

## Decent Work and Gender Equality in Mexico

**Brenda Esmeralda Moreno-Garduño,  
Gabriela Guadalupe Escobedo-Guerrero,  
Georgette del Pilar Pavía-González,  
Antonio Uribe-Méndez,  
Victor Martin Maldonado-Benitez**  
ESCA Santo Tomás, Instituto Politécnico Nacional,  
Mexico City, Mexico  
[bmorenog1500@alumno.ipn.mx](mailto:bmorenog1500@alumno.ipn.mx);  
[gescobedog@ipn.mx](mailto:gescobedog@ipn.mx); [gabrielaeg@hotmail.com](mailto:gabrielaeg@hotmail.com);  
[gpaviag@ipn.mx](mailto:gpaviag@ipn.mx);  
[auribeme@ipn.mx](mailto:auribeme@ipn.mx);  
[vmaldonadob1500@alumno.ipn.mx](mailto:vmaldonadob1500@alumno.ipn.mx)

### Abstract

In Mexico, there is the belief that there are labor inequalities in the perception of income for women due to gender issues, this study provides current information on the existing gap in Mexico and its importance for sustainable development and economic growth, through an analysis descriptive-analytical method, the data collected were processed and analyzed through Minitab software and evaluated using Pearson's correlation coefficients and regression models, however with this research it has been determined that statistically there are labor inequalities but not for gender reasons, but for educational level, since that the income disparity is less than 1% between men and women regardless of the academic degree.

To determine how average real labor income of employed persons by genre [ILS] influences the unemployment rate, disaggregated by genre and age [TD], two normality tests were carried out and in the second run, the results obtained indicated that the average income per the level of studies is more favorable for people who attended the upper secondary level, compared to those who studied basic or preschool, however, it is noted that the people who receive higher income are those with higher academic levels higher, giving them with more job opportunities and greater probabilities to get decent job.

### Keywords

SDG 5 Gender Equality, SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth, Mexico, Gender diversity

### 1. Introduction

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) establish a route of action to improve the lives of people in the world, through goals that include social, environmental and economic axes. Despite the progress in their fulfillment, the SDGs are far from being fulfilled, the year 2020 was to mark the decade of most ambitious action to achieve the Goals by 2030, however, due to the Coronavirus pandemic there was a significant setback in some Goals, including SDG 5 and SDG 8, which are considered for this study, with respect to the figures offered by UN, (2020) it is known that since January 1, 2020, the participation of women in parliaments increased to 24.9% compared to 22.3% in 2015, this advance is mainly attributed to the legislation applicable to gender quotas, however in the workplace, until 2019 women represented 39% of the population active worldwide of working age but there were only 28% in managerial positions, which compared to 2000 with 25% this figure has not increased significantly in 20 years, because it is difficult for them to access managerial positions

In Mexico there is the belief that women have lower income from work, due to gender issues, that is, that there is employment discrimination against women, this research aims to explore whether there is a relationship directly related to gender and income received, therefore, if so, it should have a direct negative impact on decent work for

women, limiting the country's social and economic progress, making it difficult to meet SDG 5 Gender Equality and SDG 8 Decent Work and economic growth.

This study provides current information on the existing gap in Mexico in terms of decent work and gender issues, this study aims to explore the relationship between gender equality in relation to decent work, its importance for sustainable development and economic growth from Mexico and contributes to future. Research related to Mexico on gender equality and decent work since information is established in accordance with the sustainable development indicators of the 2030 agenda, specifically SDG 5 Gender Equality and SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth.

## 2. Literature Review

The concept of "decent work" is defined as the work that dignifies and allows the development of the worker's skills, decent work adheres to the fundamental principles and labor rights that allow a fair income according to the effort made, does not discriminate by any reason or exclude social dialogue (ILO, 2004). For a job to be considered decent, "it must provide a fair income, job security, protection for workers and their families, opportunities for personal development, social integration, the ability to express concerns and organize in groups, equal opportunities and equal treatment for all" (Zammitti et al., 2021, p. 02).

