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TRANSFORMATION OF THE FAMILY INSTITUTION: SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF NEW CHANGES IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The emergence of new positions on the issues of gender equality and justice, as they arise in the context of social liberalism and economic reconstruction, serve to ensure equality between men and women. Furthermore, they facilitate the advent of novel approaches to the birth and upbringing of children, and accelerate the transformation of the family institution. The reconciliation of new positions in marriage-family relations and the succession of generations represents an urgent problem that requires sociological analysis.

The authors of the article conducted an analysis of the system of sociological theoretical and methodological concepts aimed at explaining the changes in the institution of the family. They also conducted a secondary analysis of the sociological research data (N: 1,200 respondent) on the topic “Kazakhstan Families – 2022”, which was conducted by the NJSC “Kazakhstan Institute of Public Development”. This multifaceted approach enabled the identification and analysis of the changes occurring in marriage and family relations in Kazakhstan.

The findings of the analysis indicated that the attitudes and stances of Kazakhstani individuals with regard to the family are characterised by a degree of conservatism. Furthermore, the findings of the study indicate that Kazakhstani individuals place a high value on traditional family values and strive to maintain them. Nevertheless, the most significant value for a contemporary family is care and mutual respect, as well as support, which in the modern era is referred to as an “ecological relationship”.

A conceptual analysis of the transformation of the family institution and its interpretation in practice through the results of sociological research has the potential to inform theoretical and methodological decisions in the development of proposals for the regulation of marriage-family relations for submission to state structures and research institutes.

Key words: family institution, family transformation, institutional approach, deinstitutionalization, diversification, institutional logic, queer theory.

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Отбасы институты трансформациясы: неке-отбасы қатынастарындағы жаңа өзгерістерді әлеуметтанулық талдау

Гендерлік теңдік пен әділеттілік мәселелері бойынша жаңа ұстанымдардың пайда болуы әлеуметтік либерализм мен экономиканы қайта құру жағдайында туындайтындықтан, ерлер мен әйелдердің теңдігін қамтамасыз етуге қызмет етеді. Сонымен қатар, олар балалардың тууы мен тәрбиесіне жаңа көзқарастардың пайда болуын жеңілдетеді және отбасы институтының трансформациясын жеделдетеді. Неке-отбасы қатынастарындағы жаңа ұстанымдар мен ұрпақтар сабақтастығын үйлестіру әлеуметтанулық талдауды қажет ететін өзекті мәселе.

Мақала авторлары отбасы институтындағы өзгерістерді түсіндіруге бағытталған әлеуметтанулық теориялық және әдістемелік тұжырымдамалар жүйесіне талдау жүргізді және «Қазақстандық қоғамдық даму институты» КеАҚ жүргізген «Қазақстандық отбасы – 2022» тақырыбы бойынша әлеуметтанулық зерттеу деректеріне (іріктеме – 1 200 адам) қосалқы талдау жүргізді. Осы кешенді бағыт Қазақстандағы неке-отбасы қатынастарында болып жатқан өзгерістерді анықтауға және талдауға мүмкіндік берді.

Талдау нәтижелері қазақстандық тұлғалардың отбасына деген көзқарасы мен ұстанымы белгілі дәрежеде консерватизммен сипатталатынын көрсетті. Сонымен қатар, зерттеу нәтижелері қазақстандықтардың дәстүрлі отбасылық құндылықтарды жоғары бағалайтынын және оларды сақтауға ұмтылатынын көрсетеді. Дегенмен, қазіргі отбасы үшін ең маңызды құндылық – қамқорлық пен өзара сыйластық, сонымен қатар қазіргі жағдайда «отбасындағы тұрақты қарым-қатынас» деп атайды.

Отбасы институтының трансформациясын тұжырымдамалық талдау және оны әлеуметтанулық зерттеу нәтижелері арқылы тәжірибеде интерпретациялау мемлекеттік құрылымдар мен ғылыми-зерттеу институттарына неке-отбасы қатынастарын реттеуде ұсыныстар әзірлеуде теориялық және әдіснамалық шешімдерді қалыптастыру әлеуетіне ие.

Түйін сөздер: отбасы институты, отбасының трансформациясы, институттық бағыт, деинституционализация, диверсификация, институционалды логика, квир-теория.

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Трансформация института семьи: социологический анализ новых изменений в брачно-семейных отношениях

Новые позиции по вопросам гендерного равенства и справедливости, возникшие в условиях социального либерализма и экономической перестройки, способствуют обеспечению равенства между мужчинами и женщинами, новым подходам к рождению и воспитанию детей, а также ускоряют трансформацию института семьи. Актуальность согласования новых позиций в семейно-брачных отношениях и преемственности поколений требует социологического анализа.

В статье проведен анализ теоретико-методологических концепций, объясняющих изменения в институте семьи, а также вторичный анализ данных социологического исследования НАО «Казахстанский институт общественного развития» на тему «Казахстанские семьи – 2022» (выборка – 1 200 человек). Данный комплексный подход позволил выявить и проанализировать изменения в семейно-брачных отношениях в Казахстане.

Результаты анализа показывают, что мнения и позиции казахстанцев относительно семьи остаются по своей сути консервативными. Население страны в целом высоко ценит семейные ценности и стремится их сохранить. Тем не менее, для современной семьи наиболее значимыми являются забота, взаимное уважение и поддержка, что в современном контексте можно определить, как «экологичные отношения».

Концептуальный анализ трансформации института семьи и его апробация через результаты социологического исследования имеют значительный потенциал для формирования теоретико-методологических решений. Эти решения могут служить основой для выработки рекомендаций для государственных структур и исследовательских институтов в регулировании семейно-брачных отношений.

