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GENDER CHARACTERISTICS OF PROVERBS ABOUT SON AND DAUGHTER IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH LANGUAGES

Artikova Dildora Egamberganovna
Urgench State University

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the gender characteristics of proverbs about boys and girls in English and Uzbek languages. The study examines how male and female images are formed in proverbs of both languages, their social roles, and the reflection of gender stereotypes. The proverbs are compared from semantic and cultural perspectives to identify the social perceptions of boys and girls. As a result, the study concludes with the specific and common aspects of gender stereotypes in both languages and their connection to broader cultural trends.

KEYWORDS: *Proverbs, Gender Characteristics, Boy, Girl, Stereotypes, Comparative Analysis.*

From the second half of the 20th century, the interest in gender-related issues within social and human sciences increased significantly. During this period, gender-focused perspectives began to emerge as a distinct field of academic inquiry and the term "genderology" entered scientific discourse. Genderology is an interdisciplinary branch of research that unites various domains such as gender anthropology, gender history, gender psychology, gender statistics, gender economics and gender linguistics. The term "gender" emphasizes not the biological sex of an individual, but the social roles, cultural norms and values associated with it. In other words, gender represents a social and cultural construct that encompasses behaviors, ways of speaking, clothing styles, professions and other societal categories traditionally attributed to men or women. According to P.Eckert and S.McConnell-Ginet, "gender is the social adaptation of individuals' sexual identity, encompassing and reflecting the behaviors of both women and men" [1]. As R.Lakoff points out, "gender is not something innate or naturally possessed by individuals, but rather a concept acquired through social and cultural influence" [2]. "Gender identity is determined not only by biological sex but also by an individual's social experience and cultural environment" [3]. "The gendered view of the world represents an integrative-psychological doctrine that encompasses philosophical, scientific, religious, atheistic, and other components, characterized by its systematic nature. Gender differences are not the result of biological differentiation between the sexes, but rather the outcome of socialization and adherence to socially established perceptions and behavioral models [4]. Indeed, these differences reflect individuality not only in biological terms but also in social, cultural and educational dimensions.

In the 1960s and 1970s, feminist theorists in the United States and Europe began to articulate their own Western theoretical and methodological approaches. The spread of feminist ideas into various fields advanced rapidly. Supporters of this movement opposed the patriarchal foundations of society, arguing that all existing languages reflect a worldview constructed predominantly from a male perspective [5]. They demanded that women's voices be recognized as independent and autonomous, and called for a reevaluation of linguistic markers and concepts used to represent femininity.

In both Uzbek and English cultures, proverbs concerning sons and daughters provide valuable insights into the perception of masculinity and femininity, shaping the ways in which men and women are expected to function within family and society. In Uzbek proverbs, there are various perspectives on girls. Some portray them as the pride of the family, while others emphasize their instability and the responsibilities they bring:

Qiz meniki, baxti o'zganiki (A daughter is mine, but her fate belongs to someone else).

Qiz bola birovning xasmi (A girl is like someone else's straw).

Reflecting traditional views on daughters and their roles in society, these Uzbek proverbs mean that while parents raise their daughter, her future (especially marriage and happiness) is determined by her husband and in-laws. It highlights the idea that daughters eventually leave their birth family. So, in a traditional society, a daughter is important for the family, but it is considered natural for her to eventually leave and become part of another family.

In some proverbs, daughters are valued positively, emphasizing that a household with a daughter is prosperous, filled with love, harmony, and happiness. Additionally, they highlight the importance of raising a daughter well and marrying her off to a worthy person:

Qizli uy bo'ston, qizsiz uy zimiston (A house with a daughter is a garden, a house without a daughter is darkness).

Qizli uy – karvonsaroy (A house with a daughter is like a karvonsaroy).

Qizni bersang, mardga ber, qizg'aldoqday jaynasin (If you give your daughter in marriage, give her to a brave man so that she may shine like a tulip).

