

Men's Attitudes to Gender Stereotypes in Ukraine

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Abstract: This study of masculinity as a concept of men's culture was undertaken with the purpose of generating data needed to understand the processes of formation of men's identity and evolution of men's cultural practices in order to find efficient communication channels for advocacy efforts to effect changes in the social stereotypes. To fill the gaps in the data throwing light on men's behavioral practices and attitudes to gender equality and violence, UNFPA launched a special sociological survey. The study methodology was based on the approaches of the International Men and Gender Equity Survey (IMAGES) adjusted to the local socio-cultural context. The survey topics covered men's experience in childhood and their marital relationships, division of powers in households and attitudes to parenthood, perceptions of the gender norms, awareness on gender-sensitive legislation and attitudes to gender-based violence.

Keywords: masculinity, gender norms, socialization, gender equality, Ukraine.

1. Introduction

Gender inequality is one of the main human rights violations that manifests itself in the unequal opportunities of women and men in various domains of public life, including political representation and decision-making, economic opportunities and access to resources, empowerment in the family and vulnerability to discrimination and violence. The reasons for the unequal distribution of powers of women and men should be sought in the patriarchal norms that establish gender-based social roles and behavior patterns accepted by the society. In the past, the gender inequality problems were perceived mostly as the "women's issues," while gender



programs focused on improving well-being of women. However, over the past decades, there has been a growing recognition of the need to involve men in promoting gender equality, in particular, through active participation in policies to combat and prevent gender-based violence.

One of the ways to start the discussion about the role, responsibilities and potential of men in advancing gender equality is to study the culture of masculinity, as it is responsible for determining and entrenchment of the prevailing men's roles, patterns of behavior and attitudes. In this way we recognize that the evolvement of masculine identity is under the permanent pressure of society requiring that men's behavior should meet certain expectations and norms. Men's socialization starts in the early childhood and faces many impacts, including upbringing and observation of marital relations in the parents' family, school environment and relations with peers, information environment and the mass media. Widely accepted norms of male behavior also determine what traits, attitudes and lifestyle patterns are expected from modern men by the society; these norms are not always favorable to their social well-being and quality of life. Aggression and predisposition to violence, in particular, are often perceived by most people as the negative aspects of manhood and masculine identity.

Therefore, the purpose of this article is to analyze the process of socialization of the modern men by exploring their behavioral patterns, attitudes and cultural practices related to the impact of gender norms and stereotypes. Accordingly, the research objectives are as follows:

- to review the concepts of masculinity through the prism of gender norms;
- to analyze factors that determine the present cultural practices of men, such as their childhood experience and patterns of relationships in the parents' family;
- to study marital relations, and division of powers and responsibilities between women and men in households;
- to explore men's attitudes to parenthood and relationships with their children;
- to assess men's attitudes to gender norms and stereotypes that are commonly accepted in the society, as well as their awareness of the current legislation on gender equality.

In accordance with the study objectives, the second section of the article presents an overview of the modern concepts of masculinity through the prism of men's attitudes to gender norms and

violence. The section lists main traits and cultural practices attributed to the “real man” concept and explains why the excessive pressure posed by the society on men produces negative effects resulting in the “crisis of masculinity” faced today; and conceptualizes the correlations between gender-based violence and masculinity standards.

Section three briefly describes the methodology and design of the research based on quantitative and qualitative sociology methods, the characteristics of the target population groups, and the recruiting technology used to select the respondents and participants of focus groups.

Section four analyzes the impact of social expectations and behavioral models associated with masculinity, on men’s social well-being in the context of labor relations, health and emotional well-being.

Section five examines men’s experiences of childhood through the prism of division of powers and home responsibilities between parents, and perceptions of marital relationship patterns that can be reproduced in men’s adult life. In the same section, men’s attitudes to parenthood are examined in detail, as well as their involvement in the childcare, including the practice of taking parental leaves.

Section six presents the study findings on the features of marital relations in modern families, including the division of powers in terms of household decision-making and men’s involvement in domestic work.

Section seven assesses men’s attitudes to the prevailing gender norms and stereotypes that determine the division of priorities between family and professional commitments, approaches to family planning and the perception of individual attributes of the masculine culture. Men’s awareness of the national legislation and state policy on gender equality is also discussed, as well as their attitudes to the family law and the law on domestic violence.

The article concludes with a summary of the main results of the study.

2. Modern concepts of masculinity through the prism of gender norms and violence

The increasing number of gender studies in the recent decades reflects the growing public interest to exploration of gender identity and norms that reinforce social roles of men and women while linking particular attributes and characteristics with a particular gender. According to UNESCO, the term ‘gender’ refers to the socially and culturally constructed meanings and roles assigned to persons of different biological sexes - males and females (UNESCO 2004: 15). As a concept, this definition also covers the expectations held about the characteristics, attitudes and behaviors of both women and men in a society, while recognizing that manifestations of unequal treatments stem from stereotypes, rigid role-setting and prejudices.

Following the global debates on women’s position called to promote the fundamental principles of gender equality in rights, opportunities, and responsibilities of citizens, there has been an increasing interest to exploration of gender issues from the standpoint of men. Research on masculinity have obvious applicative outcomes enabling to address important social problems, including the education of boys, actions on men’s healthcare, and promotion of gender equality ideas (Connell 2001: 268). Over the recent years a stronger focus has developed on the positive role men and boys can and do play in promoting women’s empowerment in the family, the community, the labor market, and the decision-making.

Beginning with the Beijing Declaration, adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women (1995) , a number of international platforms have been focused on these issues, including the World Summit on Social Development (1995), its review session (2000), and the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS (2001). Respectively, the key international documents emphasize the critical role of men and boys in addressing the inequality in power relations between men and women: ‘The Platform of Action emphasizes that women share common concerns that can be addressed only by working together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of gender equality around the world’ (Beijing Platform for Action 1995: 3).

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women specifically focused on the topic ‘The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality’ in its 48th session in March 2004. The Commission recognized ‘the capacity of men and boys in bringing about change in attitudes, relationships, and access to resources and decision-making which are critical for the promotion of gender equality and the full enjoyment of all human rights by women,’ and called for action to

‘ensure that men and boys, whose role is critical in achieving gender equality, are actively involved in policies and programs that aim to involve the equal sharing of responsibilities’.

The investigation of masculinities or men’s studies have been active for more than 20 years; research findings in numerous fields were presented in book series, individual monographs and policy papers in various countries (Reeser 2010; Connell 2005: 360; Kimmel 1994). Conceptual frameworks of masculinity have been developed by psychologists, anthropologists, philosophers, historians, and other social scientists. Most of these studies explore the intersection of masculinity with other dimensions of social relations, structures, and concepts from other research fields, such as the social construction of gender differences.

When defining the concept of masculinity, a well-known Australian sociologist Raewyn Connell argues that it is important to focus on the process through which men and women conduct their gendered lives: ‘Masculinity, to the extent that the term can be briefly defined at all, is simultaneously a place in gender relations, the practices through which men and women engage that place in gender, and the effects of these practices in bodily experience, personality and culture’ (Connell 1995: 360) According to the author, there is abundant evidence that masculinities are multiple, with internal complexities and even contradictions. Importantly, women play a crucial role in constructing masculinities through interaction with boys and men in their private and public domains of life. Mothers may reinforce the traditional ideas about manhood by demonstrating that they do not expect sons to do household chores or express their emotions.

In other words, it is society, not biology, which confines males and females to particular masculine and feminine character profiles associated with individual personality traits (Drydakis et al 2017: 23). M. Kimmel stated that masculine attributes are associated with the gendered social roles that males are expected to fulfill (Kimmel et al 2005: 505). In most societies and cultures, masculinity refers to traits that are stereotypically attributed to men, is typified by the image of a strong, brave, ambitious, self-sufficient and authoritative leader who can rationally maintain control of his emotions (Connell 1978). In contrast, femininity comprising traits which are stereotypically attributed to women are associated with empathy, sensitivity, passiveness, loyalty, irrationality and a caring disposition (Kolb 1999). There are also commonly held assumptions that not only do men and women differ, but they also tend to act like polar opposites, with women appearing to lack the qualities which are most prevalent in men, and vice versa (Heilman 2012). For example,

dominance is an acceptable trait in men, but is less socially acceptable in women; in contrast, women are permitted to display weakness, whereas this trait is viewed as unacceptable in men (Rudman & Phelan 2008).

To develop the concept, Connell introduces the term of ‘hegemonic’ masculinities which embody a ‘currently accepted strategy...which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women’, being a subject of a constant adaptation and negotiation (Connell 1995: 360). Indeed, the standards of manliness or masculinity vary across different cultures, historical periods and geographical areas. Age, ethnicity, race, social class and other stratification criteria intersect with gender identity to construct multiple masculinities which operate through the system of power relations between them. Researchers have also argued that traditionally-masculine behavior is contributed by the ‘precariousness’ of manhood (Bosson & Vandello 2011). This aspect means that manhood is not inborn, but must be achieved by engaging in stereotypically-masculine behaviors and beliefs, such as supporting hierarchy, aggression and demonstrating power and physical potential.

In practice, the hegemonic strategies are rarely fulfilled by men in their real lives, as multiple social constraints may cause a failure in possessing the dominant roles in a family or society in general. Unemployment, low income, disability or alcohol abuse may prevent them from the role of ‘breadwinner’, while impossibility to support one’s family could be seen as a failure to achieve the ideals of masculinity prescribed by dominant norms. As a result, evidence points to the negative impact of the hegemonic masculinity attributes on men’s health-related behavior, causing the gender disparities in health and life expectancy. In most countries, men live shorter lives than women do, while it is widely recognized that factors that influence gender disparities in death rates include not only biological ones, but also social and cultural influences on expectations of men in women in terms of health-related behaviors. For example, some cultures encourage or condone men’s drinking, but discourage it in women. Also, in many countries, women are discouraged to work outside the home, while men are expected to be part of the labor force and provide the decent incomes for their households.

Prevalence of risk-taking behaviors among men results in male’s higher death rates due to the external causes such as injuries, accidents, self-harm and homicide. Due to higher rates of cigarette smoking and heavy drinking, men face higher risks of smoking-related ailments and circulatory

problems. According to the national studies, these trends are particularly obvious in Ukraine, as men's medical-demographic crisis is aggravated with prevalence of socially determined diseases, such as tuberculosis, mental disorders attributed to alcohol and drugs abuse, and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS. Moreover, men are more likely to be diagnosed terminal illness due to their reluctance to visit doctors and undergo regular medical check-ups. Such health attitudes are directly caused by male-attributed perceptions and behaviors such as dislike of out-of-control situations, fear of weakness and embarrassment (Galdas et al 2005). Inconsistency in meeting the hegemonic masculinity attributes could provoke excessive psychological pressure on men, while common suppressing of emotions may lead to mental disorders and deep depressions. Men may consequently seek affirmation of their masculinity in other ways such as alcohol and drugs abuse, irresponsible sexual behavior or aggression.

As a result of a gradual understanding of the outlined problems with men's identity and social roles, the theory of 'masculinity in crisis' has emerged (Robinson 2000), posing the questions on the need to search for men's new roles in modern societies. Social scientists and the mass-media have examined also the concept of 'toxic masculinity', focusing on traditionally male attributes that many have come to see as harmful not only to women, but also to men and the fabric of society.

The gap between normative definitions of masculinity and the embodied realities might also be seen as one of the causal factors in the occurrence of gender-based violence (GBV). As Connell argues, 'Violence is part of a system of domination, but is at the same time a measure of its imperfection'. Connell's theory of hegemonic masculinity states that this dominant form of manhood asserts control over women. Varying forms of GBV might be seen to stem from attempts to sustain dominance and relations of inequality between men and women and from incoherencies within normative and realistic constructions of masculinities in different societies. As a result, aggression and violence are often perceived by most people as the negative sides of conventional masculine identities.

Indeed, numerous international studies suggest that men perpetrate the bulk of the violence in intimate relations. In 1993, the United Nations offered the first official definition of violence against women, when the General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Article 1 of the declaration defines violence against women as

‘any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.’

