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The woman and the labor market in Algeria

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Abstract:

This study sheds light on the woman and her entrance to the labor market amid the new societal changes in all the life aspects and the scientific development that made her education necessary. After the industrial revolution that resulted in the need for more labor force, the woman fought illiteracy and got into the labor market. In this regard, the Algerian society witnessed a change in the social structure, as the woman pioneered and succeeded in many positions, including high positions such as minister, ambassador, engineer, etc. Thus, this study aims at answering the following question, “What are the developments achieved by the woman in the labor market?”

Key words: woman; job; family; society; education.

Introduction:

The woman had so long occupied an important position in all the social life aspects, supported man in the various human development phases, and had a vital role in building the family. In this context, the Algerian society witnessed socioeconomic changes that affected the family. If the society changes economically, the family needs to cope with this change to meet its needs. These changes include the woman’s education and work to achieve her social and professional ambitions and self, mainly the improvement of the family living standards and getting rid of the restrictions.

1. Historical background about the beginning and development of the woman work:

Man had so long been the authority and the decision maker while woman had been submissive to his laws and wills with no participation or objection. He chooses the job he likes and leaves the rest to the woman. Besides, the historical situation of the woman had been linked to the civilizational and cultural motives and the economic systems, according to the specificity of each society. The woman work was tightly linked to her position and status in the society. In addition, the role and position of the woman had differed from one phase to another (Ihsan Mohamed al Hassan, 2014).

When the Industrial Revolution started, the woman called for equality in jobs with man. The industrial society was the 1st context where the woman got more freedom and got into the labor market. The capitalist society used the woman in soft jobs such as a secretary, nurse, seller, educator, etc despite she had new experiences that allowed her to do jobs that had been exclusively practiced by men. Thus, she got an economic position that is equal to that of the man.

In addition, the socialist regimes enshrined the gender equality in most of their constitutions. Therefore, the woman experienced new things and started working to succeed in various jobs and prove her abilities and skills and that success depends on the personality, ambition, skills, and experiences, not the gender. Consequently, she succeeded in productive jobs, mainly with the technical development that ended the need for the physical force and increased the number of the working women.

2. The development of the woman work in Algeria:

The woman penetration of the labor market was not easily accepted, as it was coercive and inharmonious with the cultural development of some societies. In Algeria, the situation of the woman was like in the rest of the world, as her role was limited to taking care of the family issues and raising children. She suffered deprivation and many social changes, mainly during the colonial period. However, she played vital roles in struggling against the colonizer, as she contributed to founding associations, curing the wounded, establishing newspapers, and participating in the forums. Then, in 1962, the National Liberation Front FLN established the National Union of the Algerian Women thanks to their role in the revolution. In this regard, the Union set a policy that guaranteed the woman right to education and job through the compulsory and free education, and literacy and vocational training programs (Ben Ziane Malika, 2003).

Her activity expanded with the independence, as she participated to the comprehensive development and got into various fields. Statistics of 1987 show that the active Algerians were 5.3 millions, of which 10% were women. Moreover, studies confirm that in the Algerian society, the active women were 77.000 in 1990. This confirms the increase of their numbers in the labor market. Later in 2012, the working women were 607.1600, i.e. 31.8% of the whole labor force in Algeria. 88.7% of them are permanent employees while 11.3 work under limited contracts. These statistics reflect the existence of women in all the fields, even politics, as they compete men over high governmental positions.

The Algerian law provides for protecting women and for equal wages with men. Thus, the number of the working women increases continuously thanks to the ideological and technological changes that brought about a new man with different psychological features. The woman got a new role in addition to her familial ones. Besides, there is a new universal trend toward giving the women more freedom after it was confirmed that they have equal intelligence, abilities, and skills with men, and that any differences are due to the culture, not the instinct (Mohamed Ali al Bar, 1998).

3. The motives of women penetration of the labor market:

The increasing phenomenon of women work was not arbitrary; rather, it is due to various factors and motives. Undoubtedly, the contribution of the woman to the social development is thanks to different conditions, namely:

3.1 The economic motive: It is generally the most important, as the living standards are decreasing and the needs are increasing. In this context, the aspiration to a better life pushes the woman to leave the circle of the traditional roles and to get into the labor market to help the husband and satisfy their needs.