Ключевые слова: институт семьи, трансформация семьи, институциональный подход, деинституционализация, диверсификация, институциональная логика, квир-теория.

Introduction

It is evident that the pace of social change in the contemporary era is rapid, and the resulting crises in all areas of society demonstrate that social institutions are ill-prepared to adhere to the norms and regulations demanded by global modernisation, or that they lack the capacity to uphold their fundamental values. For centuries, the family, which has been considered the primary value for an individual and a crucial social institution in any society, has undergone transformational processes due to the advent of new rules brought about by the post-industrial society and capitalist market relations. The value attributed to the family has diminished, and individuals have adopted new attitudes towards marriage and the family, leading to the emergence of various dysfunctions and the establishment of new norms within the functional dynamics of this institution.

American family historian S.Coontz posits that the relationship between men and women has un-

dergone a more profound transformation in the past three decades than it did over the preceding three millennia (Coontz, 2005: 4). In the modern era, individuals are compelled to choose between pursuing personal self-development and establishing a family. The creation and upbringing of children requires a substantial investment of resources, including time, financial capital, spiritual capital, and cultural capital. The decision to marry and start a family is a deliberate and logical one, yet it also entails considerable costs. The contemporary younger generation is conscious of the fact that they are undergoing a significant transition from a lifestyle that is “comfortable” to one that is more structured and demanding. They are aware that their education, personal characteristics, economic status and other factors will influence the way they live their family life.

In examining the evolution of marriage and family relations, it is essential to contextualise these changes within a historical and global framework. The analysis of the evolution of the family institu-

tion requires the examination of historical patterns of marriage, child-rearing, gender roles and kinship structure practices. These provide a basis for understanding the dynamics of the present of family institute. Furthermore, an analysis of the conceptualisation of the contemporary transformation of the family institution, which is occurring as a result of global trends, provides the foundation for elucidating the nature and significance of local changes.

Literature review

Since the end of the 20th century, scholars have offered divergent perspectives on the transformations occurring within the family institution. For example, according to the physiologist D.Blankenhorn and the sociologist D.Popenoe, family changes represent a clear example of disintegration and institutional failure to preserve the family (Blankenhorn, 1995; Popenoe, 1993). British sociologist S.Abrutyn and American sociologist J.H.Turner posit that changes in the family represent a form of “adaptive modernization”. They argue that the family as a social institution has undergone a transformation, assuming a new position within the broader system of social institutions (Abrutyn et al., 2011).

The American scientists who are studying the new wave of family transformation have identified a number of institutional directions that support a number of conclusions. These include the superiority of family life based on marriage, the birth and upbringing of children in a complete family with parents, and the importance of aiming for a family that adheres to the established rules. They also emphasise the stability of marriage, the priority of family interests over individual interests, and structural changes in the family. This allows for consideration within the functional concept (Knapp et al., 2019). This approach views the family as an institution that performs its functions within the framework of established rules, norms, and values. It considers two potential avenues for change: a critical perspective, which views the family’s transformation as a crisis, and a positive perspective, which perceives the family as adapting to new demands.

The maintenance of social institutions is dependent on three fundamental “pillars”: regulatory (law and religion), normative (values and rules), and cultural-cognitive (Cherlin, 2020:63). Those representing the new institutional approach focus on the final pillar, namely the evolution of the family institution. According to this perspective, institutional activity does not necessitate conscious deliberation on the part of the actor, who instead views cogni-

tive patterns as an inherent aspect of their daily life. Cognitive models, in turn, undergo transformation in different cultural contexts (Cherlin, 2020:65).

A review of recent studies on changes in the family reveals a common focus on the processes of deinstitutionalisation, disintegration and detraditionalisation, which collectively shape the character of the family institution. Those who espoused the deinstitutionalisation perspective sought to ascertain the potential of the family as an institution in an individual’s life. Consequently, the future of the family institution shifted its focus from an examination of its structural aspects to an investigation of the necessity of a family unit for the individual and the opportunities it can provide for personal growth. The focus of researchers shifted from an examination of the external aspects of family and marriage to an investigation of their internal content and the psychological processes involved in these relationships. Those who espouse the deinstitutionalisation perspective posit that social norms, cultural and social structures that constrain and regulate individuals in the formation of their personal lives will become less prevalent. In this regard, the primary focus is on the expansion of individual requirements (Gurko, 2016:181), for example, the individualized marriage described by A.Cherlin (Cherlin, 2020:63), as well as the transformation of marriage into a partnership, as defined by E.Burgess (Burgess, 1945). The process is described by contemporary researchers as the reconstruction of the family model tradition. In the view of the British sociologist A.Giddens, for those who are sexually “normal”, love is associated with having sex through marriage. Nevertheless, it is becoming increasingly prevalent for two individuals to engage in a relationship without the formalities of marriage (Giddens, 2007). As postulated by the American sociologist P.Amato, individuals are disinclined to assume obligations towards another person. They are only prepared to assume responsibility for their partner when the couple is in a state of mutual happiness and their needs are being met (Amato, 2004:960).

A.Cherlin, a proponent of the deinstitutionalisation approach, identified three key factors that contributed to the reconstruction of the institution of marriage. Firstly, there was a shift in the social context in which the individual was situated. Secondly, the labour market underwent significant changes, becoming accessible primarily to women. Thirdly, there was a transformation in the resource environment, with the advent of contraceptives. Furthermore, internal contradictions emerged, resulting in a redistribution of the roles of spouses (Cherlin, 2020: 65).