Therefore, physical, sexual, emotional and economic forms of violence against women are associated with unequal distribution of power between women and men, when a woman’s position is subordinate to that of a man’s. In most studies males are viewed as the perpetrators of violence while females are more likely to be the victims of violence. Indeed, data from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) find men’s reports of having used physical intimate partner violence ranging from 18% to 46% in various countries, while men’s reports of perpetration of sexual violence against women and girls ranged from 2% to 25% (Levtov et al 2014).

Consequently, most of GBV policies and advocacy campaigns focus at women as survivors to examine how violence occurs from women’s perspective. To date, some comprehensive assessments have been conducted worldwide, highlighting such issues as women’s experience of GBV over their life-courses (WHO 2013: 57; European Union 2015: 44), consequences of violence for women’s health and quality of life (Howard et al 2010; Campbell 2002; Ellsberg 2008), correlations between GBV and reproductive health losses and risks of HIV-infecting (Pallitto 2005; Campbell et al 2008), survivor’s coping strategies and needs assessment in terms of service-providing (Heise 2011; WHO 2010).

A number of studies on violence against women have been conducted in Ukraine as well, including population-based surveys (Demography and Health Survey in 2007, Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey in 2012, Incidence of Violence against Women and Girls Survey in 2014), situational analyses and population needs assessments (USCR & UNFPA 2015). In 2016-2017, an innovative research entitled ‘Economic costs of violence against women in Ukraine’ (USCR & UNFPA 2017), was launched by the UNFPA Country Office in Ukraine to facilitate the advocacy efforts and strengthen the awareness raising campaign on GBV preventing. Several national studies were devoted to the problems of gender stereotypes in the Ukrainian society, which underpin public perceptions of women’s and men’s behavioral norms and social roles. Among the recent studies, the issues of gender and men in the context of multiple inequalities and discrimination were raised by T. Martsenyuk in her book ‘Gender for All. Challenging the stereotypes’ , while the problem

of unequal distribution of parental responsibilities was approached by O. Strelnyk in the publication 'Care as Work: Motherhood in the Focus of Sociology'.

Meanwhile, fewer research studies were targeted at analysis of the complex relationship between GBV and construction of gender roles instilled by historically and culturally determined social relations, including socialization in the family, school, daily life and routine everyday acts of people (Medrado & Lyra 2003; Peacock & Barker 2014). Globally, violence is analyzed from a number of perspectives such as psychoanalytical approaches and biological theories which identify the hormone testosterone as the catalyst for aggression in males (Batrinos 2012). Recently, the ideas claiming that men supposedly carry a hereditary predisposition in their genes that justify violence, aggression and criminal offenses were quite prevalent, being associated with presence of additional Y-chromosomes (Fromm 1973).

At the same time, a body of research literature has been focused on the role that an individual's environment plays in fostering forms of violent behavior among young men. For example, some studies imply that boys living in a violent culture learn that violence is a way to resolve conflicts and to assert power over others. As Connell asserts, boys learn how to be violent and aggressive by copying the behaviors of their fathers who act as role models in terms of 'how to act like a real man'.

Thus, as various social pressures are placed upon men, the current understanding of masculinity stems from a combination of biological, cultural and social influences. Although it is difficult to determine the extent to which each of these factors has influenced current gender inequalities and causes of GBV, an understanding of all three of these determinants provides a framework for possible changes and policy implications. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to explore the models of socialization which could involve men in efforts to end violence against women in public and private domains. The conceptual framework of the analysis is focused on the role of gendered norms in constructing men's behavioral patterns through exploration of their childhood experience, current family relations and attitudes to children, justifying gender-based violence and perceptions of gender equality. GBV is a socially determined problem and, therefore, should be confronted using a range of strategic policies and direct social interventions at different levels of society.

3. Research methodology and design

This research is a comprehensive study, conducted using quantitative and qualitative methods of sociological research. The study used specifically designed tools to conduct a nation-wide men's survey, and one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions with targeted men's audiences.

The quantitative research was built on approaches of the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES) developed by Promundo and the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW). Currently, the IMAGES is among the most comprehensive household studies of men's behavioral practices and attitudes to a wide variety of topics related to gender equality. The IMAGES data provides insights on men's use of intimate partner violence, participation in household decision-making, involvement in household work and parenting, and response to the national policies on promoting gender equality, etc. As of 2017, the IMAGES studies had been carried out in more than twenty countries worldwide.

The IMAGES standardized questionnaires include topics from the World Health Organization (WHO) Multi-Country Study on Violence against Women, Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS), the Gender Equitable Men (GEM) Scale – a standardized instrument to assess attitudes to gender that was adapted and validated in household surveys in more than twenty countries – and other questions on men's attitudes and practices related to gender equality. The data of the IMAGES are used for broad research and monitoring purposes, advocacy activities, and policy-setting at the national and international levels.

The IMAGES questionnaire was adjusted to various contexts across Ukraine while maintaining its core set of comparable questions, to ensure its cultural suitability and relevance. The adjusted questionnaire consisted of the following sections:

- social and demographic background and employment;
- relations in households;
- childhood experience;
- parenting and men's relations with children;
- cultural practices, relations between men and women;
- attitudes to violence;

- laws and policies;
- health and quality of life.

The survey covered 1,520 randomly selected men aged 18-59 in all regions of Ukraine, except Crimea. The sample was stratified based on the following criteria: 25 administrative territorial units (oblasts and Kyiv city), type of residential area (urban/rural), and broad age groups of the population. The sample is representative at the national level, with standard deviations within 1.55-2.58% and at a confidence level of 95% in the range of variables from 0.1: 0.9 to 0.5: 0.5. Data collection was conducted by the regional network of well-trained interviewers of the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research named after Oleksandr Yaremenko (February-March 2018). The survey met all requirements of the population sampling, technologies of individual interviewing, data entry and processing, and data quality control.

Data collected through the men's quantitative survey were supplemented with findings of the qualitative research to map the current understanding of masculinities, identify the key factors of men's attitudes and practices, and provide detailed life histories to assist in interpretation of some quantitative data. Within the focus groups (FGs), the following topics were discussed with participants: understanding 'female' and 'male' virtues, duties and social roles; perception of the "proper" patterns of marital relations and distribution of household activities; justifying situations of domestic violence and identifying the deep roots of violence; tolerance to victims of violence and estimating their needs in assistance outside home. Overall, ten FGs were conducted, including five FGs with male participants stratified by age, country regions and residential area, and five FGs with target male audiences, including:

- 'millennials' between 15 and 24;
- ATO combatants;
- men ordered to attend intervention programs for perpetrators of domestic violence.

The targeted categories of FG participants were recruited through assisting NGOs and public centers of social and social-psychological services that operate in various regions of the country.

To fill the existing gaps in understanding deep roots and motives of domestic violence, a special survey of men ordered to attend intervention programs for perpetrators of domestic violence was

also conducted. A targeted questionnaire for aggressors was developed in collaboration with social workers to cover such topics as the abusers' childhood experience, understanding causes, triggers, and provoking factors for violent behaviors, attitudes to victims of violence, emotional state and aggression during the conflict, ideas on approaches to prevent domestic violence and the most efficient communication tools with offenders. Overall, social workers and police officers interviewed 355 men that were referred to the intervention programs or listed in the domestic violence registry in various regions of the country.

Given the sensitive character of the survey topics, the study paid particular attention to ethical considerations. The research objectives were communicated to all respondents of the survey and clear explanation were given on how the results would be used. Verbal informed consent was obtained from all survey participants; they were also guaranteed anonymity and non-judgmental attitudes during the interviews and focus group discussions. With regard to highly sensitive questions, an opportunity of self-completion by the respondents was offered for some sections of the questionnaires, including issues of violence and childhood memories. As a result of properly addressed ethical considerations in the study, sincerity of answers was raised, while stressful situations related to possible awkward questions about men's personal experience were avoided. Most of the respondents (46%) eventually reported that they felt rather good during the interview, while 44% reported that their emotional state wasn't affected in any way. Only 10% of the surveyed men informed that they felt bad during the interview, when answering some sensitive questions. Among positive effects of the survey, it's worth noting raised awareness of men about the issues of gender equality, gender-sensitive policies, and combating gender-based violence.

4. Reflection of masculinity: men's social well-being

Social and demographic portrait of a modern man. The nation-wide survey built on the IMAGES approaches covered 1,520 men aged 18-59 from all regions of the country. To ensure the representativeness of the survey findings, the sample was stratified both by regions, and by residential area: 68% of the interviewed respondents were from urban settlements (including: 38% from oblast centers and large cities with population over 100,000), and 32% from rural area.

By age, almost one-third of the surveyed men were in the age group of 18-29, one-fourth of them were aged 30-39, and the rest of respondents were equally distributed between two older age groups (Table 4.1). Most of the respondents had vocational training or specialized secondary education (42%), as well as complete or incomplete higher education (38%). Seventeen percent of men reported complete general secondary education, while the rest had lower educational attainments. This pattern of educational achievements generally reflects the educational structure of the male population of Ukraine.

Marital relations of the surveyed men can be described as follows. More than two-thirds of the respondents had stable relationships with their partners at the time of the interview. Of these, 56% were officially married, 8% lived in cohabitation, and 4% had girlfriends but did not live together. One in five respondents were never married or partnered and three-fourths of these respondents were in the age under thirty. Nine percent of the respondents were reportedly divorced or separated, and another two percent were widowed. The largest share of divorced men was observed in the age groups between thirty and 49 (one in eleven respondents).

The average household of the surveyed men consisted of 3.4 people, including the respondent; the biggest reported number of household members was fourteen. At the time of the interview, one in ten men lived alone, 23% of the respondents lived in the households of two persons, and 30% – in the households of three persons (Fig. 4.1). More than one-third of respondents lived in large families, consisting of four persons and more.

Table 4.1. Social and demographic background of the surveyed men, % of respondents

Variables	Percentage
Age groups	
18-29 years	30
30-39 years	26
40-49 years	22
50-59 years	22
Residential area	
Oblast centers and large cities (more than 100,000 population)	38
Small cities and urban settlements	31
Rural area	32
Education	
Incomplete secondary education	3
Complete general secondary education	17
Vocational or specialized secondary education	42
Complete or incomplete higher education	38
Marital status and relationship	
Never married or partnered	21
Married	56
Non-registered marriage (cohabitation)	8
Has a girlfriend, but does not live together	4
Divorced or separated	9
Widowed	2

As to the composition of the households, one-third of men lived in nuclear families that consisted of the couple with children or without them. Only 11% of the married men lived in multi-generational families (e.g. with the respondent's parents or his wife's parents). Almost a half of the respondents reported they had children living in their households (Table 4.2).

For almost 80% of the surveyed men the main source of household incomes is salaries. 13% of men reported that their main source of personal income is business activities or self-employment. Due to the age limits of the sample, only six percent of the respondents stated that pensions is their household's main source of income; however, the role of pensions is increasing with the age of the respondents. Only a few men reported that the main source of income for their families was the government social aid or assistance from other relatives.

Fig.4.1. Distribution of respondents by the size of the household, % of respondents



According to the survey findings, in most cases men act as breadwinners for their families (60%). At the same time, one in seven respondents was supported by his parents, and this proportion is a lot larger among younger men (more than a half of young men between eighteen and 24 and one in five respondents aged 25-29). 28% of married men in the survey said that they made almost equal contributions with their wives to the total household income. At the same time, six percent of the respondents indicated that their wives or partners are the main providers of the household income. Women’s role in providing for the household is increasing with age progression: while only 4% of men under thirty recognized that their wives are the main providers, this proportion was almost 12% among men aged fifty and over.

A few percent of the respondents reportedly represented vulnerable groups of population, including internally displaced people (IDPs), combatants, and persons with disability. Two percent of men lived in families with many children, and two other percent represented single-parent families.

