

From Tradition to Modernity: A Comparative Analysis of Gender Roles Across Cultures

Prof Steve Ogbodo ^a, Chukwuemeka Steve Abiakam ^b, Akolo Yohanna Jaggu ^c, and Unekwujo Iye Etubi-Ibrahim ^d

^a The Head, Political Science Department, Enugu State University of Science and Technology

^b Research student, Institute for Development Studies, University of Nigeria, Enugu

^{c-d} University of Abuja Teaching Hospital, Gwagwalada, FCT, Abuja

Keywords: Intergenerational Gender Perspective, Cultural Dynamics, Gender and Social Change

Article Information

Received	9 th Jan 2026	Accepted	11 th Mar 2026
Published	30 th Mar 2026		

Abstract

This study investigates the transformation of gender roles and expectations in traditional and contemporary societies through a cross-cultural framework. It delves into how entrenched cultural and religious values in traditional communities have shaped fixed gender roles, often reinforcing patriarchal norms through prescribed labor divisions and family hierarchies. In contrast, modern societies are experiencing a notable shift toward gender role flexibility and equality, influenced by industrialization, expanded access to education, global interconnectedness, and the advocacy of gender justice movements. The paper also examines the friction that emerges in this evolving landscape, particularly generational divides between older individuals who uphold conventional views and younger cohorts who challenge them with more inclusive perspectives. Furthermore, it analyzes the effectiveness and limitations of both global and localized gender equality campaigns, shedding light on their cultural adaptability and impact. Drawing on comparative insights and real-world examples, the research highlights the nuanced interplay between tradition and modernity in shaping gender relations. While acknowledging the strides made toward equality, the paper underscores that progress remains inconsistent and context-dependent, calling for ongoing, culturally attuned efforts to close persistent gender gaps.

Introduction

Across human societies, gender roles and expectations serve as key organizing principles that shape individuals' identities, interactions, and opportunities. These roles are often embedded in long-standing traditions, religious doctrines, and cultural beliefs that prescribe specific behaviors, responsibilities, and social positions for men and women. In many traditional cultures, such roles tend to be highly structured, with men typically positioned as leaders and breadwinners, while women are expected to fulfill nurturing and domestic duties within the home (Connell, 2005). These patterns are usually established early in life through gender-specific upbringing and social conditioning (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

However, contemporary societies have experienced profound changes in how gender is understood and expressed. With the rise of industrial economies, expanding education, global media, and rights-based advocacy, more inclusive and flexible interpretations of gender roles have emerged. These shifts have allowed individuals greater freedom in choosing paths that were once confined by traditional gender binaries (Butler, 1990). Feminist movements and other gender equity initiatives have been instrumental in challenging systemic inequalities, dismantling stereotypical role expectations, and promoting fair representation across all sectors of society (Hooks, 2000). Nevertheless, this transformation has not been without resistance. In

many communities, especially those with deep-rooted traditional values, there exists a cultural tug-of-war between established gender norms and evolving ideals (Inglehart & Norris, 2003).

This research explores the contrasts and continuities in gender expectations between traditional and modern societies, focusing on how these roles are shaped by cultural, historical, and political forces. By examining these differences through a comparative, cross-cultural lens, the paper seeks to understand both the progress made and the persistent challenges that confront global efforts toward gender parity.

The Shifting Landscape of Gender Roles in History

In many traditional societies, gender roles were firmly embedded within the cultural and religious foundations of the community, creating clearly defined expectations for men and women. These roles were largely shaped by long-standing beliefs and economic arrangements that emphasized a strict division of labor. Men were typically viewed as the dominant figures in public life, entrusted with responsibilities such as protecting the community, providing for the family, and making key decisions (Lerner, 1986). Women, by contrast, were assigned to the domestic sphere, tasked with nurturing children, managing household duties, and supporting the family in private life. These distinctions were often seen as natural and reinforced by religious or cultural ideologies that argued men and women possessed inherently different attributes suited for these roles (Chafetz, 1990).