The process of deinstitutionalisation does not result in the complete disappearance of marriage. However, within this context, researchers have proposed that those who adhere to a traditional cultural model of the family should no longer adhere to traditional practices but rather make a conscious decision to form a traditional family (Collier, 1997). Those espousing this perspective characterise the shifts in the marital relationship as a transition from an institutionalised order to a partnership, wherein initially there is a normative control, but subsequently this loses its power and becomes a privatised marriage. The primary perspective in this description is expressive individualism, which is characterised by personal growth, introspection, and the recognition of one's needs. The privatisation of family-marriage relations imbues them with a market character. Individuals are increasingly reluctant to adhere to the roles and statuses prescribed by the institutional structure. Instead, they are exercising greater autonomy in determining the content and nature of their family-marriage relations, based on their personal preferences and interests. This includes opting for alternative forms of marriage, such as civil marriage, childfree and etc. The subsequent approach, which assesses the evolution of family dynamics, examines the recent shifts in family structures as a diversification rather than an individualisation of family forms. As posited by I. Levin, the social construction of an individual's family unit implies the existence of a multitude of familial concepts (Levin, 1999:93). Furthermore, American philosopher S.L. Gardner posits that the proliferation of family forms engenders a perception of family life in which "individuals accept each other as they are" (Gardner, 2006:238). Those representing the diversification perspective challenge the conclusions of the socio-institutional approach, oppose the judgments of the deinstitutionalization perspective, and seek to conceptualize the individual within the context of family and marital relations, moving beyond the boundaries of institutional and deinstitutionalization concepts.

British feminist sociologist C. Smart posits that it is crucial to examine the intricacies and diversity of interpersonal connections that individuals forge in the contemporary era. Qualitative empirical work that explores the relational, memory, autobiographical, imaginative and embeddedness of how family life is constructed and lived will identify elements of individuation that attempt to preserve traditional elements. From this perspective, a useful conceptual framework for understanding recent changes in the family is to consider how kinship and obligations

provide the context for choice, and how individual choice is shaped along a continuum where individualisation and traditionalism are balanced. The core tenet of the sociologist's concept is that individuals are situated within a system of relations that offers products that reflexively select the aspects deemed most significant to them (Smart, 2007:498). British sociologists R. Pahl and L. Spencer, who espouse a similar viewpoint, contend that qualitative empirical research demonstrates that individuals can experience a sense of connection and loyalty to others within their communities, while simultaneously maintaining a conscious and balanced approach to their relationships, avoiding isolation, anomic tendencies, or narcissistic selfishness (Pahl et al., 2010).

From the perspective of those who advocate diversification, the most crucial aspect of analysing the family is to acknowledge the diversity of family life. J. Sprey, Doctor of Philosophy, Researcher of the Family Institute, posits that in the study of family issues, researchers should refrain from evaluating divorce, remarriage, step fatherhood, cohabitation under a contract, and marriage with a member of the opposite sex as deficiencies of the modern institutionalisation of family-marriage relations. Instead, they should be regarded as integral components. It is imperative that the diversity that characterises modern family life is considered and analysed. It must be interpreted not as deinstitutionalised individualisation, but as a transformation of the family that must be included in "alternatives" in the overall structure (Sprey, 2009:17). Canadian sociologist S. Lauer and British sociologist C. Yodanis argue that the recognition of diversity does not necessitate the development of theories concerning the decline of traditional family structures. According to these researchers, alternative forms of marriage exist alongside the traditional institution and have been institutionalised to a certain extent. However, the traditional institution of marriage continues to perform its function alongside these alternatives (Lauer et al., 2010).

Another common direction in the analysis of modern changes in the family is M. Weber's concept of modernity and the theory of institutional logic. M. Weber's concept allows for the explanation of modern institutional dimensions in terms of different, competing terms of "order of life" and "field of values". Each of these is shaped by its own "internal logic" and "immanent legitimacy". M. Weber posits that each value field is characterised by its own internal logic, which is distinguished, identified and defined by the differentiation of its institutional logic from other competing institutional logics. M. Weber's concept of the "field of values" encom-

passes various aspects of modernity, including the family, science, politics, economics, religion, aesthetics, and eroticism (Weber, 2004: 215).

In terms of institutional logic, the relationship between the subject and the institute is not characterised by antagonism; rather, it is a constitutive one. The subject exhibits a genuine conviction in the institution's existence. In line with M.Weber's sociology of religion, the American sociologist R.Friedland posited that the underlying substance of institutional logic is presented as a 'God' that believers love and obey (Friedland, 2014a). In the view of the Canadian philosopher C.Taylor, family members act on the basis of what they perceive to be the right course of action in family relationships, without necessarily considering the wider benefits that such actions might bring to the family (Taylor, 1989:74). The American sociologist R.Friedland and the French philosopher J.L.Marion posit that this love constitutes a higher sentiment than the subject, whereby an individual loves others as they love themselves (Friedland, 2014b; Marion, 2007).

This framework allows for the analysis of the family without imposing the constraints of a pre-defined "family" or other mould. From an institutional perspective, the family can only be sustained in the mode of "indispensable love", wherein the subject becomes oriented toward values that transcend the familial unit, or in the presence of respect and loyalty. As posited by the historian J.Gillis, modern individuals construct an imaginary family based on their personal values and ideal relationships, which they aspire to actualize. In the event that this familial construct fails to align with their idealized vision, they may experience depression (Gillis, 1996). Furthermore, as postulated by M.Weber, the concept of the family represents a higher substance that endures regardless of how it is conceptualised (Weber, 2004).