3.2 The self-motive: It is an important point that pushes the woman to work to show off and confirm herself, social position within the society, and duties and rights in the society and family (Ahmed Rachouane, 1998).

3.3 The social motive: The social development and rapid change in all the societies brought about the gender equality in the civil rights. Thus, the woman liberation guaranteed her efficient participation in the labor market and confirmed her social position. Consequently, she broke down all the traditions and restrictions by the society (Kamilia Abd al Fattah, 1984, p. 23).

3.4 The political motive: The international laws and constitutions provided for equal rights and duties between the two genders. Besides, they provided for wide range education for women, equal job opportunities, and equal legal rights. Moreover, international congresses were held in Moscow, Cairo, and other cities to discuss the social, cultural, and political situations of the woman in the family and the society.

3.5 The educational motive: The modern families gave much importance to the education of women. Besides, the modern women are aware about the right to education to get rid of illiteracy and get jobs. Education increases the efficiency of women in jobs and helps make informed decisions. Many studies found out that the high qualifications increase the contribution of the woman to the economic activity. In this context, Simone De Beauvoir states that with education, the woman managed to succeed in getting jobs outside the house to confirm her humanity, and got educational grades that paved the way for the main jobs (Jack Havelk, 1990).

4. The legal situation of the woman work in Algeria:

4.1 The national chart (1976, 1964, 1962):

The National Council of the Algerian revolution that met in 1962 agreed on the national charter in Tripoli to set the cornerstone of the activity in the independent Algeria and covered the role of the woman in the phase of construction. It provided that the woman participation in the revolution paved the way for breaking the old nightmare that restricted her. It added that to integrate her in the management and development of the state, FLN must

end all the obstacles and support the feminist organizations. Besides, it highlighted the negative attitude towards the work of the women and the belief in their inability, even by women themselves. Thus, FLN insisted on overcoming all the obstacles that face integrating the woman in the social development.

The charter of 1964 that includes a set of laws ratified by the 1st congress of the FLN on 16-21 April 1964 in Algiers about the working woman provided that gender equality must efficiently add to the sociopolitical activity and help build socialism through militancy in the party and the national organizations. It added that the woman must be able to use her power to serve the state through participation in the economic activity. We can say that the charter of Algiers insists on the participation of the woman in the economic, social, and political activities, and on the gender equality. As for the charter of 1976, it is the main source of the national policy and state laws ratified after the referendum of 1976. It insisted on the political rights of the woman and paved the way for her education and work. Besides, it considers women as a power to be used in need, as it provided that the woman is a strong labor force reserve in the state. It recognizes that the woman participation is marginal in the socialist building, and that she can be used when needed. Thus, the general congress of the Algerian women in 1979 confirmed that the laws on the rights of the working woman are not complete due to the lack of practical texts.

4.2 The Algerian constitution (1963, 1976, and 1989):

All the Algerian constitutions confirmed the gender equality in all the life aspects. In this context, the Constitution of 1963 confirmed in Article 12 of the Chapter on the basic rights that the two genders have equal rights and duties (The Constitution of 1963). Besides, the various judicial and organizational provisions issued in Algeria, such as Order 66/133 of 26/1966 on the statute of the public job, the job statute in 1978, and Article 40 of the Constitution of 1976 provided that the law is applicable to everybody. Besides, Article 81 of Chapter 0,5 on the citizens' duties, of the same constitution directly insists on the woman participation in the economic and national development, stating that the woman must fully participate to the socialist management and the economic development (The Constitution of 1976).

Later, the provisions of the statute of the public job in 2006 confirmed the equal opportunities in recruitment. In this regard, its 27th Article bans segregating the employees based on views, gender, or race. Furthermore, Article 80 provides that the recruitment must be after making contests.

4.3 The political discourse:

a. The presidential discourse 1999:

In his discourse, the ex-President Abd al Aziz Bouteflika insisted on the gender equality and the promotion of the woman based on her individual rights to achieve the harmony with the social transformations, and achieve all the professional fields.

b. The ministerial discourse 2013:

With the inauguration of the International Day of the Woman on 06 March 2013 in the Family Center in Ben Aknoun, the ex-Minister of Work and Social Insurance “Tayeb Louh” insisted on the participation of the Algerian woman in the sustainable development by asking her to adhere to all the available jobs without any condition. Then, he gave some statistics about the Algerian woman since 2012, confirming that her status in the public jobs increased to 607.160, i.e. 31.8% of the labor force.

