

УДК 94:396.1

DOI 10.58649/1694-8033-2024-3(119)-342-347

ДИН ДЖИГУАН, ХУ ЮРАНТүндүк-Батыш педагогикалык университети, Чет тилдер факультети,
Пекин тил жана маданият университети**ДИН ДЖИГУАН, ХУ ЮРАН**Северо-Западный педагогический университет Школа иностранных языков,
Пекинский университет языка и культуры**DING JIGUANG, HU YURAN**Northwest Normal University, School of Foreign Languages,
Beijing Language and Culture University

ХАМАД ДООРУНДА КАТАР АЯЛДАРЫНЫН РОЛУН ИЗИЛДӨӨ (1995 - 2013)

ИССЛЕДОВАНИЕ РОЛИ КАТАРСКИХ ЖЕНЩИН
В ПЕРИОД ПРАВЛЕНИЯ ХАМАДА (1995 - 2013)**RESEARCH ON THE ROLE OF QATARI WOMEN DURING
THE REIGN OF HAMAD (1995 - 2013)**

Кыскача мүнөздөмө: Бул макалада Хамад башкаруучулук кылган мезгилде (1995 - 2013) катар аялдарынын ролунун өзгөрүүсү изилденет. Аялдардын билим берүү, ишке орношуу жана коомдук ишмердүүлүктөрүнүн өнүгүүсүн талдоонун натыйжасында, өкмөттүн аялдар реформасын илгерилетүүдөгү максаттары жана жетишкендиктери ачылып берилет. Изилдөө Хамаддын башкаруучулугу мезгилинде катар аялдарынын билими кыйла жакшырып, билим деңгээли жана жогорку окуу жайларына кабыл алуу көрсөткүчү жогорулап, билим берүү түрлөрү жана кесиптик тандоолор ар түрдүү болгонун көрсөтөт. Ишке орношуу чөйрөсүндө, өкмөт тең эмгек акы мыйзамдарын кабыл алып, эмгек рыногунда аялдардын катышуу деңгээлин, айрыкча, билим берүү жана ден соолук тармактарында көбөйттү. Аялдардын коомдук иш-чараларга катышуусу, анын ичинде спорт жана саясат тармактарында көбөйүп, улуттук имиджди жогорулатууга түрткү берди. Бирок, изилдөө аялдар реформасы салттуу маданият, дин, коомдук түзүлүш жана үй-бүлөлүк ролдордон келип чыккан кыйынчылыктарга туш болорун да көрсөтөт. Гендердик сегрегация жана тең эмгек акыны төлөөнүн теңсиздиги сыяктуу маселелер дагы деле бар жана кээ бир тармактарда аялдардын катышуусу чектелүү бойдон калууда. Жалпысынан, бул макалада өкмөттүн аялдарды модернизациялоону илгерилетүү аракеттери жана жетишкендиктери көрсөтүлүп, реформалардагы кыйынчылыктар ачылып берилген. Муну менен Катардагы социалдык өзгөрүүлөрдү түшүнүү жана гендердик теңчиликти алдыга жылдыруу үчүн маанилүү көз караш берилген.

Аннотация: В данной работе исследуется трансформация роли катарских женщин в период правления Хамада (1995 - 2013). Путем анализа развития женщин в образовании, занятости и общественных мероприятиях, раскрываются цели и достижения правительства в продвижении реформ в области женских прав. Исследование показывает, что в период правления Хамада образование катарских женщин значительно улучшилось, возрос уровень образования и процент поступающих в высшие учебные заведения, а формы образования и профессиональные выборы стали разнообразнее. В сфере занятости правительство приняло законы, обеспечивающие равную оплату за равный труд, и увеличило уровень участия женщин на рынке труда, особенно в области образования и здравоохранения. Активность женщин в общественных мероприятиях возросла, включая спорт и политику, что способствовало улучшению национального имиджа. Однако исследование также указывает на то, что реформы в отношении женщин сталкиваются с вызовами со стороны традиционной культуры, религии, социальной структуры и семейных ролей. Все еще существуют проблемы гендерной сегрегации и неравной оплаты за равный труд, и участие женщин в некоторых сферах остается ограниченным. В целом, в данной работе продемонстрированы усилия и достижения правительства в продвижении модернизации женщин, а также выявлены трудности на пути реформ, что дает перспективу для понимания социальных изменений в Катаре и содействия гендерному равенству.

