

ARAB WOMEN DISCRIMINATION IN THE ISRAELI LABOR MARKET

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This article presents an extremely important problem for affirmation and welfare of Arab women in Israel. The author presents the situation on Israel labor market and the conditions that favor the perpetuation of discrimination against women, and the Arab population versus the Jewish. It also analyzed the social policies and measures to increase participation of Arab women in the labor market.

Keywords: Arab women, promotion, value of family, labor market, economic gap, motivation.

DISCRIMINAREA FEMEILOR ARABE PE PIAȚA FORȚEI DE MUNCĂ DIN ISRAEL

În articol este abordată o problemă extrem de importantă pentru afirmarea și bunăstarea femeilor arabe din Israel. Autoarea prezintă situația pe piața forței de muncă din Israel și condițiile care favorizează perpetuarea discriminării femeilor, dar și a populației arabe comparativ cu cea evreiască. De asemenea, sunt analizate și politicile sociale destinate să ridice nivelul de participare a femeilor arabe la piața forței de muncă.

Cuvinte-cheie: femeie arabă, promovare, valori familiale, piața muncii, decalaj economic, motivație.

Discrimination

In Israel the Equality of Opportunities Law forbids private employers to discriminate between work applicants and employees on basis of various reasons, including nationality. However, since its being legislated over 5 decades ago, no law was implemented in contexts of discrimination of Arab population, with exclusion of a small number of instances. The lack of enforcement allows for a prevailing reality of discrimination against Arab population to continue persisting without a challenge.

Discrimination on basis of nationality is one of the factors for creation of large gaps in Israel between Jews and Arabs in rate of unemployment, fields of occupation and level of income. These gaps hurt the Israeli economy but more importantly, they erode social solidarity and reinforce a sense of alienation and deprivation amongst the Arab population [18, p.5].

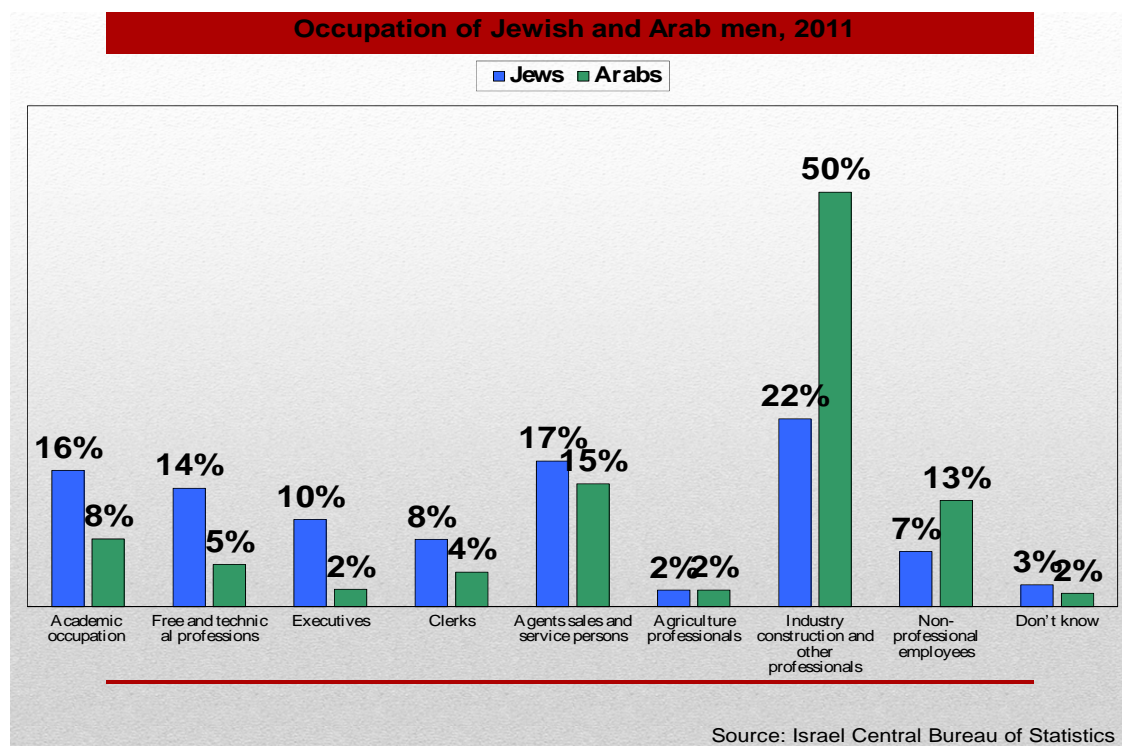
Attitude of society regarding the difference between genders

Fig.1. Occupation of Jewish and Arab men, 2011.