Family life in these contexts was generally patriarchal, with male authority figures, often fathers or elder men holding the greatest influence. A woman's social identity was closely tied to her functions as a wife and mother, with societal expectations limiting her involvement in public affairs. Social customs upheld these roles through behavioral codes that encouraged qualities like submission, humility, and care in women, and strength, assertiveness, and leadership in men (Kandiyoti, 1988). These roles were ingrained from childhood through socialization practices that conditioned individuals to internalize gender-specific expectations and continue passing them down (Ortner, 1974).

The emergence of industrialization, followed by the forces of globalization and activism, significantly altered the landscape of gender roles. Beginning in the 18th century, industrialization catalyzed a shift from agrarian economies to urban, factory-based societies, changing the structure of both work and family life (Giddens, 1990). As economic demand grew, women increasingly participated in paid labor, especially during global conflicts like the World Wars, undermining the notion of men as the sole earners (Goldin, 1991). Globalization then facilitated the exchange of new ideas, promoting broader conversations around gender and sparking questions about traditional hierarchies (Beck, 2000). Simultaneously, feminist movements arose, confronting longstanding inequalities and pushing for institutional changes that supported gender parity (Freedman, 2002). These transformations led to greater flexibility in gender roles, with more individuals adopting roles outside traditional boundaries and redefining what it means to be male or female in a modern society (Gerson, 2009).

Nevertheless, the evolution of gender roles has not been universal. Cultural, religious, and economic factors continue to influence how societies interpret and enforce gender norms. In many regions, especially rural or less economically developed areas, traditional roles still dominate. For example, in parts of South Asia, the male-centered structure of labor and authority remains prevalent, and women are still largely expected to prioritize home and family life (Sen, 1999). In contrast, numerous Western nations have embraced more progressive gender norms, influenced by legal reforms and advocacy for gender diversity (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). Even within these modernized contexts, experiences vary according to class, ethnicity, and religious affiliation. Urban, educated women may encounter more freedom to challenge conventions, while those from more conservative or faith-based communities may remain subject to traditional expectations (Mahmood, 2005).

Ultimately, the experience of gender in today's world reflects an ongoing tension between old and new values. While advances have been made in promoting gender equity, these gains remain uneven, shaped by the intersection of culture, belief, and socioeconomic context.

In Africa, gender roles across African societies, particularly within Nigeria, have undergone dynamic transformations influenced by indigenous practices, colonial legacies, and contemporary advocacy. Understanding the historical evolution of these roles offers insight into the present realities and the socio-cultural challenges surrounding gender equality.

In pre-colonial Nigeria, gender roles were often fluid and complementary. Contrary to the rigid binaries introduced during colonial rule, traditional societies featured dual-gender systems that afforded women significant power. Among the Yoruba, women held positions such as *Iyalode*, which gave them political influence and control over market affairs (Mba, 1982). In Igbo communities, women exercised authority through organizations like the *Umuada* and market associations, contributing to communal decision-making (Okonjo, 1976). These systems reflected a balanced gender structure, where men and women fulfilled roles that were different yet equally valued.

The arrival of British colonialism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries disrupted these indigenous frameworks. Colonial administrators imposed a Western, patriarchal structure that excluded women from formal power. The warrant chief system appointed men exclusively, thereby sidelining traditional women leaders (Amadiume, 1987). Economic and legal reforms targeted male-dominated systems and ignored or suppressed female-driven markets and institutions. This shift not only entrenched gender inequality but also reshaped perceptions of gender roles, positioning women as subordinate in both public and private life.

