

T.A. Rezvushkina

*Ye.A. Buketov Karaganda State University, Kazakhstan
(E-mail: rezvushkina_178@mail.ru)*

Using of traditional practices in childcare in modern Kazakh society

The article describes the practice on using labor of «assistant girls», which are practicing in modern Kazakh families for childcare. In particular, we will describe the experience of the Kazakh married couple, which must follow the tradition of the nomadic society to provide childcare, do homework. We will consider urban couples, middle-class people with two or more children residing in the capital of Kazakhstan. In this case, Kazakhstan did not become the exception. In changing Kazakh society the family policy can be characterized as traditional, pronatalists and familists which are focused on standard family model (father, mother and children). In public, media, academic discourses the idea on necessity in revival of the family institution as stronghold for the nation in which a woman plays traditional roles — wife and mother, and the man shall provide economic responsibility for ensuring the family. In fact, Kazakh neotraditionalism becomes the state ideology in the changing society. But this ideology is badly supported with the operating social policy. The state provides a number of necessary minimum (paid maternity leave, workplace reservation, social security for childcare and kindergartens), absolutely ignoring diversified forms of modern Kazakh families (one parent families, full families, families with many children, childless and etc.), motives for children birth, need of certain social services connected with care and childcare. Under this article we will try to describe practices of Kazakh families concerning childcare which are different from the ideological standards approved the state. In particular, we are interested as Kazakh married couple follows traditions of the nomadic society in childcare.

Keywords: gender structure, gender policy, «assistant girls», modern Kazakhstan.

In many post-Soviet states political, economic, social transformations of the 90's to different extents were followed by revival of traditional values and serious changes in official ideology of family policy.

In this case, Kazakhstan did not become the exception. In changing Kazakh society the family policy can be characterized as traditional, pronatalists and familists which are focused on standard family model (father, mother and children). In public, media, academic discourses the idea on necessity in revival of the family institution as stronghold for the nation in which a woman plays traditional roles — wife and mother, and the man shall provide economic responsibility for ensuring the family [1].

In fact, Kazakh neotraditionalism becomes the state ideology in the changing society. But this ideology is badly supported with the operating social policy. The state provides a number of necessary minimum (paid maternity leave, workplace reservation, social security for childcare and kindergartens), absolutely ignoring diversified forms of modern Kazakh families (one parent families, full families, families with many children, childless and etc.), motives for children birth, need of certain social services connected with care and childcare.

So, if in Russian gender order, under words E.Zdravomyslova «...the paid house work is becoming more popular...market of nurses is diversified...there is marked increase in demand for these services» [2], so in Kazakh families are popular traditional practice which have arisen and got their justification in the period of nomadic society.

Under this article we will try to describe practices of Kazakh families concerning childcare which are different from the ideological standards approved the state. In particular, we are interested as Kazakh married couple follows traditions of the nomadic society in childcare. We will study city married couple, with two or more children, representatives of the middle class. The matter is that as show researches [3] representatives of the city middle class are motivated to implement gender contract «working mother» and «supporter father». «Gender contract is inseparably connected with the social policy. Moreover, social policy defines the hegemonic gender contract. Soviet gender contract «working mother» assumed institutional support ordered by the state and the society of female role» [2]. Today, in Kazakhstan, in our opinion, there are no exact formulated gender contracts. More likely, there is a certain mix which is contained of both traditional and Soviet, and modern practices. The choice of the given practices is caused by the individual biography both the individual and the family.

As the theoretical basis we use the ways of the Australian sociologist R. Connell which applies general paradigm in gender researches, using meaning «structure» and «practice» which he borrows from E. Giddens. General paradigm in sociology arises as attempt to overcome opposition objective (social structure) and subjective (actions of the agent). In the structuration theory of e. Giddens, the structure and practice are connected as follows: human practice always assumes existence of social structure in the sense that it includes social rules and resources [4]. The structure described E. Giddens as structuring qualities allowing «to connect» time and place in social systems, qualities which cause existence of more or less identical social practices in time and place and which provide «systematic» form [4].