5. The position of the woman in the economic activity:

The National Office of Statistics in 1966 stated that the working women were 34% and defined the active women as those who work out the house. Then in 1977, the Office widened the questions to cover all the women working outside and inside the house. Then in 1987-1990, important changes in the number of women seeking jobs happened, leading to a remarkable increase in the rate of the feminist activity and the development of the number of the working women, despite that the total rate was still low. Like men, the women took advantage of regional and sectorial programs such as the program of supporting the youths, the economic recovery program, and the National Plan of the Agricultural Development program in 2000.

In this regard, women made big demands on the small loans to found their businesses. The rate was 19.99% in 1999, 26.359% in 2001, and 33.90% in 2002. Besides, the strategy of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the national Program of the Rural Development, and the National Fund for the Rural Development promoted the economic role of the woman through:

- Establishing a cyber-basis and statistics according to the gender through integrating the term “type”.
- Organizing thinking and exchange workshops about the integration of the rural and agricultural woman.
- Making a national program for qualifying and training women.
- Boosting and improving the sociocultural situation of the local development by establishing the basic structures of the collective life, eradicating illiteracy, establishing a body for the information of families in the light of awareness

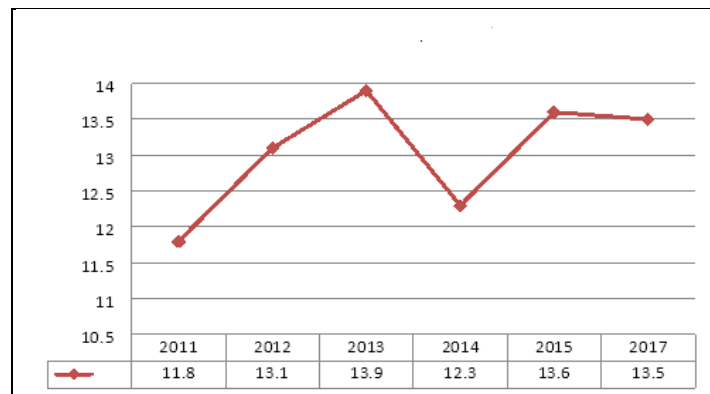
campaigns, and making regional meetings with all the ministerial sectors to focus on the rural woman.

- Strengthening the benefits of women from the development programs and projects through their integration in the agricultural activity through development programs, agricultural system change program, and youth employment support program.
- The legal banning of the gender segregation in recruitment, as the law provides that the work must have access to the same advantages and reimbursements when doing the same jobs and having the same qualification and performance.

6. The development of the woman work in Algeria: data and numbers:

6.1 The development of the women activity rate in 2011-2017:

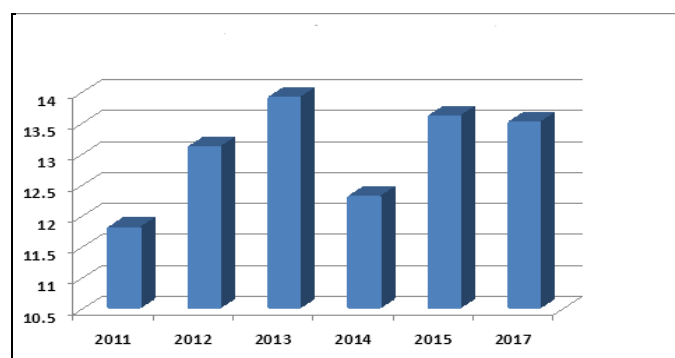
Figure 01: The development of the women activity rate in 2011-2017:



Statistics and the graph show that the rate of the women activity in the economic life witnessed a considerable increase since independence. The rate was less than 12.4% in 2005, 13.9% in 2010, 16.3% in 2014, and 17% in 2017. Thus, there is a remarkable increase in the activity of the women thanks to the state policies of empowering the women and to their participation in the economic life after they received good education.