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Abovementioned proverbs explain that a house with a daughter is compared to a flourishing garden, full of life and beauty. In contrast, a house without a daughter is seen as gloomy and lacking happiness. In the second proverb, a karvonsaroy was a roadside inn where travelers would stop to rest. It suggests that a home with a daughter is always bustling with activity, as relatives, friends, and potential suitors frequently visit. This reflects the social aspect of having daughters in traditional society, where they were seen as central to family gatherings and marriage arrangements. Moreover, the emphasis on marrying them to good men indicates the societal responsibility of ensuring a daughter's well-being even after she enters another household.

However, there are also restrictive views on girls, portraying them as individuals who must always be under supervision. Negative opinions about them can also be found:

Qiz saqlaguncha, bir siqim tuz saqla (Rather than keeping a daughter, keep a pinch of salt).

Qiz saqlading – o't saqlading (Keeping a daughter is like keeping fire).

Qiz uyning cho'risi, ham o'g'risi (A daughter is both the maid and the thief of the house).

These proverbs suggest that raising a daughter is difficult and burdensome, implying that even something as simple as salt is easier to manage than a girl or compare raising a daughter to handling fire. The last proverb has a dual meaning. On one hand, it suggests that daughters work hard in the household, much like a servant. On the other hand, it implies that they "steal" from the family by eventually leaving for another household after marriage. Thus, it reflects the stereotype that raising a daughter requires constant attention and supervision, demanding more responsibility and concern compared to raising a son. It also represents the belief in traditional societies that a girl's upbringing requires special attention and strict control. However, in modern society, it is emphasized that both girls and boys should receive equal education and upbringing, allowing them to shape their future independently.

If we talk about English proverbs that reflect gender roles and views on women in general, a proverb similar to *"Onasini ko'rib qizini ol"* also exists in English culture:

Like mother, like daughter.

The proverb highlights the similarity between a mother and her daughter not only in biological terms but also in the traits a daughter inherits from her mother, including behavior and worldview. It conveys the idea that if a mother is well-mannered, educated, and intelligent, her daughter will be the same. This emphasizes the crucial role of the mother and the importance of paying special attention to a daughter's upbringing. Overall, a girl's social status is determined by her role in family relationships, and her marriage is considered a measure of social success. This is a clear example of a gender stereotype:

A girl with a golden cradle doesn't remain long in her father's house.

Daughters and dead fish are no keeping wares.

An example that caught our attention illustrates how daughters remain consistently loyal to their parents, whereas sons, after marriage, tend to focus more on their new family:

A daughter's a daughter all your life, a son's a son until he takes a wife.

There are also proverbs that express a negative perspective on girls, portraying women as eager to get married and later as excessively demanding:

Maidens should be meek till they be married.

Maids want nothing but husbands, and when they have them they want everything.

Such gender stereotypes initially depict women as patient, humble, and undemanding but later criticize them for becoming demanding and having endless needs. In reality, it is important to value girls in society not only for marriage or beauty but also for their knowledge and professional achievements.

In Uzbek folk proverbs, the strong bond between father and son is clearly evident. They emphasize the idea that a son should follow in his father's footsteps, inheriting his skills, behavior, and experience. Additionally, a son is expected to protect the family both economically and socially, as well as preserve his father's legacy.

O'g'il otasiga o'xshamasa, qoni harom (If a son does not resemble his father, his blood is impure).

Yaxshi o'g'il otadan olti botmon ziyod bo'lar, yomon o'g'il otadan olti botmon kam bo'lar (A good son surpasses his father by six loads, while a bad son falls six loads behind).

Regarding the proverbs, a father passes down his knowledge, wealth, and reputation to his son, and the son must protect his father's honor and uphold his prestige. In general, a son is expected to be the main protector and pillar of the family.
In other words, while proverbs about daughters emphasize caution and responsibility, sons are portrayed as independent and the main support of the family, taking on a leadership role in society.

A son is expected to inherit all the qualities of his father, resembling him both genetically and through upbringing, a concept also reflected in English culture:

Like father, like son.

