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GENDER INEQUALITY AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN MOROCCO

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Abstract - With the aim of building a modern, inclusive, and competitive territory, Morocco has implemented significant sectoral and institutional reforms. However, one of the remaining challenges is maintaining a sustained level of growth and job creation. In this regard, the role played by women, as both agents and beneficiaries of development, is crucial. This issue, linked to the relationship between gender inequality and economic growth, is highly relevant to national and international discussions, as the study of this connection can be associated with several factors such as human capital, the allocation of factors of production, marginal propensities to save, and so on. To this end, it is important to understand the extent to which a decline in gender inequalities could help meet this challenge. To answer this question, it is necessary, first of all, to define the different facets of these inequalities in Morocco. In this sense, this article proposes to study whether gender inequalities in education (literacy), employment and wages, and per capita income, explain the economic growth observed in Morocco.

Keywords - Gender Inequality, Economic Growth, Morocco

I. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this article is to present an attempt to model a per capita economic growth in Morocco based on indicators of inequality over time. The first section reviews priorresearch on the subject, as well as the conceptual and theoretical framework, describing the explanatory and dependent variables. The second section addresses the methodology adopted in analyzing the effects of gender inequality on economic growth, presenting a descriptive analysis of the data and the estimation of the models. The data used comes from the 2014 General Population Census database. A longitudinal study will be conducted on this data. Finally, the last section presents the main indicative bibliographic references.

Regarding the current state of research on gender inequality and economic growth, it is important to distinguish between studies focusing on gender equality, public policies, and economic growth. This study presents an overview of the relationship between inequality and growth, particularly the modernization of analytical tools for modeling in order to quantify women's contribution to Moroccan national wealth. Its objectives are to:

- Define the disparities in gender relations in terms of access to factors of production (income, employment, health, education, infrastructure, etc.);
- Analyze the main factors of gender inequality in terms of access to economic opportunities;
- Conduct a gender-based assessment of the efforts undertaken by public authorities to strengthen the national legal, legislative, regulatory, and institutional framework for promoting gender equality;
- Analyze the quantitative impact of several pro-gender policy scenarios on gender inequality and economic growth in Morocco.
- This study addresses gender inequality in terms of access to economic activity and employment, as well as unemployment. The analysis focuses on the following variables:
- Inequalities in entrepreneurship and self-employment, wages, and participation in the informal and cooperative sectors.
- Inequalities in access to basic infrastructure (drinking water, electricity, housing, and transportation), as well as access to healthcare, education, higher education, and vocational training.

One limitation of this study is the absence of data from the 2006/2007 National Household Consumption and Expenditure Survey (ENCDM) on the model's endogenous variable, namely women's participation in the labor market. Therefore, this work relies solely on data from the 2000/2001 ENCDM.

II. REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

According to Dollar and Gatti (1999), religious preferences, regional factors, and civil liberties can, in most cases, explain the endogenous nature of gender inequalities. The econometric model in this

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study shows that economic growth is negatively influenced by gender inequalities in education. This can be supported by the study's findings, which suggest that a high level of per capita income can lead to improvements in gender inequalities in various ways, for example, by creating a better environment for economic growth through increased school enrollment rates for girls, particularly in middle-income countries.

Similarly, the econometric analysis by Jutting et al. (2008) suggests a negative correlation between gender inequalities and women's participation in the labor force. Based on a comparison of country data, this study shows that inequalities in social institutions are particularly linked to countries with low female literacy rates. However, they are less strongly correlated with GDP per capita.

Another study empirically assesses the impact on growth using panel data from African and Arab countries and employing the Arellano-Bond estimation method. This impact is demonstrated based on two primary indicators. The first relates to the ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education, and the second is the literacy ratio of women aged 15 to 24 compared to men in the same age group.

The results showed that, in more open economies, economic growth can be positively influenced by gender inequalities in literacy. This can be explained by trade, which generates growth and is also linked to significant inequalities. However, other results show that gender inequalities in literacy have a significant negative impact on economic growth.

