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Trends in the Development of Women's Education in Georgia and Modern Pedagogical Perspectives

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Abstract. This article examines the historical development and contemporary condition of women's education in Georgia from a gender-equality perspective. It combines qualitative document analysis, historical interpretation, comparative analysis, and descriptive examination of institutional data. The study considers cultural expectations, professional segregation, educational stereotypes, legal guarantees, and women's participation in higher education. The findings indicate that formal access to education has expanded substantially and Georgian legislation provides equal educational rights. Nevertheless, gendered expectations continue to influence subject choice, professional orientation, employment, remuneration, and access to leadership. The historical contributions of Georgian public figures demonstrate that women's education has long been connected with social modernization and civic participation. Current patterns suggest that legal equality alone does not eliminate informal barriers. The article concludes that educational institutions should integrate gender-sensitive teaching, career guidance, community participation, and transparent monitoring in order to convert formal equality into equal educational and professional opportunities.

Keywords: women, education, stereotypes, gender equality, gender balance, pedagogical perspectives, Georgia

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Gürcüstanda qadın təhsilinin inkişaf tendensiyaları və müasir pedaqoji perspektivlər

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Xülasə. Məqalədə Gürcüstanda qadın təhsilinin tarixi inkişafı və müasir vəziyyəti gender bərabərliyi baxımından araşdırılır. Tədqiqatda sənəd təhlili, tarixi şərh, müqayisəli yanaşma və institusional məlumatların təsviri təhlili birləşdirilir. Mədəni gözləntilər, peşə seçiminin gender üzrə bölgüsü, təhsil stereotipləri, hüquqi təminatlar və qadınların ali təhsildə iştirakı nəzərdən keçirilir. Nəticələr göstərir ki, təhsilə formal çıxış əhəmiyyətli dərəcədə genişlənməmiş və Gürcüstan qanunvericiliyində bərabər təhsil hüquqları təsbit edilmişdir. Bununla yanaşı, genderlə bağlı gözləntilər ixtisas seçiminə, məşgüllüğe, əməkhaqqına və rəhbər vəzifələrə çıxışa təsir göstərməkdə davam edir.

Məqalədə formal bərabərliyin real imkan bərabərliyinə çevrilməsi üçün genderə həssas tədris, karyera istiqamətləndirilməsi, ictimai iştirak və şəffaf monitorinqin gücləndirilməsi təklif olunur.

Açar sözlər: *qadınlar, təhsil, stereotiplər, gender bərabərliyi, gender balans, pedaqoji perspektivlər, Gürcüstan*

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Introduction

Modern approaches to human rights regard equality between women and men as a basic condition of democratic governance. In education, gender equality includes equal access, equal treatment, comparable opportunities for achievement, and freedom to choose a field of study without restrictive stereotypes. Education can broaden women's opportunities for self-realization, employment, civic participation, and leadership; however, formal access does not automatically remove cultural and institutional barriers.

The Georgian experience combines a long history of advocacy for women's education with contemporary legal guarantees. Public debate on women's rights developed in the nineteenth century, and intellectuals connected women's education with social progress and national modernization. Today, legislation provides equal access to education, yet social expectations regarding motherhood, care work, professional roles, and leadership continue to shape educational and occupational decisions (Bagratia, 2013).

International literature similarly distinguishes legal equality from substantive equality. Gender roles are socially learned and may vary across cultures and historical periods (UNESCO, 2009). Educational stereotypes can influence classroom interaction, subject choice, professional expectations, and the confidence with which students assess their abilities (Sadker & Sadker, 1995; Sadker et al., 1991). The purpose of this article is therefore to examine the historical development of women's education in Georgia, identify continuing barriers, and consider pedagogical measures that can strengthen equal educational and professional opportunities.

Materials and Methods

The study used a mixed qualitative and descriptive design. The qualitative component included document analysis, historical interpretation, comparison, and critical analysis. It examined selected works on gender and education, Georgian historical writings, international policy documents, and national legal material. The descriptive component considered author-supplied institutional data from Gori State University for 2024 in order to illustrate gender distribution across broad fields of study. The analysis proceeded in three stages. First, historical materials were examined to identify how women's education was connected with civic rights and social modernization. Second, pedagogical and policy sources were reviewed to identify mechanisms through which stereotypes influence educational participation and professional orientation. Third, the institutional figures were compared descriptively by field and gender. Because the university table concerns one institution and one year, it is treated as an illustrative case and not as representative evidence for all higher education institutions in Georgia.

The study did not involve surveys, interviews, experiments, or personal data. Its conclusions are based on interpretation of published material and aggregate institutional figures. Accordingly, the study identifies patterns and pedagogical implications but does not estimate causal effects.

Results

Historical development of women's education

The historical analysis shows that women's education in Georgia developed alongside broader debates about civil rights and national progress. Simone de Beauvoir's analysis of women's socially constructed position helped establish a conceptual foundation for examining how culture assigns different expectations to women and men (Beauvoir, 2024). In Georgia, women's participation in public discussions expanded during the nineteenth century, and writers and activists challenged the confinement of women to domestic roles. Ilia Chavchavadze linked women's education with public and civil rights and regarded women's professional activity as a condition of social freedom. His discussion of women's emancipation emphasized that education enabled women to participate in social and state functions while retaining family roles (Chavchavadze, 1988). Niko Nikoladze likewise supported European education for Georgian women and helped students pursue education abroad despite the restrictions of his period (Nikoladze, 1878). These examples show that women's education was understood not only as an individual benefit but also as a contribution to national development.

