing pain medications, the lack of coordination between sectors, and the fragmented nature of support from medical institutions hinder the development of a sustainable system. Civil initiatives outside the state system take on tasks not covered by existing mechanisms - from process coordination to individual patient support. At the same time, the lack of official recognition and institutionalized interaction limits the possibilities of scaling up successful practices and hinders their integration into the system of medical and social care.

Active participation in palliative care reform demonstrates the potential of women's activism in developing practical solutions based on direct interaction with vulnerable groups. The practice of providing informal support reveals management failures and shows ways to adapt social services to the real needs of the population. Without institutional recognition, normative status, and sustainable interaction with the state system, such forms of activity remain episodic and are subject to burnout, which reduces the long-term effect. Formalization of the participation of women's initiatives in the healthcare system creates conditions for improving the quality of medical and social services, especially in the least affluent regions.

*Education and Empowerment of Women*

One of the key findings of the dissertation research was the importance of education as a factor in empowering women to participate in public administration and social activism. Education forms the necessary knowledge base, management competencies, and confidence to perform leadership functions, implement political initiatives, and overcome gender limitations. Access to higher education positively correlates with women's ability to influence the content of public policy and initiate social change. Educational institutions perform a strategic function in preparing a new generation of women leaders focused on promoting gender equality and developing social justice institutions in Kazakhstan.

The qualitative analysis results showed persistent limitations that impede education and inclusion in management practices. The main barriers include insufficient institutional support, poor representation of women in educational and personnel programs, and limited access to opportunities for professional growth. The analysis confirmed the importance of sustainable partnerships between educational organizations, the non-governmental sector, and government agencies. The development of intersectoral interaction creates conditions for eliminating structural barriers, expands access to knowledge, and promotes women's participation in management and expert processes.

*Mechanisms for Institutionalization*

Institutionalization of women's social activism ensures the transition from episodic initiatives to a sustainable model of participation in public policy. The mechanisms developed in the dissertation include legal consolidation of forms of participation, formalization of relations with government agencies, development of programs for institutional and leadership potential, as well as support for civil organizations focused on a female audience. These elements form a structural basis that allows the integration of activist practices into decision-making processes at all levels of public administration.

One of the central proposals was the creation of the Fourth Center for Women's Social Activism as a specialized link in the management system. The architecture of the Fourth Center is being formed as a platform for continuous interaction between women's associations, government agencies, and the business sector. Coordination between government structures, women's organizations, and the private sector ensures the inclusion of civil initiatives in the procedures for planning, coordinating, and implementing state policy sustainably. Institutional consolidation of participation creates conditions for managerial reproducibility and interaction at all levels. Using the accumulated expert and organizational resources of civil society initiatives increases the effectiveness of management decisions and allows for the inclusion of social priorities in long-term development strategies.

The use of a project approach in women's activism helps increase the manageability, reproducibility, and effectiveness of social initiatives. Clear goal setting, reasonable resource distribution, and coordination of actions between participants create conditions for the effective implementation of both short-term and long-term programs. Project tools are efficient in healthcare, education, and local economic development, where coordination of efforts in different sectors and flexibility of management decisions are required.

*Impact on Public Administration*

The institutionalization of women's social activism has a complex transformative effect on the public administration system in Kazakhstan. Sustainable inclusion of women in decision-making processes helps expand representation and consider the interests of socially vulnerable groups. Increasing the sensitivity of governance mechanisms to the specifics of local requests leads to the formation of more equitable and socially oriented policies and improves the quality of services provided.

Strengthening local self-government is one of the key effects of institutionalizing activist practices. Projects implemented by women at the local community level help identify and formulate priorities that were not previously reflected in formalized management procedures. Institutionalization of such practices helps increase transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness in the municipal governance system. Programs already implemented in healthcare, education, and social support have demonstrated high efficiency and practical value. Consolidating these practices within the framework of state policy creates conditions for increasing the availability and quality of social services, especially in rural and remote communities.

Conclusion on Chapter 1.1

* examined the theoretical foundations of women's social activism, its role in the development of society and public administration. An analysis of existing definitions of social activism and its key characteristics was conducted. The author's definition of women's social activism was proposed, which takes into account the peculiarities of women's participation in the management processes of Kazakhstan, as well as their role in the social and economic spheres. Particular attention is paid to the influence of women's activism on the development of democratic institutions, the formation of social policy and the strengthening of civil society.

Conclusion on Chapter 1.2

* during the analysis of the evolution of women's activism, historical patterns of its development in Kazakhstan and abroad were identified. The main stages of the formation of women's movements are considered, starting with the traditional role of women in the family and ending with their involvement in public administration and business. It was revealed that throughout history, women have become the initiators of social reforms and social transformations, especially in times of crisis. As a result of the study, it was concluded that the institutionalization of women's activism is an important element of its sustainable development, as well as a tool for improving the effectiveness of public administration.