In addition, researcher of globalization processes of modern changes in the family, author of the concept of "Risk Society" – U.Beck linked changes in the family with process of individualization. The scientist posits that prior to the advent of industrial society family life was oriented towards a collective purpose and enterprise (such as a family farm or workshop). The advent of the "welfare state" in industrial society resulted in the implementation of state benefits for women, even in the absence of gainful employment. This form of state permitted women to make autonomous decisions and engage in action, while also facilitating their involvement in the labour market. Consequently, familial relationships underwent a transformation, shifting from a collective orientation towards a pursuit of individu-

al interests. The focus has shifted to an individually planned life, as outlined by U.Beck. In his work on individualisation, U.Beck puts forth the following concept of the pre-industrial family: "In the pre-industrial family, relations were structured according to the principles of work and economic organization. The family unit comprised men, women, the elderly, and children. However, the time and activities of these individuals were coordinated and subordinated to a common goal, namely the preservation of the farm or workshop. The family functioned as an organised community, wherein the individual interests, feelings and motives of its members were subordinated to the collective goal of the family itself. It was not the individual, but common goals and tasks that played an important role. In this regard, the pre-industrial family can be defined as a "community of needs" underpinned by "cooperative obligations" (Beck, 2002).

U.Beck, who defined the family in the context of industrial society as "post-family", offers the following description: "If, historically, the family was the primary social unit, contemporary individuals are attempting to define themselves as autonomous beings, each with distinct expectations and interests regarding the family." Individuals possess a range of capabilities and responsibilities. In conclusion, the outlines of male-only and female-only lives within the family are becoming apparent (Beck, 2002).

The recent emergence of same-sex marriage as a new trend in family-marriage relations has become an actual issue on the global stage. In response to this phenomenon, countries around the world have adopted two distinct positions. One group has legalised same-sex marriage and criminalised discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The other has recognised same-sex marriage as a form of union that is not legally recognised and has sought to address the promotion of this form of marriage. The scientific academic environment has interpreted the concepts related to these marital relations within the framework of gender theories. Towards the end of the 20th century, a new field of study emerged, namely queer studies and queer theory, which sought to provide an explanation of same-sex relationships. This theory examines the emergence, function, and development of both normative and deviant forms (models) of sexuality and their carriers within specific cultural and social contexts. The representatives of this direction, which was developed within the framework of the post-structuralism critique of identity, argue that sexual desires, experiences and identities are not interconnected. The tenets of queer theory posit that the relationship between anatomical sex, gender, and sexual desire is not as stable

as is commonly assumed. In accordance with this concept, the subject of queer theory is a distinct theoretical approach that employs a critical analysis of the prevailing normative methods of cognition and action that are used to support one of the groups that are organised according to the characteristics of sexual diversity and that oppose the other (Voroncov, 2012).

Research methodology and methods

This article presents an analysis of the transformational processes occurring within the Kazakhstani family institution. The object of research is Kazakh families undergoing new changes, and the subject of research is the emergence of new positions within the evolving institution of the family, which is subject to significant influence from the process of globalisation.

In the course of the research, the secondary data analysis of the results of the sociological research conducted by the NJSC “Kazakhstan Institute of Public Development” (hereinafter the Institute) in the framework of the preparation of the national report “Kazakhstan Families – 2022” was employed as the research method.

Sampling:

In the field phase of this study, a survey was conducted using the “face-to-face” method. A total of 1,200 respondents were included in the sample. The survey was conducted in 14 regions and three cities of republican significance. The study employed a stratified multistage sampling methodology. The selection was made in the following stages, in accordance with the population of the regions and cities of republican importance. Moreover, the sample size was calculated according to the urban-rural principle in each region. The sample size was distributed between rural and urban areas, with the latter divided into regional centres, small towns and district centres, as well as villages. This was done in accordance with the characteristics of the region and statistical data.

Data collection:

The data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed by the Institute in accordance with the principles of sociological research. The survey comprised a series of closed questions, which were divided into six sections. The following areas were covered in the survey:

Section 1: family principles.

Section 2: marriage and divorce.

Section 3: family policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Section 4: state social support for vulnerable families.

Section 5: reproductive health of men and women.

Section 6: parents and children.

Data Analysis:

The data were subjected to quantitative analysis. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, were employed to analyse the quantitative data. The data were analysed using the statistical database SPSS 26.0.

Ethical Considerations:

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before the survey. The participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and their participation in the survey was voluntary.

Results and discussion

According to the research subject, the findings of the sociological research into the changes and new positions within the Kazakh family institution were analysed. The respondents were asked to identify the family values that were of greatest importance to them. The findings of the study indicate that the most significant value for Kazakhstani families is the act of caring for one another and maintaining mutual respect (72.8%), while the second most important value is love (39.5%). It is notable that the respondents selected answer options that describe traditional values less than, those that describe relationships in a modern family. These include succession of generations (4.5%), helping parents and elders (15.9%), and socialising with close relatives, family holidays, anniversaries, etc. (9.9%). These findings demonstrate that traditional values espoused by Kazakhstani families have undergone a transformation, evolving to encompass a greater emphasis on respecting the personal boundaries and autonomy of modern individuals (Figure 1).

A correlation analysis conducted at the regional level revealed that the family value of “helping parents and elders” is more prevalent in the following regions: the Atyrau region (38.5%), the Kostanay region (37.1%), and the Mangistau region (26.8%). Furthermore, the family value of “Socialising with close relatives, family holidays, anniversaries, etc.” was identified as a significant factor among the surveyed families. In particular, the regions of Kostanay (27.4%), Pavlodar (15.4%), and Kyzylorda (14.6%) demonstrated a notable prevalence of this perspective. These findings challenge the conventional wisdom that kinship relations and traditional values are less prominent in the northern regions of the country.