The above chart describes the following situation: the significance of these findings is high employment concentration of Arab men in occupations and industries that do not require high education. In comparison, Jews men have more skilled occupations. Arab men employed are concentrated in occupations and sectors characterized by low skill relatively. Thus, 60% employment of Arab men is in construction, trade and industry and about 62% of professional work in construction and agriculture industry and unprofessional work. Advanced industries and employment in public administration is low in the Arab population.

Employment of Arab citizens is one of the main challenges lying before the Israeli society and its economy. The gaps between Jews and Arabs in the employment market are not a solely an economic issue; on the background of the political reality, economic gaps contribute to the sense of alienation and deprivation amongst the Arab population and affect the attitude of Arabs towards the state and its institutions. In positive terms, a more equalitarian employment market can contribute to an increase of trust between populations and reduction of national tension in the country [8].

There is no argument that there are significant economic gaps between Jews and Arabs the source of which is in differences in rates of participation in the labor market, rates of unemployment, sectors of employment and pay rates; the gaps in the employment market can be related to a wide variety of factors, most of which operate as early as in the pre-market stage – gaps in education. The increase in the number of Arab students in higher education, which began in mid and paragraph seventies, is still far from closing the gap. In the academic year 2011-12, the proportion of Arab students who attended undergraduate at approximately? 10%. Second degree student rate was 7.3%, while Percentage of doctoral students was about 4% only. The rate of Arab faculty members at universities is 1.75%, the percentage of administrative staff Administrative (Arabs deserve no more than? 0.9%, while the number of Arab academics who serve on the Board or Executive Committee members is only 1.9%., transportation, infrastructures and economic development, but additionally, wider phenomena in the Israeli labor market have impact, such as hiring of work immigrants. Discrimination in the employment market is one of the factors for these economic gaps. Despite its exact part in causing these gaps, there is no argument about the fact of its existence: it operates directly or indirectly, openly or undercover, and occasionally it raises its head in public proclamations not to hire Arabs [9, p.5].

Even if the phenomenon of discrimination is not a decisive factor for gaps between Jews and Arabs in the employment market, it is vitally important to handle it decisively: it severely damages the self-respect and identity of a discriminated citizen and it has a devastating effect on social solidarity. Moreover, discrimination in the employment market can thwart efforts of reduction of gaps in the pre-market stages. Investment in education, infrastructures and public transportation following which many more talented Arab candidates will apply for integration in new sectors in the employment market might go to drain completely or partially due to discrimination. Such discrimination particularly damages investments in the field of education, as it hurts the motivating of Arab citizens to invest the required resources on their part in order to advance [14, p.234].

Desire to go to work

Desire and motivation are as well a major component in a consideration whether to participate in the work force, as desire of women to go out to work is to be examined.

Women have undergone major changes in the last 2-3 decades. More and more women work outside their homes, which necessarily, brings about significant changes in their duties, education, professional training and expectations of a woman of herself and the social system from her. There is no doubt that as a result of this, changes are taking place as well in relationships between marital partners. This condition creates conflicts in family life and an attempt to find internal and external solutions [17, p.37].

There are researchers as Stevenson B. and Wolfers J., who claim that families in which marital partners work, conflicts are being created: a family with dual career clarifies this by form of tension acquired in a point in present time in a process of change. These tensions are not internal to a family mechanism but rather are an outcome of relation between the process and current social frame.

Change in distribution of duties in a family has brought about the fact that men went further and accepted upon themselves part of domestic duties and responsibility for children, however, on the other hand, accepting of this perception is grounded in a difficulty of change in those duties which are perceived by men as damaging to their manhood [15, p.15].

Changes in perception of the extent of investment of marital partners, as a result of the occupation of a woman reveal that the extent of investment of a man rises while that of a woman decreases. However, it was

found that there has been no change in the investment of a man in his family and that time is divided much more according to gender and much less according to status of marital partners at work.