Conclusion on Chapter 1.3

* a comparative analysis of models of women's activism in different countries allowed us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to its institutionalization. In Western countries, women's activism is more often based on individual initiatives and non-governmental organizations, while in Kazakhstan it is closely linked to state institutions and fulfills the function of replenishing missing social services. It was revealed that the Kazakhstani model combines elements of volunteerism, social entrepreneurship and human rights activities.

Conclusion on Chapter 2.1

* contains a quantitative analysis of factors influencing the position of women in the economy and public administration. For the first time, a data standardization method using Z-score was applied, which made it possible to identify key differences in the dynamics of employment, education and professional growth of women in Kazakhstan.

Conclusion on Chapter 2.2

* contains a detailed analysis of the impact of education on women's involvement in public and managerial activities. The use of questionnaires made it possible to determine women's perception of their educational opportunities and barriers. It was found that access to quality education is a critical factor in increasing women's social activity. In particular, women with higher education are more likely to participate in decision-making and engage in public activities. The obtained data allow us to conclude that it is necessary to expand educational programs, including distance learning and courses on the development of management competencies.

Conclusion on Chapter 2.3

* in the course of the analysis of mechanisms for regulating gender stereotypes, the key factors that hinder women's activism and women's participation in political and economic life were studied. Particular attention was paid to the role of non-governmental organizations in eliminating these barriers. A complex approach to the analysis of the mechanisms for institutionalizing women's activism was conducted, including legal, economic and educational instruments. As a result, strategies were proposed to enhance the influence of women's initiatives on government decision-making and the formation of social policy.

Conclusion on Chapter 3.1

* the problems of women's activism identified during the study include a lack of institutional support, financial resources and mechanisms for interaction with government agencies. Key areas for improving policy in the field of women's activism have been identified, including the expansion of legislative norms, support for public organizations and the development of new financing instruments. The study offers recommendations for integrating women's initiatives into the public administration system through specialized programs and partnership projects.

Conclusion on Chapter 3.2

* a detailed analysis of mechanisms for promoting women's activism through public administration has been conducted, including models of interaction with NGOs, government agencies and businesses. Examples of international experience that can be adapted to the Kazakhstani context have been considered. One of the key conclusions was the confirmation of the need to institutionalize women's activism through the creation of specialized state centers, the formation of an educational support system and the introduction of project management. Proposals have been developed to improve the effectiveness of women's initiatives by integrating them into strategic state programs.

Conclusion on Chapter 3.3

* based on the analysis of various approaches to the institutionalization of women's activism, the author's model of its integration into the public administration system has been proposed. Unlike Western models, the Kazakhstani system involves the active participation of women in public and volunteer initiatives aimed at filling social gaps. The author's methodology, developed during the study, combines both quantitative approach and qualitative methods of analysis (obtain more specific results, which makes the methodology adaptable)including the use of Z-score, surveys and analysis of social initiatives in the field of education and health care. The implementation of the model will proposed in the current research allows to increase the influence of women's activism on public administration, form new mechanisms of interaction between society and the state, and ensure sustainable financing of social initiatives.

During the study, an original methodology for analyzing women's social activism was developed, including data standardization, survey research and mixed methods of analysis. This allowed not only to identify key factors influencing women's activity, but also to develop practical recommendations for the institutionalization of their initiatives.

In conclusion, this dissertation has demonstrated that the institutionalization of women’s social activism is not only necessary for achieving gender equality but also essential for improving public administration and social services in Kazakhstan. Women activists have been instrumental in addressing critical social issues, and their efforts should be formally recognized and supported through structured mechanisms. The proposed Fourth Center for Women’s Social Activism and the application of project management principles offer viable pathways for institutionalizing women’s contributions, ensuring that their activism has a lasting impact on governance and social welfare.

By embedding women’s activism into the formal structures of governance, Kazakhstan can foster a more inclusive, equitable, and responsive public administration. This institutionalization will ensure that women’s activism continues to contribute to the nation’s development, addressing critical social issues and improving its citizens' overall quality of life. The findings and recommendations presented in this dissertation provide a roadmap for integrating women’s activism into public administration, paving the way for a more just and inclusive society.

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ANNEX A

Theoretical Foundations of Women's Social Activism and Its Impact on Public Administration

