

**DOI: 10.52363/passa-2024.2-6**

**UDC: 351.9:32-027.542:305**

*Tiurina D. - PhD in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Department of Management, National University of Civil Protection of Ukraine, Kharkiv  
ORCID: 0000-0002-1506-5849*

## **THE WAYS TO FORM A COMPLEX STATE GENDER POLICY MECHANISM**

*The conducted research has made it possible to suggest a complex gender equality mechanism encompassing four components: legal, organizational, resource, and educational one. The legal component includes a complex of legal norms contained in constitutions and current legislation, in international legal acts that establish the principle of equality between men and women and ensure gender-balanced representation in authorities and management, as well as the practice of implementing these norms.*

*The organizational, or structural component includes the system of authorities (organizational structures) responsible for the development and implementation of state programs and legislation in all spheres of state activity, which in one way or another affect the lives of women.*

*The resource component is the availability of financial and material opportunities to implement gender equality policy.*

*The educational component is the presence of a mandatory standard for providing gender education for people, without which it is impossible to overcome historically rooted gender stereotypes.*

*The proposed author's model of the structure of the gender equality complex mechanism with four components allows us to reveal the interrelationships and interdependencies between the components, to build up predictive options to design a gender perspective for the development of society.*

*Key words: state, state policy, gender, gender equality, state administration, mechanism.*

Introduction. Ukraine has a system of laws and regulations, which despite being different in content still directly establish and regulate the equality of men and women. The state institutions system, among other functions, is also supposed to ensure gender equality, and civil society institutions are increasingly taking on the relevant responsibilities on a voluntary basis.

Analysis of previous studies and publications. Representatives of various social sciences, including economics (G. Gerasimenko, I. Sulima, etc.) and public administration (V. Hrytsyak, G. Daudova, N. Kovalishyna, etc.), have studied specific aspects of the mechanism for ensuring gender equality. Ukrainian researchers O. Bandurka, N. Hrytsyak, L. Kobylanska, E. Lutsenko, K. Levchenko, T. Melnyk, K. Levchenko, and G. Zhukovska have dealt with the issue of creating, optimizing and ensuring the work of the state gender policy mechanism. However, despite this fact, Ukraine has not yet developed an effective, comprehensive, and complex institutional mechanism to create the state gender policy.

The article is aimed to identify the main ways to create a complex state gender policy mechanism.

Presentation of the main material. To carry out the institutional analysis of gender rela-

tions in society, it is preferable to use a complex approach, according to which gender relations are studied in four key spheres of social life: politics, economy, family, and culture. At all these levels, a balanced and comprehensive state gender policy system is important. Modern state policy in Ukraine is aimed at achieving the equality of women and men in society, overcoming all forms of discrimination based on gender, creating the social and political prerequisites necessary for the inclusion of women and men in all spheres of life [1].

Many countries have created gender equality mechanisms to address similar issues. An integrated mechanism for ensuring equality is a governmental body, and in some cases a parliamentary structure, created to enhance the role of women and promote the full exercitation of their rights. Its main task is to monitor and ensure the implementation of the law, the principle of non-discrimination, and the equality of men and women. It is structures based on systemic analysis that take into account the interests of both sexes when making management decisions, and help to prevent and eliminate the negative consequences of political actions that lead to the deterioration in the well-being of people, especially women.

In our study, four components of the complex gender equality mechanism are highlighted: legal, organizational, resource, and educational.

The legal component includes the Constitution and current legislation, a set of legal norms contained in international legal documents that establish the principle of equality between men and women and ensure balanced gender representation in the authorities and management, as well as the practice of implementing these norms.

The organizational part includes the system of authorities (organizational structure), responsible for the development and implementation of state plans, legislation in various spheres of state activity, which in a certain way affect women's lives.

The resource component lies in providing financial means for gender equality policy to be implemented.

Mandatory standards of gender education are an integral part of education, as their absence makes it impossible to overcome historically fixed gender stereotypes.