Table 4.2. Household composition and incomes, % of respondents

Variables	Percentage
Household composition*	
Lives alone	11
Has wife/partner	63
Has a child/children	42
Lives with other children (by relatives, of wife’s from previous marriage)	4
Lives with the parents	26
Lives with the wife’s parents	7
Lives with other relatives, family members	15
Other persons, not relatives	1
Main source of household incomes	
Salary	79

Incomes of business activity/self-employment	13
Pension	6
Stipend/scholarship	1
Social benefit/aid	1
Assistance from relatives, family members	1
Main provider of household	
Respondent himself	60
Respondent's wife/partner	4
Respondent himself and his wife/partner about equally	18
Respondent's parents or his wife's/partner's parents	15
Respondent's children	1
Other relatives, family members	1
Vulnerability status	
Internally displaced people	2
Combatants, incl. ATO combatants	5
Persons with disability	6
Families with many children	3
Single-parent families	2

** the sum is over 100%, as multiple answers were possible.*

Employment and labor market relations. A prestigious job, income earning, career growth and professional self-realization still are the important attributes of a man's success in life. Within the modern masculinity concepts, men's social roles are largely related to activities in the public, not private, domain, and they encourage men to play an active role at the labor market. Respectively, men are charged with the duty to satisfy economic needs of a family. Indeed, men's rates of participation in the labor force and employment are traditionally higher than those of women; men prevail in large business, while men-friendly corporate practices facilitate their access to senior executive positions. The dominant position of men at the labor market is also confirmed by a large gender gap in wages and traditional concentration of women in the less prestigious types of economic activity and low paid occupations.

Meanwhile, the risks of low income, unemployment and vulnerable employment in the informal economy could constrain men in following the ideals of the dominant masculinity in their real life. The expectations posed by the society on men as breadwinners for their families are associated with excessive psychological pressure that might result in emotional disorders, while stress outbursts affect the closest people. That's why the problems of men's stressful employment appear to be the drivers of the present crisis of masculinity.

Most of the surveyed men were employed at the time of the interview; two-thirds of them were employed full-time, and 12% worked on a part-time basis (Table 4.3). Less than 10% of the respondents were students, five percent were pensioners and the unemployed, who looked for a job or were registered at the employment centers. A few percent of men reported that they were neither working nor studying (and did not seek a job), were engaged in household works, or stayed on parental leaves.

A significant portion of employed men (40%) informed that they usually work for more than 40 hours per week. The share of urban residents with excessive working hours was somewhat larger than that of rural men. The main reasons of the long work hours included the demanding job duties (54%), the need to maintain living standards of the family (36%) and the need to earn additional money on the side (21%). Only one in ten respondents admitted that they spend more time at the workplace because it was important for their professional career (Table 4.4). Three percent of men reported that they prefer to stay at work instead of going home; this group of respondents was notably larger among divorced and separated men.

Table 4.3. Men’s status in the labor market, % of respondents

Status	Percentage
Neither working nor studying	1
Student	8
Unemployed (seeking a job)	5
Full-time employed	67
Part-time employed (incl. seasonal works)	12
Pensioner (age, length of service, etc)	5
Engaged in household activities	1
On parental leave	1

Table 4.4. Reasons of the excessive working hours for men, % of respondents who work more than 40 hours per week

Reasons	Percentage
Demanding job duties	54
The need to maintain the living standards of family	36
The need to earn more money	21
It is important for professional career	10
Prefer to spend time at work rather than at home	3

** the sum is over 100%, as multiple answers were possible.*

Importantly, stressful labor relations can affect the emotional state of workers – causing either excessive workload in case of the long working hours, or psychological pressure because of the feeling of professional non-realization. In particular, 38% of the employed respondents agreed that they were frequently stressed or depressed because they did not have enough work and income of employment (Fig. 4.2). Fewer respondents generally agreed that they were frequently stressed or depressed because they had too much work (30%) or were forced to work in bad or hard-working conditions (29%).

The rate of stressful employment wasn't linked to the type of residential area, but correlated with men's educational level. Men with lower education levels were stressed due to the lack of income or excessive work more often, while men with vocational training largely reported stresses due to difficult work conditions.

Fig. 4.2. Men who agreed that they were frequently stressed or depressed for the reasons related to their employment, % of the employed respondents

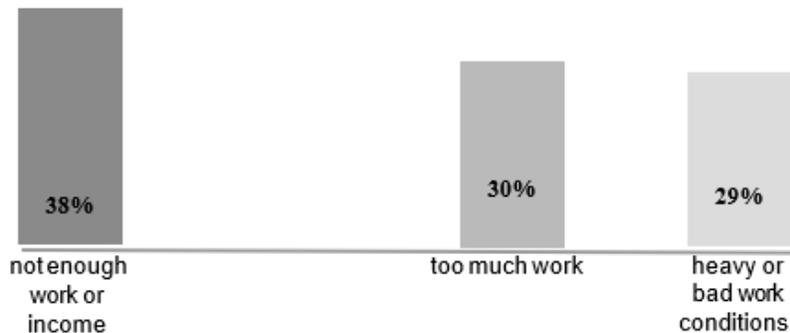


Table 4.5. Men's self-estimates of health, % of respondents

Age groups	State of health				
	excellent	good	normal	bad	very bad
18-24 years	37	45	15	2	0
25-29 years	20	48	31	1	0
30-39 years	13	48	33	6	0
40-49 years	7	34	49	9	1
50-59 years	3	19	58	20	1
Total	14	38	39	8	0

Health and quality of life. According to the survey results, most of the respondents estimated their health as good or excellent (52%), although the respondent's health self-assessment obviously getting worse the older are the respondents: while good and excellent health was reported by 82% of young men aged between 18 and 24, the share of those who said so among men aged 40-49 was two times less, and there were only 22% of the respondents with reportedly good health among men over 50 (Table 4.5).

It is widely acknowledged that the negative effects of the so called 'masculinity crisis' mostly impact the men's health, including their emotional well-being. It is argued in the review of social determinants of the health, conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe that men's poorer survival rates reflect 'the impact of several factors – greater levels of occupational exposure to physical and chemical hazards, risk behaviors associated with male lifestyles, health behavior paradigms related to masculinity and the fact that men are less likely to visit a doctor when they are ill and are less likely to report on the symptoms of disease or illness' (UCL Institute of Health Equity 2013: 139).

Indeed, almost a half of the surveyed men (43%) did not seek any health services in the last year, and only one in seven men visited a medical institution more than five years ago. Only 12% of the men reported that they sought help from a doctor over the last month, and 17% – over the last six months. In contrast to the expectations caused by unsatisfactory development of medical infrastructure in rural area, rural and urban residents demonstrated practically identical behavioral patterns in terms of visiting doctors. This also suggests that socio-psychological factors and behavioral patterns play an important role in the context of men's attitudes to their health.

As to those men, who reached out for medical help over the last five years, only a half of them saw doctors in order to have a general preventative medical check-up (Table 4.6). Many of others sought medical attention because of acute illness (23%), chronic illness (13%), and due to an injury or accident (11%). Other reasons for attending medical institutions, according to the respondents, included the need to obtain some medical documentation, or to register themselves in family clinics.

Table 4.6. Main reasons for men’s most recent visit to a healthcare facility, % of respondents

Reason	Percentage
General medical check-up	50
Injury or accident	11
Acute illness	23
Chronic illness	13
Sexual health issues	1
Other	2

Quite a lot of men (16%) reportedly had a disability or chronic illness. The incidence of these health problems increases as the age of the respondents increases: from 7% among young people aged 18-24 to 30% among men in the 50-59 age group. Importantly, a bulk of permanent health disorders was caused by consequences of the external impacts that could be eliminated, such as accidents (one in ten men with a disability), occupational injuries (7% of the respective group of the respondents), car accidents (3%), and survived violence (1% of respondents).

These problems are closely correlated with the lack of safe behaviors among men, as well as common practices of alcohol abuse. Only about one-third of the respondents indicated that they haven’t consumed any drinks containing alcohol in the last month (one-third of them were represented by young people under 30). 38% of the men consumed alcohol at least 1-3 times per month, 23% – 1-2 times per week, and 4% of respondents – almost every day (Fig. 4.3). Three percent of the men reported that they had used some drugs or psychotropic substances.

The impact of alcohol on the incidence of the risk-taking situations can be confirmed by the following data: one in five men reported that he committed violent acts (such as fighting) because of drinking, while 13% of the men indicated that either themselves or another person were injured because of alcohol abuse.

Over the past decades, psychologists have been actively exploring the link between traditional masculinity norms and poor mental health. One of the recent studies argues that, ‘In general, individuals who conformed strongly to masculine norms tended to have poorer mental health and less favorable attitudes toward seeking psychological help, although the results differed depending on specific types of masculine norms’ (Wong et al 2017).

Indeed, the survey findings revealed that one in six men had problems with focusing on his current activities, felt depressed and even experienced outbreaks of anger during the last month preceding the survey. One-third of the men had problems with sleep; moreover, 8% of them reported that sleep disorders were of a systematic nature, e.g. several times per week or most of the time (Table 4.7).

Fig. 4.3. How frequently men consumed drinks containing alcohol over the last 30 days, % of the respondent



Table 4.7. Incidence of stress disorders among men, % of respondents

Answers to questions: 'During the last 30 days, did you...'		Frequency		
		1-2 days per week	3-4 days per week	
have trouble focusing on what I am doing	78	19	2	1
feel stressed or depressed	77	19	3	2
have thoughts that your life had been a failure	84	13	2	2
feel fearful / face panic attacks	89	9	2	
have problems with sleep	70	23	6	2
feel lonely	80	14	4	2
feel sick with no particular reason	79	19	2	
feel that people disliked me	80	17	2	1
experience outbreaks of anger	80	17	3	1

Regardless, one-third of the respondents reported that they do not turn to anyone, when feeling frustrated or depressed (Table 4.8). This data perfectly fit within the perceived concept of

masculinity that disapproves men manifesting emotions, recognizing their weaknesses or perplexity, and seeking outside emotional help. As to the men who do seek external help, most often they seek it from their wives and partners (38%), friends (26%), and parents (16%). Only few percent of the respondents sought help from other relatives, colleagues, church or their children. Unfortunately, psychologists and psychotherapists enjoy the lowest level of trust, although these groups of experts can provide most professional support in the situations of psychological crisis.

Table 4.8. Sources of help men usually turn to, when feeling frustrated or disappointed, % of respondents

Source of help	Percentage
None	36
Friend	38
Parents	26
Wife/partner	16
Other relatives, family members	5
Colleagues	4
Church	5
Psychologist, psychotherapist	1
Children	2

** the sum is over 100%, as multiple answers were possible.*

Most of the surveyed men (81%) have never visited a psychologist. Only 8% of them indicated that they sought help from psychologists at least once, one in ten men – several times, while about 1% of men confirmed that they visit psychologists often. According to the respondents who had experience of going to psychologists, the principal reason for their visits was the need in prophylactic examination, including job requirements (81% of the respondents). A small share of the respondents told that they needed professional psychological support because of stresses (7%), deep depression (6%), or sought help from family psychologists (3%). A few other reasons for visiting psychologists, quoted by individual respondents, included drug addiction, orders from law enforcement agencies, and post-traumatic syndrome caused by participating in the antiterrorist operation (ATO).

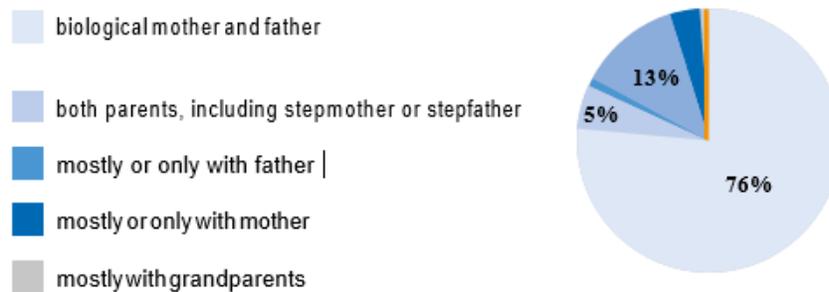
Thus, the expectations towards social roles and behavioral patterns that society imposes on men may have negative impacts on their social and emotional well-being. Desire to meet the masculinity standards may lead to psychological pressure as a result of the excessive workload or

due to incapacity to provide acceptable living standards for one’s family. On the other hand, the neglect of one’s health, prevalence of risk-taking behaviors and alcohol abuse pave the way for the current men’s medical and demographic crisis.