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **№** | Author | Author's View on Gender and Public Administration |
| 1 | Simone de Beauvoir | Simone de Beauvoir was one of the first to criticize traditional ideas about women's nature, arguing that gender is a social construct, not a biological given. She introduced and developed the notion of gender as a social construct, challenging inherent gender inferiority. In The Second Sex (1949), Women are not born but become – a process formed through upbringing, culture and social expectations. Society imposes roles: men are active, and women are passive and dependent. Women's inequality in politics and careers is the result of cultural stereotypes, not biology. Cultural norms and stereotypes must be changed, not just formal rights provided, for women to be able to fully participate in political and administrative life. |
| 2 | Betty Friedan | Friedan criticized the myth of "women's happiness through family," which for a long time justified the absence of women in the public sphere. The image of the "ideal housewife" is imposed by society. Education and career make women more complimentary, but culture still pressures them, limiting their ambitions. Women can participate in public administration, but stereotypes prevent them from fully realizing themselves. We need state programs to support women in their careers, especially after maternity leave, to break the "domestic" model of women's purpose. |
| 3 | Robert Stoller,  John Money | They were the first to differentiate between the concepts of "biological sex" and "gender", arguing that gender is not an innate property but a product of upbringing and social norms.  Gender roles are imposed through upbringing and are not determined by biology. Society teaches girls to be submissive and boys to be dominant, which creates different career ambitions and behavior patterns.  These stereotypes prevent women from holding leadership positions in government. The education system and career opportunities need to change so that gender roles do not limit women's professional ambitions. |
| 4 | Catharine MacKinnon | MacKinnon has shown that women in politics and public administration face systematic discrimination – from sexual harassment to political exclusion. Harassment in the workplace is not an isolated incident but a systemic problem that prevents women from building a career. Government structures do not take into account women's issues – for example, there are no mechanisms to protect against harassment and discrimination. Women are less likely to get into top politics because "traditional power" rejects them as "unsuitable". We need laws against harassment, equal representation of women in politics and protection of their rights in the workplace. |
| 5 | Kimberlé Crenshaw | Crenshaw developed the theory of intersectionality, arguing that women face discrimination not only because of their gender but also because of their race, class, immigration status, and other factors. Black women face double discrimination – as women and as a racial minority. Gender policies should not be “one size fits all” because women have different life circumstances and challenges. The “glass ceiling” puts more pressure on women from disadvantaged groups.  Government programs should take into account different categories of women – for example, exceptional support for immigrant women, women from poor backgrounds, and women with disabilities. |
| 6 | Joan Scott | She has researched the impact of gender stereotypes on the hiring and promotion process, showing that they create hidden barriers for women in careers and public service. Stereotypes about "male leadership" lead to women being considered for leadership positions less often. Hiring and promotion processes are biased. Women must "prove" that they are competent, while men are perceived as natural leaders.  Gender is not just a social category but a mechanism of power that affects career opportunities and institutional dynamics.  Reforming the personnel decision-making system, making it transparent and objective, developing anti-discrimination programs in public institutions, and introducing mechanisms for independent assessment of candidates without considering gender bias are necessary. |
| 7 | Anna Westergaard | She argued that public policy itself is gendered because laws and regulations were initially developed without taking into account the specifics of women's experiences. Existing political structures often ignore women's needs, especially in employment, pay, and social protection. Women face institutional barriers - for example, maternity leave is perceived as a "personal choice" and not part of social policy. Policymakers must consider gender differences; otherwise, even "neutral" laws will work in the interests of men.  Implementing gender-sensitive policies that consider the specifics of women's experiences. Audit of government programs for their impact on men and women. Creation of legislative mechanisms that promote equal participation of women in public administration. |
| 8 | Judith Lorber | Gender is a biological characteristic and a social construct formed through norms, traditions and social expectations. A system that supports existing hierarchies of power, where men occupy dominant positions, and women face limitations in their careers and access to resources. Such inequalities are reinforced at the institutional policy level - for example, through salary differences, stereotypes in hiring and promotion, and discrimination in public administration. Therefore, changing the system and not just fighting individual discrimination cases is necessary. Social norms create and maintain gender inequality. Deep institutional reforms in management, legislation and corporate policy are needed to overcome it. |
| 9 | Adrienne Rich | Dominant gender norms limit women in the professional sphere. Society's imposed heterosexuality ("heteronormativity") and traditional expectations of women shape their career trajectories, limiting their ambitions and access to leadership positions. Women are brought up from childhood to be family-oriented and caring for others. Leadership positions often imply "masculine" qualities - aggressiveness, ambition, independence - which makes women "inconvenient" candidates for high positions. Social expectations and heteronormativity create barriers to women's career growth, especially in government structures. It is necessary to create equal conditions and a change in the work culture and management practices. |
| 10 | Judith Lorber | Gender is a social institution that requires systemic changes for equality. Lorber considered gender a social institution that permeates all spheres of life—politics, economics, culture, the labour market, and public administration. Existing laws, rules, and public policies are based on "male" experience—for example, working hours, career paths, and the pension system.  Gender inequality is reproduced through education, family attitudes, economics, and laws, and not just through personal prejudices.  Therefore, according to Lorber, prohibiting discrimination alone is not enough. It is necessary to change the institutions themselves that do not take into account women's real experience: develop flexible working conditions, revise career growth criteria, and redistribute public resources, taking into account the interests of both sexes.  For real gender equality, changing people's views is not enough. We must also change the institutions that structure society, creating inclusive states and economic policies. |
| 11 | Judith Butler | Founder of queer theory, which criticizes the traditional binary division between men and women. She argues that gender is not an innate characteristic but a "performance"- a behavior al expression we learn through social norms. People are not born with a rigidly defined male or female identity. Society imposes behavior, manners, and clothing rules that make gender "normative". Gender can be fluid, not fixed: a person determines his or her own identity. Politicians need to recognize the existence of gender diversity. Flexible and inclusive labour standards for all gender identities need to be developed. |
| 12 | Raewyn Connell | She introduced the concept of hegemonic masculinity - the dominant form determining what a "real" man should be (assertive, aggressive, competitive). In the public consciousness, leadership positions = "masculine" management style. Women are less likely to be promoted because their behavior does not meet the standards of "hegemonic masculinity". Men also suffer: if they do not fit into the dominant image of masculinity, their careers can also stall.  Gender-inclusive policies are needed to destroy stereotypical ideas about leadership. It is important to change the corporate culture. Management should value different leadership styles (not only the traditionally "masculine" one) and introduce gender equality practices in personnel decision-making. |
| 13 | Joan Acker | She has proven that bureaucracy and government structures are initially "tailored" for men. The working day, career growth, and salaries were initially developed without considering women who, for example, combine work and family. There is a "male standard" in public administration: people who do not meet it (women, minorities) face barriers.  Thus, it is necessary to reform the bureaucracy to take into account different life situations. Gender-sensitive laws must be created that consider the needs of working women. Inclusive management practices must be introduced that will help women occupy leadership positions. |
| 14 | Patricia Hill Collins | Collins was one of the first to introduce the concept of intersectionality, explaining that discrimination does not exist in its "pure form". A woman may face gender discrimination. However, if she is also non-white, an immigrant or from a lower class, she faces double or triple discrimination.  Thus, politicians must consider not only gender but also other factors of discrimination (race, social origin). Government programs must be aimed at supporting vulnerable groups and not only at "universal" solutions. The fight for equality must consider the complex intersections of identities, not just feminism in a narrow sense. |