Abstract: This paper explores the transformation of the role of Qatari women during the reign of Hamad (1995 - 2013). By analyzing the development of women in education, employment and social

activities, it reveals the purposes and achievements of the government in promoting women's reform. The research shows that during the reign of Hamad, the education of Qatari women has been significantly improved, with the educational level and the enrollment rate of higher education increasing, and educational forms and professional choices being diverse. In terms of employment, the government has legislated to ensure equal pay for equal work and increased the participation rate of women in the labor market, especially in the fields of education and health. The participation of women in social activities has increased, including in sports and politics, enhancing the national image. However, the study also points out that women's reform faces challenges from traditional culture, religion, social structure and family roles. Problems such as gender segregation and unequal pay for equal work still exist, and women's participation in some fields is limited. Overall, this paper demonstrates the government's efforts and achievements in promoting the modernization of women and also reveals the difficulties in the reform, providing a perspective for understanding the social changes in Qatar and promoting gender equality.

Негизги сөздөр: Катар; аялдардын статусу; аялдардын ролу; аялдардын реформасы.

Ключевые слова: Катар; статус женщин; роль женщин; реформа женщин.

Keywords: Qatar; status of women; role of women; women's reform.

I. Changes in the Role of Qatari Women after Hamad's Reign

The real reform of Qatari women began to be gradually and orderly promoted after Emir Hamad came to power in 1995. In the "Qatar National Vision 2030" (QNV 2030) announced by the Qatari leadership in October 2008, a roadmap for the human, social, economic and environmental development of Qatar was drawn, and the rewriting of gender roles was also clearly defined [9]. In order to achieve the grand goals of this vision, Qatar allows women to participate more in social activities and create value for the enhancement of its comprehensive national strength.

1.1 Vigorously Developing Women's Education

As the foundation of a nation's prosperity, education has always been an area highly valued by successive rulers of Qatar. After Hamad became the Emir of Qatar, he vigorously promoted education, and the number of various schools in Qatar increased, and the number of students and graduates also continued to grow. With the vigorous development of domestic education, the education of Qatari women has also significantly improved and even ranks at the forefront of Gulf countries and even the Arab world.

By 2002, the total number of various schools in Qatar had reached 201, among which women's schools accounted for 99 [2]. From the 1994-1995 academic year to the 2002-2003 academic year, the total number of students at Qatar University increased from 1,124 to 8,621. Among them, the total number of female students grew from 832 to 6,240 [2]. By the 2002-2003 academic year, the total number of female students at Qatar University had reached 72% of the total number of students at Qatar University. According to statistics from UNESCO, as of 2005, Qatar's recognized literacy completion rate had reached 89%. Among them, the literacy completion rate for Qatari women reached 88.6%, ranking among the top in Gulf countries [1]. In addition to quantitative changes, there have been qualitative changes in Qatari women's education in terms of majors and educational forms.

Under the leadership of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Al-Misned, wife of the Emir, women's education and employment opportunities have become national priorities. The government has invested a large amount of money to reform primary and secondary schools and build Education City (later renamed Hamad Bin Khalifa University). Due to this bold measure, women who cannot go abroad can receive world-class education in their own country [9]. In 2003, Qatar Education City was completed. Qatari college students were able to receive Western higher education in their own country. Females could study a more diverse range of majors. At the same time, male and female students could attend classes together in Education City. In addition, the Qatari Ministry of Education has also established two technical schools for boys and girls respectively to emphasize the principle of educational equality. At the same time, many private girls' schools have also been established, such as Sheikha Gawhera Bint Hamad Al Thani Girls College and Sheikha Gawhera Design and Art College. The latter has now become the School of Art and Design of the University of Virginia [1]. In 2003, UNESCO appointed the first lady of Qatar as its special envoy for basic and higher education to recognize her contributions to education in Qatar [1], especially to women's education in Qatar.

1.2 Improving women's employment situation

Before the 1990s, the increase in the number of women attending school and graduating did not bring them equal opportunities to enter the labor market. In 1986, Qatari women accounted for only 14% of the total labor force. Such a low employment rate did not match their level of education. After Hamad came to power, while vigorously developing women's education, he also introduced a series of laws and regulations to improve women's employment situation and help them enter the labor market in a more equal posture with men.

