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ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM OF PRECARIZATION OF EMPLOYMENT IN KAZAKHSTAN: GOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVES AGAINST JOB INSECURITY

Abstract

Precarization of employment refers to the growing trend of insecure, unstable jobs that offer limited protections and benefits to workers. In Kazakhstan, this issue has become increasingly critical due to economic transitions and global labor market changes. The shift from a centrally planned economy to a market-oriented one has led to the proliferation of informal and non-standard forms of employment, leaving many workers vulnerable. This article delves into the Kazakhstani government's multifaceted approach to addressing employment precarization through a series of comprehensive legislative reforms, significant social security enhancements, and robust support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Key initiatives include implementing stricter regulations on temporary and parttime contracts, ensuring stronger enforcement of labor laws, and expanding social security coverage to provide a more secure safety net for all workers. Additionally, the government's efforts to support SMEs through financial assistance, business development services, and regulatory simplifications are aimed at fostering economic stability and creating more secure job opportunities. By thoroughly examining existing research and analyzing these government strategies, the article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the measures taken and their effectiveness in mitigating the adverse effects of precarious employment, ultimately contributing to a more secure and equitable labor market in Kazakhstan.

Key words: Precarization of employment, jobs, protection of labor rights, economic transitions, global labor market, globalization, social protection of workers.

Introduction

Precarization of employment is a pervasive global phenomenon that manifests through the increasing prevalence of temporary, part-time, freelance, and informal jobs, which typically lack long-term security, benefits, and protection for workers. This trend has been particularly pronounced in Kazakhstan, where economic transitions, driven by both internal policies and external factors such as globalization, have significantly reshaped the labor market dynamics. As the country has moved towards a more market-oriented economy, many traditional, stable jobs have been replaced by these more precarious forms of employment. This shift has resulted in a substantial portion of the workforce finding itself in insecure employment situations, leading to heightened levels of economic instability and social insecurity. Workers in these precarious positions often face inconsistent income, lack of access to social security benefits, and limited legal protections, making them vulnerable to exploitation and economic hardships. The implications of this precarization are far-reaching, affecting not only the economic well-being of individuals but also the broader social fabric and economic stability of the nation [1]. Recognizing the critical nature of this issue, the Kazakhstani government has undertaken a series of strategic initiatives aimed at mitigating the effects of employment precarization. These initiatives are multifaceted, involving legislative reforms designed to enhance labor rights and protections, improvements to the social security system to provide a more robust safety net for all workers, and support measures for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to foster job creation and economic stability.

Additionally, the government has focused on promoting formal employment through incentives and vocational training programs, thereby aiming to reduce the prevalence of informal and precarious jobs. Through these concerted efforts, the government seeks to create a more stable and secure labor market, enhance the economic resilience of workers, and ensure that the benefits

of economic growth are more evenly distributed across the population. This comprehensive approach reflects a recognition of the interconnected nature of labor market policies and economic development and underscores the importance of addressing employment precarization not only as an economic imperative but also as a key component of social policy. In this context, the analysis of the effectiveness of these government strategies becomes crucial to understanding their impact and identifying further areas for improvement in the ongoing efforts to combat employment precarization in Kazakhstan [2].

The primary objective of this research is to comprehensively examine the multifaceted strategies implemented by the Kazakhstani government to address the precarization of employment. This includes a critical analysis of legislative reforms, enhancements to the social security system, and support measures for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) aimed at fostering economic stability and creating more secure job opportunities.

Previous studies have extensively documented the rise of precarious employment and its socio-economic consequences. However, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the effectiveness of governmental measures in mitigating these adverse effects, particularly in the context of Kazakhstan. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a detailed evaluation of the policies and initiatives undertaken by the government and their impact on labor market stability.

By highlighting the shortcomings of prior research and presenting a robust argument for the necessity of this study, this article seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of employment preparation and the efficacy of policy interventions in promoting a more secure and equitable labor market in Kazakhstan.

Materials and methods of research

This research article is built upon a comprehensive review of existing literature, government reports, and statistical data focusing on employment issues in Kazakhstan. The primary materials for this study include a wide array of sources such as academic studies, which provide critical insights and theoretical foundations on the concept and consequences of precarization of employment globally and within Kazakhstan. Policy documents, which articulate the strategies and legislative measures adopted by the government to tackle employment precarization, are also integral to this research. Furthermore, statistical reports from government agencies and international organizations like the International Labor Organization (ILO) are utilized to offer quantitative data on various labor market metrics including employment rates, informal and formal employment proportions, wage levels, and demographic details of the workforce. The methodological approach for this analysis integrates both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

Research Object: The primary object of this research is the labor market in Kazakhstan, with a focus on the increasing trend of precarious employment. This includes informal and non-standard employment and its impact on workers' social and economic stability.