Regarding gender equality in labor matters, Article 11 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) establishes that "the States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the sphere of employment in order to ensure, on the basis of equality between men and women, the same rights" (UN Human Rights, 2021), in particular the right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings; the right to the same employment opportunities, the right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive training, social security, protection of the health and safety at work, the right to equal pay and equal treatment with respect to work of equal value, as well as equal treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work (UN Human Rights, 2021).

In 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development arises, where the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were embodied, within them, SDG 5 focuses on gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls, due to their part of SDG 8 relates to decent work and economic growth issues to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth for all (UN, 2015).

According to Alawi and Belfaqih (2019) as cited in Monteiro et al. 2021, when companies report on their labor practices, including decent work, they demonstrate their social responsibility and improve their corporate transparency. When examining managerial risk aversion and the power of women in the senior executive team (Adhikari et al. 2019) it was found that companies in which women have more power in management appear to reduce risk aversion by avoiding negative consequences. On the other hand, according to the study of (Adams and Ferreira, 2009), they show as a result that boards of directors with gender diversity to cover a gender quota, require stricter monitoring, which can be counterproductive for companies that they are already they are properly governed. However, diversity could also add value by bringing new ideas and different perspectives, but the more different the ideas and opinions of the directors, the more they could disagree and the more conflict there could be in the board (Adams and Ferreira, 2009) In general, there are many factors in addition to the difference of opinion, which would have to be analyzed, not only between people of the opposite gender, it should be considered that the opinions even between people of the same gender are different and therefore there is always the possibility of falling into disagreements and conflicts.

Although, today women continue to have difficulties accessing employment, and for those who are already working, access to managerial and senior management positions is difficult, that is, jobs in which decisions are required, which in turn most are dominated by men (ILO, 2021), improving working conditions and eliminating discrimination for women is a challenge (Núñez et al., 2020). According to Ara's study, (2021), in India women's work is undervalued in most sectors and occupations even when there is similarity in experience and education, and up to two thirds of the wage gap is attributed to sheer discrimination in the labor market, due to religious and caste issues. It is why, to determine the cause of the wage gaps, the existence of cultural elements specific to each country must be considered. In addition, there is the possibility that this situation will be different in the future, as boards of directors around the world are increasingly pressured to have greater gender diversity (Adams and Ferreira, 2009).

Currently the proportion of women in the industry has increased, and senior and middle management positions are no exception (Monteiro et al., 2021; UN, 2020; Calabrese et al., 2018; Furlotti et al., 2019; Birindelli et al., 2019), also unlike the male gender, women offer to be more sensitive to issues related to ethics and social responsibility (McGuinness et al., 2016); As suggested (Monteiro et al., 2019), the effect of women in managerial positions is positive in labor practices, treating employees with decent job.

In addition to the importance of considering cultural elements that could influence the gaps that exist to achieve decent work for all, free of employment discrimination, a very important factor to consider is the unequal distribution of unpaid work such as domestic work, care of child and other economic dependents (sick parents or relatives), since these activities fall mainly on women, which translates into many women working part-time (ILO, 2021). The empirical findings of (Ali, 2013) indicate that the gender gap in relation to the accessibility of obtain a full-time paid job increases in young women, while in middle-aged women their participation is mostly in unpaid jobs. According to the study by (Sarfratz et al., 2021), education represents an important factor for women to obtain greater job opportunities and with better income, being part of the formal labor market as collaborators or as an employer.

However, gender inequality around the world and causes the stagnation of social progress UN (2021), and the eradication of poverty is only possible through stable and well-paid jobs UN (2021b), which promotes economic growth sustained capable of driving progress and improvement, everyone's lifestyles.