Rapoport T. states that the distribution of duties in a family has not changed in those families where both marital partners have a career and it can be expected that there will be a more equalitarian distribution of duties.

There is an argument that a working woman is forced to invest less in her duties as a housewife and employment competes with the time and energy she puts in, and therefore, there is harm to the services she provides. On the other hand, there are those who claim that duties of a housewife have reduced as a result of machination and domestic technology and the existence of care frameworks for children, and she thus can participate in the work force more than before [9, p.12].

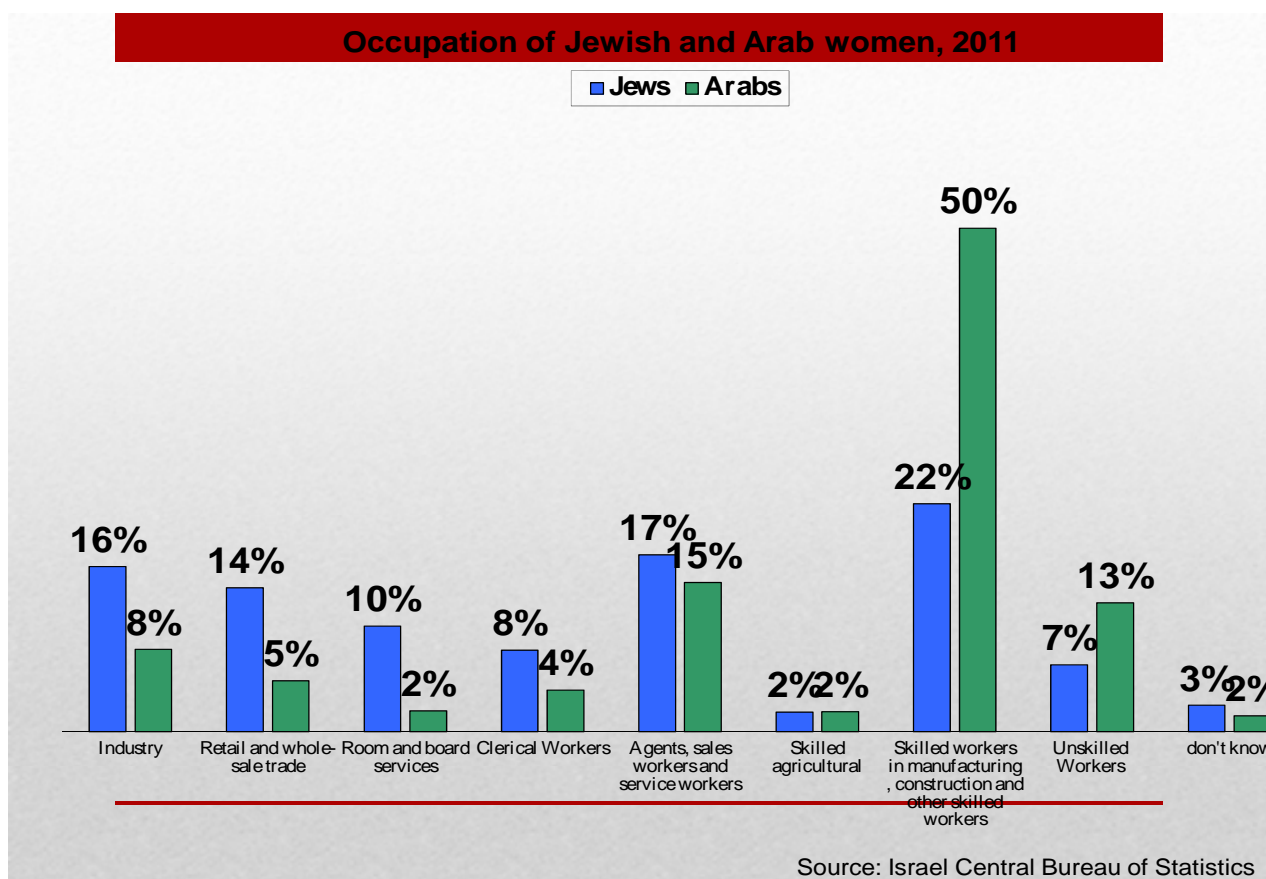


Fig.2. Occupation of Jewish and Arab women, 2011

The above chart describes the following situation: dichotomy is evident among women. There is a significant group of Arab women engaged in high professions like Jewishness. Also, on the other hand there is a higher rate at the end the occupational composition. Among women, the difference between a small group of Jewish and Arab is in high occupations. In fact we determined a higher proportion of Arab females in this group than Jewish (44.7 % versus 40.2%). However in occupations with the lowest rate Arab is 10.6% while the rate among Jewish is 5.9%. Similar men concentration exists among Arab women that about 36% of them are employed in education, or health services and their occupation matches these industries.

Economic condition of Israeli Arabs

One of the primary purposes of regional planning in Israel even prior to the founding of the state was settling Jews in all parts of the country by national planning in the state of Israel. This purpose was phrased mainly in terms of distribution of population. Oppositely, the various programs do not state the unique needs and targets of Arab population itself except for a prediction of population size. Bringing Jews to the periphery is only a marginal addressing to this as Arabs as well have needs of their own and that they are interested in developing their economy equally to that of Jews [15, p.20].

The non-Jewish population in Israel (Arabs, Druze and Circassians) undergoes changes in its lifestyle in recent years, while the rate of educated people in it, especially in fields of science and technology grows consistently. However, despite this, a large gap between it and the Jewish population is retained in level of economic industrial development, as well as in infrastructure [17, p.21].

Occupational opportunities in the minority settlements is limited, as stated in the Trachtenberg Committee – Wikisource report, and in parallel, a condition is retained in this sector, of lack of encouragement of investments and establishing infrastructure for industry and employment. Over the years, the minorities sector is based on initiated jobs, limited to the fields of services and local trade. The depth of unemployment in the minorities sector is affected by the natural growth rate that reaches 3% annually, more than in the Jewish sector (with the exception of past two years in which there is extensive immigration) and also from the fact that there is much dependence of an individual upon his family that is expressed in lack of desire to abandon the home environment even if it is for the purpose of locating a work place.

