



Woman in Development and Politics

Mechanisms of Legitimizing Gender Power (Case study: Women of Eyvan Town)

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ABSTRACT

Introduction

The theory of gender and power states that gender inequality is a social construct that results from long-term processes of socialization and education. The gender system operates through a set of socially accepted rules and creates social ideas for how men and women should behave, and this system is produced and reproduced through social interactions. In sparsely populated cities, custom plays a prominent role in life matters because mechanical correlation is abundantly observed in such places and it affects the norms, values and social relations between the two sexes. The aim of this research is to analyze the mechanisms of legitimizing gender power from the perspective of women in the city of Eyvan.

Methodology

The research paradigm is interpretive/constructive, the research approach is qualitative, and the research strategy is grounded theory. The field of study in this research includes married women of Eyvan city in 2022-2023. The sampling method is purposeful and 20 people were interviewed until theoretical saturation. In this research, semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. The questions were asked before the interview in the framework of the research and also the interviewer had the opportunity to ask new questions to the informants in the research during the interview and each interview lasted about 30 minutes. In addition, in order to reassure the informants for the confidentiality of the interviews, pseudonyms were used in the research process. The data format was in text format and open, axial and selective coding was used for data analysis. The method of observers was used to check the validity of the data, which means that two observers were asked to evaluate the process of extracting concepts, subcategories and main categories, and after their evaluation and comments, the validity of the coding process was finalized.

Findings

In this research, 233 concepts, 30 subcategories and 13 categories were extracted. According to the findings of the research, the women of Eyvan city legitimize men's power under a series of conditions, including causal conditions, which include religiosity, structural determinism, and gender socialization., which directly affect the phenomenon of legitimizing gender power. But almost the majority of women considered the Background conditions that include things such as Nature-centered, man-centered, and father-centered belief as the main factor in legitimizing men's power and claimed that social norms forced them to obey men and accepting gender roles. Intervening conditions are among other conditions that directly affect the phenomenon (legitimization of gender power) and cause it to arise. The factors of legitimizing male power in this case include Scientific justification of sexual difference and legitimization of choice. To overcome the phenomenon of legitimizing gender power that results from underlying and intervening conditions, women use strategies that include: either

surrendering to future consequences or engaging in rational politics. The strategy of surrendering to future consequences implies things such as inability to act, acceptance of the status quo, and feeling inferior. The women studied believed that their inability to make decisions caused them to leave the basic decisions in their lives to men, prefer their opinions over their own, and accept and tolerate the problems of marital life. However, sometimes women choose emotional reactions instead of passive reactions and claimed that they adopt a cold approach to men's indifference to their opinion about buying basic goods in all aspects of life, and even engage in aggressive behavior with their husbands, and sometimes adjust their behavior based on men's reactions. The rational policy strategy includes things like feeling happy, conditional response, and adopting a rational approach. The participants in the study claimed that buying basic goods by men makes them happy, and in fact, they consider its economic benefit, and they choose to react based on their family's economic situation, because its harm or benefit can cause significant harm to poor people, but for rich people, its results are not very influential in their lives. They also considered participation in such matters necessary, and they believed that they use reason and logic to convince men to consider themselves a part of their common life and achieve more desirable results. The actions and reactions that women take towards the phenomenon of legitimizing gender power have consequences, including: erosion of the family institution; reproduction of gender inequality and future consequences. The core category in this research is entitled "Coexistence of customary and religious discourse", which is based on the paradigmatic model of grounded theory, which includes causal conditions, phenomena, Background conditions, intervening conditions, actions and reactions, and consequences.

Conclusion

In the city of Eyvan, where tradition is involved in determining gender roles, women legitimize men's power based on society's customs and agree to accept gender inequality, while religion also confirms social norms and women it forces men to obey because custom and religion are aligned and confirm each other, and in such a society, if we look at every dimension of life, especially the gender gaps that are observed, custom and religion are aligned. On the other hand, women follow these two dimensions in order to be approved by others. The results of this research can be effective in changing the perspective of politicians and planners of women's affairs, because women, as half of the people in the society who are agents of the education of generations, need to be called to the text and their dignity and status should be preserved. On the other hand, the media, which play a prominent role in the representation of genders, need to use their capacity in a better and more justified way to represent the role and status of women. The findings of this research showed that gender socialization originates from the beliefs of women, so the educational system in this regard has a serious task in developing the sense of self-confidence and self-esteem of girls who are the mothers of tomorrow, and the last word is to improve the structural conditions of society in order to reduce The inferiority of women and the elimination of gender gaps based on gender are necessary so that women get more opportunities to perform economic, cultural and social activities.

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