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ETHNOSOCIAL FEATURES OF STRENGTHENING GENDER **EQUALITY IN THE UZBEK FAMILY**

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ABSTRACT

This article, based on the study of modern scientific works, examines modern ethnosocial features of strengthening gender equality in Uzbek families, ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men, protecting women from oppression and violence. Based on an analysis of the results of specific sociological research, important recommendations have been put forward to improve the legal and economic status of Uzbek women, improve their living and working conditions, preserve reproductive health, and change the traditional roles of women and men in society and family.

KEYWORDS

Society, family, gender, gender stereotypes, national values, ethnosocial features, gender equality, sex, women, family relations, violence.

INTRODUCTION

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

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One of the priorities of Uzbekistan's State policy is to achieve gender equality, ensure the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of women, and strengthen their role in public and State life.

It is important to emphasize that Uzbekistan is now a party to all major international treaties that provide for legal, economic and social support for women and their protection from various forms of discrimination. Among such international agreements to which Uzbekistan is a party are the conventions on the political rights of women and on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, the International Convention on Maternity Protection, the protocol on the suppression of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as a number of other agreements.

Each State solves the problem of gender inequality its way, combining own international experience with its own developments in this area and its own cultural specifics.

Uzbekistan. there number of are characteristic features that form national specifics and directly affect the family, its traditions, and ideas about gender roles. In addition, there is a close connection between the values of Islam and the culture of the local community. It should be noted that the synthesis of these values is firmly entrenched in the everyday life and consciousness of the people of Uzbekistan, which affects, for example, ensuring gender equality. It is very important that the principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Basic Law of the country. In particular, article 58 of the Basic Law stipulates that "Women and men have equal rights. The State ensures equality of rights and opportunities for women and men in the management of the affairs of society and the state, as well as in other spheres of public and state life." [1]

The Family Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan complements the principles of the Constitution: "Regulation of family relations is carried out on the basis of the principle of voluntary marriage of a man and a woman, equality of personal and property rights of spouses, resolution of intrafamily issues by mutual consent, priority of family upbringing of children, care for their welfare and development, ensuring protection of the rights and interests of minors and disabled family members".[2]

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

SJIF IMPACT FACTOR (2021: 5. 376) (2022: 5. 561) (2023: 6. 895)

OCLC - 1276789625











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Gender equality is also affirmed in the following provisions: "No direct or indirect restriction of rights, establishment of direct or indirect advantages upon marriage and interference in family relations, depending on gender, race, nationality, language, religion, social origin, beliefs, personal and social status and other circumstances, is allowed."[2]

In 2019, the Law "On Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men" was adopted. The law defines gender as the gender of the social aspects of the relationship between a man and a woman in all spheres of life.

What is extremely important is the definition of direct and indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination implies non-recognition of rights and freedoms, expressed in any differences or restrictions in all spheres of society. This includes non-discrimination based equal pregnancy, maternity leave. family responsibilities, or any form of harassment. [3]

The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On the Protection of women from harassment and violence" was adopted in 2019 and is aimed at protecting women from all forms of violence and harassment, including sexual, physical, economic,

psychological and other types and forms of violence.

In addition to the concept of violence, the law defines the concept of harassment, which means an act or omission that humiliates the honor and dignity of a woman if responsibility for such an act is not provided for in administrative or criminal legislation.[4]

Among the measures to prevent violence or harassment, the law identifies "a system of economic, social, legal, medical and other measures aimed at identifying and eliminating the causes and conditions that contribute to harassment and violence against women, raising awareness in society about women's rights to be free from violence."[4]

In addition to the above-mentioned normative legal acts, Uzbekistan has adopted a whole range of other norms and by-laws aimed at achieving gender equality. It is worth highlighting the Strategy for Achieving Gender Equality in Uzbekistan adopted in 2021, designed for the period up to 2030. [5] For the implementation of this Strategy, it is planned to approve an appropriate program annually.

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

SJIF IMPACT FACTOR (2021: 5. 376) (2022: 5. 561) (2023: 6. 895)

OCLC - 1276789625











Publisher: Frontline Journals

It is fundamentally important to recognize the problem of gender equality itself and link the overall course of reforms with the policy of equalizing women's rights. If earlier, as noted in the report of the Asian Development Bank for 2014, the reform processes could include, first of all, the expansion of economic opportunities for women in the country, but in general such projects were considered in isolation from comprehensive development programs, [6] now there is a direct and multifaceted connection covering all spheres of life, in particular including work and housekeeping.

If earlier the fact of gender inequality itself was not openly recognized as a problem of Uzbek society, but instead the relevant programs were usually called expanding women's access to decision-making, basic resources, maternity and childhood protection, maternal health, now the problem of gender equality is recognized at the highest level, and the adopted documents are at comprehensive eradication manifestations of gender inequality.