Using the general paradigm, R. Connell suggests describing structure, to find out what it is in this situation, and then to study as the structure limits free implementation on practice. Practice in this meaning presents transformation of the concrete situation in a certain way in compliance or contrary to the structure. Above-mentioned structural models are the main elements of any gender order or gender regime. Connell introduces a concept «gender order» understood as number of daily practices and structural conditions organizing interaction of sexes on different society levels [4] as follows:

- ✓ institutional (social institutes regulating sex behavior),
- ✓ ideological (gender ideologies and discourses, gender behavior standards),
- ✓ symbolic (ideas of masculinity-femininity)
- ✓ daily (gender identities).

Thus, using R. Connell's point of view, we will analyze how objectively set structures in the form of dominating discourse, actions of the state institutes and the state social policy influence on daily practices of individuals in family and marriage and how authors adapt under the existing structures.

Our article will be devoted to the description and the analysis traditions which we have formal designated as «the girl assistant». This practice means, use of the labor of the young girl/woman, distant relative from the city or rural areas which have experience of housekeeping and childcare. Her stay in own family is a problem as the family has no financial opportunities to pay for her education or marry her. But there are relatives who live in the city, they have good financial support and they have children to look after. As «payment» for her work the accepting family undertakes to provide her with food, clothes, sometimes paying for her education in the institute*.

It should be noted that this practice has no linguistic designation. So, in one historical source describing life of Kazakhs (see N.E.Massanov, Zh.V.Abylkhozhin, I.V.Erofeev, A.N.Alekseenko, G.S.Baratova, S.G.Klyashtorny, T.I.Sultanov, A.I.Levshin, N.A.Kislyakov) is not mentioned this tradition, but from conversations with Kazakh females, everybody agreed that there is such experience or existence of the mentioned above practice [5].

Under this article as an example we will consider a case of one informant A. who entering the University in Astana, has come to live with her aunt. The girl is 20 years old, she is from city family of the middle class. There are four people in the aunt's family (a husband — a state worker, a daughter — 17 years old, a son is 10 and a daughter is 1,5 months). We have called this interview as «*help, listen, clean up*».

The interview consists of several thematic blocks. The first block is devoted to the description of the moving and the rules, which should follow the informant in a new family. The aunt's family is described in the second block (the status of the members, relations between parents and children). And in the third block A. tells about men and their duties in the house and homework. In the fourth block she tells about her future plans.

1 block: «new family»

I.: *Did you have a variant to live in the hostel or rent a flat?*

A.: *I submitted the application, but everything is artificial, a place for me, but my mother and aunt communicate very well. They are close and the aunt offered herself...*

I.: *Did you discuss with your mother how you would live and the conditions of living? You come not to your own family...*

A.: *Of course! You should clean yourself and so on... such details...help, listen, clean...*

I.: *And what does it mean «help»?*

* In the period from January till May, 2014 there were interviewed some girls, living in the families of their relatives and taking care of their house and children in Astana and Karaganda. The age of the girls varies from 17 to 25. The way of searching informants is the method of the snowball.

A.: *At home... As I understand wash dishes... Well, what my uncle will ask me to do and on my own initiative, if I see where my help is needed....*

2 block: «aunt's family»:

A.: *- A state worker, is very important (aunt)... This child is more for the uncle... The fact that all friends have 3–4 children. Everybody told them why it's not enough children and so on....She wants to work...but what about baby..., As I think they want to find a nurse. And therefore as the baby is old enough they will hire a nurse, and aunt will get back to work...And now I must go shopping...I have to do the biggest part of duties...*

3 block: duties of the «girl assistant»:

I.: *- If to consider your average day, how do you plan it?*

A.: *- I get up early, my brother gets up with me...I must take care of him... before aunt woke up but not very often...usually I do... It is breakfast for two, help him to get ready, we leave together. First, I take him to school, after I go to the University...At the beginning it strained me, but in general it is fine and I am quiet...*

I.: *- And now when the baby was born, you told it became a little difficult?*

A.: *- Yes, you are right. I do not sleep enough, happens...I must go shopping, make porridge, wash diapers, to bring that...check if the baby sleeps or not...some things like these...*