In Mexico, it was communicated through bulletin No. 6900 of the Honorable Chamber of Deputies that the constitutional reform of parity has been achieved in everything, inviting the full exercise of parity in the Chamber of Deputies, so there will be 250 women in the LXV Legislature (Cámara de Diputados, 2021), however economic growth with a gender perspective is a task that needs to be addressed, since the wage gap between men and women ranges between 22% to 33% depending on the sector (Mendoza, 2021). In addition to achieving a gender quota by current legislation, the financial performance of women reflects positive results in companies, since profits improve by 27% and income obtained by 18%.

Therefore, education is an important part for women, because when they have a higher academic degree, they can access better jobs which allows them to have better income, in addition, companies benefit economically by including women in positions that entail decision making and improve. Its reputation with interest groups, however, in parliamentary groups, gender quotas have allowed women to be involved in positions that were previously dominated mostly by men, but in the industry the reality remains a disparity on issues gender issues in some sectors, where the highest paid positions are still led by men.

### **3. Methods**

This research is descriptive-analytical, the data collected were quantitative, obtained from the official website of the SIODS by INEGI, including for this study some indicators of SDG 5 and SDG 8. The data were collected online and were processed through mining of data and subsequently analyzed by means of a descriptive statistical analysis with Minitab software, evaluating the data using the Pearson's correlation coefficients and regression models.

#### **3.1 Hypothesis**

Currently there are gaps in equal employment opportunities due to gender, which prevents decent work for men and women in Mexican organizations.

### **4. Data Collection**

In Mexico, information has been collected that measures progress with respect to the SDGs through INEGI in its platform of the Information System of the Sustainable Development Goals, however, for the purposes of this study an exploratory analysis of the indicators has been considered 5n.1.1 Relationship between the labor income of male and female workers by education level [ILE] and 5n.1.4 Average real labor income [per hour] of employed persons by sex [ILS] of Goal 5n.1 Equitable and effective participation of women in political, economic and public life, with an emphasis on reducing gaps of all kinds, including wages, in the labor market, and the burden and domestic care, of SDG 5 Achieve gender equality and empower women all women and girls; and indicator 8.5.2 Unemployment rate, disaggregated by sex and age [TD] of Goal 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and women, people with disabilities, as well as equal remuneration

for work of equal value corresponding to SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all (SIODS, 2020).

How does the average real labor income per hour of employed persons by sex [ILS] influence the unemployment rate, disaggregated by sex and age [TD]? The unemployment rate, broken down by sex and age can be influenced by the average real labor income of employed persons according to sex, because according to the International Labor Organization the unequal distribution of unpaid work such as housework, childcare and Other economic dependents (sick parents or relatives) are activities carried out mainly by women, which results in many women working part-time (ILO, 2021).

How does the relationship between the labor income of male and female workers by level of education [ILE] influence the unemployment rate, disaggregated by sex and age [TD]? The unemployment rate, disaggregated by sex and age, may be influenced by the labor income of workers by level of education because, according to (Sarfraz et al., 2021), education represents an important factor for the benefit of the women to obtain greater job opportunities and with better income.

## 5. Results and Discussion

To achieve a decrease in gender inequality in the workplace, the main causes must be known, so a multivariate regression was carried out where [Y] represents income and [X] represents gender, education, population (disaggregated by sex) and years (point) obtaining the following results.

### 5.1 Numerical Results

To determine how the [ILS] influences the [TD], a normality test was performed to ensure that the method to be used was the most appropriate for the analysis of the available data, as shown in Figure 1 where the defined variables they have a normal distribution shown in the first table, in the second table the adjusted values that show significant symmetry are observed.