Currently, gender equality also includes men, and is seen as an opportunity to improve the conditions of development economic in Uzbekistan.

At the same time, society is dominated by strong traditional ideas about the family, gender roles, the traditional role of women as primarily wives and mothers, and the resulting relatively low opportunities for self-realization outside the family, for example, in government or entrepreneurship. [6]

Women have better opportunities in the informal sector of the economy. They are more often engaged in various types of small family businesses, usually focused on the development of home-based work. It is home-based work that is considered preferable for women due to the possibility of combining household duties and child rearing.

The established models of the division of labor by gender have a horizontal and vertical character, contributing to the strengthening of the gender gap, including in relation to income, which is an indicator of gender inequality and leads to the growth of deeper structural problems.

Deep-rooted gender stereotypes, along with a lack of financial resources, education, and leadership experience, hinder women's access to leadership positions or political careers.

Volume 04 Issue 01-2024

40

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

SJIF IMPACT FACTOR (2021: 5. 376) (2022: 5. 561) (2023: 6. 895)

OCLC - 1276789625











Publisher: Frontline Journals

The results of opinion polls show both the existing problems and significant shifts in progress towards achieving gender equality. In particular, a study conducted jointly by the Yuksalish movement, the Youth Union of Uzbekistan and UNICEF in 2018-2020 shows that girls and women in the country have many opportunities to realize, but at the same time need further support to achieve full equality in all spheres of public life, including family support. It is noteworthy that the ethnic profile of the respondents generally corresponded to the ethnic picture of Uzbekistan. Thus, 90.6% of the respondents represented the Uzbek nation.[7]

During this survey, it was revealed that girls and women are much less mobile than boys and men in the labor market. Once married, women, due to stereotypes, further limit their gender opportunities.

It can be noted that a significant number of women left the labor market after marriage. Marriage thus became a limitation of their personal educational or professional ambitions. In the field of education or work, women face the reluctance of their family, not only their husband, but also their parents, as well as limited mobility due to childcare and household management. [7]

Women noted that in marriage, the reluctance of family members to let them go to work was caused by jealousy on the part of the husband, fear of the independence of their wives, loss of control, which provokes unemployment among married women. For students or working married women, the main areas of study or employment were traditionally "women's" specialties, for example, teaching at school, medicine, home sewing, baking, hairdressing.[7]

The choice of profession was also largely determined by the gender factor. For example, the answers to the relevant questions were given by young people, largely based on traditional preferences. In particular, 8.1% of the surveyed men and only 1.7% of women saw themselves as businessmen. 14.5% of men and only 1.0% of women chose the military profession. At the same time, the medical profession attracted 18.0% of women and only 4.6% of men. 7.4% of women saw themselves as nurses, but none of the men surveyed wanted the profession of a nurse. 24.4% of women and only 7.2% of men saw themselves as teachers. 8.8% of women and only 0.2% of men surveyed wanted to do sewing.[7]

From the point of view of changes in gender equality, it remains important to preserve the

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

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traditional attitude of young people towards the older generation. The level of trust in their parents among the youth of Uzbekistan is very high. Young people, as a rule, rely on their opinion and do not dispute it.

The men who participated in the survey express satisfaction with the preservation of the traditions of the conservative patriarchy, while the women express their wishes for more equal gender rights. [7]

The established traditions of interaction determine the peculiarities of gender relations. It is important to note that, in general, the assessments of young people range from the need to preserve patriarchy in the form in which it has existed for centuries, to the transition to gender equality.

Young people agree that women and men should have equal rights. At the same time, there are no differences among people with different levels of education, but the older generation usually looks at this issue more conservatively. [7]

In particular, respondents who view gender equality more skeptically indicate that a man should remain the head of the family, just as the gender division of labor should be maintained to some extent. In a broad sense, a man should be the breadwinner of the family, while a woman should run a household and raise children. This view reflects the conservatism and strength of the traditions of modern society in Uzbekistan.

Important components of the argumentation of the conservative patriarchal way of life are statements about Uzbek national traditions, features of eastern culture, and the precepts of Islam. At the same time, from the point of view of supporters of this opinion, such an attitude towards a woman does not infringe on her rights and does not oppress her, but shows her the respect inherent in the traditions and culture of Uzbek society. [7]

A woman should have a lot to do around the house, so she shouldn't waste time working. Society recognizes as the norm if a man earns money and a woman takes care of her home and her children. It is noteworthy that women also agree with this statement, although the percentage of those who agree here is much lower than among men [7], and this indicates the potential of gender equality policy. Dissenting women serve as the foundation for future change,

Volume 04 Issue 01-2024

42

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

SJIF IMPACT FACTOR (2021: 5. 376) (2022: 5. 561) (2023: 6. 895)

OCLC - 1276789625











Publisher: Frontline Journals

the potential that can become a decisive voice in support of full-fledged gender equality.