5. Childhood experiences and men’s relations with children

Patterns of spousal relations in parent’s family. The overwhelming majority (76%) of the surveyed men spent most of their childhood in full families, with both mothers and fathers (Figure 5.1). In situations, where the respondents spent their childhood with only one of their parents, most often it was mother or stepmother (13%). Only a few respondents (about 1%) spent most of their childhood with their fathers. 3% of the respondents were raised by grandparents. About 1% of the surveyed men spent most of their childhood with other relatives, in foster families or at boarding schools. The study found virtually no difference in the distribution of the respondents’ caregivers between urban and rural areas.

Fig. 5.1. Distribution of respondents by answers on question ‘Whom did you live with while growing up?’, % of respondents



A rewarding finding of the study is that quite a large proportion of men enjoyed care of their both biological parents in their childhood. The international comparisons reveal that Ukraine looks rather good in this regard: for example, the proportion of men who lived with both parents in their childhood was 55% in the neighboring Moldova (based on the same methodology study) (Cheianu-Andrei 2015: 51). According to the US Census Bureau, 58% of children lived together with both biological parents in the United States in 2014 (Zill 2015). However, since these data was obtained based on another methodology, it cannot be unconditionally compared with the results of the Ukraine’s study, but perceived only as a benchmark for comparisons. In addition, presence of both

parents in the respondent’s childhood does not reflect whether the real relationships were meaningful.

The interviewed men reported that their fathers/stepfathers and mothers/ stepmothers were practically equally respectful of each other (Table 5.1). However, such findings should be taken with caution, as they do not give unquestionable grounds to speak about the total equality and commonly respectful spousal attitudes in the Ukrainian families. The fact is that in some cases, discriminatory practices and gender disputes are so deeply rooted in the public consciousness that most people can perceive them as normal behavioral patterns. As a rule, people also try to avoid any negative self-identifications, so the respondents may have difficulties in identifying unequal attitudes between parents in their family.

Table 5.1. Distribution of answers to questions ‘Did your father or stepfather treat your mother with respect?’ and ‘Did your mother or stepmother treat your father with respect?’, % of respondents

Answers	Father’s/stepfather’s treatment of mother/ stepmother	Mother’s/stepmother’s treatment of father/stepfather
Always	53	57
Mostly	32	32
Sometimes	14	10
Never	1	1
Total	100	100

The study findings revealed a small variation in the respectful treatment of the respondents’ parents between types of their residential area. In urban area, the share of the respondents whose parents – both mother and father – had always been respectful to each other was somewhat larger than that in rural areas (Table 5.2). Obviously, urban residents are more progressive in terms of equal family relationships. However, it should be taken into account that this survey traced the respondents’ current residential area, and did not trace where they spent their childhood, which may be totally different places. Therefore, the estimates presented below should be considered rather as a reference point for future studies.

Table 5.2. Distribution of answers to questions ‘Did your father or stepfather treat your mother with respect?’ and ‘Did your mother or stepmother treat your father with respect?’ by type of residential area, % of respondents

Answers	Father’s/stepfather’s treatment of mother/stepmother		Mother’s/stepmother’s treatment of father/stepfather	
	urban area	rural area	urban area	rural area
Always	58	54	55	48
Mostly	32	32	31	32
Sometimes	9	13	12	18
Never	1	1	2	2
Total	100	100	100	100

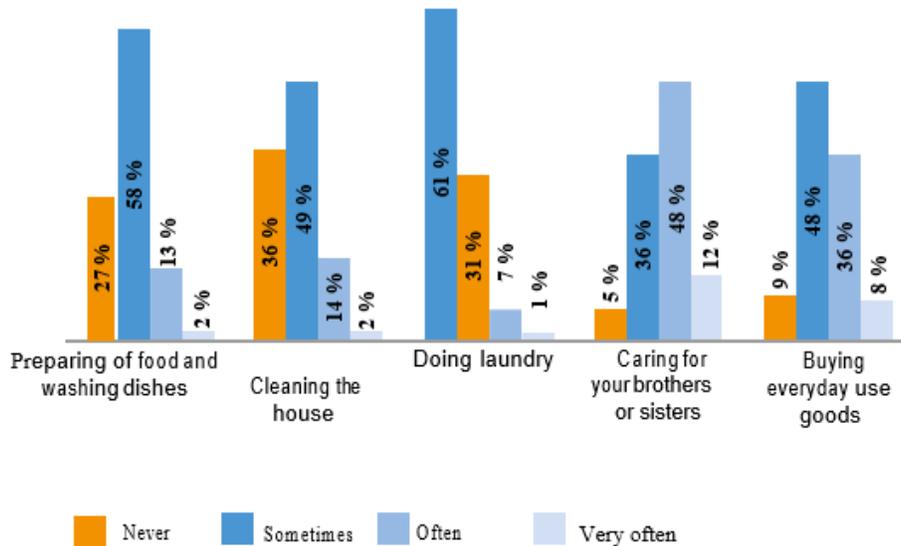
The findings of the respondent’s childhood experience enable both to analyze the factors that affected men’s personality development, and to observe intergenerational changes in the patterns of marital relations. There is a clear trend towards gradual acceptance of the ideas of gender equality and respectful relations in the marriage, supported by age-specific distribution of the respondents’ answers (Table 5.3). The proportion of men in the age under 30 who indicated that their parents were always respectful to each other is importantly larger than the same proportion among respondents of older ages (respectively, 60% in contrast to 50%).

Table 5.3. Distribution of answers to question ‘Did your father or stepfather treat your mother with respect?’ and ‘Did your mother or stepmother treat your father with respect?’ by age groups of respondents, % of respondents

Answers	Age groups			
	18–29	30–39	40–49	50–59
Father’s/stepfather’s treatment of mother/stepmother				
Always	60	50	50	50
Mostly	28	32	34	36
Sometimes	10	16	15	12
Never	1	2	1	2
Mother’s/stepmother’s treatment of father/stepfather				
Always	62	56	54	54
Mostly	29	28	35	38
Sometimes	8	15	10	7
Never	1	1	1	1

The survey findings make it possible to study the division of household chores in the Ukrainian families that was observed several decades ago (Fig. 5.2). Most men didn't wish to get engaged in doing laundry with 62% of the respondents' fathers never been engaged in this type of domestic work. Until recently, few Ukrainian families could afford a washing machine, so women had to wash dirty clothes manually, demonstrating physical strength and endurance. One-third of the respondents' fathers (36%) had never cleaned the house, while about one-fourth of them (27%) were not familiar with cooking and dishwashing. Instead, most of fathers were involved in the caring for children (i.e. the respondents when they were small, and their brothers and sisters), and purchasing everyday goods (44%).

Fig. 5.2. Distribution of answers to question 'When you were a child or teenager, how often did your father or another man in the home was engaged in the following tasks?', % of respondents



In the respondents' families, important decisions were mostly made by both parents or only by mother. In more than a half of families, women had the final word on decisions about the current expenses for essentials, such as food, clothes and other household items, as well as about issues related to children's health (Table 5.4). Both parents were usually involved in the decisions related to children's education and purchase of expensive things (cars, houses, and home appliances).

In the context of studying formation of the masculine identity, assessments of men's negative childhood experiences is of particular interest, as psychologists argue that traumatic effects obtained in the early ages have the most significant impacts on individual development. Unfortunately, many surveyed men confirmed that they experienced situations that affected their

life and well-being. One in seven respondents reported that he faced his parents' negligence in the childhood, as they were under excessive influence of alcohol or psychotropic substances, and could not take a proper care of him (Table 5.5). One in seven men witnessed his father's physical violence against his mother, 7% of the men indicated that they used to witness these situations often. Obviously, such experience has a very negative impact on any child's emotional well-being, and can result in the prevalent perceptions of domestic violence as the norm of marital relations. At the same time, the opposite reaction is also possible when a person expresses zero tolerance to violence in his/her own relationship after observing such behaviors in the parents' family. Some participants of the focus group discussions who witnessed physical abuse of their mothers by their fathers claimed that they cannot justify such actions and would do everything to avoid similar situations in their own relationships with women.

Table 5.4. Distribution of answers to question 'When you were a child or teenager, who had the final word in your household on the following decisions?', % of respondents

Decisions	Mostly mother / stepmother	Mostly father / stepfather	Both parents equally
Current expenses on essentials (food, clothes, etc.)	51	14	36
Buying expensive items (cars, houses, and household appliances, etc)	13	26	61
Issues related to children's education (respondent himself and his sisters/ brothers)	26	10	65
Issues related to children's health (respondent himself and his sisters/ brothers)	47	3	50

Overall, physical violence is present in the men's life since their early ages; therefore, they might perceive it as a universal tool for resolving the conflicts and defending their interests. Half of the surveyed men admitted that they personally faced physical punishment by their parents in the childhood, 18% of respondents were physically punished by school teachers or coaches of the sports clubs. One in five respondents was subjected to insults or humiliation by his family members, 18% of them were bullied by their mates or older children at school. Although the rate of sexual violence in the childhood was reported as minimum, it is common knowledge that this topic is usually tabooed in social studies, so these findings may be well as underestimated.

Table 5.5. Prevalence of the negative childhood experiences among men, % of respondents

Situations	Never	Sometimes	Often	Don't know
I saw or heard my mother being beaten by her husband or partner	69	20	7	4
I was insulted or humiliated by someone in my family in front of other people	75	17	3	5
I was physically punished by my parents or other family members at home (slapped, beaten, etc.)	47	43	7	3
I was physically punished at school by a teacher or a coach of sport club	78	15	3	4
There were situations, when one or both of my parents were too drunk or high on drugs to take care of me	80	12	4	4
I had to have sex with someone because I was threatened, frightened	95	1	1	3
Before I reached 18, I was bullied by my schoolmates	78	15	2	5

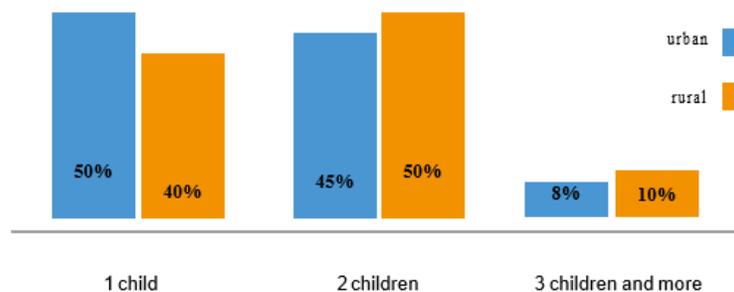
Importantly, patterns of violent culture accompany the emergence of men’s identity in adulthood, too. In particular, an aggression-friendly environment surrounds men when they serve in the army or study in military schools. In fact, 48% of the survey respondents were in the army or in the military training; more than a half of them admitted that they faced violent treatments from their officers personally, or witnessed such attitudes to their mates (Table 5.6). In addition, one in ten respondents said that he found himself in such situations often, while one in seven respondents often witnessed such acts towards other men. Violent harassments and bullying were also common among young people who served in the army or studied at military schools.

Table 5.6. Distribution of answers to question ‘Have you faced violent treatments by senior officers or other soldiers or students?’, % the respondents, who were in the army or military schools

Situations	Never	Sometimes	Often	Don't know
<u>personally</u> faced violent treatment/punishment by senior officers or teachers	43	43	11	3
witnessed these attitudes towards other soldiers/students	36	46	14	4
<u>Personally</u> faced violent treatment or bullying from your mates	46	40	11	3
witnessed any violent behavior or bullying among your mates	33	50	14	3

Parenthood and attitudes to children. More than half (62%) of the surveyed men had biological children. The overwhelming majority of them had only one child (47%) or two children (44%); the share of men having many children was quite small (9%). The share of men with many children was about the same in urban and rural area, while some residential differences were observed in the number of men with one child and two children: there were more rural residents having two children, than urban dwellers (Fig. 5.3).