6.2 The development of the women employment rate in 2011-2017:

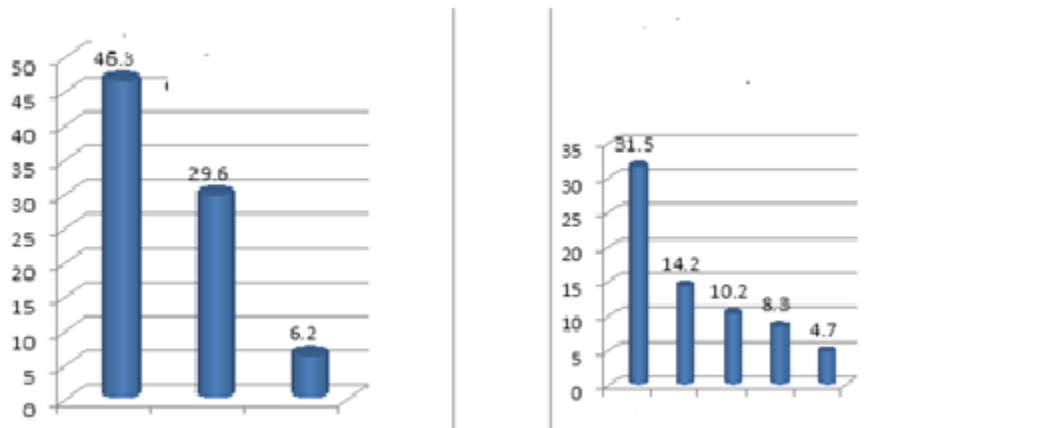
Figure 02: the women employment rate:



Statistics and the graph show that the rate of the women employment increased with time. It was 11.8% in 2011, 13.9% in 2013, 12.3% in 2014, and 13.5% in 2017 thanks to the education and the creation of temporary job vacancies by the state.

6.3 The development of the women employment rate according to the education and degrees:

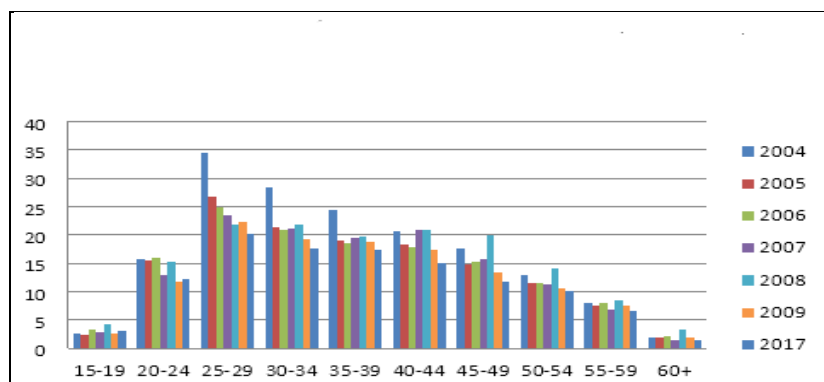
Figure 03: The women employment rate according to the education and degrees:



Statistics and the graph in 2017 show an increase in the rate of the women with high educational level. In 2017, 14% of the working women had a secondary level while 31.5% had a university level. As for employment according to the degrees, 46.3% of the working women had university degrees while 29.6% had a vocational training degree.

6.4 The development of the women activity rate according to age 2004-2017:

Figure 04: The development of the women activity rate in Algeria according to age:



Statistics and the graph show that the rate of the women activity in all the study years is weak for the U20 and +50 women, and is good for the women in between. The age category (15-19) shows a low increase from 3.1% in 2004 to 3.3% in 2008. Then, it decreases to 2.4% in 2009 due to the girls' desire to carry out their higher studies. Besides, the category (25-54) witnessed a good activity. It increased from 25% in 2009 to 34.1% in 2017 thanks to

the creation of permanent job vacancies. As for 55-60 years old, it is low with less than 3% of the total.

7. The development of the woman education in Algeria:

Education is one of the main criteria that highly contribute to the state development. Besides, it is an international right for the two genders with no segregation to achieve the economic, social, and scientific development. In this regard, illiteracy is an obstacle to the social growth. Because the woman is the half of the society, her education is necessary. Thus, the educational, legal, and cultural situation of the Algerian woman has considerably improved since independence, as confirmed by statistics and reality. The following lines shall focus on the main changes in the woman education in Algeria and the state efforts to support her education.