ANNEX B

Gender roles in public administration

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| № | Author | Gender role definition |
| 1 | Money and Stoller's Vision | Gender as a social construct, shaped by cultural norms; identity developed through socialization and exists on a continuum. |
| 2 | Rousseau's Vision | Women's role as caregivers; suited to domestic tasks due to natural gentleness and nurturing qualities. |
| 3 | Marx and Nietzsche's Vision | Marx: women's oppression linked to capitalism; Nietzsche: femininity regarded as a source of power. |
|  | Bourdieu and Millett's Vision: | Women's roles shaped by social structures; viewed as inferior, requiring institutional restructuring to address oppression. |
| 4 | Carroll and Zerilli's Vision | Gender is shaped by language transofmation leading to discourse or elevation of women’s societal status. |
| 5 | Zimmerman and Garfinkel's Vision | Gender as performance; roles are constructed and changeable through social interactions. |
| 6 | Scott's Vision: | Women's roles influenced by power relations; restructuring power dynamics is essential to address oppression. |
| 7 | Havelock’s vision | In ancient Greece, women were considered inferior and excluded from education and politics. |
| 8 | Berger and Luckmann’s vision | Socially constructed gender roles vary across cultures and time. |
| 9 | Chodorow’s vision | Women's identity shaped by motherhood and caregiving roles, with expectations imposed by society. |
| 10 | Derrida’ vision | Language shapes gender roles; feminist critique can deconstruct discourses to create new meanings. |
| Note: complied by the author | | |

ANNEX C

List of indicators

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Indicator** |
| Governance and Corruption | Corruption Perceptions Index |
| Voice and Accountability (Estimate) |
| Voice and Accountability (Rank) |
| Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism (Estimate) |
| Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism (Rank) |
| Government Effectiveness (Estimate) |
| Government Effectiveness (Rank) |
| Regulatory Quality (Estimate) |
| Regulatory Quality (Rank) |
| Rule of Law (Estimate) |
| Rule of Law (Rank) |
| Control of Corruption (Estimate) |
| Control of Corruption (Rank) |
| **Higher Education** | MEN\_HEI\_GROSS\_ENROL |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_GROSS\_ENROL |
| MEN\_NUMBER IN HEI |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER IN HEI |
| MEN\_HEI\_ACADEMIC\_STAFF |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_ACADEMIC\_STAFF |
| MEN\_HEI\_GRAD |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_GRAD |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_GRAD |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_GRAD |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_ADMISS |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_ADMISS |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_ADMISS |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_ADMISS |
| **Entrepreneurship** | WOMEN\_UNEMPLOYMENT |
| MEN\_UNEMPLOYMENT |
| WOMEN\_SME\_NUMBER |
| WOMEN\_IE\_NUMBER |
| WOMEN\_NUMER\_CREDIT |
| WOMEN\_AMOUNT\_CREDIT |