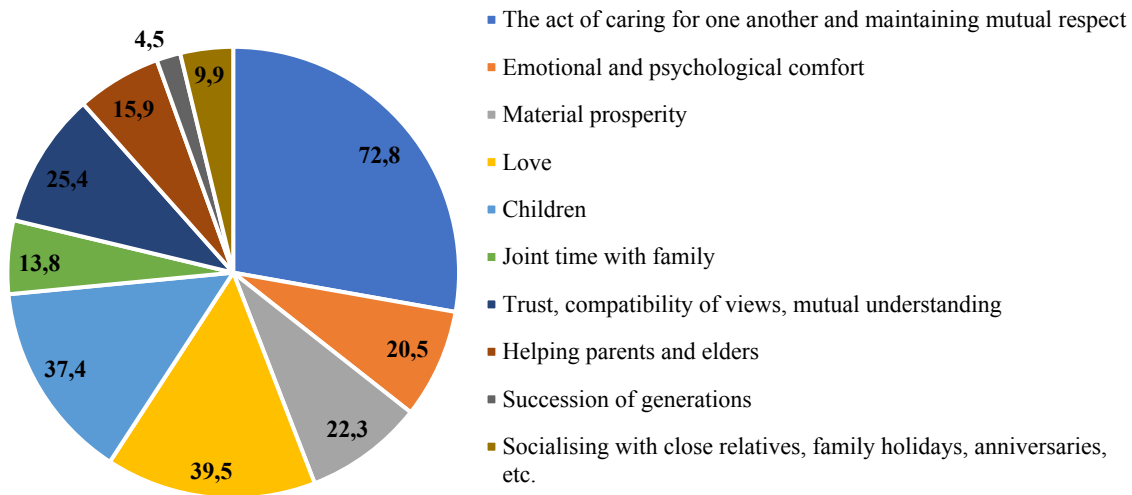


Figure 1 – Kazakhstani family values

A correlation analysis of the key family values expressed by survey participants across their age range revealed the following patterns:

- The importance of taking care of each other, showing mutual respect and support is most prevalent among those aged 18-28.
- The pursuit of emotional and psychological well-being is most common among those aged 61 and above.
- Material prosperity is most sought after by those aged 29-45.
- Love is most prevalent among those aged 18-28.
- Having children is most common among those aged 61 and above.

- Furthermore, the data indicates that spending time together, taking family holidays, celebrating anniversaries, and other similar activities are most prevalent among the 18-28 age group.

- Trust, compatibility of views, and mutual understanding are most common among the 46-60 age group.

- The 18-28 age group is most likely to engage family value such as helping parents and elders.

- The 61+ age group is most likely to prioritize the succession of generations.

- Finally, respondents aged 46-60 indicated that interaction with close relatives is the most important aspect of their lives (Figure 2).

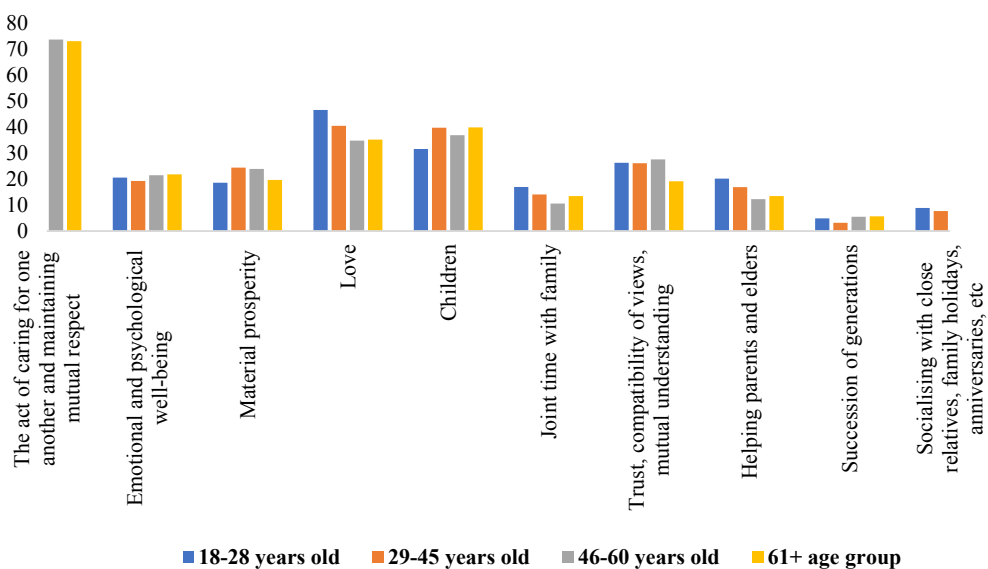


Figure 2 – Family values (by age group, %)

In order to ascertain the status of Kazakhs within the familial power structure, the survey participants were posed questions pertaining to the distribution of authority and responsibilities within the family unit. The responses indicated that traditional and patriarchal attitudes continue to exert significant influence in Kazakhstan, with nearly half of the respondents affirming that men should assume a dominant role in manage family (46.6%).

The analysis of this question by gender revealed no significant difference in the views of men and women on this issue. The proportion of men who believe that “a man should rule” was 47.4%, while

the proportion of women who held this view was 45.9%.

Nevertheless, a liberal/egalitarian perspective on the distribution of power within the family was also discernible. For instance, 28.8% of respondents indicated that there is no designated head of the family, with significant decisions being collectively made (Figure 3).

The analysis of responses to the question by age cohort revealed that the traditional position is more prevalent among Kazakhstani respondents aged 29-45 and 45-60 (51.6% and 53.9%, respectively), while the egalitarian approach is more characteristic of participants over 65 years old (35.2%).