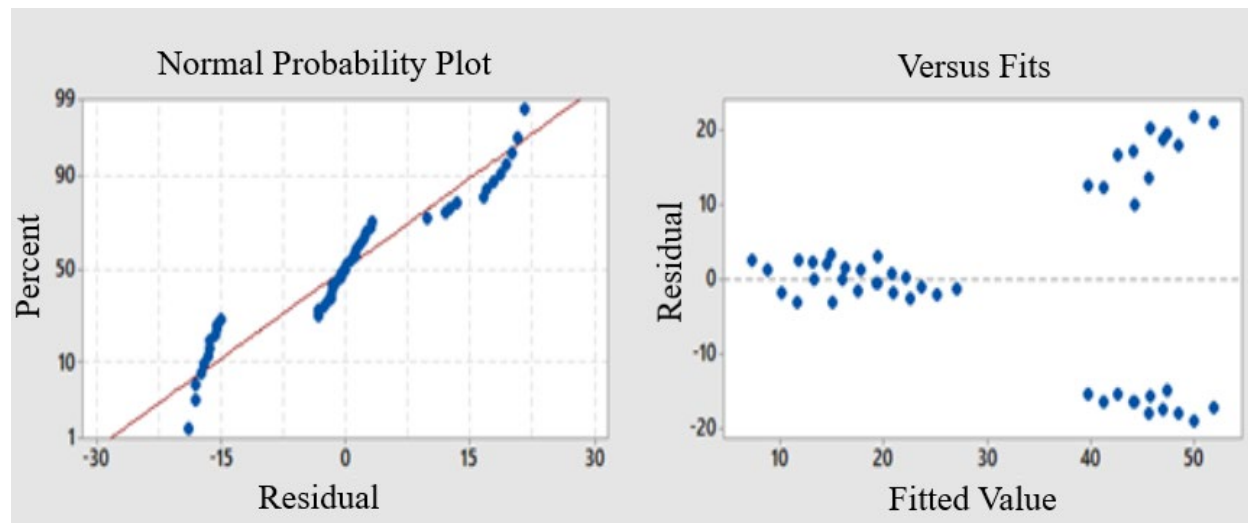


Figure 1. Residual plots for Income (first run)  
Own elaboration based on SIODS, (2020)

However, it is not recommended to conclude quickly just by looking at the graphs, that is why analyzing table 1.

Table 1. Regression Analysis: Income vs Year, Population, Gender, Studies (First run)

Regression Analysis							
Method							
Categorical predictor coding (1, 0)							
Analysis of Variance							
Source	DF	Seq SS	Contribution	Adj SS	Adj MS	F-Value	P-Value
Regression	5	10785.5	60.82%	10785.5	2157.1	13.04	0
Year	1	328.6	1.85%	321	320.96	1.94	0.171
Population	1	149.8	0.84%	0.9	0.89	0.01	0.942
Gender	1	82.7	0.47%	82.7	82.69	0.5	0.483
Studies	2	10224.4	57.66%	10224.4	5112.22	30.9	0
Error	42	6947.9	39.18%	6947.9	165.43		
Total	47	17733.4	100.00%				

Own elaboration based on SIODS, (2020)

As can be seen in table 1 the P-Value for the variables "year", "population" and "gender" are greater than ( $P > 0.005$ ) which indicates that the variables are not significant in the correlation carried out. In the column "contribution" the correlation coefficient R was 60.82%, highlighting the variable "studies" with a participation 57.66%, compared to 0.47% of the variable "gender". For this reason, trial 1 was rejected due to the low significance of the variables "year", "population" and "gender" in the study.

### 5.2 Proposed Improvements

With the results obtained in the previous exercise, the non-significant variables "year", "population" and "gender" were eliminated, obtaining as a result figure 2, in which table 1 indicates that the distribution continues to be normal and in the Table 2 of the same, the adjusted values do not show disproportionate variation with respect to that of figure 1, given that the population's levels of study can be identified, with people with more studies being the ones who receive higher labor income on average.

