BG Pulse Journal USA
ISSN:1947-2536 http://www.bgpulseusa.com/index.php/bg

SOCIO-PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS AND LEGAL FACTORS OF REFORMING THE FAMILY INSTITUTION IN NEW UZBEKISTAN

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doi:https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23335008

Abstract. The article explores the socio-philosophical meaning and legal dimensions of family reform in New Uzbekistan. It views the family as a space of socialization, moral continuity, personal dignity, and shared responsibility. Drawing on family sociology, theories of social justice, and Uzbekistan's legal framework, the study discusses changing household relations, legal awareness, gender equality, and community support. Particular attention is paid to the interaction between formal legal guarantees and everyday social practices. A twelve-item community survey framework is used to organize analysis of interpersonal relations, access to services, and attitudes toward family values. The article identifies practical directions for strengthening rights-based family support while respecting cultural continuity.
Keywords: family institution, social philosophy, New Uzbekistan, family law, legal awareness, social modernization, mahalla, gender equality, social justice.

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются социально-философские основания и правовые факторы реформирования института семьи в Новом Узбекистане. Семья анализируется как пространство социализации, преемственности ценностей, личного достоинства и взаимной ответственности. На основе научных подходов к изучению семьи и социальной справедливости раскрывается взаимосвязь правовых гарантий, внутрисемейных отношений, гендерного равенства и общественной поддержки. Особое внимание уделяется роли махалли, правовой осведомлённости и доступности социальных услуг. Предлагается инструмент социологического изучения семейных отношений и намечаются направления согласования культурных традиций с правами и свободами личности.
Ключевые слова: институт семьи, социальная философия, Новый Узбекистан, семейное право, правовое сознание, модернизация, махалля, гендерное равенство, социальная справедливость.

Introduction. Family reform in New Uzbekistan is not confined to legal amendments. It is a broader social process through which established expectations about marriage, parenting, household roles, intergenerational obligations, and community responsibility interact with contemporary ideas of equality and individual agency. The family transmits cultural norms and provides emotional support, yet its stability also depends on access to education, employment, lawful protection, and reliable institutions. The central research question is how these moral and institutional dimensions can be reconciled without opposing cultural continuity to personal rights. The article examines this question through socio-philosophical theory, national legislation, and a structured local survey framework.

Literature Review. Pierre Bourdieu explains how the family is sustained not only by kinship ties but also by collective classifications and public recognition; his approach illuminates the social meaning of official family policy (Bourdieu, 1996). Urie Bronfenbrenner emphasizes that household relationships develop within wider educational, economic, and institutional environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Anthony Giddens associates changing intimacy with

dialogue and reflexive negotiation, while Andrew Cherlin demonstrates that family practices may change even where marriage remains symbolically significant (Giddens, 1992; Cherlin, 2004). These perspectives caution against interpreting institutional reform only as either the preservation or the rejection of tradition.

Nancy Fraser's analysis of care responsibilities shows how family wellbeing is connected to gendered expectations and the organization of social policy (Fraser, 1994). Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum interpret development through substantive opportunities, including education, security, and the ability to exercise meaningful choice (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2000). Robert Putnam highlights trust and civic networks as resources for collective action, whereas Froma Walsh describes family resilience through shared meaning, adaptability, and communication (Putnam, 2000; Walsh, 2016). Taken together, these studies suggest three criteria for analysing reform: equal dignity within households, accessible institutional protection, and community solidarity that does not replace individual rights.

Legal and Socio-Philosophical Foundations. Article 76 of the revised Constitution of Uzbekistan recognizes the family as the basic unit of society and places it under public protection (Republic of Uzbekistan, 2023a). The Family Code regulates marriage and family relations, including the equality of spouses and responsibilities toward children (Republic of Uzbekistan, 1998). These provisions make family stability inseparable from legal equality: a durable household cannot be evaluated only by its formal continuity, but also by its members' ability to participate in decisions and seek protection.

The Law on Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men (O'RQ-562) establishes a framework for addressing unequal treatment, and the Law on Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence (O'RQ-561) strengthens legal safeguards against abuse (Republic of Uzbekistan, 2019a, 2019b). Amendments introduced by O'RQ-829 further address protective mechanisms, while Presidential Decree PF-87 links family and women's support to education, employment, and institutional services (President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, 2022; Republic of Uzbekistan, 2023b). Philosophically, these measures raise a central issue: legal rights are socially meaningful when households know how to use them and public services are accessible, trusted, and responsive.

Research Design and Methods. The local study framework is defined for ten families and thirty adult participants in Kumushkent mahalla citizens' assembly (MFY), Vobkent district, Bukhara region. It uses a twelve-item questionnaire scored from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), together with document analysis and theoretical comparison. The items examine family dialogue (Q1–Q5), legal awareness and access to services (Q6–Q8, Q11), and community support and values (Q9, Q10, Q12). For clarity, Table 1 contains a complete 30-person analytical tabulation: in each row the disagree, neutral, and agree categories total exactly 30. This tabulation must be checked against completed questionnaires before being cited as a fieldwork result. Because several participants may come from the same household, descriptive proportions—not population estimates or causal claims—are appropriate.

