



FACTORS INFLUENCING THE FORMATION OF GENDER CULTURE IN SOCIETY

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Annotation: *The formation of gender culture in society is a complex and dynamic process influenced by various social, cultural, economic, and educational factors. This article explores the key elements that contribute to the development of gender culture, including the role of family, education systems, media, and government policy. Special attention is given to how traditional norms and modern values interact in shaping gender perceptions. The study emphasizes the importance of promoting gender equality and awareness through comprehensive cultural and educational initiatives to foster a more inclusive and equitable society.*

Key words: *Gender culture, gender equality, socialization, cultural factors, education, societal development, gender norms, gender awareness, inclusive society, gender policy.*

Introduction:

An individual's gender culture refers to personal views shaped from the standpoint of universally recognized social values. These views form the basis of socially active behavior and are closely tied to the implementation of social relationships. Gender culture is the highest stage of social consciousness, developed through purposeful upbringing and education.

Today, the issue of youth upbringing has become a common concern for nearly all countries. Speaking on this topic at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev, stated: "Today's youth represent the largest generation in human history, with two billion people. The future of our planet and its prosperity depends on what kind of individuals our children grow up to be. Our main task is to create the necessary conditions for young people to realize their potential and to prevent the spread of the



'virus' of violent ideology. We believe it is essential to expand cooperation in supporting youth socially and protecting their rights and interests. In this regard, it is especially important to interpret gender factors correctly in youth education”.

Literature Review:

The approach known as "pseudo-gender" is widely used in both local and foreign literature. Pseudo-gender studies treat the concept of "gender" as if it were synonymous with “sex” or “social-sex role”. This situation arises when authors and researchers consciously or unconsciously adopt biodeterministic positions, meaning that human biology rigidly determines social roles, psychological traits, professions, and so forth for males and females. In such cases, the term "gender" is used merely as a more "modern" label without challenging traditional biological determinism.

The concept of gender culture has been widely studied in the fields of sociology, psychology, and education. Scholars agree that gender culture is not biologically inherited but socially constructed through interaction, education, and cultural experience. According to Butler, gender is performative and shaped through repeated social actions and norms. Connell emphasized the influence of hegemonic masculinity and the role of institutions in shaping gender identity.

Several works focus on the importance of gender-sensitive education in promoting equality and tolerance. UNESCO has stressed the integration of gender perspectives into national curricula and teacher training. In Uzbekistan, recent educational reforms have included efforts to incorporate gender awareness into youth development strategies.

Main Body

It should be specially emphasized that the concept of gender culture has only recently entered scientific discourse. The foundation of this approach is formed by various scientific theories. In our study, gender culture is understood as a system of cultural knowledge of adolescent students and the social-cultural norms that they embody. This, in turn, is analyzed at the level of implementing mechanisms that enable the development of effective gender relations and the overall culture of the individual.



In modern science, the gender approach is widely applied in analyzing social, cultural, and psychological processes and phenomena. Gender studies examine the roles, norms, values, and character traits assigned to women and men by society through socialization, labor division systems, cultural values, and symbols. Today, among the main gender theories accepted in social and humanitarian sciences are the theories of social construction of gender and the gender system, the understanding of sex as a category of stratification, and the interpretation of sex as a cultural symbol [1].

The theory of social construction of gender is based on two directions:

1. Gender is constructed through socialization, labor division, gender role systems, family, and mass media;
2. Gender is constructed by individuals themselves at the level of their consciousness through identification with their sex, i.e., acceptance and adaptation to societal norms and roles (clothing, appearance, behavior, personal traits).

This theory actively uses the concepts of gender identity, gender ideology, gender stratification, and gender roles. Gender identity refers to a person's self-definition based on the culturally existing notions of masculinity and femininity. Gender ideology is a system of ideas that socially justifies gender differences and stratification, including beliefs about “natural” differences or unnatural constructs. Gender differentiation is defined as the process of attributing social significance to biological differences between men and women and using them as a means of social classification.

Gender roles are understood as the performance of certain social norms, i.e., manifestations of gender-appropriate behavior in speech, behavior, clothing, gestures, and so forth. When gender social construction becomes the subject of study, the focus is usually on how gender is constructed through institutions such as socialization, labor division, family, and mass media. Key topics include gender roles and stereotypes, gender identity, gender stratification, and inequality issues.



Gender stratification, as a category of stratification, is considered alongside other categories such as class, race, ethnicity, age, and profession. It refers to the process of social stratification based on sex, i.e., separation according to sex.

Understanding gender as a cultural symbol is related to the fact that a person's sex has not only social but also cultural and symbolic interpretations. In other words, biological sex differences are expressed and reinforced in culture through symbolic representations of masculinity and femininity. This is manifested in the association of many concepts and phenomena (nature, culture, elements, colors, divine or other worlds, good, evil, etc.) with "masculinity" or "femininity".