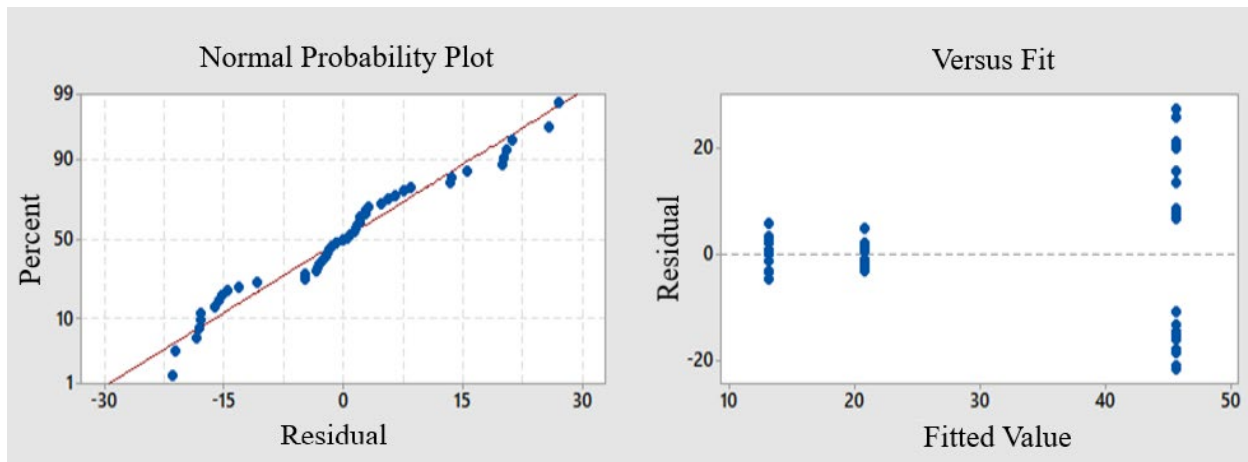


Figure 2. Residual plots for Income (second run)  
 Own elaboration based on SIODS, (2020)

However, it is still not advisable to conclude only by looking at the graphs, that is why analyzing and eliminating the non-significant values results in the following regression equation, see equation 1.

$$\text{Income} = 20.84 + 0.0 \text{ Studies\_Basic} + 24.87 \text{ Studies\_High School} - 7.63 \text{ Studies\_Preschool or less}$$

Equation 1. Regression Equation for Income

Figure 3 shows that the variables “population” and “year” are not significant for decision-making in the model, in contrast to the variable “studies”, which represents about 58% of significance.

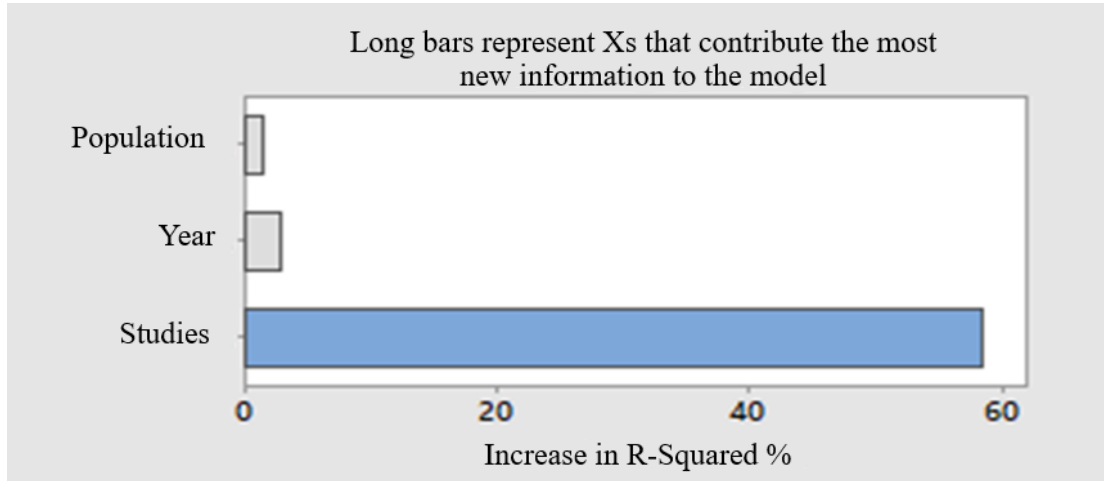


Figure 3. Incremental Impact of X Variables  
 Own elaboration based on SIODS, (2020)

In figure 4, the average income by level of studies is more favorable for people who attended upper secondary level, compared to those who attended basic or preschool studies, denoting that regardless of gender, studies are more important in labor matters as Circumstances of higher income perception and, therefore, obtain better working conditions, resulting in a greater probability of obtaining a decent job.