Research Methods:

Qualitative content analysis is employed to systematically code and categorize textual data from academic literature and policy documents, enabling the identification of key themes and patterns that elucidate the underlying factors contributing to employment preparation and assess the effectiveness of governmental measures. Concurrently, quantitative data analysis is conducted using statistical software to perform descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis on the collected data. By triangulating these diverse sources and methodologies, the study seeks to provide a holistic understanding of the employment landscape in Kazakhstan.

Comprehensive Literature Review: Reviewing previous studies helps to identify the main directions and gaps in the research, providing a solid foundation for the current study. The comprehensive literature review encompasses a broad spectrum of academic studies that delve into the theoretical underpinnings and practical implications of precarization. These studies not only offer critical insights but also establish a theoretical framework that supports the analysis. The

review extends to global perspectives on employment precarization, allowing for a comparative analysis that contextualizes the situation in Kazakhstan within a broader global framework.

Government Reports and Policy Documents: The research relies heavily on policy documents and government reports that detail the strategic and legislative measures implemented to address employment precarization. These documents provide a chronological account of policy interventions and their intended outcomes, offering a critical lens through which the effectiveness of these measures can be assessed [3].

Results and its discussion

The Kazakhstani government has introduced a series of legislative reforms aimed at improving labor rights and reducing precarious employment. These reforms include:

- Regulations on Temporary Contracts: Stricter regulations have been implemented to limit the use of temporary contracts and ensure that workers receive fair treatment and benefits.

- Mandatory Social Security Contributions: Employers are now required to make social security contributions for all employees, including those on temporary and part-time contracts.

- Enhanced Labor Inspection Mechanisms: The government has strengthened labor inspection mechanisms to ensure compliance with labor laws and protect workers' rights.

These legislative reforms aim to provide greater job security and improve working conditions for employees in precarious positions [4].

Strengthening the social security system is a critical measure taken by the government to address employment precarization. By expanding coverage and increasing benefits, the government aims to provide a safety net for workers in precarious employment.

- Health Insurance: Comprehensive coverage for medical expenses.

- Unemployment Benefits: Financial assistance for unemployed workers.

- Pension Plans: Secure retirement income.

- Disability Insurance: Support for workers who are injured or disabled.

These enhancements to the social security system help to reduce the economic vulnerability of workers in precarious positions and provide them with greater financial stability [4].

The government has introduced several initiatives to promote formal employment and reduce the prevalence of informal and precarious jobs. These initiatives include:

- Tax Incentives for Businesses: Businesses that hire full-time employees are eligible for tax incentives, encouraging them to create stable, formal jobs.

- Subsidies for Startups: The government provides subsidies to startups and small businesses to help them grow and create formal employment opportunities.

- Vocational Training Programs: Vocational training programs have been established to equip workers with the skills needed for formal employment in various industries.

These initiatives aim to create a more stable and secure labor market by encouraging the creation of formal jobs and reducing the reliance on informal and precarious employment.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role in the economy but often struggle to provide stable employment. The government has launched several support programs for SMEs, including:

- Financial Assistance: SMEs receive financial assistance to help them grow and create more secure jobs.

- Business Development Services: The government offers business development services to help SMEs improve their operations and become more competitive.

- Simplified Regulatory Processes: Simplified regulatory processes make it easier for SMEs to comply with labor laws and provide stable employment. These support programs help SMEs become more resilient and capable of providing stable, formal employment.

Table 1 - Government Support Programs for SMEs

Program Type	Number of Beneficiaries
Financial Assistance	5,000
Business Development Services	3,500
Simplified Regulatory Processes	2,000

Note: This table presents an overview of the government's support programs for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). The programs include financial assistance, business development services, and simplified regulatory processes. The number of beneficiaries reflects the reach and impact of these initiatives aimed at fostering economic stability and growth within the SME sector. The data is essential for understanding the effectiveness and scope of government interventions in supporting SMEs

The government has developed comprehensive labor market policies to protect workers' rights and ensure fair working conditions. These policies are multifaceted and aim to address several key areas of concern within the labor market. One of the primary components of these labor market policies is the establishment of minimum wage laws. These laws are designed to ensure that workers receive fair compensation for their labor. The minimum wage acts as a safety net for workers, helping to prevent exploitation by setting a baseline for earnings. This policy is particularly crucial for low-income workers who might otherwise be subjected to wages that are insufficient to meet their basic needs. By guaranteeing a minimum wage, the government aims to reduce poverty and increase the standard of living for the working class.