In resistance to these injustices, Nigerian women organized mass protests and movements. A prominent example is the *Aba Women's Riot* of 1929, a large-scale uprising led by Igbo women against unfair taxation and colonial authority (Van Allen, 1972). Women used traditional tactics such as "sitting on a man", a form of public protest to express dissent and demand change. Similarly, in the 1940s, *Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti* led the *Abeokuta Women's Union* in campaigns against unjust taxes and political exclusion, which eventually resulted in significant reforms (Johnson-Odim & Mba, 1997). These acts of resistance demonstrated women's agency and laid the foundation for post-colonial feminist activism in Nigeria.

In post-independence, access to formal education and employment began to improve women's social standing. Government reforms and missionary education facilitated women's entry into teaching, civil service, and healthcare. However, while progress was notable in urban areas, many rural communities remained bound by patriarchal customs and legal barriers. Cultural expectations continued to restrict women's roles to domestic spheres, even as some made strides in politics and professional sectors (Mama, 1997).

Contemporary Nigeria has made further efforts to promote gender equality through legal and institutional frameworks. Policies like the *National Gender Policy* (Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, 2006) and Nigeria's ratification of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW, 1985) reflect national and international commitments to gender justice. Nonetheless, implementation has been inconsistent. As of 2023, women occupy less than 10% of elective positions in Nigeria's National Assembly (UN Women, 2023), a figure far below global average. Efforts to introduce gender quotas have faced legislative and cultural resistance, revealing ongoing societal reluctance to challenge entrenched gender norms.

Global gender equality movements such as *#MeToo* and *HeForShe* have also influenced local feminist activism in Nigeria. These campaigns have helped amplify issues like sexual harassment, femicide, and economic exclusion. Local movements like "Say No to Rape" and "Not Too Young to Run" have gained traction, particularly among youth and urban populations, contributing to increased awareness and policy

advocacy (Adebayo, 2020). Yet, in many regions, traditional values and religious ideologies continue to impede meaningful gender reform.

Cultural Determinants of Gender Roles

Religious ideologies and longstanding cultural practices have historically played a central role in constructing and sustaining gender roles in traditional societies. These frameworks often operate as authoritative systems that legitimize and perpetuate distinct expectations for men and women. In many communities, religious doctrines are interpreted to promote specific roles that are considered divinely established and beyond question. For example, certain interpretations of Islamic teachings have been used to support gender hierarchies that prioritize male authority, especially in familial and societal settings (Moghissi, 1999). Similarly, Hindu scriptures such as the Manusmriti have long prescribed specific duties for women, often reinforcing patriarchal values that view a woman's identity through her relationships with male guardians - father, husband, or son (Sharma, 2002). These religious views are deeply woven into cultural norms, making gender divisions seem natural and self-evident. Daily life, ceremonies, and social rituals continue to reflect and reinforce these traditional roles (Brenner, 1996).

However, the forces of modernization have introduced new perspectives that challenge these timeworn constructs. Increased access to education has been transformative, particularly for women, enabling them to participate more fully in public life and question longstanding gender expectations (Tembon & Fort, 2008). Through education, individuals gain exposure to alternative worldviews that promote gender equity and personal autonomy. Media globalization has also played a powerful role in reshaping gender narratives, with film, television, and digital content showcasing men and women in roles that defy traditional stereotypes. Images of female leaders and male nurturers are becoming more common, shifting public perception and encouraging reevaluation of gender norms (Connell, 2002). Additionally, feminist movements and human rights campaigns have emerged as key forces in dismantling patriarchal systems and advocating for systemic reforms in favor of gender inclusivity (Eisenstein, 1996).

Yet, cultural norms and religious values continue to shape gender expectations in distinct ways across different societies. In many Western contexts, where secularism and liberal ideologies are prevalent, religious influence on gender roles has waned, giving rise to more egalitarian and fluid role definitions (Inglehart & Norris, 2003). By contrast, in regions like the Middle East, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa, where religious and cultural traditions remain strong, traditional gender roles often persist, particularly in rural communities less affected by globalization and economic transformation (Kandiyoti, 1988). While urban centers may adopt more progressive attitudes due to exposure to global media and labor market demands, rural areas frequently uphold rigid roles deemed crucial for maintaining social cohesion (Jayawardena, 1986). This diversity underscores the nuanced relationship between cultural tradition, religious influence, and societal change in the evolution of gender roles.