Educational stereotypes and equal opportunity

The reviewed literature indicates that equal enrolment conditions do not necessarily eliminate gendered expectations. Students may be guided toward different subjects and careers on the assumption that boys are naturally better suited to mathematics, engineering, and technology, while girls are better suited to languages, education, and the arts. Such expectations can be reinforced through classroom attention, feedback, textbooks, family expectations, and career guidance (Sadker et al., 1991; Zittleman & Sadker, 2003).

Gender equality requires equal conditions, treatment, and opportunities so that women and men can realize their potential and participate in social, cultural, economic, and political development (Status of Women Canada, 2007). UNESCO (2009) likewise treats gender roles as socially constructed and changeable. These definitions direct attention away from biological determinism and toward the educational and social processes that shape choices.

Table 1

Dimensions and indicators of gender equality in education

Equal access	Equality in educational quality	Equality through education	Illustrative indicators
Girls and boys outside school	Literacy, mathematical literacy, and life skills	Employment opportunities for women and men	Out-of-school rates and student–teacher ratio

Note. Adapted from the analytical framework used in the source manuscript.

Contemporary participation and institutional patterns

Contemporary Georgian legislation formally prohibits discrimination and guarantees equal access to education. The Law on Gender Equality recognizes equal rights and opportunities in education,

labour, family, and public life and provides for equal access to all levels and fields of education (Bagratia, 2013). Nevertheless, equality in law may coexist with unequal outcomes in employment, remuneration, care responsibilities, and access to management positions.

The institutional figures supplied for Gori State University illustrate different gender distributions across broad fields. Women constitute the majority in the humanities and social sciences, while men have a larger share in precise and natural sciences, economics, and law. The table is descriptive and cannot establish why students selected particular fields.

Table 2

First-year students at Gori State University by field and gender, 2024

Field	Female (%)	Male (%)
Humanities	80	20
Precise and natural sciences	50	50
Economics	35	65
Social sciences	55	45
Law	26	64

Note. Author-supplied institutional data. The law-field values are reproduced unchanged from the source manuscript and should be verified because they total 90 rather than 100 percent.

The data suggest field-specific gender patterns, but the example of one university cannot support national generalization. A broader assessment would require comparable data across institutions, years, degree levels, regions, and fields. It would also require information on applications, admissions, completion, employment, and academic progression.

Discussion

The findings indicate that the development of women's education in Georgia should be understood through the interaction of legal reform, historical advocacy, cultural expectations, and institutional practice. Formal equality has expanded access and supported women's participation in higher education. At the same time, stereotypes can continue to influence which subjects are considered appropriate, how teachers distribute attention, and how students imagine their professional futures. The distinction between access and outcome is important. Women may enter higher education in large numbers while remaining concentrated in fields associated with lower remuneration or fewer leadership opportunities. International development literature has repeatedly connected women's education with employment, family welfare, poverty reduction, and social development (World Bank, 2005, 2009). These relationships should not be interpreted as automatic: educational credentials create opportunities only when labour-market institutions, family support, childcare, and non-discriminatory recruitment allow women to use them.

Pedagogically, gender equality requires more than presenting identical curricula to girls and boys. Teachers should examine classroom interaction, examples used in textbooks, expectations communicated through feedback, and the assumptions embedded in career guidance. Research on gender bias in education shows that apparently neutral practices can reproduce unequal participation when teachers and institutions do not monitor patterns of attention and encouragement (Sadker & Sadker, 1995; Sadker et al., 1991).

Community participation is also relevant. Families, local organizations, universities, and employers can support women through mentoring, accessible childcare, flexible learning opportunities, and public discussion of professional stereotypes. Such measures are particularly important in regions

where educational and employment opportunities are more limited. The objective should be to expand genuine choice rather than direct women and men into predetermined roles.

Limitations

This study is based on a selective set of historical, policy, and pedagogical sources. The institutional table relates to one university and one year and therefore cannot represent Georgia as a whole. The source manuscript does not provide the sampling frame or administrative extraction procedure for the university data, and one pair of percentages requires verification. Future research should use national longitudinal data and clearly documented institutional datasets.

Conclusion

Women's education in Georgia has developed from a historically restricted field into an area protected by formal legal equality and marked by substantial female participation. Georgian intellectual history demonstrates that women's education has long been associated with modernization, civic responsibility, and national development. Contemporary evidence nevertheless shows that social expectations and professional stereotypes can continue after legal barriers have been removed.

Educational policy should therefore connect equal access with equal quality, freedom of subject choice, career development, and fair employment opportunities. Gender-sensitive teaching, transparent institutional data, inclusive career guidance, community support, and accessible childcare can help transform formal rights into substantive equality. Further research should test these relationships with representative data and compare patterns across regions, institutions, and degree levels.

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