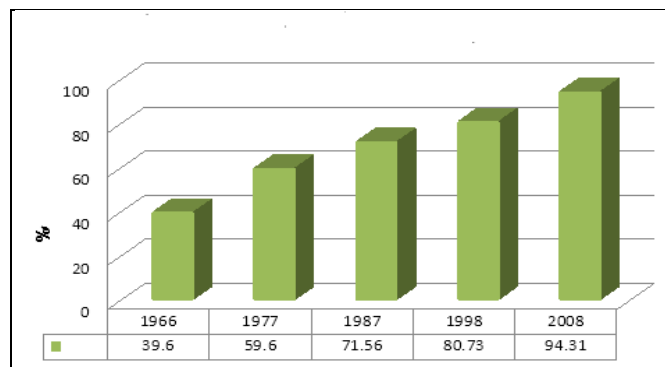
7.1 The development of the educational situation of the woman in Algeria:

The Algerian state focused on education through declaring it as free, compulsory, and democratic. This policy increased the education rate and decreased illiteracy. Besides, it provided equal opportunities for the two genders and fought the social differences through providing educational social services such as dormitories, restaurants, transportation, and stipends. Moreover, the giant investments in the educational structures facilitated the education of the rural children and considerably increased the rate (triki Hassan, 2020).

Moreover, the 04 Algerian constitutions enshrined the women right to education and vocational training. Article 04 provides that each Algerian has the right to education and training under the principle of the general fundamental education. As for the vocational training after the end of the compulsory fundamental education period, i.e., after reaching 16 years old and deciding to quit the school, it has considerably increased thanks to the Algerian legal system regarding education and training, which helped make a giant leap against illiteracy.

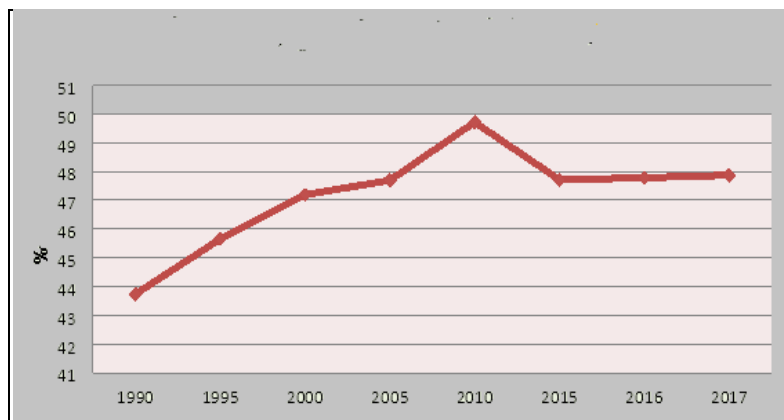
7.2 The woman and education in Algeria: reality and data:

Figure 05: the development of women education in Algeria:



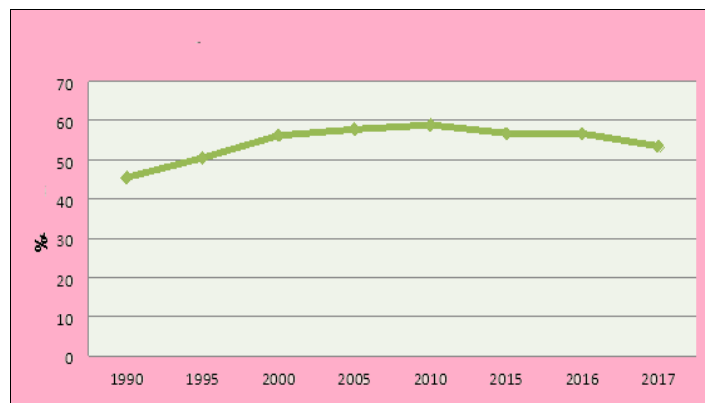
Statistics in figure 13 show a remarkable increase in women education. The rate was 39.60% in 1966, 80.73% in 1998 thanks to the free and compulsory education policy, and 94.31% in 2008. This brought about big transformations in women social and economic lives and increased their chances to get high positions. Besides, the figure shows that the rate of the women in the primary and middle education had been increasing from one year to another. The rate was 43.74% in 1990 and 45.65% in 1995 despite the security conditions at that time that led to schools shut down, mainly in the rural regions. The rate kept increasing to reach 47.87% in 2017 thanks to the effective socioeconomic development and the free education program.