In Nigeria particularly, gender expectations are significantly influenced by a blend of cultural norms and religious values. These societal forces jointly establish and reinforce traditional roles for men and women, shaping individual identity and societal participation. Culturally, most Nigerian communities are patriarchal, with clearly defined roles that prioritize men as leaders, providers, and decision-makers, while women are typically expected to focus on domestic responsibilities, child-rearing, and care giving. This division of labor is often perpetuated through customary proverbs, folklore, and rites of passage that prepare boys for leadership and girls for marriage and obedience (Okeke-Ihejirika & Franceschet, 2002).

Religious beliefs further reinforce these expectations. In northern Nigeria, where Islam is predominant, women's roles are often confined to the private sphere, supported by practices such as *purdah* and interpretations of Sharia law that limit female autonomy in areas like marriage, inheritance, and education (Bano, 2012). In southern regions, Christianity plays a similar role by upholding male leadership within the home and church, drawing on biblical texts that promote female submission (Aina, 1998). Even traditional

African religions, while offering some spiritual authority to women, generally uphold gender hierarchies in societal and political spaces.

These cultural and religious norms have led to gender-based disparities in education, employment, political participation, and protection under the law. For example, girls in rural communities are often withdrawn from school to prepare for early marriage, and women who defy traditional expectations by choosing not to marry or by seeking leadership roles may face stigmatization (Olojede, 2009). Nevertheless, Nigeria is witnessing gradual shifts. Increased access to education, urbanization, feminist activism, and exposure to global norms are challenging long-standing gender roles. Local NGOs, reformist religious groups, and youth-led movements are also contributing to a rethinking of gender expectations within cultural and religious contexts (Okeke-Ihejirika, 2004).

Gender Role Dilemmas: Traditional Norms vs. Modern Realities

In societies undergoing transitions between traditional and modern values, generational disagreements over gender expectations often become flashpoints for social tension. Elders, whose identities were shaped by well-defined and hierarchical gender norms, frequently find it difficult to accept the more fluid and egalitarian views of younger generations. This generational rift becomes especially visible within families, where older relatives may expect women to focus on domestic responsibilities, while younger members pursue career goals and independence that contradict such conventions (Schwartz et al., 2010). These conflicting viewpoints can result in strained relationships as younger individuals shaped by education, global exposure, and economic participation seek to redefine gender roles, sometimes at odds with the expectations of tradition-bound elders (Mannheim, 1952). The tension between honoring cultural heritage and embracing new social realities often results in unresolved friction within households and across communities (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

One of the most visible arenas of this transformation is the workplace and family sphere. Historically, men were cast as providers and women as homemakers. But modern economic and social realities have disrupted this binary. Increasingly, women are active participants in the labor market, and men are stepping into caregiving roles once seen as exclusively feminine (Goldin, 2006). This rebalancing has been supported by shifting policy landscapes, economic necessity, and gender equality advocacy (Gerson, 2010). Today, families are increasingly sharing domestic and economic responsibilities (Bianchi et al., 2000). Nevertheless, enduring societal expectations and sluggish policy reform continue to generate conflict around work-life balance, division of labor at home, and parental responsibilities (Coltrane, 2000). These persistent tensions contribute to stress and dissatisfaction among both men and women, who must often juggle outdated expectations with modern demands.