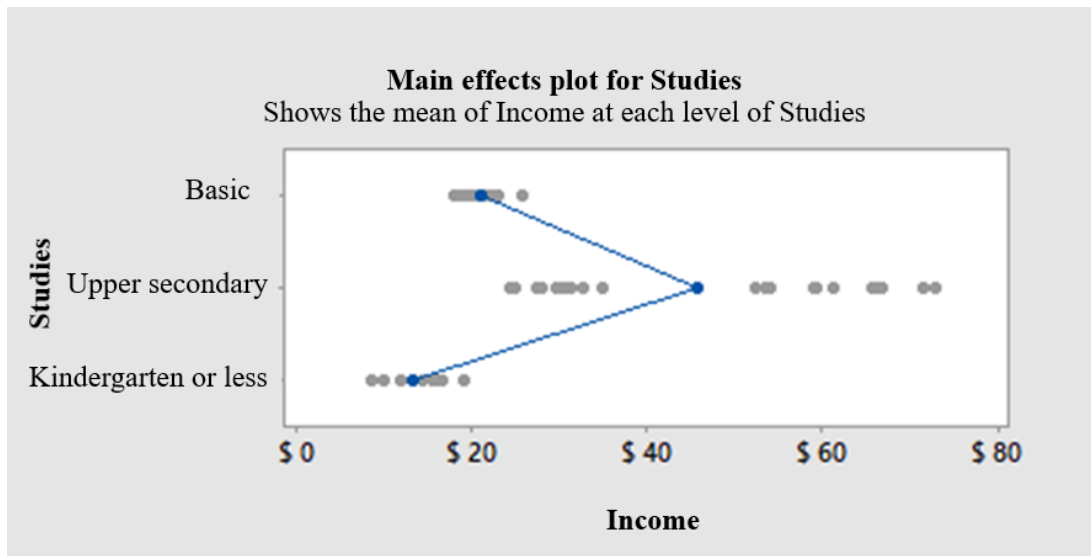


Figure 4. Main effects plot for Studies  
 Own elaboration based on SIODS, (2020)

### 5.3 Validation

The analysis of the study in question was successful, figure 5 validates it, since it indicates that there is a correlation between the variable Income (Y) and Studies (X), so it is statistically significant, and there is also a 57.66% precision in the proposed model.

