

Has neoliberalism
impacted men and
women differently



Even though all citizens in most of countries have equality rights on paper, they need to do more much work to make also these equality rights a reality, for all people: men and women. In this paper, I will try to analyze how the neoliberalism and also globalization affect citizenship and I will try to find answer for question how do neoliberalism affect women and men differently? My intention is to show how the neoliberal economics of globalization impairs citizens' rights, particularly right of women. The neoliberalism was the idea of Friedman, a winner of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, from 1976.

Importance of this idea is free markets, increased privatization of the public sector, and deregulation of the labor market, and also fiscal responsibility. In this philosophy the role of the state is limited to guaranteeing private property rights and enforcing contracts between individuals (Starke, 2008: 12-14). Neoliberalism economic philosophy was ushered by Ronald Reagan in the USA and by Margaret Thatcher in the UK. In general, the neoliberal philosophy can be thus broken down in state-market-employee relationships and the retrenchment of the welfare state, because both of these outcomes have increased household social risk. It is because, the first through the individual and second through the household unit.

The state-market-employee relationships are no longer secured and protected. Now, the state has opted out of the market by deregulation and privatization of national industries at the same time as the flexibility businesses perceive as necessary to remain competitive in a fast-paced global economy has increased the level of market risk an employee assumes when entering into a labor contracts (Andersen, 1999: 33-35). In a European

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labor market Burgoon and Dekker (2010: 11-15) found that part time and also temporary work increase labor market risk, also subjective employment and income insecurities. In some study Giesecke and Grob (2004 : 16-19) discover the existence of a wage penalty and also barrier to permanent, full-time employment present in temporary and fixed-term contracts. In addition, for women, this increased risk diminishes the likelihood that she will choose childbearing over the labor market (Gash; 2008: 9-11). Moreover, the decrease in wages that accompany the shift from industrial to service labor and also the rapidly expanding labor pool around the world have created higher levels of insecurity and yet inability to financially provide for a child.

It is because, the woman has left the workplace, even if only temporarily. As some authors suggest (Gash; 2008: 9-12) the mechanism by which the impact of these state-market-employee relationship changes can be measured is the aforementioned increased labor market risk. It is important to stress, that “ operationalizing” the labor market risk mechanism includes the increased risk that accompanies market liberalization, privatization, and deregulation. In addition, those risks occur with high levels of unemployment, part-time employment, contractual and self-employment, insufficient wages as well as the retrenchment of government in dealing with labor security and social insurance issues. It can be say, that countries which adopting and implementing a high degree of neoliberalism will be altering the state’s contract with its citizens thereby changing the structure, security, and expectations with which people provide for themselves and their families.

Also it is important, to discuss what are women and men rights in neoliberalism philosophy? It is easy to explain, that the main gap between citizenship rights for men and women arises from disparities in social citizenship rights. Some authors suggest that this is because women benefit disproportionately from the social programs provided by the state, given their initial subordinate position (Trimble 2003: 115). Yet, her work is interesting to note because she is less critical of globalization than others, stating that, in general, economic restructuring has not increased the gap between male and female salaries. Also, Brodie (1997: 231-237) notes how, in some respects, gender can actually be less relevant under globalized neoliberal market citizenship. For instance, the feminization of labor, in which jobs have become more insecure, has made male and female work more similar in the public sphere. Add, while men's and women's salaries have gotten closer, widening gaps have mostly occurred among classes and racial groups, allowing some women to exploit the labor of others.

Moreover, as already discussed, neoliberal economic ideology explicitly rejects any relevance of gender. In addition, Brodie says that a neoliberal view like performativity which provides no space for making citizenship claims on the basis of difference or structural inequality. Often, this point is discussed more thoroughly under political rights. A lot of authors say that the neoliberalism does fundamentally revolve around gender. Although it is a contradiction of the economic order's rejection of the relevance of gender, much of global neoliberalism is founded on the subordination of what society equates with women for instance caregiving and selflessness, to male-centered concepts, like public sphere work and competition.

One of the most important point is to correctly understand what rights citizens have and should have. In this point it can be useful to use the Marshall influential theory (Brodie 1997: 12-16). Marshall describes three components in the evolution of liberal-democratic citizenship rights. Moreover, he shows that civil citizenship rights led to political citizenship rights, which led to social citizenship rights (Marshall 1963: 71).

Marshall describing his theory explains that the civil component means the rights necessary for individual freedom, like liberty of the person, and freedom of speech, also thought and faith, yet the right to own property, and the right to justice etc. (Marshall, 1963: 71). The political component means, the right to take part in the exercise of political power, for example as a member of a body invested with political authority and also as an elector of the members of such a body. (Marshall, 1963: 72) The social component of citizenship means the wide set of rights, for example the right to a bit of economic welfare and also security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and yet right to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards existing in the society (Marshall, 1963: 72).