What problems exist in Qatar's education and labor market? In 2001, the Civil Service Law (Law No. 1) and the cabinet regulations (Decree No. 13) laid the foundation for gender equality in the labor market. In 2002, Law No. 24 provided retirement benefits for women and allowed for salary income and pension rights. Moreover, the Labor Law (Law No. 14) promulgated in 2004 established the principles of equal treatment, training opportunities, and job promotion [10].

According to the labor force statistics bulletin of Qatar's National Planning Committee in 2013, from 2007 to 2013, the economically active population of Qatari women (over 15 years old) nearly doubled. By 2013, the labor force participation rate of Qatari women reached 34.7% [13]. There is no doubt that the employment situation of Qatari women has improved significantly, but there are still some drawbacks. For example, Qatari women are mainly concentrated in working in the fields of education and healthcare. They are absent in many fields such as construction, trade, and manufacturing. Qatari women are still considered unsuitable to be actresses, flight attendants, hotel and hospitality staff, or diplomats in the diplomatic service [5]. Such a situation is caused by multiple factors, including gender segregation in the workplace caused by religious and traditional concepts. This makes Qatari women more inclined to choose to work in single-female group departments that conform to "traditional gender norms". In addition, the relatively high salaries and generous welfare benefits in the public sector also reduce the necessity for Qatari women to enter the non-public sector.

However, since Hamad came to power and launched a plan called "Qatarization" in 1997, the employment space for Qatari citizens in both the public and private sectors has expanded, and the employment situation for women in the non-public sector has improved [5]. Women also hope to start their own businesses. The Qatar Businesswomen Association established in 2000. As reforms are gradually implemented, the employment directions of Qatari women show a diversified trend. At the same time, more women have accepted the mixed-gender working environment. They can be found in the political, scientific and even business fields.

1.3 Enriching women's social activities and improving women's image

Some new policies during Hamad's tenure have enabled many women to step out of their homes and participate in social activities in various fields such as politics, culture, and sports, greatly increasing women's sense of participation in social construction, liberating them from household chores and enhancing women's value and social status.

Since the founding of Qatar, due to the constraints of male discourse and traditional values, women's participation in the sports world has been almost zero. But this situation changed in 1998, when an international track and field competition was held in Doha. Qatar allowed women to watch large-scale sports events for the first time. The International Amateur Athletic Federation has designated 1998 as the Year of Women's Sports and approved designating this one-day event as a grand prix on the condition that women are allowed to participate [12]. Share some specific cases of the elevation of Qatari women's status. Later, in 2001, the Qatar Women's Sports Committee was established, and this committee has made considerable contributions to increasing women's participation in sports [6]. In addition to making significant breakthroughs in the sports field, Qatari women have gradually stepped onto the political stage. In 1999, Qatari women participated in the elections of the Central Municipal Council, which was the first manifestation of the restoration of women's rights. In the 2003 elections, a female candidate was elected. In 2003, Qatar passed the "Permanent Constitution", which stipulates that all citizens, regardless of race, gender and religion, enjoy equal rights and obligations [2]. This provides a strong guarantee for women to step onto the political stage and participate in all aspects of social life equally with men.

In addition to all of the above, Qatari women will also spontaneously form some non-governmental organizations to publicize the importance of women's participation in social activities, help women step out of their homes and maximize their own value. In 1997, Qatar held its first women's conference. With the support and sponsorship of the wife of the Emir of Qatar, this conference attracted many people from home and abroad to actively participate [2].

During Hamad's tenure, under the impetus of a series of laws and regulations of the Qatari government and the leadership of the first lady Sheikha Moza bint Nasser Al-Missned, the Qatari

women's reform was in full swing and took the lead among Gulf countries and even Arab countries. The image of Qatari women has also undergone tremendous changes.

2. The Motivations and Challenges of Qatar's Women's Reform

Since Hamad came to power, the role of Qatari women has undergone very significant changes. This change cannot be separated from the promotion of the government. Behind this, there are the government's in-depth considerations of factors such as economy and national strategy. At the same time, this reform also faces certain difficulties and is restricted by factors such as religion, traditional culture, social structure, and family roles.