ANNEX D

Trends in indices of quality of public administration

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATA | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Corruption  Perceptions Index | 28 | 26 | 29 | 28 | 29 | 31 | 31 | 34 | 38 | 37 | 36 |
| Voice and  Accountability  ESTIMATE | -1,18 | -1,24 | -1,18 | -1,16 | -1,21 | -1,24 | -1,20 | -1,23 | -1,18 | -1,13 | -1,07 |
| Voice and Accountability\_RANK | 15,02 | 14,08 | 14,29 | 16,26 | 13,79 | 13,79 | 15,05 | 14,49 | 15,94 | 18,84 | 19,81 |
| Political Stability  and Absence of Violence/Terrorism  ESTIMATE | -0,41 | -0,40 | 0,04 | 9,00 | 0,00 | 0,02 | -0,05 | -0,17 | -0,26 | -0,23 | -0,36 |
| Political Stability  and Absence of Violence/Terrorism  RANK | 34,12 | 34,60 | 47,62 | 43,81 | 47,62 | 47,14 | 44,81 | 41,51 | 38,21 | 38,21 | 32,55 |
| Government Effectiveness  ESTIMATE | -0,53 | -0,62 | -0,08 | -0,15 | -0,14 | -0,07 | -0,04 | 0,07 | 0,11 | 0,03 | 0,14 |
| Government Effectiveness  RANK | 37,44 | 32,70 | 50,00 | 48,10 | 47,14 | 49,52 | 50,95 | 54,76 | 55,71 | 55,24 | 58,49 |
| Regulatory Quality  ESTIMATE | -0,39 | -0,38 | -0,24 | -0,09 | -0,16 | 0,15 | 0,09 | 0,11 | 0,11 | 0,08 | -0,01 |
| Regulatory Quality  RANK | 38,39 | 38,86 | 46,63 | 49,52 | 47,14 | 60,95 | 59,05 | 60,48 | 56,67 | 55,71 | 52,83 |
| Rule of Law  ESTIMATE | -0,77 | -0,72 | -0,61 | -0,52 | -0,51 | -0,49 | -0,50 | -0,51 | -0,47 | -0,51 | -0,47 |
| Rule of Law  RANK | 26,76 | 29,58 | 32,21 | 36,19 | 32,38 | 32,86 | 33,33 | 32,86 | 36,19 | 33,33 | 35,85 |
| Control of Corruption  ESTIMATE | -0,92 | -0,93 | -0,83 | -0,87 | -0,83 | -0,84 | -0,49 | -0,29 | -0,38 | -0,26 | -0,19 |
| Control of Corruption  RANK | 18,96 | 18,96 | 23,56 | 20,95 | 21,90 | 20,00 | 37,62 | 45,24 | 40,95 | 47,14 | 48,58 |

ANNEX E

Assessment of the quality of public administration: means and standard deviations

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variables | μ (Average value) | σ (Standard Deviation) |
| Corruption Perceptions Index | 31,54545 | 3,893202 |
| Voice and Accountability ESTIMATE | -1,18404 | 0,049357 |
| Voice and Accountability RANK | 15,57879 | 1,93431 |
| Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism ESTIMATE | 0,653132 | 2,644317 |
| Political Stability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism RANK | 40,92672 | 5,421429 |
| Government Effectiveness ESTIMATE | -0,11582 | 0,234465 |
| Government Effectiveness RANK | 49,09648 | 7,481959 |
| Regulatory Quality ESTIMATE | -0,0662 | 0,190305 |
| Regulatory Quality RANK | 51,47635 | 7,69462 |
| Rule of Law ESTIMATE | -0,55246 | 0,097902 |
| Rule of Law RANK | 32,86741 | 2,700071 |
| Control of Corruption ESTIMATE | -0,62003 | 0,284721 |
| Control of Corruption RANK | 31,26062 | 11,92696 |