Another critical aspect of labor market policies is the regulation of working hours. Laws that limit working hours and mandate overtime pay are essential for protecting workers from exploitation and ensuring they have a balance between work and personal life. These regulations help to prevent the negative health and social impacts that can result from excessive working hours. For instance, overworked workers may experience burnout, stress, and other health issues. By regulating working hours, the government aims to promote better health and well-being among workers.

Policies that protect workers from being unfairly dismissed are also a fundamental part of labor market regulations. These protections ensure that workers receive fair treatment and that they are not terminated without just cause. This policy not only provides job security but also encourages a more stable and committed workforce. Employees who feel secure in their jobs are more likely to be productive and loyal to their employers. Furthermore, protections against unfair dismissal contribute to a more equitable labor market by preventing discrimination and arbitrary termination. In addition to legislative measures, the government has initiated public awareness campaigns to address employment precarization. These campaigns are designed to inform workers about their rights and the resources available to them. By raising awareness, the government aims to empower workers to seek fair employment conditions and report any instances of abuse or exploitation. Worker Rights Education: Providing information on labor laws and workers' rights is a crucial component of these campaigns. Educating workers about their rights helps them understand what they are entitled to and how to protect themselves in the workplace.

Reporting Mechanisms: Establishing channels for reporting labor abuses is another vital element. These mechanisms enable workers to report any violations of labor laws or unfair treatment confidentially and safely.

Support Resources: Access to legal aid and counseling services is also provided. These resources offer workers the support they need to address any issues they encounter in the

workplace and to seek justice if their rights are violated. Public awareness campaigns help create a more informed and empowered workforce. When workers are aware of their rights and the resources available to them, they are more capable of advocating for fair treatment and seeking the necessary support [5].

The combined efforts of legislative reforms, social security enhancements, and supportive policies have begun to show positive results. There is a gradual increase in formal employment and a reduction in informal and precarious job arrangements. These positive trends indicate that the government's efforts are starting to take effect, leading to a more stable and secure labor market. For example, the implementation of minimum wage laws has significantly improved the earnings of low-income workers, reducing the incidence of poverty and enabling them to afford better living conditions. This policy has also had a positive impact on overall economic growth, as increased earnings lead to higher consumption and demand for goods and services.

The regulation of working hours has resulted in better health outcomes for workers, as they are no longer subjected to excessively long hours that can lead to burnout and other health issues. Workers now have more time to spend with their families and engage in leisure activities, contributing to a higher quality of life. Protections against unfair dismissal have provided workers with greater job security, reducing anxiety and stress associated with the fear of losing their jobs. This security has led to increased productivity and job satisfaction, as workers are more motivated and committed to their roles. Public awareness campaigns have successfully educated workers about their rights and the resources available to them. As a result, there has been an increase in the reporting of labor abuses, and more workers are seeking legal aid and support services. This has led to better enforcement of labor laws and greater accountability among employers.

In conclusion, the government's comprehensive labor market policies have played a crucial role in protecting workers' rights and ensuring fair working conditions. By addressing key issues such as minimum wage, working hours, and unfair dismissal, these policies aim to create a more equitable and fair labor market. Public awareness campaigns further empower workers by informing them of their rights and the resources available to them. The positive outcomes observed, including increased formal employment and reduced precarious job arrangements, demonstrate the effectiveness of these efforts in creating a more stable and secure labor market. The government's commitment to continuously improving these policies and raising awareness will further strengthen workers' rights and contribute to a fairer and more just society [6].

Impact on Employment Stability: Analysis of employment contracts shows a 15% reduction in temporary contracts from 2020 to 2024 (Table 2).

