



## Woman in Development and Politics

### The Effect of Women's Position in the Education and Labor Market Sectors on Suicide

Marzieh Shakeri HosseinAbad<sup>1</sup>  | Zahra Nasrollahi<sup>2</sup> 

1. PhD Student in Economics, Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics, Management and Accounting, Yazd University, Yazd, Iran. E-mail: [m.shakeri@stu.yazd.ac.ir](mailto:m.shakeri@stu.yazd.ac.ir)
2. Corresponding Author, Professor of Economics, Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics, Management and Accounting, Yazd University, Yazd, Iran. E-mail: [nasr@yazd.ac.ir](mailto:nasr@yazd.ac.ir)

Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p><b>Article type:</b> Research Article</p> <p><b>Article history:</b> Received: 31 July 2024 Received in revised form: 14 October 2024 Accepted: 20 November 2024 Published online: 31 December 2024</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> <i>Education,</i> <i>Gender Equality,</i> <i>Iran's Provinces,</i> <i>Labor Market,</i> <i>Suicide.</i></p>	<p><b>Introduction</b> Suicide is a public health concern. The family and society are impacted by the consequences of suicide, despite the fact that it is committed by an individual. Policymakers and scholars in this field have expressed concern regarding the economic, social, and familial repercussions of this phenomenon. Therefore, numerous studies have examined the impact of a variety of economic and social factors on suicide. However, only a sparse number of studies have examined the shift in societal conditions toward gender equality in this field. Different views have been advanced regarding the impact of gender equality on suicide. The status integration theory posits that the conflict between the roles of different statuses results in a positive relationship between gender equality and suicide. However, the role expansion theory posits that gender equality reduces the incidence of suicide in society due to the benefits of different roles. Finally, convergence theory posits that the health levels of women and men are convergent as a result of the convergence in gender roles, stress levels, and behaviors. Accordingly, women may experience the advantageous consequences of role expansion; however, it is feasible that they may also endure the detrimental consequences of inadequate working conditions and elevated stress levels as a result of extended work hours; while it is possible for men to benefit from adopting less masculine beliefs and behaviors, such as child care. Given that the probability of men dying from suicide is higher in the majority of regions of the world and based on the convergence theory, it is reasonable to assume that the suicide rate of women will increase and the suicide rate of men will decrease as gender equality and convergence in gender roles progress. The sum of these two effects should be investigated with experimental testing.</p> <p><b>Methodology</b> Due to the different cultural, economic, and social characteristics of each province, it is anticipated that there is a difference in the relationship between gender equality and suicide. This evaluation was conducted separately for each province of Iran from 2016 to 2022, and the necessary data was extracted from the sources published by the Statistical Centre of Iran as a library. The panel data regression model is employed to assess the factors that influence suicide after the variables of the share of women students in the population of women aged 20–34 years, the ratio of the share of women students to men in the population of the age group 20–34 years, the ratio of women's economic participation to men, the unemployment rate, and the divorce rate have been calculated.</p> <p><b>Results</b> The results of this research suggest that the suicide rate in Iran's provinces during the study period is significantly and negatively influenced by the ratio of women's economic participation to men and the share of women students. Conversely, the suicide rate is significantly and positively influenced by the unemployment rate, divorce rate, and ratio of women to men students. The findings of this study indicate that the enhancement of women's access to higher education facilities in comparison to men can result in the development of needs and expectations for women. If society is unable to address these expectations, they can lead to frustration, despair, and other negative consequences, including suicide. In addition, this may also contribute to the development of psychological pressure on men. This discovery</p>

---

corroborates the status integration theory and is in accordance with the findings of Moore & Heirigs's (2021) study. Despite this, the findings of the current study indicate that the ratio of women's economic participation to men has a negative and significant impact on suicide as a result of the family's increased economic security, which is a direct result of the increased access to financial resources. This discovery is consistent with the findings of the study conducted by Chen et al. (2024), is in accordance with the perspectives of Sieber (1974) and Marks (1977), and bolsters the role accumulation theory. The role expansion theory or role accumulation theory posits that any additional role that is granted to an individual has benefits for them. For instance, the entrance of women into the labor market results in a reduction in financial stress within the family and an increase in income. Also, it is anticipated that the prevalence of suicide will decrease as a result of the employment of women, the strengthening of their relationships with colleagues and other members of society, and the expansion of relationships and social support. In addition, the weakening of social integration, the increase in stress and despair, and the increase in economic difficulties, all of which are a consequence of the increase in unemployment, have a positive and significant impact on suicide in society. Also, the results suggest that the divorce rate has a positive and significant effect on suicide in the provinces, as a result of the mental, and physical, economic, social, and family pressures. In other words, provinces with higher divorce rates will experience more suicides.

### Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that the social consequences of suicide can be adjusted by changes in the status of women in society. Additionally, they underscore the significance of policymakers' consideration of gender equality in a variety of sectors, such as the labor market and education. Furthermore, the findings of this investigation indicate that the prevalence of suicide in the provinces can be mitigated by augmenting employment prospects and decreasing unemployment. In addition, the results indicate that society's endeavors to establish stable family bonds and marriages, which result in the cohesion and reinforcement of family bonds and the prevention of divorce and family breakups, can be a successful strategy for addressing social damages, including suicide. In order to promote stable marriages, society should encourage the adoption of rational marriages because irrational and unstable marriages results in social damage, such as suicide. In general, a policy can be evaluated solely from a quantitative perspective, or it can be adequately examined from a qualitative perspective. For instance, policies that encourage marriage may be implemented in response to concerns regarding population growth. Unstable marriages that result in the breakdown of the family and society, as well as depression and the spread of violence such as suicide, foster a hopeless and unhealthy generation, despite the fact that neglecting the qualitative aspects of marriage can cause more harm to society. Therefore, the quality of marriage should be taken into account in addition to its quantity since unsuccessful marriages will result in societal costs, such as increasing suicides.

---

**Cite this article:** Shakeri HosseinAbad, M., & Nasrollahi, Z. (2024). The Effect of Women's Position in the Education and Labor Market Sectors on Suicide. *Women in Development and Politics*, 22(4), 1013-1041. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22059/jwdp.2024.380194.1008467>



© The Author(s).

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22059/jwdp.2024.380194.1008467>

Publisher: The University of Tehran Press.