



Survey of the Social and Economic Position of Women Workers in Rastakhiz-I Kargaran Magazine (1976-1975)

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Abstract

With the increase in oil revenues and the implementation of the Fourth (1968–1972) and Fifth (1973–1977) Development Plans, the country moved further towards industrialization. The implementation of agrarian reforms and the massive migration of villagers to cities provided cheap labor for factories and production centers. The White Revolution of Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi further prepared the ground for women's entry into the economic sectors of the country, as one of the goals of this revolution was to change women's attitudes towards work and modernize their lives.

What was emphasized more in the 1960s and 1970s was not just the employment of women, but the destigmatization of certain technical jobs that the government wanted to fill with the necessary workforce. Some of these jobs were traditionally male-dominated or required specialized training. The government sought to familiarize women, especially working women, with these workplaces and educational environments. De-stereotyping the traditional mentality of Iranian society through state-owned media was one of the key programs of this era. The use of mass communication media, such as the press, which was the guardian of the government's dominant ideas in society, reveals the extent of control over the developed programs.

There were no publications that addressed the issues of working women or were specifically dedicated to this group during the period under discussion. Publications related to women in the years after the 1940s can be divided into two categories: 1) Publications focused on fashion and clothing, often with an entertainment aspect, such as *Zan-e Rooz*, *Dounyaye Zanan*, *Women's Information*, etc.; and 2) Magazines and publications affiliated with women's organizations that were published in Tehran and other cities. Multi-circulation newspapers, such as *Ettela'at* and *Kayhan*, also published brief articles on some of the issues facing women in carpet weaving, though these were of limited significance. Despite being a government magazine and the publisher of the Rastakhiz Party's ideas, *Rastakhiz-i Kārgarān* magazine holds an important position in the study of labor issues related to women workers. The content analysis technique was used to analyze data extracted from *Rastakhiz-i Kārgarān* magazine. The statistical population of this research consists of all issues of the magazine published between 1975 and 1976.



The main issue of the upcoming research is how the social and economic issues of working women are reflected in *Rastakhiz-i Kargaran* magazine. It seems that, while expressing the modernization discourse of Mohammad Reza Shah's government, *Rastakhiz* magazine also contributed to changing society's traditional view of women's employment by addressing the issues faced by women workers, such as literacy, skills, health, and education. In general, the issues raised by the magazine in relation to working women include: encouraging women to change their social roles, emphasizing women's empowerment, job advertisements, raising awareness among working women about their own and their children's health, sports, and well-being, promoting membership of working women in labor unions, focusing on the literacy of working women, and supporting day and night internship schools.

The results obtained show that the government tried to present its revolutionary achievements to society through the implementation of the White Revolution. *Rastakhiz-i Kargaran* magazine, which was launched alongside the formation of the *Rastakhiz* party, played an effective role in reflecting the working and living conditions of women workers while spreading the welfare and service programs of the government. In line with the policies of the Shah's White Revolution, this magazine sought to highlight the importance of women's effectiveness in economic fields through the articles and titles it published. The magazine adopted a modern view of women and challenged old beliefs about absolute motherhood. This modern view called for their widespread presence in society and for them to accompany men in driving the economic machinery of the government. The emphasis on improving women's abilities and increasing their literacy and education aimed to make their presence in society more effective. By covering news about overnight training centers and skill development competitions, which required women and girls to be absent from home for several days or weeks, this magazine sought to normalize the presence of women in technical centers alongside men and to change the traditional views of middle-class families. An important criticism of this magazine is its failure to reflect on women's issues and workers' demands, as the achievements of the Shah's White Revolution were never criticized.

Keywords: *Rastakhiz-i Kargaran* magazine, Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, women workers, social status.

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