Examples from different national contexts offer deeper insight into the cultural complexity of these issues. In Japan, the traditional "salaryman" model—where men are expected to devote themselves to long hours at work and minimal domestic involvement—is facing growing resistance from younger generations advocating for shared household duties and healthier work-life balance (Dasgupta, 2003). Older generations, who view unwavering workplace dedication as a masculine ideal, often struggle to empathize with these new values (Roberson & Suzuki, 2003). In India, economic modernization and urbanization have sparked similar shifts. Middle-class young women are increasingly pursuing higher education and professional careers, disrupting long-held beliefs about early marriage and domestic life (Radhakrishnan, 2009). Yet this progression often provokes backlash in more conservative families and communities, where traditional norms remain deeply embedded (Sen, 1999). As a result, both men and women are caught in a delicate balancing act, navigating personal aspirations while contending with societal expectations.

These global snapshots underscore the ongoing friction between evolving gender roles and entrenched cultural norms. They point to the urgent need for policies and cultural dialogues that recognize these tensions

and support inclusive paths toward gender equity—tailored to the realities of specific social and cultural contexts.

Gender Equality Campaigns and Their Societal Outcomes

Global movements for gender equality have been instrumental in confronting long-standing gender norms and advancing women's rights across diverse societies. Initiatives like the United Nations' HeForShe campaign, the #MeToo movement, and the global Women's March have shed light on issues such as gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and systemic inequality. These campaigns have galvanized public consciousness worldwide and pressured institutions and governments to introduce reforms that foster greater gender parity (True, 2013). In deeply patriarchal societies, such global momentum has offered visibility and support to local activists challenging oppressive norms. For instance, international advocacy has contributed to policy shifts in Saudi Arabia, where women have gradually gained rights like driving and entering the labor force (Doumato, 2010). Nevertheless, the extent of influence these movements wield varies, often limited by entrenched cultural, religious, or political resistance.

At the national and community levels, local feminist and gender advocacy groups have tailored their activism to address specific socio-cultural issues. In contemporary societies, these efforts have targeted causes such as reproductive autonomy, pay equity, and the eradication of gender violence. In India, for example, the Save Our Sisters campaign, sparked by the 2012 Delhi gang rape, mobilized mass protests and prompted significant legal reforms to combat sexual violence (Kumar, 2014). Similarly, Latin America's Ni Una Menos movement has spotlighted femicide and domestic abuse, resulting in both legal and societal change (Gargallo, 2020). These locally grounded movements, while often aligned with broader global feminist ideals, remain closely attuned to the distinct challenges facing women in their respective contexts. By confronting patriarchal customs and demanding progressive policies, they play a critical role in reshaping cultural expectations around gender.

However, the reception and effectiveness of gender equality movements are deeply shaped by cultural context. In societies with progressive social frameworks—such as those in Scandinavia—gender advocacy has led to swift institutional responses, including robust parental leave policies and wage equality legislation (Borchorst & Siim, 2002). Conversely, in conservative or religiously rigid environments, such efforts frequently encounter hostility. In countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan, gender rights activists not only struggle against state indifference but also risk violence and marginalization, as traditional belief systems often frame gender equality as a threat to societal norms (Abirafeh, 2009). These varying outcomes emphasize the need for culturally sensitive strategies that balance global solidarity with local realities in the pursuit of lasting gender justice.

Conclusion

The transformation of gender roles and expectations across traditional and modern societies reflects a multifaceted intersection of cultural, religious, economic, and social influences. While traditional societies often maintain strict gender norms rooted in long-standing historical and cultural frameworks, modern societies are increasingly embracing more egalitarian roles, shaped by education, globalization, and advocacy for gender equity. Yet, this evolution is far from uniform or uncontested. Resistance from cultural traditions, generational divides, and slow institutional adaptation continue to hinder progress.

Global and grassroots gender equality movements have played a critical role in challenging the status quo, but their effectiveness varies widely depending on local contexts. These disparities highlight the complex and often contentious nature of gender reform across different societies.

To effectively address the persistent challenges surrounding gender roles, it is vital to engage in inclusive and culturally aware conversations that uphold the core values of gender equality. Such an approach can help

bridge the divide between tradition and progress, ensuring that change is both respectful and enduring, and that the movement toward gender justice benefits individuals across all social and cultural backgrounds.