Later Brodie clarifies the social component, as the right to the collective provision of a minimum level of economic security (Brodie, 1997: 229).

Marshall claims three components of citizenship, but today political right and civil rights mean little while citizens are so unequal or impoverished that they cannot exercise them (Brodie 1997: 229). It should be stressed that Marshall's theory is itself exclusive. It means the theory relies on naturally gendered conceptions of rights and discourses which can exclude women (Lister, 1997: 103).

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Some authors note that Marshall's theory of rights is based in particular on the historical experiences of European men and that many feminists argue that his historical order of rights does not apply to women. They often argue that women gained political rights before civil citizenship and point out those women's civil rights did not lead to full social citizenship (Lister, 1997: 161). Nowadays, still Marshall's theory of the three components of citizenship provides a useful analytical framework for describing the different aspects of citizenship. In most of citizenship view theory, there is a difference between formal and substantive citizenship. Feminist's authors often point out, that citizenship to women can only provide simple, formal equality and fall short of substantively changing society in ways that will allow women to act as citizens with gendered identities (Lister, 1997: 163). Most probably identity-less norms of citizenship, based on "falsely universalizing one particular group's practice of it," reject claims based on difference (Jones 1990: 784). By stressing goals of substantive, active citizenship that guarantee social rights, authors such as Jones strive to ensure that women bring their differences into the public sphere, beyond mere formal citizenship.

Thus, formal (or liberal) citizenship merely conveys equal (legal) rights on citizens. Citizenship based on substantive equality looks deeper to address the systemic barriers created by patriarchal or colonial, or by racist and class-based legacies and is more concerned with equal outcomes than citizenship based on formal equality (Jones 1990: 784-785). It is probable that this inherently liberal blindness to difference is even greater under neoliberalism. Feminine qualities are subordinated as the market values and pays for traditionally male (public) work while it expects citizens (mostly

women) to do the private sphere work, such as caregiving, always for free (Bakker, 1996: 18-19). This position therefore provides additional harm to women's right to social security.

The feminization of labor also ensures that women's work is more often part time, low paying, and with few benefits. While some women may not feel any effects of market citizenship, "women" are not a homogenous group and particular women are in a much worse situation. For case in point, women are overrepresented among single parents and poor seniors and there is a growing gap between classes of women. Bakker (1996: 8-11) also explains that one should not believe that gender is the only important factor in globalization but that it is a vital part of an affected "matrix of identities". More usually, though, recent reforms in education, health care, social assistance, workfare, and privatization are all cited for being disproportionately harmful to women. For example, Brodie (1997: 238) explains how single mothers are explicitly targeted for losing welfare benefits.

Women are more likely to accept part time or casual employment because they are doing the "second shift" by working in both the private and public spheres (Hochschild 2000: 123-128). These combined factors also increase the psychological pressures on women. To compound these problems, women's domestic care-giving roles are further increased by reductions in state services. One of the greatest factors to be influenced by the change in social citizenship rights is social reproduction.

This relates to the reproduction of the species, of the labor force, and of provisioning and caring needs (Bakker and Gill 2003: 32-34). Because of, the biological fact that only women can give birth and the patriarchal social tradition that in the public/private division of labor women carry out the majority of care-giving, the economic transformations in social reproduction have greatly affected women and their status as citizens. With the global neoliberal shift, social reproduction has become “ re-privatized” and returned back to the private sphere where women are once again burdened with providing for their families without the welfare state’s support (Bakker 1996: 4-6). The care-giving occurs informally unpaid child care and caring for sick family, and also formally paid work in the woman dominated social service professions such as nursing or child care.

The welfare state had helped women manage the second shift by providing better resources for working outside the home. Other than women’s reproductive and caring labor, though essential for society, is now left out of state regulation because the performativity based economic view sees that this labor has no market value. Further, freed from government intervention, a traditional “ state of nature” has returned to the increasingly private home (Bakker and Gill 2003: 35-39). This works to many women’s disadvantage because they frequently end up being hierarchized below their husbands and are in a position of less power. Thus, in addition to describing neoliberalism’s view of citizenship as merely consumption and economic production. Green (2001: 201-205) shows how neoliberalism works with the neoconservative ideology that calls for a hierarchal, patriarchal society.

Numerous factors also show how women are more negatively affected than men in the area of political citizenship rights to participation. First, there are logistical barriers. On the whole, women have less access to material resources for example, money, education, or employment benefits, than men, weakening their impact on government (Macdonald 2006: 137-139). Women also work the second shift, giving them less nonmaterial resources such as time. The more cut backs that are made, the more women's role in care-giving is increased and the less they can publicly participate. Second, as more and more decisions are made by international trade panels and corporate boardrooms, one may wonder how many women are represented in these bodies.