Fig. 5.3. Distribution of men with children by the number of children and residential area, % of respondents



Transformation of marital and family relations also impacts ways of natural reproduction of families. In Ukraine and all over the globe new approaches to childbirths where the father plays an active role, such as childbirth with the partner and home births, become increasingly more popular. Notwithstanding, specialized healthcare facilities remain the most popular locations for

childbirth: 93% of men having biological children reported that their children were born in these institutions, 2% of children were born at home, and 5% were born elsewhere.

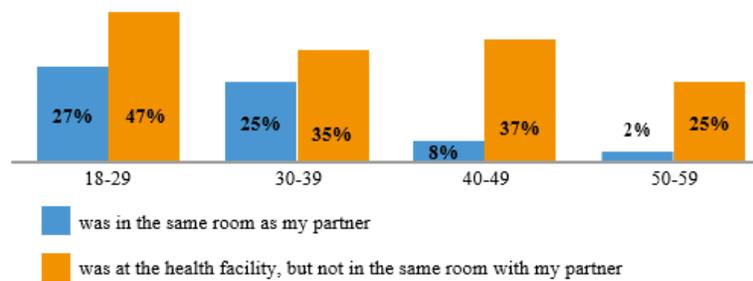
Almost half (47%) of the surveyed men with children were in the maternity clinics at the time of the childbirth (in case of many children, this question concerned only the youngest one), and 13% of the men stayed in the same room with mother of the child at the time of the delivery. Rural men appeared to be involved in the progressive practices of delivering babies on the about the same level as urban men: the percentage of respondents who were in the maternity clinics at the time of the childbirth (including in the same room with the mother) were almost equal in urban and rural areas (Table 5.7).

The data about the presence of the respondents of different age groups at the childbirth can be used to illustrate the evolution of men’s attitudes towards births with the partner. Expectedly, the oldest men (50-59) were not at the healthcare facilities during the birth of their youngest child in most situations (72%) (Fig. 5.4). Such attitudes were discouraged by both cultural practices of that time and by the lack of appropriate infrastructure. In each subsequent age group of the younger men, the percentage of the respondents who were in the healthcare facilities (including in the same room with the partner) is increasing, and, accordingly, the percentage of those who were absent and stayed elsewhere is decreasing. Thus, a gradual change in the cultural practices in society can be perceived, towards increased perceptions of the responsible parenthood among young men.

Table 5.7. Distribution of answers to question ‘Were you present in the healthcare facility during the birth of your (last) child?’ by residential area, % of respondents with children

Answers	Total	Urban area	Rural area
I was in the same room as my partner	13	13	12
I was at the healthcare facility, but not in the same room with my partner	34	34	33
I was not at the healthcare facility	53	53	55

Fig. 5.4. Proportions of men of different age who were at the healthcare facility and in the same room with their partners at the time of the childbirth, % of respondents with children



There is also a certain link between the level of respondent’s education and their involvement in births with the partner. These attitudes were mostly prevalent among men with higher education (17% of them were in the same room as their partners and 35% – at the healthcare facility), while it is less prevalent among the respondents with lower education levels (respectively 11% and 33% for men with vocational training and secondary special education, 9% and 39% for men with complete secondary education). Men with lower educational levels are less aware of the importance of the father’s role in the processes associated with childbearing; and they may represent a target groups for future educational campaigns.

During their partner’s pregnancy, the respondents took active interest in the state of the women’s health, and mostly accompanied them to ante-natal visits. Only 13% of the respondents had never visited doctors together with their pregnant partners, while 7% of the men accompanied their partners only once; 53% – several times; 27% – to every visit to the doctor. The study did not reveal any significant differences between behavioral patterns of urban and rural men.

When planning future addition to the family, Ukraine’s couples pre- dominantly discuss this issue together and listen to the partner’s opinion. When answering the question about who wanted to have a child the last time they had a child, the vast majority of respondents (84%) reported that they wanted it together with their partners. Only one in ten men admitted that it was mostly the desire of his wife/partner, and 6% of men reported that it was their own initiative.

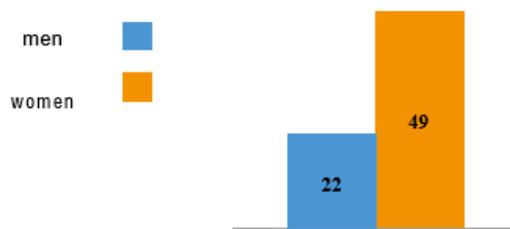
A newborn child in a family means a significant increase in family responsibilities. These responsibilities are often put on the shoulders of the young mother, who needs to recover after the childbirth. It was relieving to know that quite many men want to spend time together with their families after the childbirth. According to the survey findings, more than one-fourth of men (27%)

used their vacation or parental leaves, when their (youngest) child was born. In urban settlements, the surveyed men took leaves by almost 10 percent points more often than in rural areas (29% vis-à-vis 19%). Younger respondents also are more likely to take leaves: while one-third of men in the age under 40 took leaves after the childbirth, the proportions were lower for older men: 24% among men aged 40-49, and 18% among men aged 50-59.

Meanwhile, the leaves of the respondents who took the opportunity to stay at home with the newborn child were short. Only one man from the entire sample stayed on the parental leave for a year. The total number of the respondents who took leaves after the childbirth can be divided into four practically equal groups by the length of the leaves: 1-3 days – 20%, 4-7 days – 24%, 8-14 days – 28%, 15 days and more – 28%.

The distribution of time spent on family responsibilities related to the subsequent care of the child reveals that childcare remains mainly the women’s prerogative. According to the survey, men spent with their child/children 22 hours per week on average, including their daily routine, communication, walks, and leisure activities. Instead, the average women’s time spent with children was significantly longer, 49 hours per week (Fig. 5.5). It is obvious that both men and women having children spend some time with them, but the main burden of the responsibilities is carried by women.

Fig. 5.5. The average time spent with children by men and their partners, hours per week



The verbal expressions of the focus group participants demonstrated that men often develop their attitudes to childcare based on the behavioral patterns that prevailed in their parents’ families:

‘I did not have a father, my mother raised me. In my opinion, it is the mother who should bring up children, as she is closer to a child’ (a man, 16 y.o.),

‘While a child is small, it is important to have connection with mother, that’s why women should take care of pre-schoolers. Men can join the education process later, in teenage years, when it is

necessary to explain some things related to discipline, responsibility, and maturity' (a man, 42 y.o.).

On the other hand, there is a clear trend, when the negative childhood experiences could result in the opposite reactions of the men who disapprove the lack of attention from their fathers, and deliberately strive to avoid their mistakes:

'My father was not interested in me at all - neither did he go to school, nor walk with me. Therefore, in my own life, I decided that I have to be interested in my children's lives. I used to go to their kindergarten, I went to the school and talked to teachers, I try to participate in their lives in every possible way' (a married man, 39 y.o.),

'you know, my father was like a child until the age of forty - watching cartoons on the TV for days ... He wasn't interested in the family matters at all. In any case, I do not want to become like him' (an unmarried man, 32 y.o.)

Despite the fact that most of the focus groups participants agreed with the importance of the father's role in a child's upbringing, they expressed quite different views with regard to the father's participation in the upbringing of children of different genders. One group of men was convinced that the same-sex parent should play the leading role in the child education: 'I believe that a son should be raised more by the father, not by the mother' (a man, 17 y.o.), 'a boy has to acquire male qualities. Therefore, the father has to play the first role' (a man, 39 y. o.), while other respondents expressed the opposite view: 'I've noticed that girls are more drawn to their fathers, and boys to mothers' (a married man, 51 y.o.), 'someone believes that fathers are more important for boys. But it seems to me that fathers should spend no less time with girls too' (a man, 38 y.o.).

Reflecting on their relationships with their own children, the overwhelming majority (71%) of men generally agreed that they spend too little time with their children because of their work. The long working hours that are common for men leave even less time for fathers to communicate with their children. In particular, 83% of the men who work for more than 40 hours per week agreed that they spend too little time with their children because of work. One of the focus group participants commented on this situation: 'in the contemporary world, you have either to support the child financially or spend your time with the child' (a man, 42 y. o.).

Two-thirds of the respondents weren't afraid to lose contact with the children if they broke up with their mothers. Is can be explained by the men's confidence in the ability to keep good relations with their ex-spouses, and by a strong relationship with children that does not depend on the relations with their mothers. At the same time, the majority of the respondents agreed that their role in raising children is limited to the status of the 'breadwinner': one-third of the respondents strongly agreeing with this statement (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8. Men's attitude to relations with their own children, % of respondents with children

Statements	Strongly agree	Rather agree	Rather disagree	Strongly disagree
I spend too little time with children because of my work	25	46	17	12
I am afraid that I would lose contact with the children if my relationship broke up	10	20	34	36
Children get educated mostly by their mother, I only provide help in the case of need	14	34	36	15
My role in caring for children is mostly as the provider	33	32	24	11

Instead, young men (age 18-24) expressed the views that men's role in the family should not be limited to providing for the family. To back up this opinion, two reasons were put forward: firstly, women and men are equally demanded by and are active at the labor market: 'if a mother works, the man cannot claim that he feeds and dresses her up and this is the end of his role'. As the second reason, the focus group participants emphasized the importance of emotional contact between children and their father ('otherwise, a child will treat his father somehow wrong, the father will remain a stranger', 'a child should receive equal amount of love from both father and mother').

Analyzing the distribution of the main responsibilities for caring of small children between men and women, we found out that there wasn't any responsibility that was always or prevalently a men's obligation (Table 5.9). It is usually mom who takes daily care of a child, stays at home with sick child, change diapers and clothes on the baby. As to the activities that were equally shared between men and women, these as rule were playing games and entertaining the child (65%), instilling discipline on the child verbally (76%), and talking about personal matters with the child

(60%). Four out of ten men reported that they help their children with homework about the same as their mothers, get involved in physical punishment of children in the case of need, and accompany the child to school, kindergarten or children’s clubs.

Table 5.9. Distribution of answers to question ‘Disregarding the help you may get from others, how do /did you and your partner distribute the following tasks now or when the child was small?’, % of respondents with children

Responsibilities	Always husband	Usually husband	Shared equally/ done together	Usually wife	Always wife
Daily care of the child	3	2	33	45	17
Staying at home with the sick child	1	1	19	45	33
Taking or collecting the child to/from school/daycare center	2	9	39	33	16
Playing with the child or doing leisure-time activities together	1	4	65	25	5
Scolding the child (verbal discipline)	1	2	76	15	6
Physical punishment of the child	7	16	43	26	8
Changing the child’s diapers or clothes	1	1	28	44	25
Talking about personal matters with the child	2	5	60	24	9
Helping with the child’s homework	1	7	43	36	13

Although the vast majority of the men (84%) lived with all of their biological children, a small proportion of respondents reported that they live with only a few of them (6%), and less than one percent of men did not live with any biological child. Those respondents who didn’t live with their children generally communicated and supported them financially. Only two men reported that they did not communicate with their biological children at all; the rest of the respondents communicated with their children every day (14%) or at least once a week (37%), once a month (25%), or several times a year (25%). Almost a half of the men who didn’t live with their children provided them with financial support sometimes, one third of them - often, 15% of respondents reported that they pay for most of the children’s expenses.

The survey results confirmed that the experiences of childhood and behavior patterns from the parent's family have important impacts on men's perceptions in building their own marital relationships and attitudes toward parenthood. However, the effects of such impacts can be controversial; they may lead to reproducing the perceived division of decision-making, responsibilities and relationships between the family members, but also perceived as negative experiences that should be avoided in one's own life.