4 block: mark given by informant of its status «the girl-assistant»:

A.: *- But psychologically I understand that I live in this family and I must realize this...but also it is tradition that this is a grown up person and in spite of the fact that they are my relatives, this is not my house. This is not close aunt though we communicate too close, I feel subordination...Traditions customs — this all is my life...I have not done anything very important...*

5 block: men's duties at home

A.: *- The uncle is very kind. Not every uncle would do the same... He makes atmosphere in the family. He is very kind, quiet...His work allows him to be at home and work. He works 3 times per day for some hours...Sometimes he cooks...He does it seldom only when he wants...To do some physical work I do not know...*

I.: *- And what about your brother?*

A.: *- The brother does not do anything ...He finishes the 4th form. He is little and does not listen to me much, but respects in principle...He does not get up himself, but he makes his bag himself...I help him to do his lessons...Sometimes...I am sorry for him, he tells that he is tired and so I put my plans away on the second plan. I study well. Sometimes I can...*

6 block: «family hierarchy»:

A.: *- I told before when the little sister was very chaotic (elder daughter of the aunt, cousin who is 17, before going to study abroad). Now everything is ok, sometimes it can be... tulle push, I do not like and so on...as the cousin left there was not any orders if only in the kitchen. F.ex.: Put the rug not right and something like this.*

I.: *- Can you tell more detailed about this situation (I mean the conflict between the informant and her cousin). What had happened?*

A.: *- I think it lasted for a long time. It was often like wash the dishes. «I cannot. I feel myself bad». (cousin) and something like this...in spite of the fact that she is younger, she can hurt me... She told me «Clean brother's room»... I told that it was clean there...and she for harm «no, it is not clean, you will clean it! I told you clean!» and this hurt me, I entered the room, closed the door and told her if she spoke to me in this way, I would also speak in another way to her!»...Her parents heard this but they kept silence...I got angry and when she passed by, she told «If I tell you must, it means you must!» This hurt me very much!!! ...Her tone and words...All together...Though on the place of my aunt I would tell her that she was wrong... She hurt me and humiliated in front of all family.*

A.: *- Sometimes, she tells «you do nothing». You cannot cook in your 20s» (aunt)... but her words are not serious. But there was the situation last year. She told me to take a schoolbag but I was in a hurry and forgot. It was something with something!!! I got in trouble!!! I told, «We are 3!!! Why I?» «I told you about it» (aunt)!!!*

7 block: «future plans»:

I.: *- Won't you be back there?*

A.: *- No...What for? She often tells me, don't forget I cooked for you and etc. and many like this...*

I.: - Would you like to live in this family for the second time? Better to tell, there is a choice the hostel, to rent a flat or in aunt's family?

A.: - At the moment I will prefer to rent a flat...

Having made a number of interviews with the «girls-assistants» we have made the following conclusions:

1. The system of gender inequality has considerably become tougher in Kazakhstan under capitalist relations and free market when the state has removed from itself obligations to provide minimum of social services and put actors in the situation to look for its own strategies, «recipes» to solve problems on housekeeping, caring and education children.

2. One of such ways of adaption, «recipes» developed in Kazakh families of middle class is to use labor of young girls «assistants».

3. Daily, household relations in Kazakh families has changed much especially concerning such criterion as age. It means demonstration and full submission younger by the senior.

4. Gender inequality is developed by women themselves who keep and pass to the next generation of women value and norm of obedience, respect, honoring of seniors, especially men.

5. Duties at home are gender marked, it is imputed duties of women and only women. This labor is not considered like work, rather more it is considered as duty peculiar to women. And women themselves value this work.

6. In Kazakh families is supported exploitation of young girls by the senior women when the girl are obliged to follow all household work and duties.