The fact that young people with higher education are more likely to advocate a revision of traditional attitudes [7] indicates a new perspective and potential for achieving gender equality. It also means that more people with higher education will mean more votes in favor of redefining gender stereotypes. Consequently, the field of higher education should become part of the policy of gender equality.

The survey found a belief among young people that women and men have equal business management abilities. At the same time, the majority of opinions formed were asymmetrically, women sharing this opinion turned out to be much more (56.6%) than men (35.3%). In addition, the factor of higher education also affected here - this idea received more support among people with higher education.

The respondents expressed the opinion that the processes of globalization, including in the information sphere, have a negative impact on the traditions of society, including issues of gender equality. Men were more likely to express

concern that the conservative traditional model of interaction was being questioned and revised. First of all, the opinion of women on the issue of inter-gender interaction was of concern.

The negative dynamics of the number of divorces in the country is also more often associated with external influence, rather than with the situation in the country itself, changes in socio-economic life and the transformation of a traditional family. In this regard, the natural conclusion that follows from such arguments is the need to strengthen patriarchal traditions, strengthen the status of men and their ability to "control" the family, including women. Financial resources are considered an important component of such "control". The decision-making process itself is often presented as a direct function of income. If a woman receives her own income, she, from the point of view of conservative supporters of patriarchal traditions. mav become more "demanding" and will continue to strive to increase the possibilities of influence [7].

Gender differences affect the use of modern digital technologies. Cultural representations have a direct impact on the use of the Internet. Men are more often interested in sports or cars on

43

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

SJIF IMPACT FACTOR (2021: 5. 376) (2022: 5. 561) (2023: 6. 895)

OCLC - 1276789625











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the world Wide web, while women are interested in recipes, fashion styles, parenting, sewing, etc.

Men usually use the Internet without restrictions. while women face restrictions. Men do not use the Internet less often than women. 38.1% of men and only 16.1% of women use the Internet daily. Only 15.2% of men "never" use the Internet, while among women this figure reaches 27.0% [7].

This may partly be due to free time, as women are more likely to report doing time-consuming household chores that leave a minimum of free time.

Despite the continuing traditional distribution of gender roles in the family, primarily the perception of a male father and a female mother, research shows at least the intention to solve the most important issues of family life jointly by spouses, who are also jointly responsible for the joint upbringing of children.

The changes taking place traditional in reproductive attitudes among the country's population indicate a continuing transition from having many children to having average children, despite fairly stable traditions of having many

children, especially strong among the rural population.

Although the power of traditions often plays a role restraining in relation changes, nevertheless, it also prevents families from disintegrating or transforming fundamentally new social institutions with new functions. In this regard, traditions contribute to the gradual transition and prevent the growth of conflicts.

As the Uzbek expert R.A. Ubaydullayeva notes, "There has been a tendency in Uzbekistan to harmonize and improve intra-family relations. The survey revealed that family quarrels and conflicts occur less frequently in rural areas. In Uzbek society, the district continues to play an important role in the formation of spirituality and morality, this important institution of personal socialization retains its position in the public opinion of the population of the republic."[8]

As the results of sociological research show, the population of Uzbekistan adheres to traditions and customs, referring them to the most valuable for a person. 86% of the respondents agreed with this opinion, while the majority of them - 62% were women. [9]

VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

SJIF IMPACT FACTOR (2021: 5. 376) (2022: 5. 561) (2023: 6. 895)

OCLC - 1276789625











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It was also suggested that it is extremely important to carry out explanatory work among the population, explain national traditions, their significance, and study them more deeply, including through communication and knowledge transfer from the older generation.

Thus, summing up the above, the following conclusions can be drawn. Gender equality issues occupy a large place in the modern politics of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The foundations of gender policy are laid down in the Constitution, which enshrines the equality of men and women.

In recent years, it can be noted that purposeful work has been carried out towards the practical implementation of the principles of gender equality, pursuing the goal of achieving gender equality by 2030, in accordance with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Uzbekistan has adopted laws that regulate gender issues in detail, including in the framework of direct or indirect discrimination.

At the same time, the results of sociological research show that there are still quite a lot of problems in the field of gender equality. Most of them are related to the deeply rooted traditions

of Uzbek society, such as reverence for elders, a conservative patriarchal view of family life.

Nevertheless, there are prerequisites for the consistent progress of society towards gender equality. Among them, one can note the consistent policy of the leadership of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the understanding among a significant part of the country's youth, primarily women, of the need for a gradual transition from patriarchy to equal rights for women and men in all spheres of public life, including in the family.

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VOLUME 04 ISSUE 01 Pages: 37-46

SJIF IMPACT FACTOR (2021: 5. 376) (2022: 5. 561) (2023: 6. 895)













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