2.1 Motivations for Qatar's women's reform

First, economic transformation promotes women's reform. Since Qatar entered the oil era in the 1950s, its main source of income has changed from traditional fishing, animal husbandry, and pearl diving to oil extraction and sales. The government has obtained huge incomes from this and provides generous welfare benefits to staff in fields such as government employees, education, and health. Therefore, domestic workers, especially domestic female workers, are more inclined to engage in work in these fields, while other private enterprises are long occupied by foreign workers who account for about 75% of Qatar's total population. However, due to various unstable factors in the oil market, Qatar needs to break its high dependence on the oil economy, vigorously develop economic diversification, and let more women enter different fields in the job market to serve national economic construction. In order to establish a knowledge-based economy, become a regional research and innovation leader, and play an important role on the international stage, Qatar needs to mobilize the potential of all citizens [9], And there is no doubt that Qatari women are an indispensable force among them.

Second, the shaping of the national image promotes women's reform. Islam is the state religion of Qatar. Most of the country's residents believe in Islam and most belong to the Wahhabi sect of the Sunni sect[3]. Therefore, under the guidance of strict Wahhabi doctrines, black veils and robes often become the symbol of Qatari women in people's eyes. And such dress and grooming, coupled with their traditional gender segregation system, will give people an impression of being closed and conservative. For a long time, Qatari women, like women in other Gulf countries, have always maintained such an image, but this is obviously contrary to the open attitude that Qatar wants to show to the world. Therefore, promoting women's reform is the only way to shape Qatar's open and inclusive national image. Letting women participate in sports, serve as government employees, and participate in diplomatic activities are all effective efforts made by Qatar to improve the image of women and the country.

Third, geopolitical strategy promotes women's reform. Since its independence in 1971, Qatar has long been in a state of dependence on regional powers such as Saudi Arabia. It was not until 1995 when Hamad, the son of the then Emir of Qatar, seized power that this situation improved. Since Hamad came to power, he has implemented reforms in multiple fields such as domestic affairs and diplomacy, and is committed to building Qatar into a "new type of country"[11]. Moreover, after the Arab Spring in 2011, the power and international influence of traditional regional powers such as Egypt have declined. This is equivalent to presenting an excellent opportunity for Qatar, which wants to break free from its long-standing dependent status. On one hand, Qatar is closely aligning with traditional Islamic forces in the region, such as the Muslim Brotherhood and Hamas. On the other hand, Qatar is actively shaping its own image of being open and democratic in order to seek the support of the United States and other Western countries, break free from its dependent status on Saudi Arabia, and make up for its weakness in national defense. Therefore, Qatar is reforming the image of women to conform to the "democracy" of the United States and other Western countries, and is actively developing relations with Western countries in order to maintain a balance in its geopolitical strategy.

2.2 Challenges of Qatar's women's reform

First, constraints of culture and religion. Since Qatar is a Sunni monarchy and takes Islamic law as the main source of legislation, the current mobility of Qatari women needs to be viewed in the context of the established model of Islamic gender relations. In terms of social relations, the strict interpretation of the Quran reinforces gender segregation. Therefore, men and women are divided into different fields and are assigned corresponding roles. Traditionally, public space is regarded as exclusive to men; women are restricted to the home and play the roles of wife and mother [2, 9].

Constrained by such traditional culture and religion, some devout religious believers in Qatar, including even women, have an inherent resistance to the reforms that grant more freedom to women. When many women choose a career, they still consider whether the workplaces for male and female employees are separated as a basis for their choice.

Second, constraints of social structure. When Qatar's oil economy was booming, in order to reduce the country's dependence on oil income, the government vigorously developed economic diversification. At this time, a large number of foreign workers poured in, resulting in a serious imbalance in the male-female ratio in Qatar. By 2004, although 66.3% of government employees in Qatar were locals, 85.7% of the labor force in the economic field were foreigners [3]. The situation of more men than women has led to the weakness of the social power of the female group. At the same time, foreign workers have also occupied the employment market of Qatari citizens. These situations have had an adverse impact on the employment of Qatari women, and the government still needs to seek a balance in the employment of local women and foreign workers.