Positively, gender stereotypes undergo gradual transformation from generation to generation. The younger respondents observed their parent's respectful attitude towards each other more often; they also have shown more interest in their own children, pregnancy planning and childbirth with the partner. Some men sought to spend their time with the wife after the childbirth - about one-fourth of the respondents took a leave or days off (usually, several days), when their youngest child was born. Still, the division of responsibilities related to further upbringing of the child remains quite traditional, since most household activities related to the daily care or caring for a sick child are considered to be mother's prerogative, while men's participation is observed mostly in the educational process and leisure activities with the child. Men also get involved in talking with children about personal matters, but it obviously concerns older children, who do not need the daily care.

6. Current family life and relations

Spousal Relations. Family environment remains the main origin of the perceived understanding of social roles, responsibilities and empowerments of women and men. As social scientists argue, 'Families are ideal social institutions to examine gender because gender hierarchy is created, reproduced, and maintained on a day-to-day basis through interaction among members of a household' (Glenn 1978). The expectations towards marital relationships, personality traits and behavior patterns that are common for 'good' wives and 'good' husbands are developed yet in the adolescence, being under the impact of family education and standards imposed by public opinion. In practice, the unspoken division of the family roles between women and men is rarely discussed before starting the cohabitation that may lead to misunderstandings and disappointments in the subsequent spousal life.

According to the focus group discussions with men of different ages, different levels of education and different experiences of family relationships, the main attribute of a ‘good’ man is seen in his financial capacity to provide a decent living for his family. Interestingly, this was the only requirement to men in terms of being a ‘proper’ husband perceived by the public. On the other hand, a bulk of requirements and restrictions was put forward to a standard ‘good’ wife: ‘She must be friendly, well-balanced and caring, so that her husband was willing to come home every day’ (a man, 18 y.o.). The ‘ideal’ wife is regarded by men as a resourceful housekeeper, who cares about the family and provides comfort to her family. Some important traits for women include patience, ability to avoid and ‘smooth out’ any conflicts, yield to her husband in disputes and support him in all his intentions:

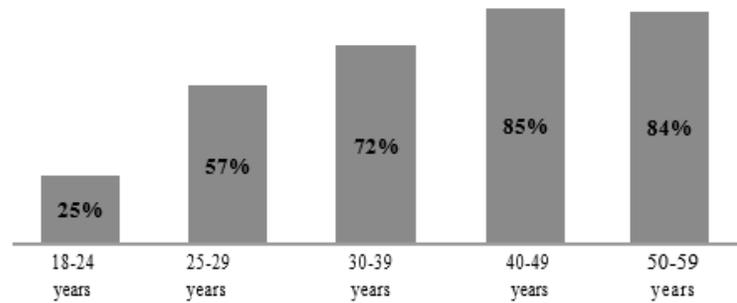
‘To me, what makes a good wife is, for sure, her appearance and her inner world, and mutual understanding, loyalty, and flexibility ... I think, that for a woman, a ‘good’ man is her defender in all possible senses, and the breadwinner for her family’ (a man, 39 y.o.);

‘A husband has to provide for his family financially, and a wife has to take care of her own looks, children and the household... so that there is comfort and mutual understanding in the family’ (a man, 64 y.o.).

Obviously, these perceptions may make a significant impact on the relationship between men and the opposite sex, while disparities between their expectations and real circumstances of the family life could lead to frustration, stress and, consequently, to interpersonal conflicts. Therefore, the issues of the marital relations, distribution of the gender roles in terms of decision-making and household activities were in focus of this study. Presented below are, the survey findings that highlight the men’s personal experiences in steady and long-term relationships with women, i.e. wives, partners, or girlfriends at the time of the interview or earlier.

In general, only 21% of the surveyed men reported that they had never been married and partnered. The bulk of these respondents was presented by young people – only one in four men aged 18-24 and more than a half of the men aged 25-29 reported having a permanent partner (Fig. 6.1). Among older men, the proportion of the respondents who had stable relationships with partners was higher, up to more than 80% in the age groups over forty. The absolute majority of men in these age groups were officially married.

Fig. 6.1. Availability of a stable partner by age groups of men, %



According to the survey, a half of the men preferred relationships with women of the same age as themselves (Figure 6.2). Only one in seven respondents reported that his wife or partner was older; the maximum age difference did not exceed five years. Meanwhile, quite a large proportion of the surveyed men were in stable relationships with younger women: 13% of the respondents indicated that their partners are younger by 1-5 years, 18% – by 6-10 years, and 4% of the respondents reported that their present or most recent partners were younger by more than 10 years.

More than a half of the men reported that they had the same level of education as their partners did (Figure 6.3), with 17% of them having higher educational attainments. At the same time, one in five men reported that his partner was better educated. This trend is a good evidence of a widespread women’s objective to obtain a higher education, while men tend to be targeted at vocational training to be able to secure a blue-collar job, or start their employment just immediately after graduation from high school.

Fig. 6.2. Age difference between men and their partners, % of partnered respondents

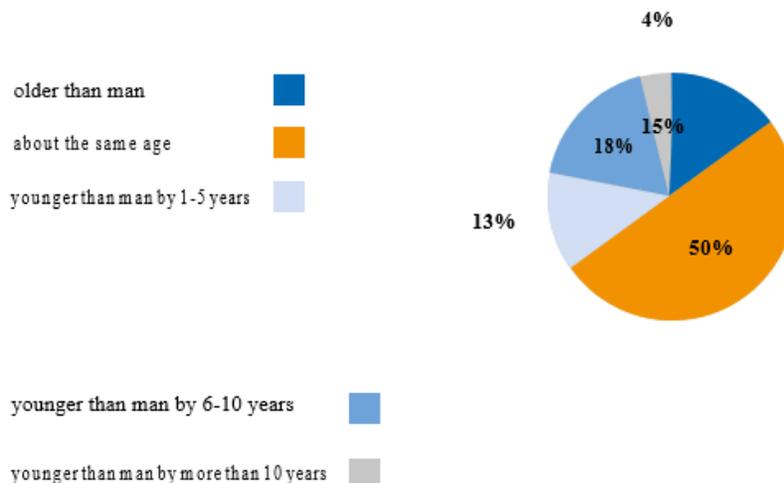


Fig. 6.3. Educational levels of men and their partners, % of partnered respondents



As noted, the gender distribution of social norms implies men’s greater orientation at self-realization in the public sector, including at the labor market, whereas women’s priorities are linked to the private life, family roles and responsibilities. Accordingly, a bulk of the surveyed men were economically active through full or part-time employment (almost 80%), while employment rates were significantly lower among their wives or partners (65%). Women were importantly more engaged in the household activities: one in ten respondents’ partners stayed on a maternity leave, one in eleven women was a housewife involved in care-giving activities for family members (children, elderly, sick, people with disabilities). The respective shares of men who were engaged in household activities or stayed on parental leaves did not exceed 1% of the respondents (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1. Employment status for men and their partners, % of partnered respondents

Status	Men	Wives or partners
Neither working nor studying	1	3
Student	8	4
Unemployed	5	3
Full-time employee	67	56
Part-time employee (incl. seasonal works)	12	9
Pensioner (age retiree, by length of service, disability)	5	5
Engaged in household activities	1	9
Stay on parental leave	1	10

The outlined trends in employment for men and women are logically reflected in the gender gap in earnings. Almost 60% of the interviewed men reported that they earn more than their partners do; only one in four men believed that he has about the same level of income as his partner (Table 6.2). Only nine percent of men acknowledged that their partners earn more than they do. The gender gap in earnings is not correlated with such variable as residential area, but depends on the level of education and age group. In particular, the percentage of women earning more than their husbands is bigger for couples with well-educated women (18%). In older age groups, the gender gap in earnings is also gradually changing for the benefit of women (Table 6.2).

Table 6.2. The gender disparities in earnings between men and their partners by age groups of men, % of partnered respondents

Age groups	Disparities in earnings			
	about the same level	women earn more than men	men earn more than women	don't know
18-24 years	19	7	63	11
25-29 years	21	4	69	6
30-39 years	26	6	60	8
40-49 years	27	10	56	7
50-59 years	29	14	52	5
Total	26	9	58	7

Decision-making and household activities. Although in their verbal comments men acknowledged that they were quite capable of coping with most of the household works and had been actively involved in household activities in the childhood, the current division of powers and responsibilities in their partnerships looks very similar to that in a traditional family. Focus group participants argue that men’s responsibility is to provide for their families financially; they argue that men’s wages are usually higher, so it is economically unreasonable for women to enter the labor market. Instead, women should take care of their children and do all household work, as women are more apt in these responsibilities than men. A large proportion of men preferred not to get involved into daily housekeeping issues at all.

Thus, only a half of the men reported that they make decisions on the current expenditures on the essentials (such as food, clothing, etc.) and goods and services for children, jointly with their partners (Table 6.3). In a significant percentage of households responsibility for these items is borne solely by women (35% and 27%, respectively). The process of making decisions about

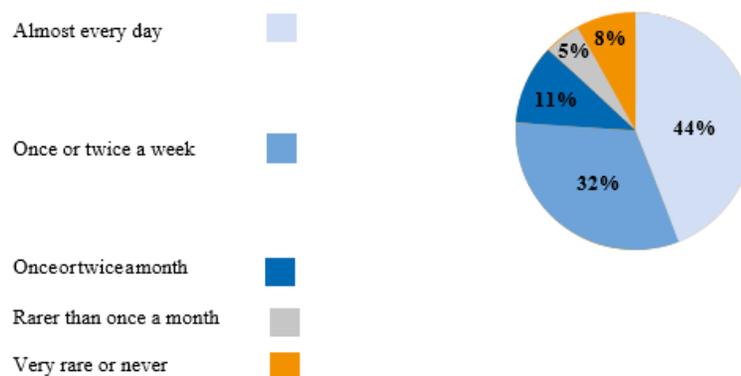
investing in the expensive goods such as cars and houses was more participative (63% of men make these decisions jointly with partners). Only a small percentage of the partnered men reported that the final say about these critical decisions have other people in the household, mostly parents.

Positively, the couples tend to make joint decisions on spending time with family friends or relatives (three-fourths of the respondents), while decisions on one’s employment are mostly independently made by women and men. Participation in decision-making tends to be higher among respondents with higher educational levels, especially among married couples in which women are better educated than men.

Table 6.3. Distribution of answers to question ‘Who in your current or most recent relationship has (had) the final say about the following?’, % of partnered respondents

Decisions	Husband	Wife/ partner	Husband and wife/ partner jointly	Another person	Difficult to answer
Current expenditures on everyday goods	11	35	49	4	1
Buying expensive goods (a car, a house)	23	4	63	2	8
Expenditures on goods and services for children	8	27	54	1	10
Spending time with friends or relatives	13	8	76		3
Husband's employment	67	2	26	1	4
Wife's/partner's employment	5	56	32		7

Fig. 6.4. Men’s practice of talking to partners about problems they face in their lives, % of partnered respondents



The issues of division of household activities between partners rank high on the agenda of all gender studies, since it is widely recognized that the grounds of gender inequality in a society are largely linked to women's disproportionate involvement in household work. The research approaches that attempt to explain this correlation can be divided into the following three groups: 1) theories that focus on the value of financial support for the family ('exchange theory' and the 'relative resources theory'); 2) theories of gender ideology ('gender display model' and 'gender roles socialization theory'); and 3) approaches that focus on the value of time ('time availability theory').

Within the economic approach, it is assumed that the partner with higher income (usually this role is attributed to men) performs a smaller portion of household activities or avoids them completely, while the person whose financial contribution to the family budget is significantly smaller may compensate the low income by doing more of the daily household work. In other words, there is a conditional exchange between domestic work and economic support, therefore the intra-family distribution of responsibilities is perceived as fair and well-grounded.

According to the 'gender display model', the amounts of household work are determined by norms and values that are usually associated with gendered social roles. In particular, economic dependence and performance of everyday work are primarily perceived as attributes of femininity, whereas economic independence and exclusion from domestic work are associated with masculinity.