Together, these components make up the institutional mechanism for building and ensuring gender equality in the country and society. The proposed author's model of the structure of the complex gender equality mechanism makes it possible to reveal the relationship and interdependence between its components, to make up forecast options for the progress in the gender perspective of society development. In addition, each of these components serves as a criterion for evaluating the effectiveness of the gender equality policy implemented by the state.

The legal component includes a complex of legal norms contained in constitutions and current legislation, in international laws and regulations that establish the principle of equality between men and women and ensure gender-balanced representation in authorities and management, as well as the practice of implementing these norms:

- availability, formation and development of the legal framework to ensure equality, improvement and development of legislation in this area;
- consistent implementation of generally recognized principles and norms of international law and international obligations;
- development of new laws aimed at adjusting the gender balance in society;
- conducting gender expertize of laws and regulations adopted by public authorities;
- creation of special conditions promoting women's participation in all levels of govern-

ment;

- the capability of the electoral system and political parties to nominate women to parliament;

- inclusion of measures ensuring equality in state programs aimed at developing the social sphere [1, 4].

The mechanisms promoting participation in political activity are made up of a whole system of fundamental principles based on which civil society can work, the level of political traditions, maturity of the civil initiatives sector, and society's own interest in that political institutions work properly. A policy aimed at adopting a system of measures to ensure gender equality is effective if it is developed and controlled by the state.

The organizational, or structural component refers to the system of local and state authorities (institutional structures) aimed at developing and implementing state programs and legislation in all spheres of state activity, which in one way or another affect women's lives.

The localization of institutional structures is very diverse – as part of the state apparatus, they can be located under the president, the parliament, the government, in one or more ministries. The structural elements of this complex mechanism can have an independent status in the form of commissions, advisory bodies, or be additionally located in the NGO sector.

The Beijing Platform for Action recommends to place the mechanisms in the central authorities, e.g. in the office of the president or the prime minister, or in the central coordinating body within the government to try to influence the planning process in all departments. This makes it possible to provide gender issues with a high status, to achieve good funding and create closer ties with civil services. It is clear that the mechanisms of gender equality policy are developed in the bowels of the central executive power, which is often a key factor determining the possibility of making appropriate decisions at the highest political level. But since the head of government primarily manages the work of the Cabinet, (s)he cannot usually pay special attention to gender issues. Therefore, in some countries, the position of Minister for Women's Affairs/Gender Equality has been introduced, whose duties include advising the Prime Minister on the issues.

Some countries locate the institutional mechanism for gender equality in the structure of state management bodies; others expand the powers of social security departments within the Cabinet of Ministers to ensuring equal opportunities for women and men; still others create special ministries for gender policy.

In addition, in some European states, a significant role in the promotion of equality ideas in legislative initiatives was played by permanent committees on equality issues and factions of women parliamentarians, who seek to introduce a gender dimension into the parliamentary work and play an important role in informing MPs on gender equality issues. At the same time, in some countries women's factions include representatives of different parties, while in others women parliamentarians stand in solidarity based on party affiliation. Specialized committees and women's factions are unique forums where NGOs members and experts from the academic environment can consider the gender implications of policies. Thanks to the activity of specialized committees, it becomes possible to intensify the work of government institutes responsible for making key decisions in the gender policy field. Within the framework of women's parliamentary factions, measures are taken to increase the gender literacy of other female MPs.

Consultative and advisory bodies which are the third element of complex mechanisms

prepare the ground for the creation of agencies promoting gender equality within the government and beyond. They can involve representatives of broad political circles in this topic, mediate between non-governmental organizations and gender departments, popularize the activities of gender equality policy bodies, and articulate the social demands of broad segments of the population.