Jubran R. states that the supply of work force in the non-Jewish sector, which is of a higher quality presently, will become a severe problem due to the reduction on demand for personnel in industry, as a result of implementing new technologies and on the inferior background of non-Jewish personnel in the Israeli economy. Personnel in the Arab sector, educated or not, is forced to adjust to the unnatural situation in which it is supposed to work in non-skilled professions with a much lower pay [15, p.18]. We find engineers or practical engineers who work as teachers and earn hundreds of percentages less than their Jewish peers.

Traditional agriculture, as Jubran R. indicates, has fulfilled its potential 30 years ago as providing an economic foundation for the increasing population. In 1948, 70% of the minorities have provided their livelihood from agriculture, in 1970 - 27%, whereas in 2013 it was less than 7%. Minorities cover long distances, occasionally, dozens of kilometers on their way to work; as a result of this, the rural agricultural society has changed and turned into pseudo-urban one. This new society adopted economical expectations that conform to its new form, but the ability to realize them depends on finding occupation in the urban Jewish sector [11, p.182].

Presently, there are 410 factories in 106 minorities' settlements. 45% of them are located in proximity to the city of Carmiel. This number can be impressive, if not for the fact that most factories employ less than 10% employees and 41% of all the villages there are no factories. An increasing number of personnel amongst minorities is absorbed in the services sector – 51% in 2014, as opposed to 41% in 1975, while the rate of employees in industry amongst these has decreased in those years from 58.5% to 47.5% [11, p.184].

Table

The distribution of Arab personnel in selected rural areas, by sectors, 2013 (in %)

| Sector | Total Arabs | Shefar'am | Upper Galilee | Western Galilee | Beit-Hakerem valley | Sakhnin valley |
|----------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Agriculture | 10.2 | 13.1 | 9.4 | 9.2 | 12.3 | 15.3 |
| Industry | 19.6 | 17.2 | 21 | 22 | 20.3 | 19.2 |
| Electricity | 0.3 | 1.1 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 1.4 |
| Construction | 21.3 | 18.3 | 22.1 | 20.3 | 22 26.1 | 26.2 |
| Trade | 13.5 | 9.3 | 6.3 | 8.8 | 7.6 | 8.2 |
| Transportation | 7.0 | 7.2 | 8.1 | 7.2 | 6.2 | 5.6 |
| Finance | 3.1 | 3.9 | 3.2 | 4.3 | 2.3 | 2.8 |
| Public | 19.3 | 21.3 | 21.2 | 22.3 | 19.3 | 17.6 |
| Other | 5.6 | 7.4 | 7.2 | 5.6 | 5.4 | 4.7 |