Table 1

Twelve-item social survey and response distribution (N = 30)

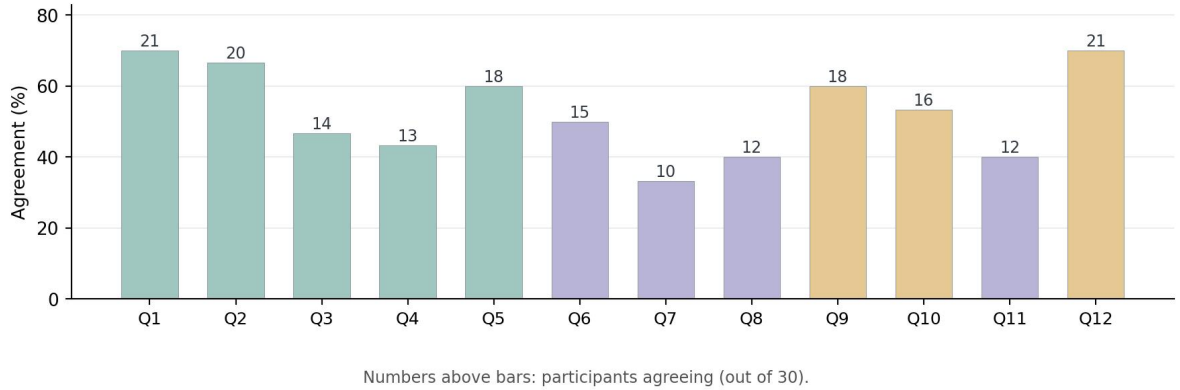
Item	Questionnaire statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
				n	%
Q1	Members of my family listen respectfully to different generations.	5	4	21	70

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ISSN:1947-2536 http://www.bgpulseusa.com/index.php/bg

Item	Questionnaire statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	
				n	%
Q2	Major family decisions are made through mutual consultation.	5	5	20	66.7
Q3	Household and caregiving duties are shared fairly among capable members.	9	7	14	46.7
Q4	Young adult members can express their educational and career preferences.	11	6	13	43.3
Q5	Disagreements are discussed without humiliation, threats, or coercion.	7	5	18	60
Q6	My family knows where to obtain legitimate advice or mediation.	8	7	15	50
Q7	I understand how to seek formal protection against domestic violence.	13	7	10	33.3
Q8	Local social assistance is accessible to families that need support.	11	7	12	40
Q9	Participation in mahalla life encourages practical mutual assistance.	6	6	18	60
Q10	Family members have realistic opportunities for education or employment.	7	7	16	53.3
Q11	I can find reliable digital information about family rights and services.	10	8	12	40
Q12	Family reform should combine cultural continuity with equal dignity and rights.	4	5	21	70

Figure 1

Positive responses to the twelve questionnaire statements



Numbers above bars: participants agreeing (out of 30).

Results and Interpretation. Within the 30-person analytical matrix, Q1 and Q12 have the largest shares of agreement: 21 respondents each (70.0%). Mutual consultation (Q2) is endorsed by 20 respondents (66.7%), and respectful conflict resolution (Q5) by 18 (60.0%). Lower agreement appears in the division of domestic duties (Q3: 46.7%) and the expression of younger adults'

educational preferences (Q4: 43.3%). This contrast highlights the importance of distinguishing general approval of family solidarity from concrete opportunities to participate in household decisions.

The institutional items yield an even clearer contrast. Fifteen participants (50.0%) affirm knowledge of advice channels (Q6), but only ten (33.3%) affirm knowledge of formal protection procedures (Q7). Access to assistance (Q8) and reliable digital legal information (Q11) each receive twelve positive responses (40.0%). Community mutual aid (Q9) attracts eighteen positive responses (60.0%). These patterns suggest that social trust and commitment to family values may coexist with limited knowledge of legal services. The three thematic groups show average positive-response shares of 57.3% for family dialogue, 40.8% for legal knowledge and services, and 61.1% for community support and values; these are averages across items, not separate respondent samples.

Discussion. The theoretical and legal analysis indicates that family reform should be evaluated across three mutually dependent levels. At the interpersonal level, dignity entails respectful communication and equitable participation. At the institutional level, legal guarantees require understandable information, confidential assistance, and functioning referral mechanisms. At the community level, the mahalla can strengthen solidarity and facilitate access to services, provided that informal mediation does not obstruct formal remedies or compromise safety. In this sense, social-philosophical modernization does not necessarily dissolve family traditions; it examines which traditions encourage care and reciprocity and which practices require reassessment in light of equality and human rights.

For policy and community practice, the most relevant priorities are accessible legal education for families, transparent cooperation between mahalla personnel and specialized agencies, respectful intergenerational dialogue, and support for education, employment, and fair caregiving responsibilities. Future local studies should use completed anonymous questionnaires, specify respondent selection and consent, and compare findings across several mahallas before making broader generalizations.

Conclusion. Reforming the family institution in New Uzbekistan is a socio-philosophical process as well as a legal one. Constitutional commitments, family legislation, gender-equality guarantees, and protective mechanisms provide essential norms, but their social effect depends on household practices and practical access to assistance. The analysis supports a model of family stability that combines cultural continuity with equal dignity, individual agency, and institutional responsibility. Local survey instruments can help identify where communication, legal literacy, and community support require focused attention.

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