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#### O'ZBEKISTON MILLIY UNIVERSITETI XABARLARI, 2023, [1/6/1] ISSN 2181-7324



FALSAFA https://science.nuu.uz/ Social sciences

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#### GENDER AND SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS: HOW TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS AFFECT GENDER EQUITY

Abstract

This article examines the impact of socio-cultural factors on gender equality in various societies. The authors draw attention to traditions and customs that can hinder the achievement of gender equality and put gender inequalities into a broad context of the socio-cultural environment. Considering the specific example of Uzbekistan, the authors analyze what socio-cultural factors can affect gender equality in this country and what measures can be taken to support gender equality. The article emphasizes that the achievement of gender equality requires not only changes in legislation, but also overcoming deeply rooted cultural traditions, fostering conscious gender thinking and changing public consciousness.

**Key words:** gender, socio-cultural factors, traditions, customs, gender equality, Uzbekistan, equality, cultural norms, gender roles, legislation, education, conscious gender thinking.

**Introduction.** The concept of "gender" has a rather long history of evolution, beginning with its original use in biology to denote the difference between the sexes. However, nowadays the term "gender" is used not only to refer to biological sex, but also to refer to social, cultural and psychological characteristics associated with gender.

In the middle of the 20th century, the term "gender" was introduced by sociologists and psychologists to refer to the socio-cultural aspects of male and female behavior. Within the framework of this approach, gender was considered as a socio-cultural construct, which is formed in the process of socialization and human interaction with the environment. In recent decades, the concept of "gender" has undergone further evolution, becoming more broad and multi-layered. Today, gender understanding includes not only the socio-cultural aspects of male and female behavior, but also considers gender in the context of racial, ethnic, religious and other social differences. [5, 113-116]

Today's understanding of gender also includes aspects of sexual orientation and gender identity. Gender identity refers to how a person feels about their own gender, while sexual orientation refers to who a person is sexually attracted to. These aspects of gender are usually considered in the context of human rights and freedoms, including the right to freely express one's gender identity and sexual orientation.

Thus, the concept of "gender" continues to evolve and become more broad and includes many aspects related to gender and social differences.

**Methods.** In the 1950s, the concept of "gender" began to be widely used in sociology and psychology to refer to the socio-cultural aspects of gender. However, at the time, gender roles and stereotypes were mostly seen within two classical models: masculinity and femininity. In these models, male and female roles were considered as two different types of behavior inherent in a particular sex.

In the 1970s, feminist scholars began to criticize this two-model concept, arguing that it ignored the diversity and plurality of gender identities and roles. Instead, feminist researchers have proposed a broader approach to gender, viewing it as a process of social construction that is shaped by the interaction between the individual and society. [2, 95]

In the 1990s, the concept of "gender" was further developed under social constructionist theory, which argues that gender is not something biologically given, but is created and maintained by the interaction between the individual and the social environment.

In recent years, gender studies have become more inclusive and take into account multiple and diverse forms of gender identity and expression. Today, gender studies include topics such as sexual orientation, gender identity, gender norms and stereotypes, gender relations, and gender-based violence.

**Results and discussion.** Gender and postmodernism are two related concepts, as postmodern thought contributes to the understanding of gender as a socio-cultural construct. Postmodernism rejects the idea of the immutability and universality of truths and objective knowledge. Instead, it is recognized that knowledge and truth are formed and constructed in the social context, the interaction and interdependence of social and cultural factors. This concept also applies to gender. In postmodernism, gender is seen as a socio-cultural construct that is formed and changed in the social context. Gender is a set of social and cultural norms, stereotypes, roles and expectations associated with gender. Therefore, gender is not an immutable and objective factor, but rather the result of social processes and interactions. [2, 104]

Critics of postmodernism argue that this understanding of gender does not take into account the biological and physiological characteristics of sex, and also ignores the influence of biological factors on the development of gender stereotypes and roles. However, the postmodernist approach to gender allows for a more conscious and critical approach to social and cultural constructs related to gender, and to combat discrimination and inequality based on gender.