References

- Abirafeh, L. (2009). *Gender and international aid in Afghanistan: The politics and effects of intervention*. McFarland.
- Adebayo, B. (2020). Social media and feminist activism in Nigeria: The case of #SayNoToRape. *African Studies Review*, 63(3), 450–466.
- Aina, I. O. (1998). *Women, culture and society*. In A. Sesay & A. Odebiyi (Eds.), *Nigerian women in society* (pp. 3–21). Lagos: Unity Publishing.
- Amadiume, I. (1987). *Male daughters, female husbands: Gender and sex in an African society*. Zed Books.
- Bano, M. (2012). *The rational believer: Choices and decisions in the madrasas of Pakistan*. Cornell University Press.
- Beck, U. (2000). *What is globalization?* Polity Press.
- Bianchi, S. M., Milkie, M. A., Sayer, L. C., & Robinson, J. P. (2000). Is anyone doing the housework? Trends in the gender division of household labor. *Social Forces*, 79(1), 191–228. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2675569>
- Borchorst, A., & Siim, B. (2002). The women-friendly welfare states revisited. *NORA: Nordic Journal of Women's Studies*, 10(2), 90–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/080387402760262086>
- Brenner, S. (1996). Reconstructing self and society: Javanese Muslim women and “the veil.” *American Ethnologist*, 23(4), 673–697. <https://doi.org/10.1525/ae.1996.23.4.02a00010>
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender trouble: Feminism and the subversion of identity*. Routledge.
- Chafetz, J. S. (1990). *Gender equity: An integrated theory of stability and change*. Sage Publications.
- Coltrane, S. (2000). Research on household labor: Modeling and measuring the social embeddedness of routine family work. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(4), 1208–1233. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2000.01208.x>
- Connell, R. W. (2002). *Gender*. Polity Press.
- Connell, R. W. (2005). *Masculinities* (2nd ed.). University of California Press.
- Dasgupta, R. (2003). Creating corporate warriors: The “salaryman” and masculinity in Japan. In P. Roberson & S. Suzuki (Eds.), *Men and masculinities in contemporary Japan: Dislocating the salaryman doxa* (pp. 118–134). Routledge.
- Doumato, E. A. (2010). *Women and globalization in the Arab Middle East: Gender, economy, and society*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Eisenstein, H. (1996). *Inside agitators: Australian femocrats and the state*. Temple University Press.
- Federal Ministry of Women Affairs. (2006). *National Gender Policy*. Abuja: Government of Nigeria.
- Freedman, E. B. (2002). *No turning back: The history of feminism and the future of women*. Ballantine Books.
- Gargallo, F. (2020). *Feminist movements in Latin America: From diagnosis to proposal*. UN Women.
- Gerson, K. (2009). *The unfinished revolution: How a new generation is reshaping family, work, and gender in America*. Oxford University Press.
- Gerson, K. (2010). *The unfinished revolution: How a new generation is reshaping family, work, and gender in America*. Oxford University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The consequences of modernity*. Stanford University Press.
- Goldin, C. (1991). *Understanding the gender gap: An economic history of American women*. Oxford University Press.
- Goldin, C. (2006). The quiet revolution that transformed women’s employment, education, and family. *American Economic Review*, 96(2), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1257/000282806777212350>
- Hooks, B. (2000). *Feminist theory: From margin to center*. South End Press.
- Inglehart, R., & Norris, P. (2003). *Rising tide: Gender equality and cultural change around the world*. Cambridge University Press.
- Inglehart, R., & Welzel, C. (2005). *Modernization, cultural change, and democracy: The human development sequence*. Cambridge University Press.