Therefore, like women's organizations, one of the main vehicles for effective women's citizen participation, face backlash from social conservatives who fear change and neoliberals who want to enshrine individualism, civil society finds itself further depoliticized and the space for democracy has narrowed (Patten 2003: 99-108). This has the overall effect of reducing women's political space, substantive equality, and their opportunities to be women citizens. Nowadays atomistic view of democracy by individuals and the redefinition of " citizen" hurts those who found effective political expression through group advocacy. Further, some women are impacted even more.

When performativity is enshrined, the only good citizens are those who are self-reliant. Those that are not self-reliant, such as single mothers, are " bad citizens. " Under neoliberalism, the state can refuse to take seriously those people who do not contribute. The end result is further stigmatization, not

only as single mother (“vindictive leech moms”), but as a burden on society (Dacks, Green and Trimble 1995: 280-285).

The new “more efficient” state is therefore less willing to listen to some people. To explain, many women’s groups do not claim to represent all women. The neoliberal government, which seeks to limit the public sphere, is finding it “increasingly easy to ignore the mixed messages” coming from so many different groups (Burt 1999: 410-412). Burt also says that groups will have to work together or else face dismissal by a government that wants to hear simple answers coming from only one single source that mutes diversity. As a result, globalization’s weakening of citizens’ political rights has provided additional problems for women.

Having found it hard enough to influence the state in the first place, they are further burdened because the market state sees them as “special interests” of no interest to the “ordinary” citizens. Consequently, funding for groups has decreased leaving women even more out of the decision-making process that is led by government and corporate executives who are not likely to substantively represent women’s interests. It is important to stress also, that very little was actually written, on whether women are being disproportionately hurt by having civil rights granted to corporations. One could reason that as a group that is marginalized from society’s main sites of democratic power, women must increasingly rely on court cases to advance their claims. If organizations that fight for women in the courts are now up against large corporations; either against them in class action suits or if corporations demand intervener status in cases against the government,

then one has to hope that women's groups have the necessary resources to beat these formidable adversaries.

The poorer status of contemporary women's organizations does not bode well for judicial success. Moreover, no author is entirely clear on how neoliberal globalization's destructive impact on women's citizenship can be reversed, if at all. But some do offer suggestions for further exploration such as relying on improved women's movements and unions to resist downward convergence (Macdonald; 2006: 32-39), pursuing politics at the more accessible local levels (Green, 1996: 103-109), working with international women's organizations and summits (Lister, 1997: 32-38), taking advantage of budget surpluses while we can to open discussion on social citizenship policy (Harder, 2003: 81-85), committing ourselves to democracy and the values of welfare liberalism such as equality and diversity (Trimble, 2003: 18-23), having a greater presence in the traditional forms of media (Criquillion, 2004: 13-16), ending downward harmonization by taxing personal wealth (Phillips, 1996: 18-23), public education, pressuring government for more resources, making trade deals subject to health, labor, and human rights agreements, consumer boycotts, or taking control of pension plans (Morris, 2000: 132-135). Although neoliberalism and globalization are not a new topic, it will take time to see what effects any countermeasures may have. One can see how neoliberalism and globalization have dismantled citizenship rights in world.

The foundations of modern citizenship, social rights, have been eroded by government cutbacks. Citizen's sources of participation in governance, their political rights, have been hollowed out and are disappointingly weak in an <https://assignbuster.com/has-neoliberalism-impacted-men-and-women-differently/>

era when the government is bound by transnational interests. Also, people cherished civil rights have been granted to powerful corporations who will use them to further undermine citizens and the state. The citizens hit hardest by these effects are those who do not conform to the new citizenship model of the identity less consumer and customer.

The new definition of neoliberal citizenship particularly hurts women citizens, although the heterogeneity of countries population shows that different women are affected differently. In conclusion I can say that women's citizenship is adversely affected by neoliberal globalization, especially their social rights, the most vital rights for vulnerable women. The burdens of the second shift and social reproduction have increased while participation through women's organizations has become less promising. Even though globalization does offer some new tools such as enhanced communication, this alone is not enough to restore protection of citizenship rights.

The role of women has changed dramatically over the past fourteen years. Women no longer can be classified as " stay at home moms" or " business professionals. As an alternative women are faced with juggling both titles. In 1975 in USA and UK about 48 per cent of women with children under the age of 18 worked outside the home.

By 2008, this number had risen to 73% (Van Dyke, 2009: 32-36). Moreover, the equal rights and opportunities has become a necessity for maintaining a middle class lifestyle. According to Gibbs, there are now about 3. 4 million married couples in which the wife is the sole earner.

That is 2. 6 million more than in 1972 (Gibbs et al. 2009: 29-32). It is consequently unsurprising that the changing role of women in the labor market would impact the the family unit as well.