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Т.А. Резвущкина

Қазіргі қазақстандық қоғамда балаларды күтудегі дәстүрлі тәжірибені пайдалану

Мақалада қазіргі қазақ отбасыларында балаларға қамқор, күтім көрсетуде «көмекшіл-қыздар» еңбектерін пайдалану тәжірибесі қарастырылды. Нақты айтқанда, қазақ отбасының үй жұмысын атқаруда, балаларға күтім жасауда көшпенді қоғамның дәстүрлерін қолдану тәжірибесі бейнеленді. Біз Астанада тұрып жатқан екі және одан көп балалары бар, орта тап өкілдері ретінде анықталатын отбасылық жұптарды қарастырамыз. Қазіргі Қазақстан қоғамында жүргізіліп жатқан отбасылық саясатты дәстүрлі, пронаталистік және фамилистік деп сипаттауға болады және ол отбасының нормативтік үлгісіне (әке, ана және балалар) бағытталған. Көпшілік, медийлік, академиялық дискурстарда ұлттың негізі ретінде отбасының институт ретінде жандандыру керек екендігі жиі айтылады, онда әйел дәстүрлі рөлдерді — ана және жолдасы, ал ерлер отбасының экономикалық қамтамасыз ету қызметтерін атқаруы тиіс. Қазақстандық жаңа дәстүрлер өзгеріске ұшыраған қоғамда мемлекеттік идеологияға айналуға. Бірақ бұл идеология жүзеге асырылып жатқан әлеуметтік саясатпен толық қамтамасыз етілмейді. Мемлекет азаматтарына қажетті минимумды қамтамсыз етіп (декреттік демалыс, жұмыс орнының сақталуы, балаға күтім жасауға арналған әлеуметтік көмектер, балабақшалар), қазіргі Қазақстан қоғамында орын алатын отбасының диверсификацияланған түрлерінің (ата-аналық, кеңейтілген, көпбалалы, баласыз және т.б.), баланы туу, балаларға күтім жасауда пайдаланатын қызметтерді ұсыну қажеттіліктері мүлдем ескерілмейді. Осы мақала аясында біз қазақ отбасыларының балаларға күтім жасау барысында қолданатын тәжірибелерді бейнелеп беруге тырысамыз және олардың мемлекетпен ұсынылып жатқан мемлекеттік стандарттардан ерекшеленетіндігін көрсетеміз. Нақты айтқанда, бізді балаларға қамқорлық пен күтім жасауда қазақ отбасылық жұптың көшпенді қоғамның дәстүрлерін қалай қайта өндіретіндігі қызықтырады.

Кілт сөздер: гендерлік салт, гендерлік саясат, «көмекші-қыздар», қазіргі Қазақстан, отбасы институты, қаржылық мүмкіндіктер.

T.A. Резвушкина

Использование традиционных практик заботы о детях в современном казахстанском обществе

В статье рассматривается практика использования труда «девочек-помощниц», к которой прибегают современные казахские семьи для осуществления функции заботы о детях. В частности, описан опыт казахской семейной пары, которая вынуждена прибегать к традиции кочевого общества для осуществления заботы о детях, выполнения домашней работы, использования труда «девочек-помощниц». Рассмотрены городские семейные пары, представители среднего класса, имеющие двух и более детей, проживающие в столице Казахстана. Казахстанский неотрадиционализм стал сегодня государственной идеологией, но данная идеология плохо подкрепляется действующей социальной политикой. Государство обеспечивает граждан набором необходимого минимума (декретный отпуск, сохранение рабочего места, социальное пособие по уходу за ребенком, детские сады), абсолютно игнорируя диверсифицированные формы современных казахстанских семей (монородительские, расширенные, многодетные, бездетные и т.д.), мотивы рождения детей, необходимости тех или иных социальных услуг, связанных с заботой и уходом за детьми. Эта ситуация вызывает у казахстанцев необходимость искать альтернативные стратегии адаптации для выполнения контрактов «работающая мать» и «кормилец-отец». Одной из таких стратегий является использование труда «девочки-помощницы», которая, как правило, является родственницей по линии отца или матери, не имеет финансовых возможностей обучаться после окончания школы, но имеет опыт ухода за маленькими детьми и выполнения домашней работы. Именно она берет на себя осуществление функции заботы о детях и выполняет домашнюю работу. В обмен на это она получает возможность жить в городе, учиться и выйти замуж за горожанина.

Ключевые слова: гендерный уклад, гендерная политика, «девочки-помощницы», современный Казахстан, финансовые возможности.

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