In general, the relationship between a son and his father is emphasized in other proverbs as well:

A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a grief to his mother.

A father's son is a mirror of his soul.

A son is considered a reflection of his father's spirit, while a father takes pride in his son's success, a mother is more inclined to feel her child's pain.

The son full and tattered, the daughter empty and fine.

This proverb implies that even if a son is not hungry, his clothes might still be worn out, whereas a daughter, even if she lacks material wealth, is expected to maintain a neat and elegant appearance. In terms of gender characteristics, it suggests that men are engaged in physical labor and care less

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about their clothing, while women are valued more for their outward appearance and manners in society:

My son is my son till he gets him a wife, but my daughter's my daughter all the days of her life.

This proverb also compares the roles of sons and daughters as children. It suggests that after marriage, a son becomes more focused on his wife and children, whereas a daughter remains emotionally attached and devoted to her parents even after marriage.

Many proverbs in both English and Uzbek cultures compare sons and daughters. We conducted a comparative study of these proverbs within the following themes to identify their gender characteristics:

1. *Activity and strength.* In Uzbek tradition, a son is commonly associated with power, energy, and leadership, whereas a daughter symbolizes beauty, grace, and modesty. In English culture, the son is portrayed as following in his father's footsteps strong, independent, and responsible while the daughter is viewed as mirroring her mother's manners and behavior, embodying politeness and refinement.
2. *Bringing blessings to home.* In Uzbek society, a household with a son is often described as stable and prosperous, while one with a daughter is considered pure and well-organized. The son is regarded as the family's future provider and protector, whereas the daughter adds harmony and emotional warmth to the household. In English beliefs, the son eventually becomes self-reliant, while the daughter remains emotionally close to her mother throughout life.
3. *Role in family and society.* Uzbek proverbs depict the son as a ruler or leader and the daughter as a symbol of peace and happiness. English proverbs emphasize the son's involvement in public life, resilience, and independence, while the daughter is expected to be delicate, polite, and caring.
4. *Family continuity.* Uzbek sayings describe a home with a son as strong and firmly established, and a home with a daughter as gentle and affectionate. English tradition also encourages sons to become self-sufficient and independent, while daughters are raised to value obedience and family duties.
5. *Personality and behavior.* Uzbek proverbs associate sons with strength and daughters with tenderness. Similarly, in English culture, sons are expected to act independently and confidently, while daughters are taught to be modest and well-mannered.
6. *Economic and social stability.* A son in Uzbek culture is believed to bring wealth and stability to the family, whereas a daughter may sometimes be seen as a source of concern or responsibility. In English thought, the son is expected to earn his success through effort, while the daughter is simultaneously viewed as a precious treasure and a cause for parental worry.
7. *Responsibility and authority.* Uzbek tradition emphasizes that sons should contribute to society and preserve the family legacy, while daughters are expected to marry and maintain family traditions. In English culture, the son gains independence after marriage, whereas the daughter remains closely connected to her family.
8. *Parental influence.* Uzbek proverbs portray the son as the continuator of the father's name and honor, while the daughter's behavior reflects the family's overall reputation. In English tradition, fathers tend to discipline and set expectations for sons, while mothers monitor and guide their daughters closely.
9. *Marriage and social expectations.* In Uzbek culture, a son's wedding is celebrated as a joyful event, symbolizing success and pride for the family. In contrast, a daughter's marriage is often perceived as a serious responsibility for parents. In English culture, parents are typically responsible for arranging or supporting their daughter's marriage, and daughters are expected to remain modest, virtuous, and well-behaved until marriage.

In conclusion, in the proverbs of both languages, sons are consistently associated with strength, independence, and active participation in society, while daughters are typically portrayed in connection with beauty, obedience, and dependence on the family. However, English proverbs emphasize a daughter's strong bond with her parents and a son's pursuit of independence, whereas Uzbek proverbs depict the son as the family's successor and the daughter as someone who remains under parental authority.

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