ANNEX F

Evaluation of the quality of public administration using the Z-score method

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Z Score | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Corruption Perceptions  Index | -0,91068 | -1,42439 | -0,65382 | -0,91068 | -0,65382 | -0,1401 | -0,1401 | 0,63047 | 1,657901 | 1,401043 | 1,144185 |
| Voice and Accountability\_  ESTIMATE | 0,148384 | -1,18634 | 0,002595 | 0,410526 | -0,43522 | -1,19457 | -0,32361 | -0,93435 | 0,060921 | 1,074998 | 2,376668 |
| Voice and Accountability\_  RANK | -0,28709 | -0,77252 | -0,6685 | 0,350184 | -0,92317 | -0,92317 | -0,27413 | -0,56146 | 0,187786 | 1,686279 | 2,185777 |
| Political Stability and Absence of Violence/  Terrorism\_  ESTIMATE | -0,40146 | -0,3992 | -0,23337 | 3,156531 | -0,24644 | -0,23778 | -0,26692 | -0,31052 | -0,34442 | -0,33448 | -0,38194 |
| Political Stability and Absence of Violence/  Terrorism\_RANK | -1,25493 | -1,16751 | 1,234422 | 0,531743 | 1,234422 | 1,146587 | 0,716528 | 0,107484 | -0,50156 | -0,50156 | -1,54563 |
| Government Effectiveness\_  ESTIMATE | -1,74685 | -2,15033 | 0,147695 | -0,1319 | -0,11066 | 0,213257 | 0,314793 | 0,788071 | 0,946621 | 0,623604 | 1,105693 |
| Government Effectiveness\_  RANK | -1,55784 | -2,19128 | 0,120759 | -0,13382 | -0,26111 | 0,057114 | 0,24805 | 0,757211 | 0,884501 | 0,820856 | 1,255564 |
| Regulatory Quality\_  ESTIMATE | -1,70455 | -1,62417 | -0,9087 | -0,12873 | -0,49938 | 1,161742 | 0,845065 | 0,911738 | 0,905614 | 0,75255 | 0,288811 |
| Regulatory Quality\_  RANK | -1,70089 | -1,6393 | -0,62924 | -0,25375 | -0,56318 | 1,231514 | 0,98397 | 1,169628 | 0,674539 | 0,550767 | 0,175947 |
| Rule of Law\_  ESTIMATE | -2,25161 | -1,67251 | -0,58088 | 0,374745 | 0,403814 | 0,666445 | 0,500784 | 0,43486 | 0,877634 | 0,449305 | 0,797415 |
| Rule of Law\_  RANK | -2,26173 | -1,21846 | -0,24291 | 1,230734 | -0,18016 | -0,0038 | 0,17256 | -0,0038 | 1,230734 | 0,17256 | 1,104285 |
| Control of Corruption\_  ESTIMATE | -1,058 | -1,09189 | -0,7214 | -0,88292 | -0,74416 | -0,77 | 0,4494 | 1,174258 | 0,850393 | 1,267456 | 1,526864 |
| Control of Corruption\_  RANK | -1,03155 | -1,03155 | -0,64584 | -0,86428 | -0,78443 | -0,94413 | 0,533114 | 1,171923 | 0,812593 | 1,331625 | 1,452532 |

ANNEX G

Educational level as a factor in women’s social and managerial activity (2012–2022)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| DATA | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| MEN\_HEI\_GROSS  \_ENROL | 49,16 | 46,09 | 42,26 | 43,22 | 45,24 | 48,55 | 54,68 | 61,05 | 58,07 | 56,34 | 53,61 |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_GROSS  \_ENROL | 60,15 | 57,23 | 54,70 | 53,86 | 57,29 | 60,29 | 67,04 | 73,18 | 70,35 | 69,24 | 64,89 |
| MEN\_NUMBER  IN HEI | 241 502 | 226 150 | 204 461 | 202 555 | 213 945 | 226 560 | 250 227 | 282 702 | 269 758 | 266 511 | 269 682 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER  IN HEI | 330 189 | 301 076 | 272 926 | 256 814 | 263 129 | 269 649 | 292 231 | 321 643 | 306 799 | 309 000 | 308 555 |
| MEN\_HEI\_  ACADEMIC\_STAFF | 15 338 | 15 021 | 14 924 | 14 016 | 13 747 | 13 586 | 13 361 | 13 859 | 12 945 | 12 527 | 12 489 |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_  ACADEMIC\_STAFF | 25 886 | 26 614 | 25 396 | 24 071 | 24 494 | 24 626 | 24 914 | 24 611 | 23 362 | 23 851 | 23 915 |
| MEN\_HEI\_GRAD | 70 531 | 72 310 | 75 936 | 62 923 | 58 878 | 54 690 | 57 080 | 63 185 | 68 354 | 68 716 | 72 450 |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_GRAD | 101 078 | 100 500 | 101 742 | 84 261 | 79 126 | 72 394 | 73 611 | 79 250 | 85 273 | 82 963 | 89 524 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_  MA\_GRAD | 3545 | 4601 | 5588 | 5638 | 6199 | 7416 | 7931 | 8216 | 8628 | 7170 | 7389 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_  MA\_GRAD | 6573 | 8361 | 10292 | 10178 | 10246 | 10852 | 11302 | 12033 | 12744 | 12287 | 14804 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_  PHD\_GRAD | 124 | 172 | 189 | 233 | 231 | 259 | 278 | 326 | 503 | 864 | 478 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_  PHD\_GRAD | 133 | 201 | 314 | 300 | 388 | 462 | 443 | 579 | 943 | 1 639 | 1 058 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_  MA\_ADMISS | 5 850 | 6 376 | 6 132 | 6 340 | 7 586 | 7 987 | 9 100 | 6 245 | 5 793 | 6 311 | 6 166 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_  MA\_ADMISS | 10 501 | 11 399 | 10 809 | 8 921 | 11 488 | 10 842 | 12 614 | 8 773 | 9 452 | 9 304 | 8 115 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_  PHD\_ADMISS | 227 | 251 | 260 | 327 | 391 | 640 | 985 | 601 | 809 | 690 | 606 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_  PHD\_ADMISS | 338 | 387 | 469 | 467 | 695 | 1 031 | 1 781 | 1 174 | 1 285 | 1 030 | 1 105 |