Our survey shows that the gendered distribution of powers still persists in Ukrainian households. Women's traditional responsibilities include: doing laundry, cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning the house (Table 6.4). The responsibilities related to the purchase of essentials and care-giving for family members in need for outside help (senior, sick or persons with disability) are shared between partners in almost a half of the families. Small household repairs were the only type of household work that was perceived as exclusively masculine duty by almost 90% of respondents.

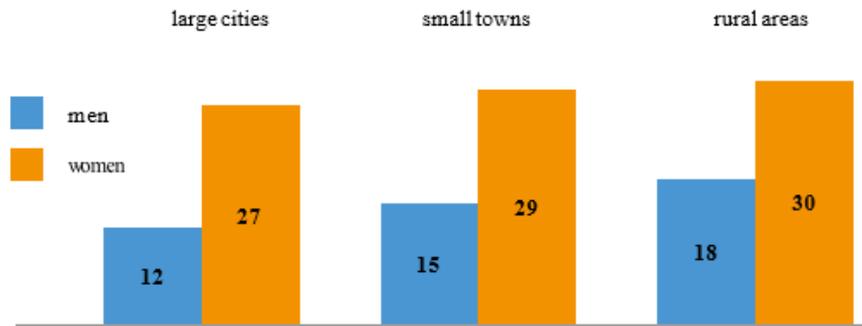
Table 6.4. Distribution of answers to question ‘Disregarding the outside help you receive from others, how did/do you and your partner divide the following household tasks’?, % of partnered respondents

Household activities	Always man	Usually man	Shared equally or done together	Usually woman	Always woman	Difficult to answer
Doing laundry	3	3	16	49	25	4
Repairing the house	51	38	7	1		3
Buying food and essentials	5	8	49	27	8	3
Cleaning the house	3	3	31	43	16	4
Cooking and dishwashing	3	3	23	49	19	3
Paying bills	12	17	28	25	11	7
Care giving for family members	2	2	48	26	8	14

On average, men spent about 15 hours per week on the household work. Meanwhile, according to the respondents’ answers, their partners spent twice as much time on fulfilling these home duties (29 hours per week). Ultimately, this trend can result in the excessive burden for women who are also employed at the labor market; moreover, household work may require much more physical efforts than professional employment. Therefore, in the contemporary social studies, the gender trends in the distribution of working time are described in terms of women’s ‘double workload’, ‘double working day’ or the ‘second shift’. Importantly, the women’s disproportionate involvement in household activities could constrain their opportunities of life choices, professional realization and prospects of development.

Time spent on household work is significantly bigger in rural areas (Fig. 6.5). At the same time, the gender gap is somewhat declining among rural population, as men get usually involved in the household works requiring physical labor (i.e. in the backyard, gardening, and caring for livestock). The largest gap in the average time spent on household work is observed among residents of large cities, e.g. oblast centers and cities with population of more than 100,000.

Fig. 6.5. Average time spent on household work by men and their partners, hours per week



The detailed analysis in the trends of spending time on household work by men and their partners reveals that almost one in seven women spends about 31-49 hours per week on household activities, and as many women spend fifty hours per week or more (Table 6.5). Interestingly, none of the men reported of bearing this heavy burden of domestic work, while the majority of male respondents reported their average time spent on household work within 14 hours per week.

Table 6.5. Distribution of men and their partners by average time spent on household work, % of partnered respondents

Time spent on household works, hours per week	Distribution of respondents, of them:	
	men, %	their wives or partners, %
Less than 14 hours	61	22
15-20 hours	19	26
21-30 hours	20	24
31-49 hours		14
50 hours and more		14

The absolute majority of men (89%) were generally satisfied with the current distribution of household work in their families (a half of them were fully satisfied), while 62% of respondents believed that their partners were also satisfied with the status quo (one in five respondents was convinced that his wife is fully satisfied with the division of household activities). These common perceptions obviously result in instilling of the ‘proper’ social roles and functions for men and women in the public mind, and, consequently, may determine the perceived women’s ‘inferiority’ in society, and their dependent or even subordinate position in family hierarchy.

However, the discussions with young people do provide some reasons for optimism with regard to gradual transformation of the stereotypical views on distribution of household activities and decision-making in families. A lot of young men aged 18-24 expressed their opinions that all family responsibilities should be shared or equally divided between a husband and a wife:

'there are no exclusively 'male' and 'female' responsibilities, as everyday household work should be divided equally; that is the partner who has more free time at the moment should take care of it. As to some specific things, such as repair of a car or a computer, they must be performed by a person who knows better how to do it... no matter whether it is a man or a woman' (a man, 19 y.o.);

'both partners have to earn money, and then there will be no complaints, disagreements or disappointments between them... And it's not a matter of who earns more, but the feeling of personal independence and self-sufficiency. Of course, decisions on large purchases for the entire family, investments in children, their education and development, must be taken together and calmly discussed by the partners' (a man, 20 y.o.).

7. Attitudes to gender norms and stereotypes in society

Perceptions of gender equality. Even though the concept of gender equality was integrated into the legislative and institutional environment of Ukraine quite a long time ago, plain people do not always know what it is about or interpret it correctly. 'Gender equality is the equality between women and men... But is there any problem with this in our country? Women can study and work, and make their careers – that is one's personal matter, a question of choosing priorities' (a man, 42 y.o.), 'not only our women have all the opportunities and rights that are provided by the state, they are also supported by men in everything... Men try to get out of their skin to please women. I think that it is men who are treated unfairly and belittled in society' (a man, 55 y.o.).

A lot of men tend to that gender equality exists where equal rights of women and men are declared formally and, therefore fail to see whether they are easily exercisable in real life. In particular, 41% of men agreed that gender equality in the Ukrainian society has mostly been achieved (Table 7.1). Meanwhile, 29% of them opined that promotion of gender equality benefits mostly well-to-do people, as they are better positioned to use these benefits. In general, the rate of public awareness of the policies of gender equality is quite low: a lot of men were unable to rate their attitudes to these issues and didn't know how to answer the questions.

Though the overwhelming majority of the men have shown an unbiased attitude to women’s empowerment (Table 7.1), one in ten men still agreed with the stereotyped statements that giving rights to women results in restricting men’s rights, and that women who enter the labor market take the jobs from men. The prevailing majority of men who thought so, were the respondents of older age.

Table 7.1. Men’s perceptions of gender equality, % of respondents

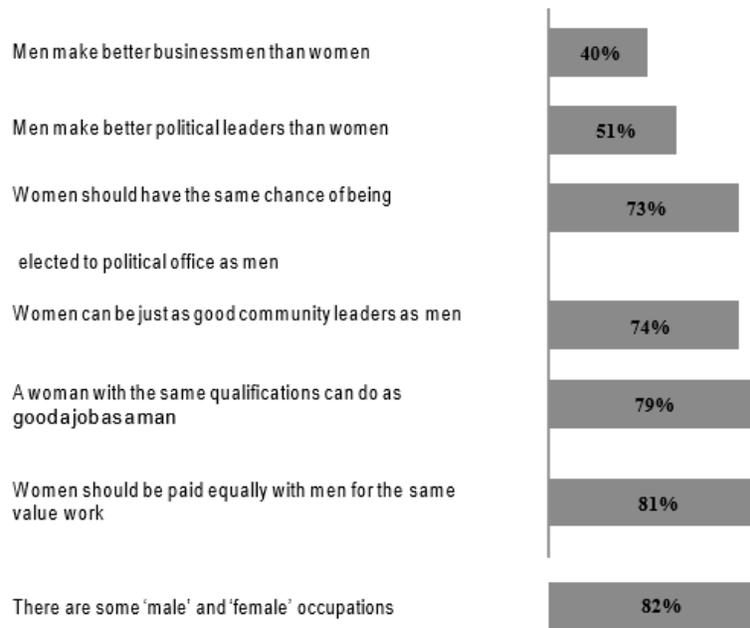
Statements	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don’t
Gender equality has already been achieved for the most part take the rights away from men	10	31	27	9	23
When women get the rights, they take the jobs away from men mostly well-to-do people	3	9	36	48	5
When women get employed,	2	8	39	48	3
Promotion of gender equality benefits	8	21	25	14	32

Positively, most of the respondents were not biased towards women’s professional skills and employment. About 80% of the respondents agreed that women with the same qualification can do as good a job as men, and should be paid equally with men for work of the same value (Fig. 7.1). Meanwhile, 82% of the interviewed men were convinced that there is a division between ‘female’ and ‘male’ occupations at the labor market, while 40% of the respondents generally agreed with the statement that men are better businessmen than women. These ideas build preconditions for the gender-based segregation of employment that usually results in concentration of women’s employment in the low-paid economic sectors and lower-ranking positions, and strengthens the gender inequality in society. Public views that underestimate the entrepreneurial potential of women predetermine constraints that women’s business can face in accessing financial resources and development programs.

The statements about women’s aptness to public and political activities garnered somewhat weaker support. Although three-fourths of the respondents agreed that women could be as good community leaders as men, and should have the same chances to be elected to political structures, a half of the respondents generally agreed with the statement that men are better political leaders

than women (Fig. 7.1). These social expectations are consequently reflected in a low level of women’s political representation, since the proportion of women among the Parliament members never exceeded 12% throughout the period of independence of Ukraine. The percentage of women holding executive managerial positions remains disproportionately low as well: based on the recent studies, women represent only 30% of managers of enterprises and organizations established as legal entities.

Fig. 7.1. Attitudes to opportunities of professional fulfillment of women and men in society, % of respondent who generally agreed with the statements

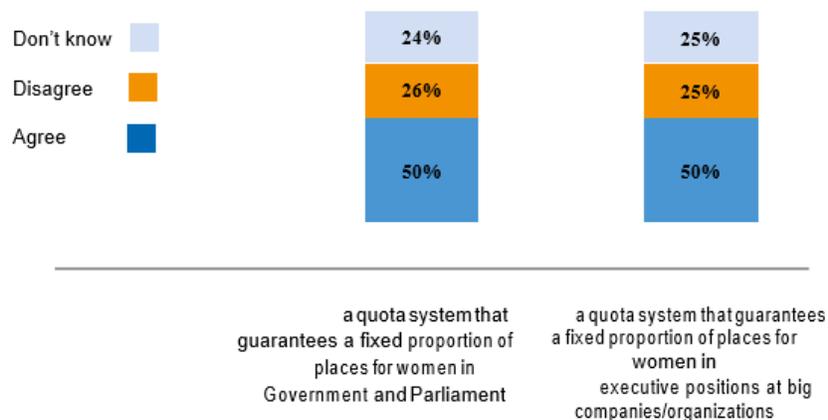


Even though the study respondents admitted low representation of women in political structures and at managerial positions, they did not support the idea of introducing gender quotas as a temporary affirmative action to recompense the long-term neglect of the gender equality ideas. Only a half of the men generally supported the idea to establish a fixed proportion of seats for women in the Government and Parliament, as well as on executive positions at big organizations and companies. Meanwhile, one-fourth of the respondents strongly disagreed with this approach to promote gender equality (Fig. 7.2), and another one-fourth of the respondents didn’t have an opinion, presumably because they did not care about gender equality altogether.

The respondents’ views on the priority of family responsibilities for women remain quite pronounced. Almost 70% of the respondents believed that woman’s most important role is taking

care of her home and cook for her family (Fig. 7.3). A large proportion of men still see women’s social roles as housewives who give birth, nurture and take care of children. Thus, 63% of the respondents noted that babysitting, e.g. changing the diapers, bathing and feeding of children, is purely women’s responsibility, while one-third of them articulated that men do not know how to take care of babies at all. Only a half of the respondents supported the idea that men have to share the work around the house with women equally, but personal experience of the respondents suggests quite a different reality with the division of family responsibilities and time spent on household work. In this context, young men (in the ages of 18-24), men with higher education and urban residents, were more progressive, as they were less supportive of these stereotyped statements.