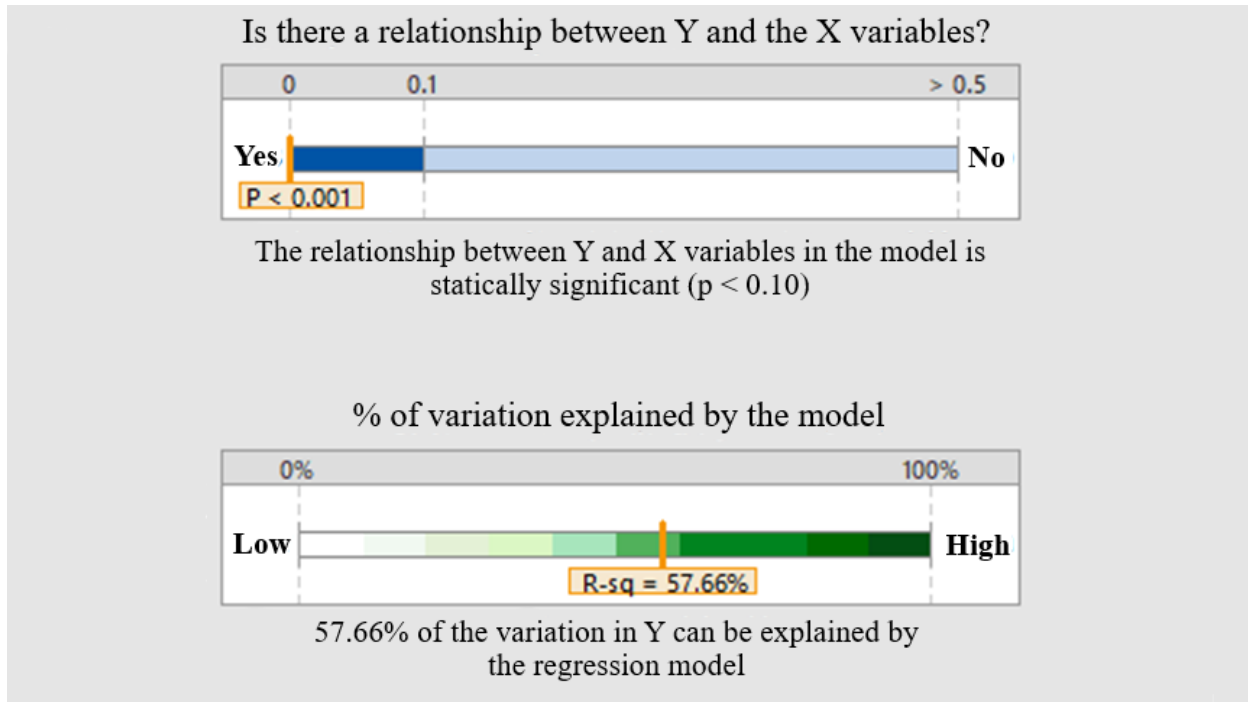


Figure 5. Existing correlation of Income (Y) with Studies (X)  
 Own elaboration based on SIODS, (2020)

Statistically, income is not significantly related to gender, there is barely a salary difference 0.25% on average, considering that both sexes have the same level of studies (upper secondary level study) as shown in the table 2, therefore that the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2. Regression Equations for Gender and Studies

Regression Equation		
Gender	Studies	
Men	Basic	Income = 1584 - 0.775 Year - 0.000001 Population
Men	Upper secondary	Income = 1608 - 0.775 Year - 0.000001 Population
Men	Kindergarten or less	Income = 1576 - 0.775 Year - 0.000001 Population
Women	Basic	Income = 1579 - 0.775 Year - 0.000001 Population
Women	Upper secondary	Income = 1604 - 0.775 Year - 0.000001 Population
Women	Kindergarten or less	Income = 1571 - 0.775 Year - 0.000001 Population

Own elaboration based on SIODS, (2020)

The results contrast in reality, and according to the figures recorded in the databases consulted, gender does not significantly influence decent work issues and decision-making positions, and this is due to some extent to the degree of bias that may exist and the lack of data that were not found in the registered figures, such as undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral academic degrees, however as we mention, real problem persists terms of women's access to leadership positions, there are limitations to enter the job market and advance your career.

## 6. Conclusion

The objective of providing updated information on the existing gap in Mexico in terms of decent work and gender issues was achieved, with this study the relationship between gender equality in relation to decent work was explored, and it was determined that statistically Gender does not have a significant influence on labor issues, what really influences both genders is the level of studies, the higher the level of studies, the greater the opportunity to receive better remuneration and therefore, more opportunities to have decent job, in the that human rights are respected and there is access to social security, there is an opportunity for job growth and they contribute to the achievement of SDG 8, generating economic growth and greater progress of society in Mexico.

In fact, the figures in national reports do not express the reality of salaries in Mexico or the occupation of vacancies in companies, the reason being a certain degree of bias that occurs when reporting national figures, it may be because state agencies have sought to comply with the gender quota, however a real problem persists in terms women's access to leadership positions, there are limitations to enter the job market and advance in their career.

This study could guide future research related to Mexico on gender equality and decent work, as the information is established in accordance with the sustainable development indicators of the 2030 agenda, specifically SDG 5 Gender Equality and SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth.