Klassen (1999) studied how economic growth and development can be slowed down by gender inequalities in education and employment, based on regressions across a panel of countries. The results reveal that, in education, gender inequalities directly influence economic growth, through the decrease of the average quality of human capital, and indirectly through gender inequalities in investment and population growth. This impact is more pronounced in Sub-Saharan Africa. Regarding employment in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, the results related to gender inequalities show that growth is reduced by 3% compared to East Asia.

Another study reveals the existing link between women's autonomy and family well-being (Jim Sallee, 2000), using econometric analysis (Ordinary Least Squares and Probit model). This link is negative because the fertility rate declines among women with a degree of autonomy, leading to a drop in population growth.

In industrialized countries, the results of Baten's (2004) study demonstrated the influence of gender inequality on economic growth by using three inequality indicators to construct the model: life expectancy, labor force, and education. Economic growth is strongly and negatively influenced by gender inequality in education. High per capita income reflects lower levels of inequality.

The findings of this study were applied to the case of Pakistan (Zahid et al., 2010). The indicators chosen for the error correction model regress the real GDP per capita growth rate on labor force growth, investment, the country's openness to trade, and a composite index of gender inequality.
The results show that gender inequality has a negative impact on economic growth, unlike labor force growth, investment, and trade openness. These variables showed statistically significant results.

In efficiency theory, the goal is to rationalize spending and reduce social programs, using structural adjustment programs (SAPs), to ensure economic growth and integration in developing countries. Women's role in development remains invisible. Their contribution is considered a burden, leading to increased poverty.

The "gender and development" approach shows that the problem is not related to women themselves, but to inequalities in access to resources.

III. PROPOSED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND EXPECTED RESULTS

This section presents the methodology adopted for analyzing gender panel data. First, the selection criteria are outlined, followed by a list of the indicators deemed relevant. At the end, the analytical methods used to compile these variables are presented.

3.1 Data and Methodological Approach

Data

The data used comes from the 2014 General Population Census database. The analysis focuses on the interaction between gender and development. It is therefore a panel data study.

3.2 Methodological Approach

The methodology adopted in this document is essentially econometric modeling using panel data. This involves selecting relevant indicators. Some

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variables can be measured using multiple indicators. The data is based on development indicators in the following areas: Education, Socio-political, Health, Employment, International Trade, and Wealth Creation. The choice of variables selected for the study is based on a review of the literature on the subject. This study aims to identify the effect of gender disparities on the real GDP per capita growth rate, based on the following variables:

Explanatory variables: Gender inequalities in:

• Education: girls' school enrollment rate.
• Literacy.
• Income per capita.
• Women's life expectancy.
• Female labor force participation rate.

Dependent variable: Economic growth.

The objective of this study is to identify the impact of gender disparities on Morocco's economic development. To this end, a dynamic panel model can be estimated using the generalized method of moments of Arellano and Bond (1992) to control for the endogeneity of gender indicators.