ANNEX H

Gender differences in higher education and their impact on women's participation in public administration.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variables | μ | σ |
| MEN\_HEI\_GROSS\_ENROL | 50,75188313 | 6,051099 |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_GROSS\_ENROL | 62,56590694 | 60,22342 |
| MEN\_NUMBER IN HEI | 241277,5455 | 27133,03 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER IN HEI | 293819,1818 | 23549,14 |
| MEN\_HEI\_ACADEMIC\_STAFF | 13801,18182 | 13044,64 |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_ACADEMIC\_STAFF | 24703,63636 | 913,475 |
| MEN\_HEI\_GRAD | 65913,90909 | 6668,151 |
| WOMEN\_HEI\_GRAD | 86338,36364 | 10183,62 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD | 6574,636364 | 1523,794 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_GRAD | 10879,27273 | 2099,704 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_GRAD | 332,4545455 | 202,5238 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_GRAD | 587,2727273 | 430,9942 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_ADMISS | 6716,909091 | 997,4545 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_MA\_ADMISS | 10201,63636 | 1320,443 |
| MEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_ADMISS | 526,0909091 | 240,5099 |
| WOMEN\_NUMBER\_PHD\_ADMISS | 887,4545455 | 433,6006 |

ANNEX I

Z-Score Results of Higher Education Indicators

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Z-score | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| MEN\_HEI  GROSS  ENROL | 0,027 | 0,078 | 0,142 | 0,126 | 0,092 | 0,037 | 0,065 | 0,172 | 0,122 | 0,093 | 0,048 |
| WOMEN  HEI  GROSS  ENROL | 0,038 | 0,084 | 0,123 | 0,137 | 0,083 | 0,036 | 0,070 | 0,166 | 0,122 | 0,105 | 0,037 |
| MEN\_  NUMBER  IN HEI | 0,001 | 0,057 | 0,139 | 0,146 | 0,103 | 0,055 | 0,034 | 0,156 | 0,107 | 0,095 | 0,107 |
| WOMEN  NUMBER  IN HEI | 0,159 | 0,032 | 0,091 | 0,162 | 0,134 | 0,106 | 0,007 | 0,122 | 0,057 | 0,066 | 0,064 |
| MEN\_HEI  ACADEMIC  STAFF | 0,185 | 0,147 | 0,135 | 0,026 | 0,007 | 0,026 | 0,053 | 0,007 | 0,103 | 0,153 | 0,158 |
| WOMEN  HEI  ACADEMIC  STAFF | 0,148 | 0,239 | 0,087 | 0,079 | 0,026 | 0,010 | 0,026 | 0,012 | 0,168 | 0,107 | 0,099 |
| MEN\_HEI  GRAD | 0,070 | 0,097 | 0,153 | 0,046 | 0,107 | 0,171 | 0,135 | 0,042 | 0,037 | 0,043 | 0,100 |
| WOMEN  HEI  GRAD | 0,155 | 0,149 | 0,162 | 0,022 | 0,076 | 0,147 | 0,134 | 0,075 | 0,011 | 0,036 | 0,034 |
| MEN\_  NUMBER  MA\_GRAD | 0,207 | 0,135 | 0,068 | 0,064 | 0,026 | 0,058 | 0,093 | 0,112 | 0,141 | 0,041 | 0,056 |
| WOMEN\_  NUMBER\_  MA\_GRAD | 0,245 | 0,144 | 0,033 | 0,040 | 0,036 | 0,002 | 0,024 | 0,066 | 0,106 | 0,080 | 0,224 |
| MEN\_  NUMBER  PHD\_GRAD | 0,123 | 0,095 | 0,085 | 0,059 | 0,060 | 0,043 | 0,032 | 0,004 | 0,101 | 0,314 | 0,086 |
| WOMEN\_  NUMBER\_  PHD\_GRAD | 0,121 | 0,103 | 0,073 | 0,076 | 0,053 | 0,033 | 0,038 | 0,002 | 0,095 | 0,280 | 0,125 |
| MEN\_  NUMBER  MA  ADMISS | 0,096 | 0,038 | 0,065 | 0,042 | 0,096 | 0,140 | 0,263 | 0,052 | 0,102 | 0,045 | 0,061 |
| WOMEN\_  NUMBER\_  MA  ADMISS | 0,023 | 0,093 | 0,047 | 0,099 | 0,100 | 0,050 | 0,187 | 0,111 | 0,058 | 0,070 | 0,162 |
| MEN\_  NUMBER  PHD\_  ADMISS | 0,127 | 0,117 | 0,113 | 0,085 | 0,058 | 0,048 | 0,195 | 0,032 | 0,120 | 0,070 | 0,034 |
| WOMEN\_  NUMBER\_  PHD\_  ADMISS | 0,132 | 0,120 | 0,101 | 0,101 | 0,046 | 0,034 | 0,215 | 0,069 | 0,096 | 0,034 | 0,052 |