An important role is played by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in local communities, or networks of such non-governmental organizations. Support from the state allows NGOs to participate in the development of a comprehensive gender policy. It is necessary to recognize the role of NGOs as agents representing the interests and life prospects of those population groups whose socio-economic situation is primarily influenced by the governmental political programs. Women's associations remain the main participants in activities aimed at achieving balanced representation in the decision-making process. Their support lends democratic legitimacy to efforts aimed at ensuring equality, as well as to new discussions and strategies.

The resource component is represented by the availability of financial and material opportunities to implement gender equality policy.

The educational component is the presence of a mandatory gender education standard, without which it is impossible to overcome historically rooted gender stereotypes. The gender education standard establishes the order and types of education, organizes further training in order to stimulate general culture advance and gender knowledge growth of decision-makers, specialists and management personnel. Education itself is a set of knowledge and dissemination of this knowledge in society. Here, to a large extent, a lot depends on the traditional gender-specific stereotypes in a given culture and their replacement with new and modern ones.

The first feature of the educational component is research, that is, obtaining and accumulating knowledge. The implementation of the gender strategy requires periodic research using such methods as sociological monitoring, modeling, and forecasting methods, aimed at studying the social processes of self-organizations, identifying gender discrimination and its causes, as well as developing propositions to harmonize gender relations. This requires the introduction of gender criteria in all sectors and directions of state policy. Research results are published in the mass media in order to draw public attention to them and cause broad discussion. Discussions at conferences and meetings with relevant target audiences are aimed at developing solutions to improve the position of women in society.

The educational task of research is to raise the level of public awareness of gender issues, to consider all the main forms of discrimination. The political goal of the research is to contribute to the inclusion of women's interests in the political agenda through the gender vision of the position of women in society.

The second feature is communications. To what extent is the issue of women's participation in politics presented in communicative processes? Are there any empirical and theoretical works focusing their attention on women holding official positions, on identifying the specifics of women's activities at responsible public positions? Are there any works dealing with the collective efforts of women aimed at influencing the process of policy formation and refuting prevailing stereotypes in society?

Accountability and independence are two principles enabling the creation and operation of a comprehensive mechanism for ensuring equality.

Accountability is a necessary condition for complex mechanisms to function. A complex

mechanism involves the creation of organizational structures (bodies) that take into account the different interests of women and men and social relations between them. It should be open to different points of view, experiences and numerous practical and strategic interests.

At the same time, persons whose task is to ensure the operation of the mechanism should be exempted from unconditional political responsibility and have the opportunity to participate in discussions.

This brings us to the second principle, i.e. independence. According to democratic practice, representatives of different interests have a certain level of independence, which allows them to change their points of view. Without independence, there is no flexibility and, therefore, appropriate policy implementation becomes impossible.

Conditions necessary for complex mechanisms to function effectively include:

a) the subordination of such a mechanism to an official of the highest level in the government, e.g. to a minister who is a member of the Cabinet;

b) the presence of institutional mechanisms or processes that facilitate, when necessary, decentralized planning, implementation, and control in order to form non-governmental and public organizations from the grassroots level and above;

c) availability of a sufficient amount of resources in terms of budgetary funds and staffing;

e) the possibility of influencing the government's policy development in all areas.

In addition, according to the structural and functional analysis of Talcott Parsons, the types of role behavior are determined and learned in the process of socialization and internalization of norms, or role expectations; in other words, roles are not innate, that is, they can be modified and changed as a result of practical activities. Talcott Parsons recognizes a contradiction between the basic values of modern society and the inequality of men and women in the structure of employment. If some women are committed to the basic values of equality and the importance of working in the public sphere, they may be dissatisfied with their subordinate position, and modern feminism is an expression of this dissatisfaction. Thus, the solution is to somehow resolve the tension that has arisen, to transform society so that women are satisfied with their place in it. This approach is applicable when explaining the factors that hinder or promote the effective operation of complex mechanisms, when considering recommendations for overcoming gender inequality, when assessing the gender perspective of women's political participation in the sphere of state and municipal administration.