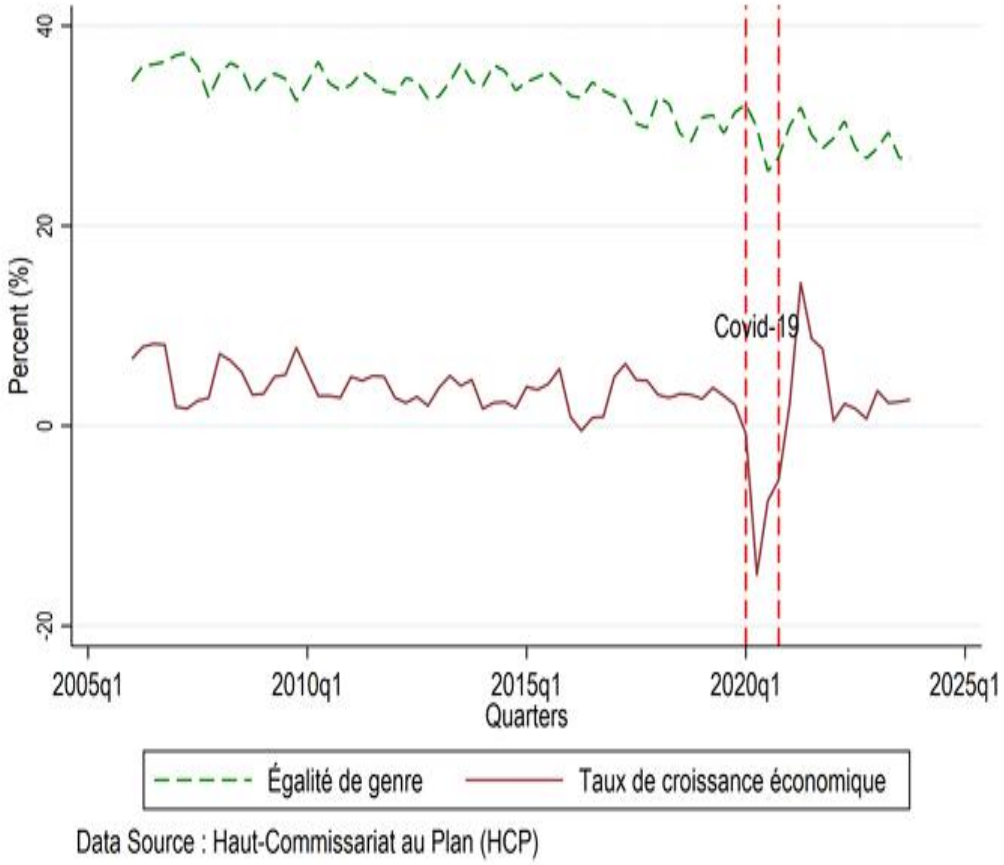


Figure 1: Evolution of gender equality and growth rates

This figure represents a downward trend in the female participation rate. This constitutes a significant obstacle to economic growth and also an equality issue.
Despite Morocco's socio-economic progress, the labor market shows the active participation of only one in five Moroccan women. This is illustrated in the following graph:

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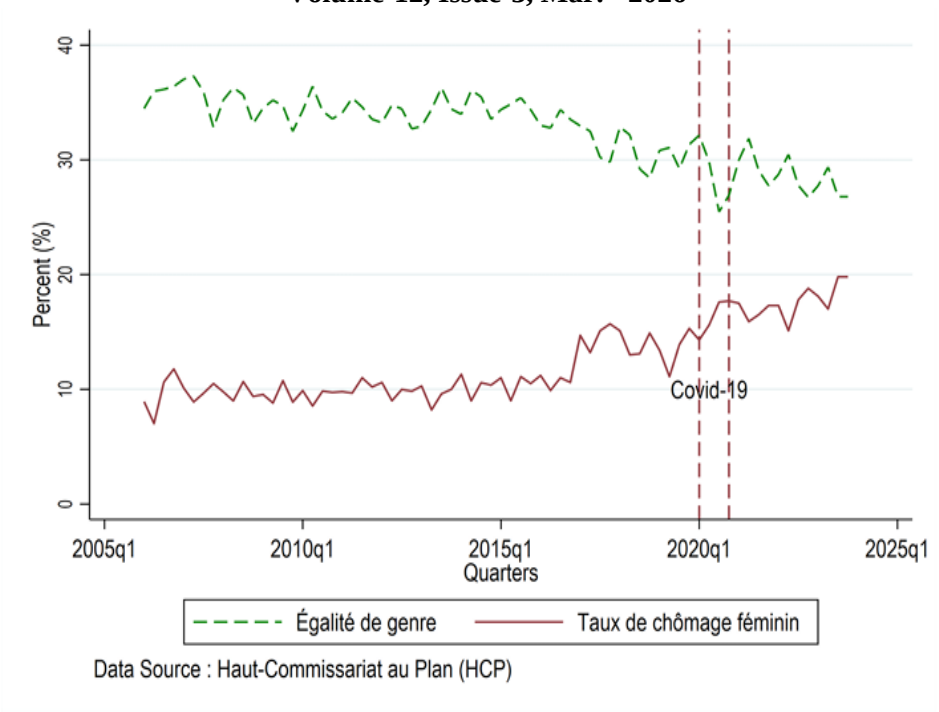
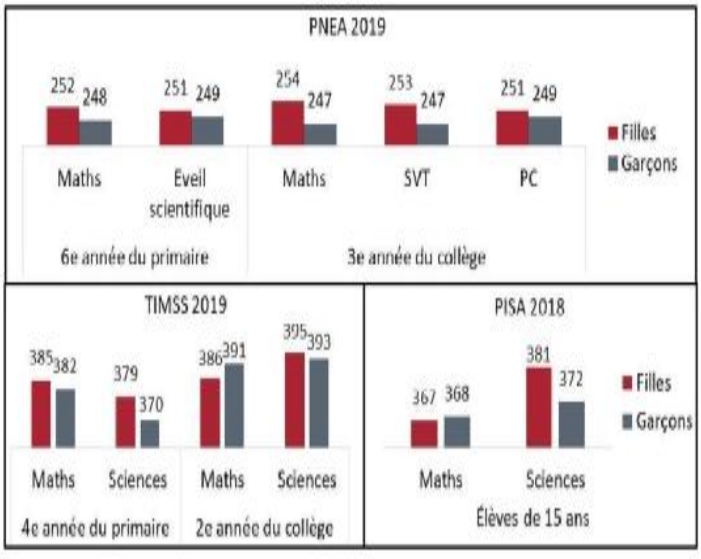