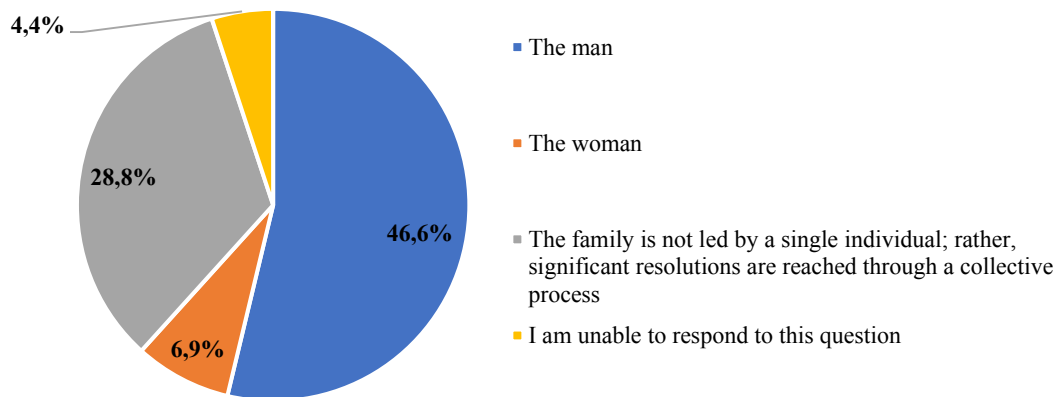


Figure 3 – «Power» in the family

Furthermore, the regional analysis of the data obtained in response to this question indicates that the traditional attitude towards the issue of power in the family is predominantly observed among residents of the Atyrau, Kyzylorda and Mangistau regions (respectively, 64.1%, 62.5% and 58.5%). The most prevalent position among respondents from Astana city (43.6%) and the Kostanay region (43.5%) is that of egalitarianism.

The findings of the study indicate that there is a perception of equality between spouses with regard to the division of parental duties within the family unit in Kazakhstan. Specifically, spouses are responsible for and undertake the following family obligations in a manner that is perceived to be equal:

- financial support (45.8%);
- family budget management (54%);
- walking with children (71.9%);
- organising free time together with children (72.3%);
- taking children to extra clubs and sports sections (62.8%);

- taking children to kindergarten and school (62.3%);
- checking homework (54.5%);
- treatment of the child if they are sick (62.4%).

Nevertheless, an analysis of the division of responsibilities within the family unit revealed that the provision of material support for the household is predominantly assigned to men (50.4%). Furthermore, it was observed that the majority of tasks related to childcare are performed jointly and equally by the mother, with percentages ranging from 21.5% to 39%.

In examining the distribution of responsibilities within the family in the housing domain, a notable observation emerged. A greater proportion of Kazakhstani respondents who rent an apartment believe that both spouses are responsible for the financial support of the family (75%) compared to those who live in their husband’s parents’ house. Furthermore, respondents who live in their husband’s parents’ house perceive themselves to be more responsible for the family income than oth-

ers (65.2%) (Figure 4). These particular social data demonstrate that the rigorous standards of the market society necessitate logical decision-making and accountability in the allocation of responsibilities within the family. In a traditional extended family,

it is customary for the male head of the household to assume responsibility for providing for the family. In contrast, in an egalitarian family that rents an apartment, the husband and wife typically share this responsibility.

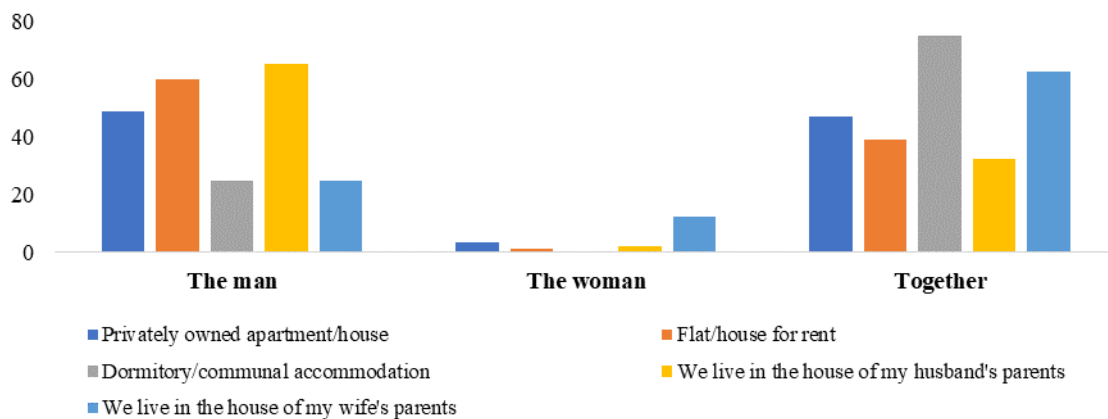


Figure 4 – Division of responsibilities in the family (in the housing division of the respondents)

The Kazakhstani public's stance on civil marriage, a prevalent contemporary form of marital and familial union, was not unambiguous. A positive assessment of this type of marriage was given by 28.3% of those who participated in the survey, while 32.8% of respondents displayed a negative attitude. A further 33.1% of respondents indicated a neutral stance on the matter. A total of 5.9% of respondents from Kazakhstan indicated that they had difficulty answering this question.

The correlation analysis of the data obtained during the study revealed the following relationship: respondents who are not registered in Civil Status Registration bodies and are not married according to religious ceremonies demonstrated a greater propensity to support civil marriage (59.5%) than other groups. Among these respondents, the rate of those who expressed a negative attitude towards civil marriage was only 4.8%. This represents the lowest rate of those who hold a negative opinion about civil marriage. Conversely, the highest proportion of those who do not enter into a civil marriage was identified among those who were registered in the

Civil Status Registration bodies or married according to religious rites (40.9%) (Figure 5).