As part of the feminist campaign, K. Millettt develops the concept of patriarchy, and on this basis shows the subordinate position of women in society. Feminist social theory explains why gender inequality persists in our society in state and local authorities and management. We can define patriarchy as a system of social relations between men that has a material basis, and this system, although having an internal hierarchy, creates and maintains interdependence and solidarity among men, which allowing them to dominate women. The material base on which the patriarchy rests is primarily related to men's control over the female workforce. Men exercise this control by depriving women of a number of important resources and by restricting women's sexuality. As long as the state continues to be "masculine", as long as its system of laws is based on masculine power, women remain unable to overcome their subordination. The complex mechanism of gender equality is one of the effective ways to change the existing state of affairs. Roles assigned to representatives of different sexes are no longer considered complementary, emphasis is placed on their hierarchy and power relations.

Thus, the reliance on the methodology of structural and functional and feminist approaches makes it possible to develop a theoretical model, which assumes that the complex mechanism of gender equality will be considered as a set of legal, organizational, resource, and educational components. In accordance with this, a research strategy is developed aimed at: analyzing the presence of a gender-balanced legal framework in modern Ukraine (the legal component); studying the existing state institutions that directly deal with the problems of improving women's position in society and contribute to an active and real policy of including the gender issue in all areas of policy (the organizational component); researching the possibilities to overcome historically rooted gender stereotypes (the educational component).

**Conclusions.** The author suggests an interpretation of the complex gender equality mechanism and highlights its four components: legal, organizational, resource, and educational one. The legal component includes a set of legal norms contained in constitutions, current legislation, and international legal acts that establish the principle of equality between men and women and ensure gender-balanced representation in authorities and management, as well as the practice of implementing these norms.

The organizational, or structural component includes a system of authorities (organizational structures) responsible for the development and implementation of state programs and, in general, legislation in all spheres of state activity, which in one way or another affect the lives of women.

The resource component is the presence of financial and material opportunities to implement gender equality policy.

The educational component is the presence of a mandatory gender education standard, whose absence makes it impossible to overcome historically rooted gender stereotypes. Its first feature is research, that is, obtaining and accumulating knowledge. The implementation of the gender strategy requires periodic research using such methods as sociological monitoring, modeling, and forecasting methods, aimed at studying the social processes of self-organizations, identifying gender discrimination and its causes, as well as developing propositions to harmonize gender relations. The second feature is communications.

The systematization of theoretical approaches to the problem of gender equality shows that the formation of a complex gender equality requires a broad interdisciplinary approach. The application of the research toolkit typical for the structural and functional feminist approach allows us to consider the complex gender equality mechanism as a model for the institutional arrangement of political management.

The proposed author's model of the structure of the complex gender equality mechanism with four components allows to reveal the interrelationships and interdependencies between the components, and to build predictive options for creating the gender perspective of society development.

## **References:**

1. Genderna polityka v normatyvno-pravovykh dokumentakh. Chastyna 1. [Gender policy in legislative acts. Part 1] Za zah. red Levchenko K.B. / H.H. Zhukovska, K.B. Levchenko, O.O. Ostapenko, O.I. Suslova. Kyiv, 2020. 186 s. [in Ukrainian].
2. Konstytutsiia Ukrainy vid 28.06.1996 r. [Constitution of Ukraine of 28.06.1996]. URL : <http://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254к/96-вр>. [in Ukrainian].
3. Konventsiiia Orhanizatsii Obiednanykh Natsii pro likvidatsiiu vsikh form dyskryminat-

sii shchodo zhinok. [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women]. URL : [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995\\_207#Text](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_207#Text). [in Ukrainian].

4. Shcherbak N. V. Instytutsiine zabezpechennia realizatsii derzhavnoi gendernoi polityky v umovakh reformuvannia derzhavnoho upravlinnia [Institutional provision for implementing the state gender policy in the context of reforming public administration]. Pravo ta derzhavne upravlinnia. 2020. № 3. S. 141–149. [in Ukrainian].