Figure 2: The evolution of gender equality and the female unemployment rate

Regarding student performance, statistics show that girls tend to gravitate towards languages rather than mathematics (Figure 3).



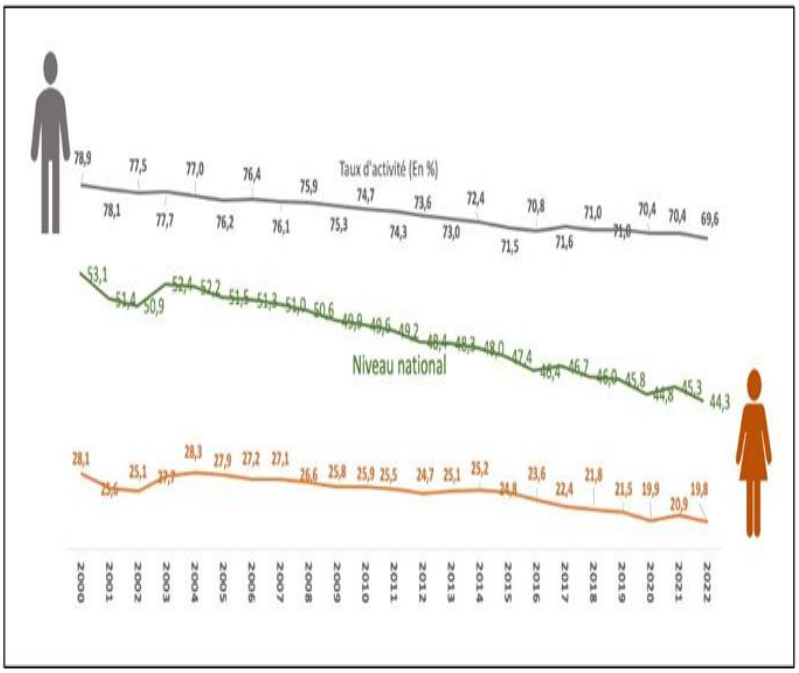
Source : Données PNEA 2019, PISA 2018 et PIRLS 2021[47] INE, CSFRS

Figure 3: Average student scores in mathematics and science, by gender

Nationally, 1.5 million young people aged 15 to 24 are outside the labor market. Nearly 72.8% are women, of whom 68.2% have a diploma and 40.6% are married (HCP, 2023).