The distribution of personnel according to above table reveals a rather big change in relation to the Jewish population: a high rate in agriculture and manual jobs as compared to a low rate in various services, an effect that occasionally created much bitterness [11, p.179].

Regarding the economic policy in 1948 the Arab sector, one of the key expressions in policy towards the Arab minority is expropriation of property and land from the hands of Arab owners and redistributing them

for Jewish national needs. The results of expropriation of resources were much far fetching than their effect on agriculture. They relate almost to all fields of life of the Arab residents, as it caused a reduction of mountain lands territories which can be employed for mining stones, and this could have been an important source of wealth. Part of the expropriated lands was utilized in this sense by their owners, long time before their ownership was expropriated. Another effect was expressed in a drastic reduction of lands intended for residential construction and industrial uses and thus the increase of land prices [12, p.401].

In summary, it can be said that the economic situation of Israeli Arabs was inferior in relation to the economic situation of Jews. Two facts should be added to these data:

1. The level of consumption and standard of living of an Arab is much lower than those of a Jew. The patterns of consumption award Arabs with an ability to save much more and thus he requires less means (this is mainly about prices of housing and food) [4, p.6].
2. The condition of Arabs prior to the establishment of the state of Israel was much more difficult and they improve the standard of living from one year to another. It could be that they do not improve the standard of living like Jews, however, this does not mean that if Jews have developed the economy of the state then Arabs deserve a part of it. This inferiority occasionally creates much bitterness, especially as Arabs live in close proximity to Jews, mainly in the large cities [12, p.397].

Women are discriminated and Arab women even more so. Discrimination in the labor market is defined as supplying work conditions that are not identical to employees who apparently seem identical; employees who can contribute identically are not being accepted for work and when they do get accepted they earn less. Meaning that the curve of demand for women is low, and particularly for Arab women, meaning that the difference in work conditions is determined by the group of affiliation of an employee, such as: gender, ethnic affiliation, age, etc. [6, p.28]. The *first reason* that can explain their not being accepted for work is naturally the output attributed to education, experience, ability, etc.

The *second reason* is that women have more satisfaction at work from factors that are not financial. It means, that women receive more rewards that are not financial. The total sum of importance is different in each profession, and also depends upon the employee.

The *third reason* is considerations that do not stem from financial reasons – simply the society considers them differently [7, p.18].

During an employment interview between an employer and his employees, what affect the considerations of an employer is not merely financial matters: the rational employer would want to maximize his profitability and therefore would consider accepting employees, determining their pay, etc., only according to their productivity. A flesh and blood employer produces benefit or damage as well from characteristics of employees that are not related to their productivity.

If for example he is a habitual philanderer, he would prefer to hire women and vice versa. Discrimination of this type indeed brings about systematic pay and employment differences between various groups with identical productivity. Although in an economic research it is difficult to examine the cardinality of a problem, however, it undoubtedly exists [14, p.230].

First reason in explication is the human capital approach. Over two hundred years ago, Smith A. maintained that a person who has acquired education and professional training would receive a higher pay for his work than a person without education. One of his explanations is that a person who studies acquires skills that raise his productivity. The human capital approach is part of the classic economic approach of marginal product. This approach maintains that an employer, who operates in a competitive market and strives at increasing his profitability as much as possible, would pay an employee according to his marginal product. This method maintains that if an employee with human capital produces more than an employee without human capital, he also needs to earn a higher pay [10, p.39].

Second reason is the occupation separation approach that claims that women earn less as they practice more in less paying sectors. While the human capital approach focuses on a specific employee and his characteristics, this approach focuses on characteristics and attributes of the labor market. According to this approach, payment is given to an occupation rather than to an employee himself. There are occupations and duties that are more important to an employer than others. This significance can be determined by the contribution of occupation to achieving the purposes of an employer [6, p.39].