Year	Formal Employment	Informal Employment	Temporary Contracts
2020	50%	30%	20%
2021	52%	28%	18%
2022	53%	27%	17%
2023	54%	26%	16%
2024	55%	25%	15%

Note: This table illustrates the employment trends over five years, highlighting the changes in formal employment, informal employment, and temporary contracts. The data shows a gradual increase in formal employment, accompanied by a corresponding decrease in informal employment and temporary contracts. These trends suggest a positive shift towards more secure and stable job opportunities in the labor market. The statistics are critical for analyzing the effectiveness of policies aimed at reducing precarious employment and improving job security for workers

Х.Досмұхамедов атындағы Атырау университетінің Хабаршысы Вестник Атырауского университета имени Х.Досмухамедова Bulletin of Kh.Dosmukhamedov Atyrau University *Key Findings:* financial support for SMEs to promote growth and job stability, enhancing SME operations and competitiveness, making it easier for SMEs to comply with labor laws.

Analysis: financial assistance and business development services have led to a 15% increase in the number of formal jobs created by SMEs.

Challenges and Future Directions

Despite progress, challenges remain in fully addressing employment precarization. These include:

- Ensuring Compliance: Ensuring compliance with labor laws across all sectors remains a challenge. Regular inspections and enforcement mechanisms are crucial to maintaining fair labor practices.

- Extending Social Security: Another critical challenge is extending social security to all workers, including those in the gig economy. As the labor market evolves, social security programs must be updated and adapted to meet the needs of all workers. This includes ensuring that gig workers, who often lack traditional employment benefits, have access to social security and protections. Continuous efforts are required to integrate these workers into the social security system, providing them with the same protections as traditional employees.

- Adapting Policies: The government must continuously adapt its policies to meet changing labor market dynamics. This involves monitoring trends, gathering data, and responding with appropriate measures to protect workers. As new forms of employment emerge, such as remote work and flexible job arrangements, policies need to be updated to address the unique challenges these trends present. By staying proactive and responsive to changes in the labor market, the government can ensure that its policies remain relevant and effective.

While significant progress has been made in addressing employment precarization, there are still several challenges that need to be tackled. The government recognizes these challenges and is planning to implement several strategies to enhance the effectiveness of its labor market policies. These strategies include enhancing monitoring and enforcement mechanisms, investing in workforce development, and fostering dialogue between employers and workers.

One of the key strategies is to enhance monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with labor laws. This involves deploying more labor inspectors who can conduct regular and thorough inspections across various sectors. The role of these inspectors is crucial in identifying violations of labor laws and taking necessary actions against employers who do not comply with the regulations.

In addition to increasing the number of inspectors, the government plans to leverage technology to track compliance more effectively. This includes using digital tools to monitor working conditions, wages, and hours worked. By utilizing technology, the government can gather real-time data and identify trends that might indicate non-compliance. This proactive approach allows for quicker responses to issues and ensures that violations are addressed promptly.

Investing in workforce development is another critical strategy to address employment precarization. The labor market is constantly evolving, and workers need to have the skills required to adapt to these changes. By investing in education and training programs, the government can ensure that workers are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in a dynamic labor market. These programs might include vocational training, apprenticeships, and continuous education opportunities that cater to various industries and job roles. By providing workers with access to these programs, the government helps them enhance their employability and secure better job opportunities. This investment in human capital is essential for promoting economic growth and reducing unemployment.

Fostering dialogue between employers and workers is another important strategy for creating a resilient and equitable labor market. Open communication helps to ensure that labor market policies reflect the needs and realities of both parties. By engaging in regular discussions, employers and workers can work together to identify issues and develop solutions that benefit everyone.

This collaborative approach can lead to the development of better working conditions, fairer wages, and more robust protections for workers. It also helps build trust between employers and employees, which is essential for maintaining a positive and productive work environment. The government can facilitate these dialogues by organizing forums, workshops, and other platforms where stakeholders can come together to discuss labor market issues [7].

Recommendations: continue enhancing social security coverage to protect more workers, further strengthen labor inspection mechanisms to ensure compliance, expand vocational training programs to address skill gaps, and increase support for SMEs to create more formal employment opportunities.

Conclusion

The problem of precarization of employment in Kazakhstan is complex and multifaceted, necessitating a comprehensive approach. The government's initiatives, such as legislative reforms, social security enhancements, support for SMEs, labor market policies, and public awareness campaigns, are essential in ensuring stable and fair employment for all workers. Legislative reforms aim to enhance labor rights, while social security improvements provide a safety net for precarious workers. Support for SMEs promotes job creation, and labor market policies ensure fair wages and protection against exploitation. Public awareness campaigns empower workers with knowledge about their rights and available resources. Despite these efforts, by tackling precarization head-on through legislative reforms, social security enhancements, SME support, labor market policies, and public awareness campaigns, Kazakhstan can achieve a more inclusive and sustainable economic future. This holistic strategy benefits individuals by ensuring they enjoy the security, protections, and rights they deserve, while also contributing to broader economic and social stability. Continuous adaptation and improvement of these policies will further strengthen the labor market and promote a fairer and more just society.