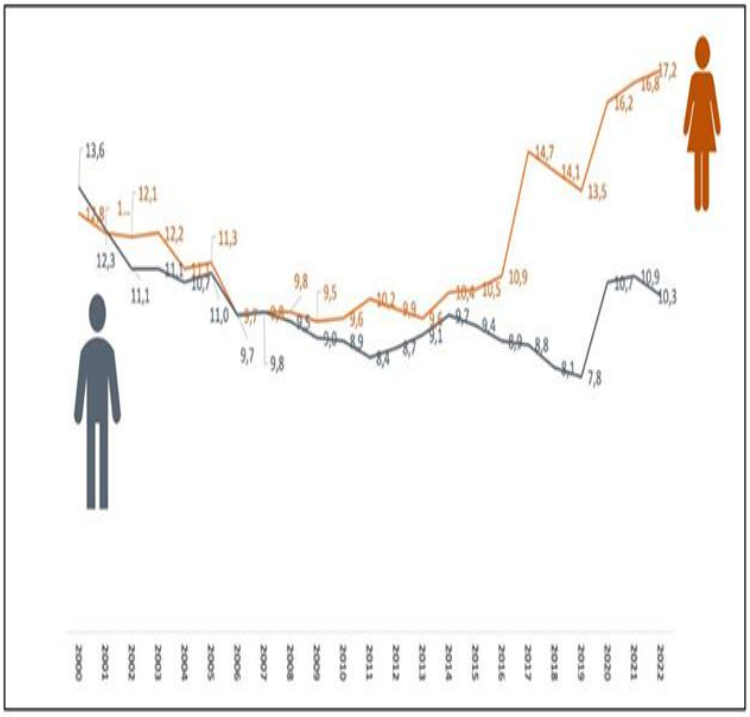
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Source : Elaboré par les auteurs (à partir des données de l'Enquête emploi, HCP)

Figure 4: Evolution of the activity rate by gender



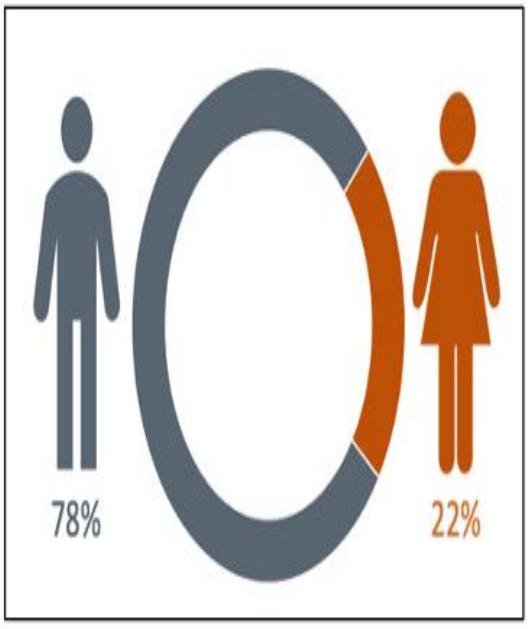
Source : Elaboré par les auteurs (à partir des données de l'Enquête emploi, HCP)

Figure 5: Evolution of the unemployment rate by gender in %

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Since the early 2000, female unemployment has been higher than male unemployment. According to the HCP (High Commission for Planning), in 2022, the female unemployment rate was 17.2%, compared to 10.3% for men. This highlights the problem of professional integration for working women in Morocco (Figure 5).



Source : Enquête nationale sur le profil entrepreneurial du Maroc (BAD, MEF, 2023)

Figure 6: Entrepreneurship, weight by gender (18 years and over in %)

Over the past decade, several programs have been implemented to stimulate the social and solidarity economy. Despite these measures, informal entrepreneurship represents 80% of women's businesses, while subsistence entrepreneurship accounts for 47%. This can be explained by several factors:

- Institutional constraints
- Difficulty accessing financing
- Lack of support tailored to the specific needs of women entrepreneurs (EINA-BAD, MEF, 2023)

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This article examined the interaction between gender inequality and economic growth in Morocco, through a review of empirical literature and a presentation of the methodology adopted by several studies that had the same research objective.

Most of this research shows that economic growth has a positive impact on gender equality. This involves implementing important measures such as:

- Eliminating legal barriers
- Expanding access to employment
- Reducing the opportunity cost for women

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