Additionally, the demographic most supportive of civil marriage is comprised of citizens with professional and technical education (34.1%), respondents aged 29-45 (30.2%), and men (30.5%).

With regard to the question of same-sex marriage, it is evident that there are a number of different approaches and positions with regard to its interpretation. The survey data allowed for the determination of the opinions held by Kazakhstani citizens regarding this phenomenon. The research findings indicate that the majority of Kazakhstani citizens hold a negative view of same-sex marriage, with 86.7% expressing such an attitude. A mere 0.5% of respondents expressed support for this type of relationship, while 6.6% indicated a neutral stance (figure 6). The correlation analysis revealed that the majority of those who support this type of relationship are individuals who have only entered into a marital union through a marriage ceremony (3.7%), respondents with secondary education (0.9%), and respondents aged 29-45 (0.6%).

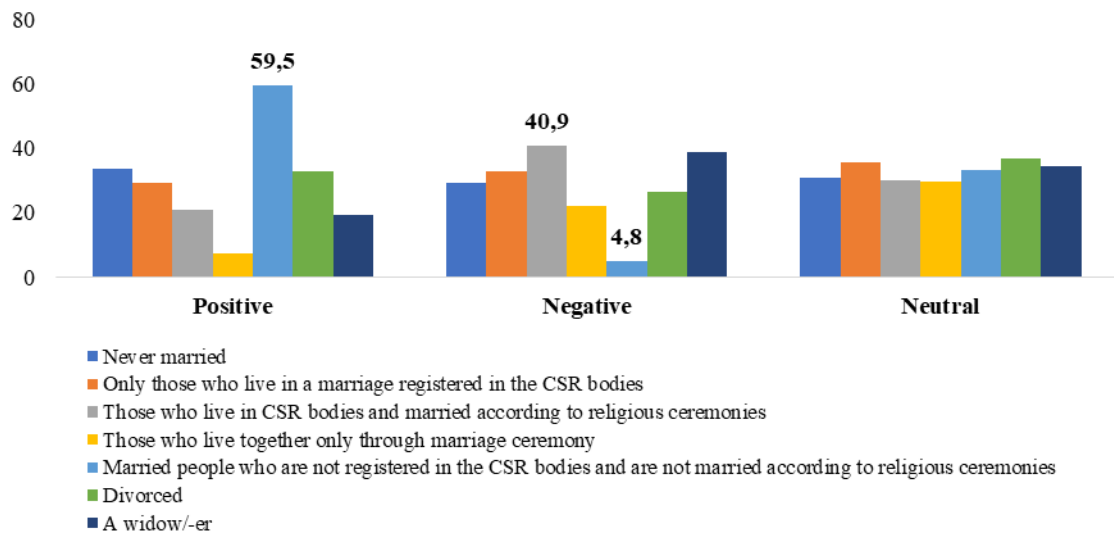


Figure 5 – Attitude towards civil marriage (in the breakdown of respondents’ marital status, %)



Figure 6 – Attitudes toward same-sex marriage

A further aspect that reflects the contemporary character of marital relations is the attitude towards premarital sexual intercourse. The majority of respondents in Kazakhstan expressed a negative opinion of premarital sex (56.7%), while 7.5% indicated support for this practice. The attitudes of men towards premarital sexual relations are similar to those indicated above, although there is a notable discrepancy: Of those with a negative opinion, 46.7% expressed support, while 9.7% of those in favour of premarital sex held a negative view.

A correlation analysis of the responses to this question revealed that those who support premarital sex are predominantly individuals who are not registered with Civil Status Registration bodies and have not been married according to religious ceremonies. Specifically, 19.0% of those who support a woman’s premarital relationship and 23.8% of those who support a man’s premarital relationship fall into this category.

A regional analysis of attitudes towards premarital sexual intercourse between men and women revealed a correlation between support for this practice

and the regions of Akmola and Almaty. Specifically, the majority of individuals who expressed support for this relationship were located in Akmola (18.0% of men and 20.0% of women) and Almaty (21.0% of men). The figures for the region are 0.4% and 17.5%. In contrast, those who espouse an opposing viewpoint, particularly those who hold a negative view of premarital sexual relations among men, are predominantly residents of the Atyrau (71.8%) and Kyzylorda (72.9%) regions. Similarly, those who do not support premarital sexual relations among women are primarily residents of the Atyrau (94.9%) and Zhambyl (87.9%) regions. One of the most striking findings of the correlation analysis is that none of the residents of the Atyrau and Mangistau regions endorse the notion of a woman entering into a relationship before marriage. In general, the sociological data obtained on this question demonstrate that the attitudes of citizens in the western and southern regions of the country towards premarital sex are characterised by traditional and patriarchal values (Figure 7).

