

Abstract

The study intends to investigate the manifestation of power and patriarchy among Armenian marriage and household traditions and customs which have their role in the process of marginalising women. The construal how the marriage traditions and customs define gender roles and trigger gender inequality in Armenian context is discussed.

Culture and society and traditions have an enormous impact on defining gender roles in Armenia. Armenians throughout history have been strongly influenced by cultural messages concerning gender roles and family influence. People both at subconscious or conscious level, take in the cultural perceptions.

While the country is going through globalisation processes and becoming more and more exposed to foreign influences, conventional gender stereotypes, and patriarchal systems are still deeply rooted and prevalent in all spheres of social life, and the institution of marriage is one of the most striking among them.

The research will illustrate how the culture, through institution of marriage, shapes compound power relations which lead to inequality and marginalisation of Armenian women in domestic sphere.

Institution of marriage itself, all over the world, historically has been deeply rooted in patriarchal values, customs and traditions. Despite the fact that nowadays, thanks to feminist movements, women are no longer husband's property, and achieved more rights, still patriarchal symbolism via traditions and culture encourages inequality disadvantaging women.

In Armenia's case it is much more prominent, because it is highly conservative country where traditions are cherished and define social life. The institute of marriage is closely interlinked with social and political as well as cultural factors which often define gender roles. The gender issues prevalent in different marriage patterns and different times will be touched upon in the paper.

The paper will also describe different marriage ceremonies and wedding traditions and how and in what ways they display complex and entangled power relations which Armenians follow with their different expressions and consequences. During my interviews with Armenian women who went through different strata of institution of marriage and media analysis, I gained an insight by capturing different patterns and traditions of marriage institution which shed light on how power relations emerged.

Key words: marriage, gender, feminism, patriarchy, power, inequality, oppression, toxic masculinity, heteronormativity, women rights