Figure 06: The development of women primary and middle education in Algeria:



The figure shows an increase in women secondary education. The rate was 45.47% in 1990 and kept increasing thanks to the state efforts and policy that encouraged the secondary education. Later in 2017, the rate was 53.44% thanks to the decrease of the school dropout in the primary and middle educations.

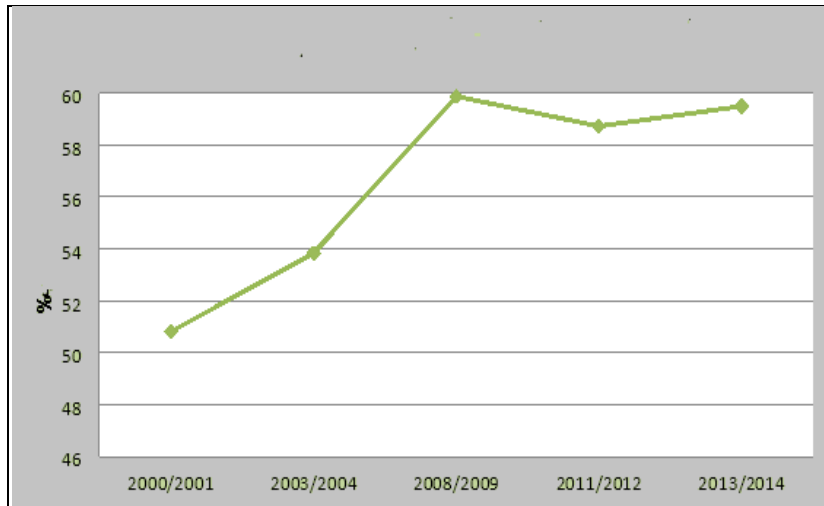
Figure 07: the development of women secondary education in Algeria:



The figure shows an increase in women higher education. The rate was 50.81% in 2000 and reached 59.49% in 2013 thanks to women desire to carry out their university education and get a degree, and to their decision to delay marriage because of the development of the society and change of the mindsets to cope with the era. Moreover, the

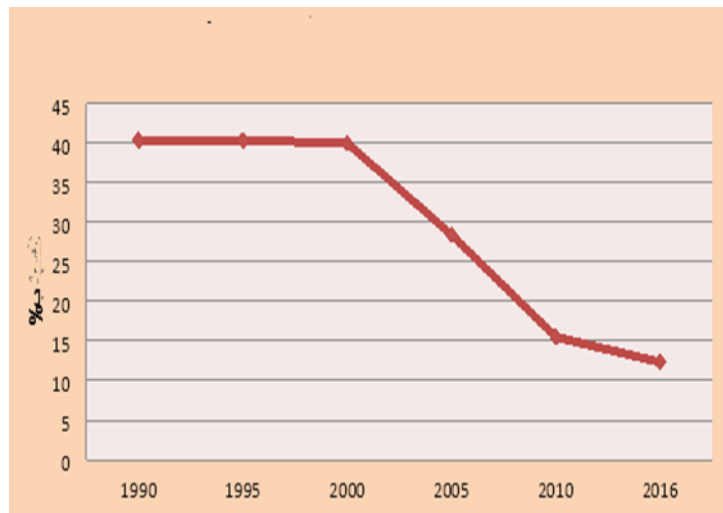
state enshrined the equal opportunities principle between the two genders, and the families became aware about the importance of women education and level improvement. Moreover, the parents started encouraging their daughters to carry on their studies.

Figure 08: the development of women higher education in Algeria:



The figure show that Algeria witnessed a continuous decrease of illiteracy among women. The rate was 40.33% in 1990 and, then, gradually decreased to 12.33% in 2016 thanks to the state efforts, policies, and programs.

Figure 09: the rate of women illiteracy in Algeria:



Conclusion:

Upon this study, we find out that the socioeconomic changes in the Algerian society brought about changes in the role of the woman, the family, and the society. Thus, the work of the women turned into a reality and her education has noticeably increased to confirm themselves and penetrate the labor market. In this regard, the woman competes the man in

many fields and her traditional tasks inside the family changed and expanded. Moreover, the woman became freer and gained an important position with a socioeconomically changing society.

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