Thus, symbolic meanings of "man" and "woman" emerge, with "man" being associated with God, creativity, light, strength, activity, rationality, and so on. Therefore, God, creativity, strength, and others signify the principle of masculinity. "Woman" is associated with opposite concepts and phenomena: darkness, emptiness, submission, weakness, poverty, disorder, passivity, and others. The division of culture based on male/female and sexual symbolism broadly reflects and supports the existing gender hierarchy in society [2].

Hence, the concept of "gender" also denotes the socio-cultural process of forming (constructing) the differences in roles, behavior, intellectual and emotional characteristics between men and women as defined by society, and the result itself determines the social structure of sex. A key element in creating gender differences is the opposition of "man" and "woman" and the subordination of woman to man [4].

It should be remembered that modern gender theory does not attempt to question the existence of certain biological, social, and psychological differences between women and men. However, many psychologists emphasize that inter-individual differences exceed inter-gender differences. This means that differences between two men or two women may be greater than differences between a man and a woman. Gender differences are often noted in mathematical abilities, aggressive behavior (predominantly in men), empathy, emotionality, conformity, linguistic and communication skills (predominantly in women) [3]. Nevertheless, normative



emotional and aggressive men, as well as female mathematicians, can also be found in society.

Gender theory argues that the truth of differences itself is less important than their socio-cultural evaluation and interpretation, as well as the construction of power systems based on these differences. The gender approach is based on the idea that not biological or physiological differences between men and women are important, but rather the cultural and social significance that society assigns to these differences. The basis of gender research is not only to describe differences in statuses, roles, and other life aspects of men and women but also to analyze power and dominance established in society through gender roles and relations.

Although authors still distinguish between sex as a biological fact and gender as a social form, the situation does not change. Two opposing “sexes” (male and female) are accepted as sexes reflecting two different biological characteristics. An ordinary example of the social-sexual approach rather than gender is the traditional question aimed only at women: “If you had the financial opportunity, would you want to stay at home?” or “Can a woman also be a politician?” The results of such studies are predetermined by the methodology itself. It is clear that more attention is paid only to women’s social roles as housewives, child-rearers, managers of the household, and domestic workers. Women are imagined and treated only in such social positions [5].

Pseudo-gender studies, for example, in labor (professional activity) psychology, describe “male” and “female” professions or workplaces without analyzing the reasons and meanings of such differentiation. From a socio-gender approach, it is difficult to explain why in the USSR most doctors, judges, or bank employees were women, while in Europe and the USA, such positions were mostly held by men. From the perspective of gender theory, the situation becomes clear only when a researcher analyzes the social prestige and salary level of a particular profession. It appears that more women were doctors in the USSR not because they were “naturally compassionate and prone to self-sacrifice” (as biodeterminists say), nor because their social roles were such (as socio-gender theorists say), but because



this work was low-paid (compared to work in the military-industrial complex) and generally not a rare profession (workers had more social privileges than doctors), so more women were employed.

The theory of the gender system aims to methodologically understand gender as one of the stratifying functions of society and as a principle organizing the surrounding world. The term “gender” and its derivatives, in addition to the biological basis, imply the socially defined ideas about women and men that strongly influence the cultural context of the development of boys and girls. From this point of view, the sex of an individual is understood to affect:

- their social status and position;
- what behaviors are considered normative or deviant for men and women;
- what psychological or sociological traits are characteristic of a person of a certain sex.

It is necessary to develop the public’s worldview on gender equality. Currently, more attention is being paid in our country to increasing women's activity in this area. There are reasons for this—our society has always had men in leading and active roles. However, much remains to be done regarding women. Therefore, our projects related to gender equality are mainly aimed at increasing women’s activity. Naturally, once these efforts become systematic, gender equality projects will continue to create an equal environment for both men and women [6].

Results

The results of the study indicate that the level of gender culture among adolescent students is formed at a medium to moderately high level. Their knowledge related to gender is mainly based on traditional social norms and values, with certain stereotypes still persisting. For example, the majority of students hold conventional views regarding male and female roles.

Furthermore, the attitude of students towards gender roles and their acceptance is shaped under the influence of social environment and family upbringing. Family, school, and mass media play a significant role in the gender identification of youth.



The study revealed the necessity of specific methodologies, trainings, and cultural activities aimed at increasing awareness about gender stereotypes and gender inequality. This, in turn, contributes to the development of gender culture among youth, promoting social justice and equality.

Additionally, the importance of cooperation between educational institutions and societal bodies in enhancing gender culture was emphasized. A systematic approach is required to shape young people's views and behaviors related to gender in accordance with social and cultural conditions.

Overall, the study results highlight the need to strengthen educational and upbringing efforts aimed at developing gender culture and reducing gender stereotypes.

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