ANNEX J

The Impact of Education Level on Women's Involvement in Public Administration: A Quantitative Analysis (Z-score)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Data | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| WOMEN  SME  NUMBER | 501791 | 557748 | 640521 | 697355 | 647082 | 630919 | 648128 | 665973 | 677390 | 680897 | 737653 |
| WOMEN  IE  NUMBER | 414458 | 466557 | 542865 | 592652 | 533515 | 510196 | 515091 | 520923 | 519820 | 515794 | 564751 |
| WOMEN  NUMER  CREDIT | 703 | 789 | 759 | 694 | 8223 | 5474 | 10268 | 9410 | 5616 | 3893 | 3500 |
| WOMEN  AMOUNT  CREDIT | 11897 | 12863 | 13448 | 16799 | 32652 | 39321 | 43050 | 33842 | 26947 | 26871 | 20000 |

ANNEX K

The role of women's entrepreneurship in social activism and management: statistical assessment (2012–2022)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Data | μ | σ |
| WOMEN SME NUMBER | 644132,4545 | 62120,92546 |
| WOMEN IE NUMBER | 517874,7273 | 44793,26593 |
| WOMEN NUMER CREDIT | 4166,272727 | 3686,530374 |
| WOMEN AMOUNT CREDIT | 23426,36364 | 12764,93741 |

ANNEX L

The role of women's entrepreneurship in social activism and management: Z-score analysis

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Z-score | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| WOMEN  SME  NUMBER | 0,290 | 0,176 | 0,007 | 0,108 | 0,006 | 0,027 | 0,008 | 0,044 | 0,068 | 0,075 | 0,190 |
| WOMEN  IE  NUMBER | 0,309 | 0,153 | 0,075 | 0,224 | 0,047 | 0,023 | 0,008 | 0,009 | 0,006 | 0,006 | 0,140 |
| WOMEN  NUMER  CREDIT | 0,095 | 0,093 | 0,094 | 0,096 | 0,112 | 0,036 | 0,168 | 0,144 | 0,040 | 0,008 | 0,115 |
| WOMEN  AMOUNT  CREDIT | 0,093 | 0,085 | 0,080 | 0,053 | 0,074 | 0,128 | 0,158 | 0,084 | 0,028 | 0,028 | 0,189 |

ANNEX M

Gender representation in politics and public service: Dynamics (2012–2022)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Data | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| WOMEN  POLITICIAN | 321 | 39 | 34 | 40 | 43 | 40 | 52 | 49 | 65 | 67 | 59 |
| MEN  POLITICIAN | 2886 | 386 | 359 | 371 | 382 | 388 | 391 | 650 | 663 | 670 | 680 |
| WOMEN  ADMINIST  CIVIL\_SERV | 48037 | 49488 | 49061 | 50179 | 51108 | 50451 | 50279 | 49535 | 48966 | 46039 | 46500 |
| MEN  ADMINIST  CIVIL\_SERV | 35643 | 40307 | 41083 | 40740 | 40670 | 40951 | 40210 | 38771 | 38715 | 36017 | 38622 |

ANNEX N

Gender representation in politics and public service: statistical assessment

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Variable | μ | σ |
| WOMEN POLITICIAN | 73,55 | 78,95264822 |
| MEN POLITICIAN | 711,45 | 700,6093924 |
| WOMEN ADMINIST CIVIL\_SERV | 49058,45 | 1537,7521 |
| MEN ADMINIST CIVIL\_SERV | 39248,09 | 1831,576244 |

ANNEX O

Gender representation in politics and public service: Z-score analysis

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Z-score | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| WOMEN  POLITICIAN | 0,5 | 0,0698 | 0,0799 | 0,0678 | 0,0617 | 0,0678 | 0,0435 | 0,0496 | 0,0173 | 0,0132 | 0,0294 |
| MEN  POLITICIAN | 0,5 | 0,0681 | 0,0794 | 0,0741 | 0,0703 | 0,0692 | 0,0683 | 0,0138 | 0,0106 | 0,0092 | 0,0075 |
| WOMEN  ADMINIST  CIVIL\_SERV | 0,0763 | 0,0321 | 0,0002 | 0,0837 | 0,1531 | 0,104 | 0,0912 | 0,0356 | 0,0069 | 0,2256 | 0,1912 |
| MEN  ADMINIST  CIVIL\_SERV | 0,0636 | 0,0733 | 0,0843 | 0,0797 | 0,0783 | 0,0825 | 0,0621 | 0,0206 | 0,0231 | 0,1612 | 0,0339 |