Ignoring biological factors in the development of gender stereotypes and roles is an erroneous approach in the study of gender. While gender is a socio-cultural construct, it interacts with and influences biological aspects of sex such as hormone levels and brain structure. Some research suggests that men and women may have different brain structures and functions that can influence behavior and preferences. However, biological differences do not explain all gender differences, but only complement the socio-cultural approach.

It is important to note that gender stereotypes and roles can be negative and limiting for people and that they can be changed through social change and education. However, for a more complete understanding of gender and its role in society,

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it is necessary to take into account both socio-cultural and biological factors that interact with each other.

Gender is a complex phenomenon that is formed as a result of the interaction of many factors, including sociocultural and biological ones. The interaction of these factors is the basis for understanding gender and its role in society.

Socio-cultural factors include traditions, customs, norms, stereotypes, roles and other aspects of culture that influence the formation of gender. These factors can be both positive and negative for people, depending on how they are perceived and used in society.

Biological factors include genetic and physiological aspects of sex, which can also influence the formation of gender. For example, hormone levels and brain structure can influence people's behavior and preferences.

However, gender is not a simple amalgamation of socio-cultural and biological factors, but rather a complex process of interaction and influence. For example, sociocultural factors can influence how biological factors are manifested, and conversely, biological factors can influence how socio-cultural factors are perceived and used in society.

The roles of men and women in the family are determined by the socio-cultural traditions and customs that exist in a particular society. Such traditions and customs may differ depending on culture, religion, ethnicity and other factors. In some cultures, for example, a man may be responsible for earning a living and providing for the family, while a woman may be responsible for taking care of children and the household. In other cultures, the roles of men and women may be more equal, or they may be more explicitly opposed to each other. These traditions and customs can have a profound effect on gender identity and gender stereotypes within the family and in society at large. For example, if a man believes that his main role in the family is to earn a living, then he may believe that he should be more confident and authoritative, and a woman more caring and emotional. These stereotypes can influence the behavior of men and women in the family and in society, as well as the expectations of their environment. [1.56]

However, there are cultures and traditions in which the roles of men and women in the family can be less rigidly defined and more flexible. In these cultures, gender stereotypes and roles can change over time and according to individual preferences and situations.

In general, understanding the traditions and customs associated with the role of men and women in the family can help in understanding how gender stereotypes and roles in society are formed and how they can be changed to create a more equal and inclusive society.

Socio-cultural factors in the families of different countries can vary significantly depending on the historical, religious, ethnic and other characteristics of a particular culture. Some common features and differences can be identified as follows:

1. Religion. Religious traditions and beliefs can have a significant impact on family values and behavior. For example, in some Islamic countries, the family plays a very important role, and the man is considered the head of the family, and the woman is his subordinate.

2. The role of the state. In some countries, the state plays an active role in regulating family relations and influencing family values. For example, China has a "onechild" policy that limits the number of children in a family.

3. Traditions and customs. Different countries have different traditions and customs that can influence family relationships. For example, in some countries it is customary for children to live with their parents until marriage, while in other countries it is not.

4. Economic conditions. Economic conditions can also affect family relationships. For example, in some poor

countries, children may start working at an early age to help their families survive.

5. Education. The level of education in the family can also influence family relationships. For example, in some countries women are not able to get an education and marry at a young age, which can lead to family instability.

6. Gender equality. Different countries may have different attitudes towards gender equality and women's rights. For example, in some countries women are not allowed to work and earn money, which can lead to dependence on a husband and family instability. [6, 48]

Uzbekistan has a gender policy aimed at supporting gender equality and preventing gender-based discrimination. However, as in many other countries, socio-cultural factors can influence how gender policies are applied in practice. [3, 218]

For example, the traditional roles of women and men in Uzbek culture may hinder their equality in society and in the workplace. Many women in Uzbekistan still see their primary role as caring for children and families, and this may limit their educational and career opportunities. In addition, stereotypes that men are better suited for certain occupations may limit women's access to certain occupations, such as engineering or science. This can lead to inequalities in pay and career opportunities. In general, the Uzbek gender policy aims to support gender equality and combat gender-based discrimination. However, as in other countries, socio-cultural factors can create obstacles to achieving this goal and require constant awareness and fight against them.