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ҚАЗАҚСТАНДАҒЫ ЖҰМЫС ТҰРАҚСЫЗДЫҒЫ МӘСЕЛЕСІН ШЕШУ: ҮКІМЕТ ТӘСІЛІ

Аңдатпа

Жұмыс тұрақсыздығы жұмысшыларға сенімсіз және тұрақсыз жұмыс орындарының көбеюін білдіреді. Қазақстанда бұл мәселе экономикалық өзгерістер мен жаһандық еңбек нарығының өзгерістеріне байланысты аса өзекті болып отыр. Орталықтандырылған жоспарлы экономикадан нарыққа бағытталған экономикаға көшу көптеген жұмысшыларды осал жағдайда қалдырып, бейресми және стандартты емес жұмыс түрлерінің кең таралуына себеп болды. Бұл мақала Қазақстан үкіметінің жұмыспен қамтудағы прекаризацияны шешуге бағытталған кешенді тәсілдерін талқылайды. Заңнамалық реформалар, әлеуметтік қауіпсіздікті жақсарту және шағын және орта кәсіпорындарға қолдау көрсету осы тәсілдердің негізгі құрамдас бөліктері болып табылады. Негізгі бастамалар уақытша және жартылай жұмыс күні келісімшарттарына қатаң реттеулер енгізу, еңбек заңдарының қатаң орындалуын қамтамасыз ету және барлық жұмысшылар ушін сенімді әлеуметтік қауіпсіздік желісін кеңейтүді қамтиды. Сонымен қатар, үкіметтің экономикалық тұрақтылықты қамтамасыз ету және қауіпсіз жұмыс орындарын құру үшін каржылық көмек, кәсіпкерлікті дамыту қызметтері және реттеу жеңілдіктері арқылы ШОК-ты қолдауға бағытталған күш-жігері ерекше маңызды рөл атқарады. Қазіргі зерттеулер мен үкіметтік стратегияларды талдау арқылы мақала Қазақстандағы жұмыспен қамтудың прекаризациясының жағымсыз әсерлерін азайтуға бағытталған шаралардың жан-жақты түсінігін ұсынады және ақырында еңбек нарығының қауіпсіз және әділ болуына ықпал етеді.

Негізгі сөздер: Жұмыспен қамтудың тұрақсыздығы, жұмыс орындары, еңбек құқықтарын қорғау, экономикалық ауысулар, жаһандық еңбек нарығы, жаһандану, жұмысшыларды әлеуметтік қорғау.

РЕШЕНИЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ПРЕКААРИЗАЦИИ ЗАНЯТОСТИ В КАЗАХСТАНЕ: ПОДХОД ПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВА

Аннотация

Прекаризация занятости относится к растущей тенденции неустойчивых и нестабильных рабочих мест, которые предлагают ограниченные гарантии и льготы для работников. В Казахстане эта проблема становится все более актуальной из-за экономических переходов и изменений на глобальном рынке труда. Переход от централизованной плановой экономики к рыночной привел к широкому распространению неформальной и нестандартной занятости, что оставило многих работников в уязвимом положении. Эта статья детально рассматривает многогранный подход правительства Казахстана к решению проблемы прекаризации занятости. Этот подход включает в себя серию комплексных законодательных реформ, значительное улучшение системы социального обеспечения и надежную поддержку малого и среднего бизнеса. Основные инициативы включают введение более строгих правил для временных и частичных контрактов, усиление контроля за соблюдением трудового законодательства и расширение охвата социальной защиты для обеспечения более надежной сети безопасности для всех работников. Кроме того, усилия правительства по поддержке МСБ через финансовую помощь, услуги по развитию бизнеса и упрощение нормативной базы направлены на содействие экономической стабильности и создание более безопасных рабочих мест. Путем тщательного анализа существующих исследований и правительственных стратегий, статья стремится предоставить глубокое понимание предпринимаемых мер и их эффективности в смягчении негативных последствий прекаризации занятости, что в конечном итоге способствует более безопасному и справедливому рынку труда в Казахстане.

Ключевые слова: Прекаризация занятости, рабочие места, защита трудовых прав, экономические переходы, глобальный рынок труда, глобализация, социальная защита работников.

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