### 6.1 Recommendations

Due to the lack of analysis of other elements that can influence gender equality with respect to the workplace, it is recommended to expand the research considering more variables that influence women for the achievement of SDG 5 and SDG 8, such as cultural aspects, in different sectors.

### 6.2 Limitation

Statistical information for conducting a more in-depth study is not available in the databases analyzed and the information available on the variables analyzed has a certain degree of bias.

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## Biographies

**Brenda E. Moreno-Garduño** has a degree in Business Administration and Entrepreneurial Development from ESCA UST-IPN. Currently, she is student of Master in Business Administration for Sustainability at the ESCA UST IPN. Her experience is focus on business consultant; she has participated in projects with SMEs. In addition, she has participated in multiple courses and workshops that complement her academic and work life. She participates as a research fellow and collaborates in the publication of chapters of books about innovation and sustainability.

**Gabriela G. Escobedo-Guerrero** is a Researcher and Associate Professor at Instituto Politécnico Nacional, she has a degree in Industrial Administration at UPIICSA, a Master in Policy and Management in Technological Change from CIECAS and holds a Ph.D. in Administrative Sciences from ESCA UST-IPN; she has held several positions of Planning and Organization, in addition, Ph.D. Gabriela has been a member of the National Research System of CONACyT. She coordinated the Environmental Leadership project of ESCA-UST achieving the Honorable Mention.

She has also published two books about sustainability and innovation, and she was the coordinator of the Master's program in Business Administration for Sustainability, during her tenure, the program achieved one of the top five MBAs in Mexico (rating awarded by the magazine "Expansión"). Her research interests include Sustainable Development and Technological Innovation to promote its application in Mexican companies; in addition to proposing a viable model for a responsible society with a view to a sustainable future.

**Georgette del Pilar Pavía-González** is a Researcher and Associate Professor at Instituto Politécnico Nacional, she is a Public Accountant from ESCA ST - IPN, she obtained a Master of Science degree with a specialty in Administration and Development of Education, with Honorable Mention, being awarded by the highest decoration of the IPN, the Lázaro Cárdenas medal. She has a Master's Degree in Literature and Literary Creation from the Casa Lamm Culture Center, she has Ph.D from CEAAMER; She is a specialist in Educational Policy and Management from FLACSO, she has a degree in Law; Specialist in Teaching the History of Mexico from UNADM and Specialist in Teaching Spanish as a Foreign Language from (UNAM). Dr. Pavía has been head of the Department of Evaluation and Academic Follow-up and Coordinator of the Specialization in Management of Educational Institutions of the ESCA ST IPN; she is professor of the six academic programs, postgraduate professor in the two academic programs of educational management and the one for sustainability at ESCA UST; and she is a professor of the bachelor's degree in Pedagogy, the master's degrees: in Educational Sciences and Development of Management Skills; as well as in the Doctorate in Education of CEAAMER. Dr. Pavía belongs to the Lines of Knowledge Generation and Application: Management leadership and training of executives for institutional development in knowledge societies; in the sub-lines: Training of managers and leaders and Management Ethics and Education for sustainability; and in that of Innovation and Technological Development for Sustainability.

**Antonio Uribe-Méndez** has a degree in Economics, graduated from the Technological and Higher Studies Institute from Monterrey, Campus Estado de México, with graduates in Project Administration and Management Skills in the same Institute. He has a Master's degree in Sciences in Business Administration with Honorable Mention by the IPN, ESCA UST. Researcher and teacher, he has produced articles for COLPARMEX, and his field of research is aimed at innovation and sustainability. For 18 years he has worked in companies of international stature in various areas such as finance, sales, operations and supply chain; occupies positions management at the subsidiary and regional level in Latin America and Canada. He has been a member of the editorial and sustainability.

**Victor M. Maldonado-Benitez** graduated as Industrial Engineer from UPIICSA – IPN, he has two technical careers in Computer Science and Administration; in the field of research has participated in social projects, so it has a global vision of organizations. Also, he has among its main certifications Agile Methodologies of SCRUM and Lean Six Sigma Green Belt project management.