Third reason – although the skills are supposedly distributed equally between genders, discrimination can be expressed even prior to entering the labor market. This can stem from early social opinions.

Fourth reason for discrimination is that women have fewer work places as there are less occupations that they can fill. Therefore, when they focus on specific specializations, an excess of these specialization comes about and pay reduces. The differences between genders are diffusive in essence. Therefore, distinction between all the components is extremely difficult [14, p.231].

Despite the negative connotation of difference between the groups in society and lack of equality, the social structuration is beneficial and inevitable at the same time. The values and beliefs that supply legitimacy to social non-equality are the province of significant part of the society. Since the methods of social structuration are beneficial to the society in general, and are implemented by beliefs and cultural values, they tend to hold on for a long time [16, p.3].

So the third and fourth approach explains the situation in Israel.

Scoops D. and Perry M. claim that society has no need to be equalitarian, but they warn about an equal reward in which all earn the same. This will be possible only should the society agree to let everyone to do his work and receive a reward as excelling. It is worth mentioning that those who suggest the human capital approach as an explanation to pay gaps in the labor market between men and women, support the approach derived from it, according to which women are less productive than men and the evidence to this is that they have lower levels of human capital [6, p.42].

The question is whether there is a chance to equality in actuality?

According to the researcher Sharlin Sh., equality is not hung in thin air – it starts with skills, human capital and equal professions studied that are in the work circle. The change that came into being in last decade is far from being essential. Even if there were transitions of women from one profession to another, they remain in the female professions. It appears that for several years now, the Ministry of Education attempts, without success, to direct girls to significant technical orientations (electronics and instrumentation), in which there is higher employment. Success is not high as girls do not show much interest. On 2009 In a study conducted by the Szold Institute on the subject of “encouraging girls for studying technical subjects” is was found that girls do not tend to choose technical subjects out of lack of familiarity, “male” stereotypes of subjects and fear of not being able to meet the demands, meaning, that there is a need to increase publicity of the technical subjects [16, p.4].

A sociologist Willy R. claims that a society can be seen as a tree in which all details exist. A transition from one branch to another is not possible unless one descends to the steam and from it rises to the right branch. This descent which is for the purpose of ascending, is not always beneficial to a person, but rather is in his way in terms of the social price he needs to pay. Meaning, in order to reach a certain place in society, one needs to go down to the roots of society and then climb up another branch. And therefore, in order to make mobility possible several conditions are required:

1. Members of the lower layer are to be able to embrace the norms of members of a higher layer, not to be too subordinate or even not subordinate at all to the higher layer, and members of the higher layer are to be able to properly judge the norms of members of the lower layer.
2. Education for professionalism and ambition in the minority group.
3. The conflict between those interested to reach the other group and between those who are not interested is supposed to be not too gentle and to too harsh.
4. It is advisable that there will be no prejudice about the ethnic group out of which mobility is being performed.
5. An individual who performs mobility is advised to have a high appreciation in the group he aspires to get to both due to his personality and skills.

Observing the condition of women reveals that women indeed move on a separate course than men, particularly on the occupational subject, where discrimination is broad. Women are trapped in social mobility and they manage occasionally to reach a central sector and affect it. In order to reach the steam, meaning the central sector, they need to change the attitude of certain employers towards them. It can be well understood why there is no change in female professions: women move in one direction since the beginning of their studies and until the development of their career. A movement parallel to the steam guarantees a rise in marginal occupations rather than prestigious ones [6, p.18].

In addition, value of family is a very important one in Israel. In various layers of the population the statement “the honor of king’s daughter is internal” maintains, meaning that a women has other duties in life than men. The guiding line of this policy maintains that a large family is an important motif that binds ideologies and

Jewish religious and ethnic traditions and unites them into a national ideology. Family bond is perceived therefore as a tool for blurring differences of opinions, however, has served as a stop for achieving equality in women status, while perpetuating traditional distribution of duties between women and men [1, p.27].

In summary, it is advised to implement a variety of policy steps to increase the participation of Arab women in the work force. Steps are required to act towards raising the level of education and skill; steps that would reduce the costs of going out to work; steps that would act for change of social norms regarding going out to work of Arab women; steps for improvement of public transportation and increasing the physical accessibility to work places.

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