Third, constraints of family roles. "Men are in charge of the outside while women are in charge of the inside" is the traditional family division of labor model in Qatar. The reform of Qatari women is not to break this model, but to require women to become people who are "in charge of both the inside and the outside". Because of the influence of traditional concepts, very few men are willing to take on the responsibility of taking care of the family. It is mentioned in Qatar National Vision 2030: "The rapid economic and population growth in Qatar has created intense strains between the old and new in almost every aspect of life. Modern work patterns and pressures of competitiveness sometimes clash with traditional relationships based on trust and personal ties, and create strains for family life"[10]. In the situation where more and more women enter the job market, it also means that more women have to face the dual pressures of career and family, and this will surely become one of the resistances to promoting the employment of Qatari women.

3. Conclusion

From Qatar's entry into the oil era to after the founding of the country, most of its women have played the role of housewives. Religion and tradition have hidden them under heavy black veils and robes, making them part of the "unique" women in the Gulf region. However, the image of women is inseparable from the national image, and the status of women is also closely connected to the progress of the country. Therefore, the traditional image of Qatari women will inevitably label the country as "conservative."

After Hamad came to power in 1995, the Qatari government introduced a series of laws and regulations and formulated many relevant policies to promote the transformation of the role of women in the country and enhance national strength in all aspects. In terms of education, while Hamad established schools and developed education, he also vigorously improved the educational level of women. From the number of students to the establishment of majors and then to the quality of running schools, women's education in Qatar has been qualitatively improved. In terms of employment, the government has introduced laws to ensure equal pay for equal work for men and women and provide conveniences such as employment training for women, so that Qatari women can participate in the country's economic construction. In terms of social activities, the government allows women to break through traditional restraints and enter the fields of sports and even politics, endowing women with more rights and striving to create a moderate national image and achieve a balance in geopolitical strategy.

The reform of Qatari women is an important link in realizing the country's Vision 2030 and also a part of the overall reform and transformation of the country. However, while the Hamad government has achieved many achievements in women's reform, it also faces certain resistances. The infiltration of long-term traditional culture and religion has made gender segregation a deeply ingrained concept that is difficult to eradicate in a short time. A large number of foreign workers have crowded out the domestic job market, and women are at a significant disadvantage. The women's reform has failed to break the traditional concept of family division of labor, and women face the dual pressures of career and family.

References

1. Sun Peide, Shi Juqin (eds.). Qatar: A Country Study [M]. Beijing: Social Sciences Academic Press, 2009.
2. Wu Huixuan. Society and Culture of Contemporary State of Qatar [M]. Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2007.
3. Guide to Country (Region) for Foreign Investment and Cooperation: Qatar (2023 Edition), website of the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China.
<https://www.mofcom.gov.cn/dl/gbdqzn/upload/kataer.pdf>

4. Ding Long, Zhao Yuanhao. Qatar's Foreign Policy and Its Practice [J]. Journal of Arab World Studies, 2010.
5. Wang Yunhan. A Study on Qatari Women's Employment during the Hamad Era (1995 - 2013) [D]. Master's thesis of Shanghai International Studies University.
6. [Olympic Culture] - The Qatar Olympic Committee continues to promote women's sports. June 11, 2015, Chinese Olympic Committee website.
<http://www.olympic.cn/e-magazine/1506/2015-06-11/2352571.html>
7. Magee, Peter (2014). The Archaeology of Prehistoric Arabia. Cambridge Press. p. 50. ISBN 9780521862318.
8. Abu Saud, Abeer (1984). Qatari Women: Past and Present. United Kingdom: Longman Group. ISBN 978-0582783720. p. 24 "Bedouin women were therefore responsible for the process of buying and selling within their own tribe."
9. Krystyna Golkowska. Qatari Women Navigating Gendered Space. 2017.
<https://www.mdpi.com/2076-0760/6/4/123>
10. Qatar National Vision 2030, July 2008, General Secretariat for Development Planning. p. 4.
11. Mohammed Bazaz. New Trends in Qatar's Foreign Policy in a Changing World (Arabic version) [J], "Arab History", 2008(44). (Quoted from Ding Long, Zhao Yuanhao. Qatar's Foreign Policy and Its Practice [J]. Journal of Arab World Studies, (8).
12. For women at track meet in Qatar, it's a coverup. May 7, 1998.
www.washingtonpost.com/archive/sports/1998/05/07/for-women-at-track-meet-in-qatar-its-a-coverup/621f9757-017d-4223-8025-f4b62319754c/?utm_term=.65f2d634b2748
13. Labor Force Statistics Bulletin 2013, pp. 24 and 26.
<https://www.cceol.com/search/viewpdf?id=458106>