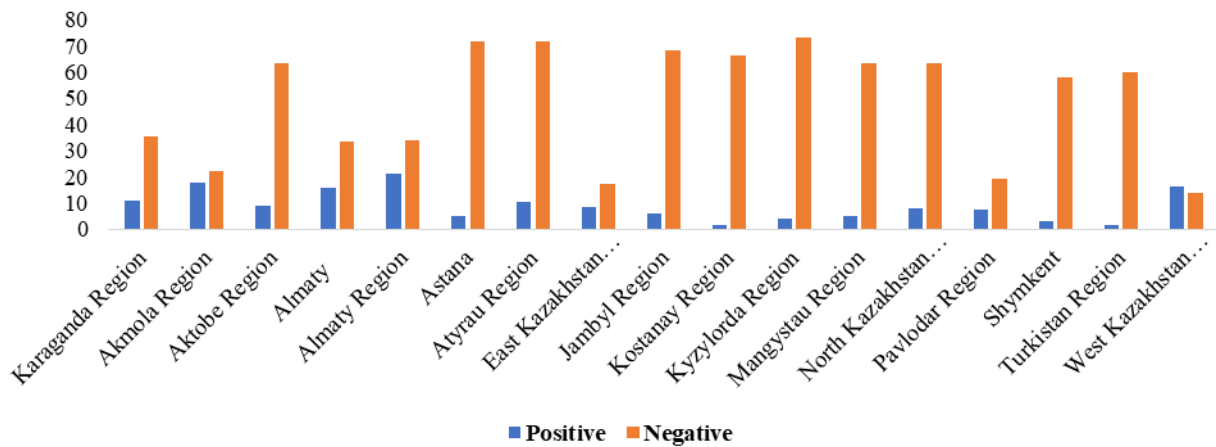


Figure 7 – View of men's premarital sex (by region, %)

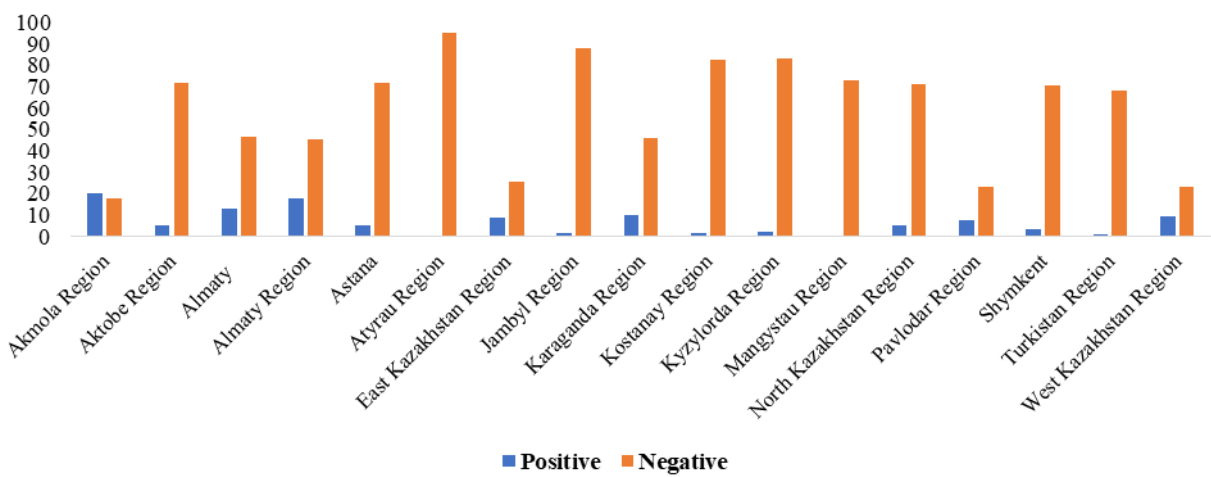


Figure 8 – View of women's premarital sexual relations (by region, %)

The analysis of the data from the sociological research indicated that the opinions and positions of Kazakhstani citizens regarding the family remain conservative in nature. The population of the country as a whole holds family values in high regard and is committed to their preservation. Nevertheless, the most significant value for a contemporary family is the provision of care and mutual respect, as well as support, which can be defined as “ecological relations within the family” in the modern context. The respondents did not ascribe a high level of importance to the values – succession of generations, the provision of assistance to parents and elders, the fostering of socialisation with close relatives, the celebration of family holidays, anniversaries, and so forth, ranking them between 7 and 10 in terms of their significance.

It is well documented that modern market capitalism has contributed to the entry of women into the labour market. This trend is also evident in Kazakhstani society, with a corresponding shift in the distribution of family responsibilities. The results of the study demonstrate this. Nevertheless, the study revealed that, with regard to the matter of power within the family unit, the patriarchal approach continues to exert a dominant influence. Additionally, the survey findings indicated the presence of gender-based stereotypes in the distribution of responsibilities within the family unit. These stereotypes entail the assumption that men are the primary providers for their families, while women are primarily responsible for the care of their family members.

A recent trend that has gained significant traction across the globe, including in Kazakhstan, is

the growing acceptance of cohabitation within a civil marriage. Findings from recent research indicate that there is a relatively narrow gap between individuals who hold positive and negative attitudes towards this phenomenon.

Meanwhile, the majority of Kazakhstanis are opposed to same-sex marriage, with only six respondents expressing support for this type of relationship.

Concurrently, Kazakhstani society adheres to traditional norms regarding the sacredness of marriage, which is perceived as a sacred bond that should be preceded by sexual relations, particularly among women, who disapprove of premarital sexual intercourse.

Conclusion

In light of the family's pivotal role in society, it is possible to examine it from a multitude of perspectives, drawing upon a diverse array of paradigms, theories, and concepts. This expansive topic lends itself to interdisciplinary analysis, offering a rich avenue for investigation. Nevertheless, when it comes to the sociological study of

the family, it is a challenging endeavour to select a system of concepts comprising a specific set of theories and concepts. An effective conceptual system for explaining the transformation of the family institution should integrate a range of sociological theories, including structural functionalism, Marxism, symbolic interactionism and gender theory, among others.

An examination of the theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of the family allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the complex issues associated with the transformation of marriage and family relations. This, in turn, enables the development of strategies for the creation of stable family structures in a variety of social contexts.

The secondary analysis of sociological study, entitled "Kazakhstan Families – 2022", which is analysed in the article, allows us to ascertain the opinions of citizens of the country regarding family values, marriage-family relations and contemporary trends in the family institution. It also permits us to determine the extent of approval of modern theories and concepts of the transformation of the family institution.

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