In Uzbek families, gender roles and expectations related to sex play an important role in socio-cultural factors. Although women and men have equal rights in Uzbekistan, in practice, men and women are expected to play different roles in the family and society. [8, 86]

Women's role: A woman in Uzbek culture is expected to fulfill the traditional role of a housewife, taking care of household chores and children. In traditional Uzbek families, women usually do not work, but take care of household chores, raising children and caring for older family members.

Role of a man: In Uzbek culture, a man is considered the head of the family and is responsible for providing for the material needs of his family. Men usually work and earn money to support their family, and also make key decisions in the family.

Marriage: In Uzbek culture, marriage is considered an important social institution and it is generally expected that a man and a woman will marry in accordance with traditional expectations and norms. For example, a man is considered responsible for finding a bride, while a woman usually expects a man to propose marriage to her.

Social pressure and public opinion: In Uzbek culture, social pressure and public opinion can have a significant impact on gender roles and expectations. For example, traditional expectations about the roles of men and women can put pressure on men and women to live up to these expectations. [9, 11]

Socio-cultural factors in Uzbek families may include the following features and characteristics:

1. Strong family bond. The family plays a very important role in Uzbek culture. Parents and close relatives can have a significant impact on the lives of young people.

2. patriarchal traditions. In Uzbek culture, there are patriarchal traditions, where a man is considered the head of the family, and a woman is his subordinate. The man usually makes important decisions about the family, works and earns money, and the woman takes care of the house and children.

3. Respect for elders. In Uzbek culture, respect for elders and experienced people is very important. Young people usually have to follow the advice and guidance of their elders, including parents and grandparents.

4. Family traditions. In Uzbek culture, there are many family traditions associated with holidays, weddings and other events. These traditions are often passed down from generation to generation and may have a religious or national basis.

5. Family values. In Uzbek culture, family values are very important, including respect for parents and elders, responsibility for the family, caring for children, and family bonding.

6. Religious traditions. Uzbekistan is dominated by Islam, which can influence family values and behavior. For example, a man is considered the head of the family, and a woman is his subordinate, and there are certain rules of conduct in the family. [4, 294]

Uzbekistan has made significant strides towards supporting gender equality in recent years. In 2019, the National Action Plan for the Support of Gender Equality for 2020-2021 was approved, which is aimed at strengthening the participation of women in the political, economic and social life of the country. [10, 103]

One of the key points of this plan is to increase the level of awareness of the population about the problems of gender inequality, including among law enforcement agencies and judges. In addition, it is planned to develop new laws and regulations that will strengthen the protection of women's rights and combat gender-based discrimination. Steps were also taken to increase the participation of women in the political life of the country. For example, in 2019, a decree was approved that obliges parties to represent at least 30% of women on candidate lists in elections.

Despite this, there are still challenges in the area of gender equality in Uzbekistan. Some conservative attitudes and traditions continue to prevent women from achieving equality in practice. But in general, the Uzbek gender policy is focused on promoting equality and justice for women in society. [7, 179]

**Conclusion.** In conclusion, it can be noted that sociocultural factors play a significant role in determining gender roles and norms in society. Traditions and customs that have long been formed in different cultures affect the lives of men and women, creating certain restrictions and privileges for each sex. However, as society develops and social structures change, it is possible to change these stereotypes and achieve greater gender equality. Gender policies and programs that address gender-based discrimination and violence can help in this process. It is also important to pay attention to education and awareness in order to change negative stereotypes and expand the perception of opportunities for each gender. As a result, only through the joint efforts of society and the state can a more just and equitable world be achieved for all, regardless of their gender.

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