

IS UZBEK SOCIETY MASCULINE?

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Abstract. This article explores the question of whether Uzbek society can be considered as masculine based on Geert Hofstede's five cultural dimensions, specifically focusing on Masculinity vs. Femininity index. Through scientific insights from "Cultures and organizations" by Geert Hofstede collaborating with Gert Jan Hofstede and Micheal Minkov and "Developing intercultural competence" by Raykhona Gulomova, the article analyzes cultural values, social expectations and gender roles in Uzbekistan. It aims to contribute to a deeper understanding cultural identity in Uzbekistan and offers reflections on how masculinity shapes intercultural competence within and beyond the region.

Key words: Uzbek society, masculinity, gender roles, Hofstede's Five Dimensions, cultural values, social identity, intercultural competence.

Annotatsiya. Mazkur maqolada Geert Hofsted tomonidan ilgari surilgan beshta madaniy o'lovlar asosida O'zbekiston jamiyatini maskulin madaniyat sifatida tasniflash mumkinmi degan savol ko'rib chiqiladi. Ayniqsa, maskulinlik va femininlik indeksiga alohida e'tibor qaratilgan. Gert Hofstedning Gert Yan Hofsted va Maykl Minkov bilan hamkorlikda yozilgan "Madaniyatlar va tashkilotlar" asari hamda Rayhona

Kalit so'zlar: O'zbek jamiyati, erkaklik (maskulinlik), gender rollari, Hofstedning beshta o'lovi, madaniy qadriyatlar, ijtimoiy indentifikatsiya, madaniyatlararo kompetensiya

Introduction.

The question of whether Uzbek society aligns with masculine or feminine cultural values can be interpreted through Hofstede's five dimensions of culture. Specifically, it can be examined in detail alongside with relevant examples including explanations from Uzbek traditions and social expectations. What does masculinity-femininity dimension refer to? How this index is different within cultures? It refers to the extent which a society prioritizes assertiveness, rivalry and materialistic achievement (masculinity) versus nurturing, collaboration and good quality of life (femininity) according to Geert Hofstede. It's important to understand that these values aren't strictly tied to being male or female. This means that men can belong to cultures considered more feminine, and women can relate to values often labeled as "masculine." Moreover, just like other cultural value dimensions, gender-related values can differ widely within a single culture. (Hofstede, G., 2001). In terms of Hofstede's masculinity dimension, Uzbek society presents a mix of both masculine (dominantly) and feminine traits. The competitive behaviour of people in the community are obvious by the

expectations of most parents from their children while they compare the success levels between their and neighbor's children. As an Uzbek woman, I have personally experienced these dynamics, having been raised in a traditional Uzbek family where the values strongly reflect characteristics of a masculine society — most notably, a strong emphasis on competitiveness. Additionally, traditional gender roles stay firmly as the men are expected to be the leader and provider of the family while women taking on domestic and caregiving responsibilities. This reflects a feature that is related to masculine orientation, where clear distinctions are maintained between males and females in the community.

Discussion

Historically, we can confirm that these values are shaped by the religion of Islam as it is a major religion followed by millions of people here in Uzbekistan. As it is mentioned in “Cultures and organizations”, religion plays a huge role in creating and defining moral circle of people. (Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede and Micheal Minkov, 2010). Furthermore, social status and material success such as having permanent residence, luxury vehicle and career advancement are measured by social respect. The major part of young generation on social media, as well, can be the evidence for this case as they show their material success as the ultimate goal in life and thousands of people in the comment section express agreement, often leaving comments that either admire the situation or wish for the same experience in their own lives.

Ironically, there are feminine elements that can be witnessed through family ties, hospitality and community well-being in our society. In many cases, teamwork and maintaining harmony within families and other social groups are considered better way of living over individual effort of doing same things. It means Uzbek society leans towards masculinity in many areas or aspects of life while keeping some feminine values rooting to collectivism and cultural traditions.

It is often discussed that in high-masculinity cultures, men have more access to leadership positions compared to women, with decisions focused on strength than consultation. In Uzbek culture, people used to live on similar social norms about leadership access mentioned earlier, however, in recent years new policy on giving necessary amount of access for women to education and supporting them to be in leadership roles became prominent. Due to that, our society can accept that both males and females can take the responsibility of high positions in several systems in the country. For instance, female nominees have begun to appear in presidential elections since 2007. This was a notable shift in traditionally male-dominated political spheres.

While older generation still uphold traditional gender expectations, many younger Uzbeks, especially women, are challenging these norms by prioritizing education, careers alongside with traditional family roles. It still cannot be accepted, if women choose this path over traditional family norms. Hence, this concept was not adopted straightforwardly but adapted to Uzbek cultural

norms. On the other hand, this differs between rural and urban areas, as greater access to education, media, and global values in urban settings provides more opportunities to challenge and reduce strict masculine traits.

When comparing Uzbekistan to a country like Canada, it is easy to notice some big difference of how people view success, gender roles and competitive features of living. According to the analysis of Uzbek culture, our society exhibits masculine traits including material accomplishment, competitive environment while Canadian culture follows feminine traits such as coordination, good quality of life and balance between work and personal life.

Conclusion

To sum up, being aware of the masculine traits in Uzbek community involving ambition and competitiveness is essential for intercultural understanding, while also appreciating how other societies prioritize traits such as modesty, equality and cooperation can have significant role to build harmonious relationships worldwide. In short, balancing these viewpoints can help to strengthen mutual respect and deeper connections between people from different cultures.

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