Fig. 7.2. Attitudes to the system of gender quotas in public administration and executive positions, % of respondents



Traditional perceptions of social roles take roots in some perceptions of masculinity related to the expectations of men’s dominant roles in the household decision-making and financial support of a family. Two-thirds of the survey respondents were convinced that it is men who have a final say in decisions influencing welfare of their families; one-third of them believed that a man is worthless if he earns less than his wife (Fig. 7.4). The youngest respondents were particularly radical in this regard; almost a half of them told that if a man earns less than his wife, he is weak and incapable in his life.

It is noteworthy that more than one-fourth of the respondents agreed that having personal leisure time or a hobby is more important for men than for women, which may satisfy themselves with having a family to feel themselves fulfilled. Meanwhile, it is positive that the stereotyped attitudes

to the division of family roles between women and men are much less pronounced in relation to the respondents' children. The vast majority of the surveyed men disagree that, given that money is scarce in a family, these resources should be spent on education of boys, as girls may not need university education in the adulthood. Therefore, there is reason to expect a gradual transformation of public views at women's and men's position in the future.

Fig. 7.3. Attitudes to the distribution of family roles between women and men, % of respondents who generally agreed with the statements

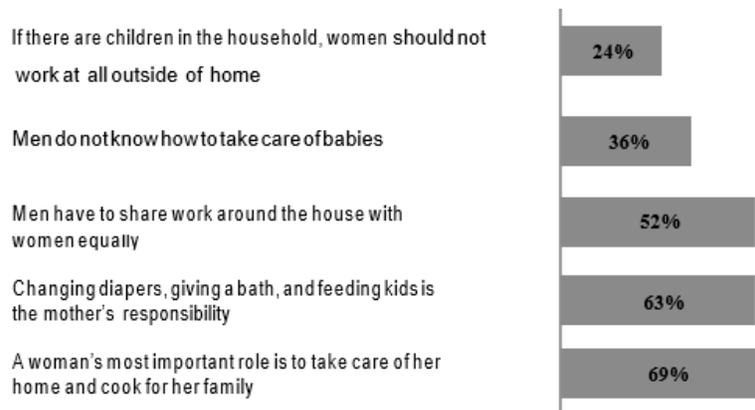
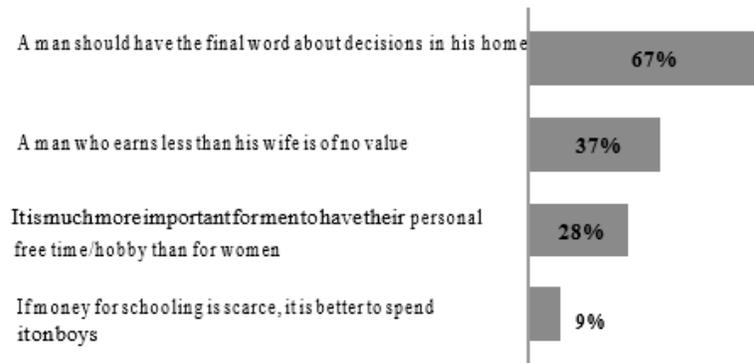


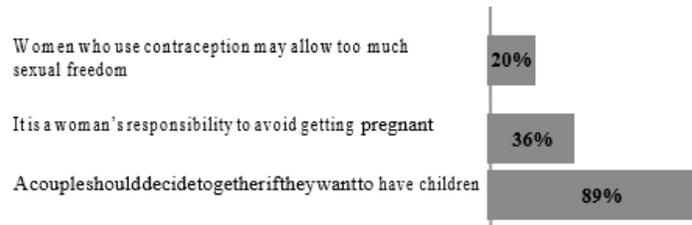
Fig. 7.4. Perceptions of some masculinity attributes, % of respondents who generally agreed with statements



Unfortunately, patriarchal views persist when it goes about family planning. Although the vast majority of respondents agreed that spouses or partners should decide together whether they want to have children, the responsibility for unwanted pregnancy is mostly placed on women. Thus, more than one-third of men agreed that it is women's responsibility to avoid getting pregnant (Fig. 7.5). Rural residents were particularly categorical with regard to family planning, with 41% of them claiming that it is a woman who is responsible for preventing unwanted pregnancy. In

addition, one in five respondents supported stereotyped statements about use of contraceptives by women, suggesting that women who use contraception may have too much sexual freedom.

Fig. 7.5. Men's attitudes to family planning, % of respondents who generally agreed with the statements



Summarizing the findings of the survey, it should be noted that the formal recognition of equality of women and men in a society is combined with sustainable perceptions of the distribution between priorities of private (family) and public life and social roles of women and men. In practice, these expectations not only strengthen the barriers limiting women's life choices, but also have a negative impact on men's lives. An extensive social pressure related to the need to meet generally accepted masculinity guidelines results in men's excessive psychological pressure, as they feel personally responsible for the well-being of their families, and deliberately avoid being engaged in family responsibilities and childcare. At the same time, one's subjective well-being, satisfaction with life and emotional well-being largely depend on the relations with children.

Awareness on gender-sensitive legislation and policies. International observers argue that a progressive legislation and institutional environment were established in Ukraine to regulate the issues of gender equality (Gerasymenko & Maksymenko 2016: 93). The country has joined the fundamental international treaties that declare the equality between women and men and non-discrimination with regard to gender; the governmental authorities regularly report on the progress in promoting gender inequality in various domains of the society. At the national level, a number of the State target social programs for ensuring gender equality were implemented, and the issue of equal rights and opportunities for women and men was included in the national development agenda.

In 2005, the law 'On Ensuring Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men' was adopted, defining main directions of the national gender policy, introducing the gender mechanisms at the national level and prohibiting gender-based discrimination. Numerous amendments to ensure

gender equality were introduced into family law, laws of education, political representation and employment opportunities. Finally, the Law ‘On Grounds of Preventing and Combating of Discrimination in Ukraine’ (2012) determined the forms of discrimination, including gender-based discrimination, and outlined the mechanisms for preventing human rights violations.

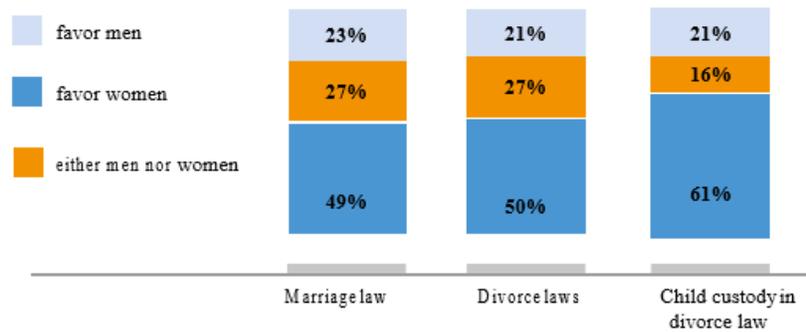
Nevertheless, the level of public awareness on the gender-sensitive legislation and public policies targeted at ensuring equality between women and men is still rather low. According to the survey, only 30% of men were aware that gender equality legislation exists in the country. More than a half of the respondents did not know the answer to this question, and one in nine respondents was convinced that there is no special law to guarantee the equality of rights and opportunities for women and men in the country.

Assessing the gender sensitivity of family laws, a half of the respondents indicated that the national laws on marriages and divorces favor women (Fig. 7.6). Only 27% of the men recognized that family laws favor neither women nor men; the percentage of the respondents who assessed family laws as gender-neutral was slightly higher among men with higher education.

In the opinion of many respondents, a particular problem with the family law is related to the biased attitude to men in the issues of child custody after divorce. The vast majority of men (61%) were convinced that the custody laws work in favour of women, since it is women who usually stay with children based on the court decisions. Only 16% of the respondents agreed that the child custody legislation is gender-neutral.

A large number of men were unable to answer the question about the family laws which suggests a rather low level of public awareness about the legal issues. The ignorance about the basic legal aspects of the family relations could result in men’s vulnerability to violation of rights, while unawareness on the existing mechanisms of protection could restrict their access to obtaining legal support in resolving family disputes.

Fig. 7.6. Assessment of the national family laws favorability for women and men, % of respondents



In the context of public attitudes to the gender norms and stereotypes, it is particularly interesting to study the level of men’s awareness of the government aid programs targeted at protecting workers with family responsibilities. In general, the national legislation offers Ukrainian women a broad array of social protection measures in case of childbirth. They are entitled to a paid maternity leave of a minimum seventy days before the childbirth and 56 days (and in the case of health problems – seventy days) after the childbirth. After this period, mother (or father) may take up to three years of parental leave (in some situations – up to six years); moreover, under the law, mother (or father, as applicable) keeps their place of job during the leave. This parental leave may be used, in full or in part within the established timeframe, by other relatives who provide the actual childcare or by another person who adopted or offers tutelage to the child.

However, men’s acceptance of the opportunity to take parental leaves until the child turns three years old remain so unpopular that only a few of men inquire about the opportunities to that effect provided by the legislation. Thus, less than a half of the respondents (46%) basically knew that father has the same right to take parental leave, as mother. At the same time, 8% of the men were convinced that there are no such legislative clauses; the rest of them did not know the exact answer to this question.

Men’s limited interest in parental leaves is well illustrated by the following data. Less than a half of the respondents (44%) who were aware of the leaves could give the correct answer about the length of this leave (Table 7.2). One-third of the men were unable to answer this question at all, and the rest of them tended to underestimate the norms of labor legislation by assuming that the father’s parental leave may last no more than a year, for several months, or for a month. Because of these social expectations, there aren’t any discussions on harmonizing professional employment

and family responsibilities of a father in the national legislation and institutional environment, while most of the state policies, advocacy efforts and initiatives of social partners are directed exclusively at protecting employment opportunities for women with small children.

Table 7.2. Expectations of the length of parental leave for men, % of respondents who were aware on the opportunity of the leave

Length of parental leave	Percentage
One month or less	3
Several months	4
About 1 year	11
Several years	44
Don't know	36

Among the recent legislative initiatives designed to promote gender equality, the Law ‘On Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence’ has to be mentioned, as it was adopted in late 2017 following a lengthy advocacy campaign. The law criminalizes domestic violence, introduces an integrated approach to combat violence, and extends the range of tools to protect victims. Despite the extensive outreach activities that accompanied fine-tuning of the Law, only 30% of the surveyed men were informed about existing of the special legislation on domestic violence in Ukraine. The rest of respondents did not know anything about it at all.

As to the informed men, their attitudes to the domestic violence laws were quite sceptical. More than half of the men believed that the laws will fail to provide relevant support for victims of violence (Figure 7.7), while almost one-third of them believed that the laws expose women to even more stigmatizing and suffering. Also, quite common are public perceptions that the law is biased against men: 44% of respondents agreed that the law makes it too easy for women to bring violence charges against men, while these charges may not be grounded sometimes. Finally, almost one in five men believed that the laws are too harsh to abusers. More rural residents and older men were in support of the last assumption.

8. Conclusion

Our study reveals that aggression and violence are present in men’s life since the early childhood. Half of the men indicated that they were physically punished by their parents, while one in five

respondents experienced physical punishment from the school teachers. The experience of emotional violence was also quite prevalent in the childhood: one in five men faced insults and humiliation by family members, and 18% were bullied by their mates. Later on in life, men find themselves in violence-prone environment when they are in the army or in military training.

Family remains the main origin of the perceived understanding of social roles, responsibilities and powers for women and men. According to the study results, some persistent expectations exist in the Ukrainian society in terms of marital relationships and division of powers and responsibilities in a household. In particular, a capacity of providing the economic well-being for the family is mostly perceived as the only requirement for a 'good' husband to meet. At the same time, the role of a 'good' wife is associated with a set of requirements including caring about her good looks, intelligence, prudence, skills in running the household and setting up the family comfort.

Positively, the survey findings demonstrate a gradual transformation of gender norms among young men. A large proportion of young people articulated that all family activities have to be performed by partners jointly or equally divided between husbands and wives. A gradual increase in responsible parenting attitudes is also observed among young men, as they get more interested in their children, pay attention to the issues of family planning, and get involved in the partner births. Still, the division of childcare responsibilities is quite traditional even among the young age cohort, since most household duties related to daily care or care for a sick child are considered to be the mother's prerogative.

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