- Jayawardena, K. (1986). *Feminism and nationalism in the Third World*. Zed Books.
- Johnson-Odim, C., & Mba, N. (1997). *For women and the nation: Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti of Nigeria*. University of Illinois Press.
- Kandiyoti, D. (1988). Bargaining with patriarchy. *Gender & Society*, 2(3), 274–290. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124388002003004>
- Kumar, R. (2014). The law and rape culture in India. *Feminist Review*, 112(1), 33–46. <https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.2014.13>
- Lerner, G. (1986). *The creation of patriarchy*. Oxford University Press.
- Mama, A. (1997). Feminism or femocracy? State feminism and democratisation in Nigeria. *Africa Development*, 22(1), 37–58.
- Mahmood, S. (2005). *Politics of piety: The Islamic revival and the feminist subject*. Princeton University Press.
- Mannheim, K. (1952). *Essays on the sociology of knowledge*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Mba, N. E. (1982). *Nigerian women mobilized: Women's political activity in southern Nigeria, 1900–1965*. University of California Press.
- Moghissi, H. (1999). *Feminism and Islamic fundamentalism: The limits of postmodern analysis*. Zed Books.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (2000). *Women and human development: The capabilities approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Okeke-Ihejirika, P. E. (2004). *Negotiating power and privilege: Igbo career women in contemporary Nigeria*. Ohio University Press.
- Okeke-Ihejirika, P. E., & Franceschet, S. (2002). Democratization and state feminism: Gender politics in Africa and Latin America. *Development and Change*, 33(3), 439–466.
- Okonjo, K. (1976). The dual-sex political system in operation: Igbo women and community politics in midwestern Nigeria. In *Women in Africa* (pp. 45–58).
- Olojede, I. (2009). Gender justice and political representation in Nigeria: Barriers and prospects. *Africa Development*, 34(3–4), 165–187.
- Ortner, S. B. (1974). Is female to male as nature is to culture? In M. Z. Rosaldo & L. Lamphere (Eds.), *Woman, culture, and society* (pp. 67–87). Stanford University Press.
- Radhakrishnan, S. (2009). Professional women, good families: Respectable femininity and the cultural politics of a “new” India. *Qualitative Sociology*, 32(2), 195–212. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s1133-009-9125-5>
- Roberson, J. E., & Suzuki, N. (2003). *Men and masculinities in contemporary Japan: Dislocating the salaryman doxa*. Routledge.
- Schwartz, S. J., Côté, J. E., & Arnett, J. J. (2010). Identity and agency in emerging adulthood: Two developmental routes in the individualization process. *Youth & Society*, 37(2), 201–229. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X04268380>
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as freedom*. Oxford University Press.
- Sharma, A. (2002). *Women in Indian religions*. Oxford University Press.
- Tembon, M., & Fort, L. (Eds.). (2008). *Girls' education in the 21st century: Gender equality, empowerment, and economic growth*. World Bank.
- True, J. (2013). *The political economy of violence against women*. Oxford University Press.
- UN Women. (2023). *Women in politics: 2023*. <https://www.unwomen.org/>
- Van Allen, J. (1972). “Sitting on a man”: Colonialism and the lost political institutions of Igbo women. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 6(2), 165–181.
- West, C., & Zimmerman, D. H. (1987). Doing gender. *Gender & Society*, 1(2), 125–151. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243287001002002>

Article Information and Declarations

Declarations
Authors' Contribution: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ All Authors Conceptualization, and intellectual revisions, Data collection, interpretation, and drafting of manuscript▪ The authors agree to take responsibility for every facet of the work, making sure that any concerns about its integrity or veracity are thoroughly examined and addressed
Conflict of Interest: NIL
Funding Sources: NIL
Correspondence:
Chukwuemeka Steve Abiakam
steveabiakam@gmail.com
How to Cite: <p>From Tradition to Modernity: A Comparative Analysis of Gender Roles Across Cultures. (2026). Wah Academia Journal of Global Religions, 2(1), 21-29. https://doi.org/10.63954/dnto5j86</p>
Open Access: Publication is Open Access
Licensing: Creative Commons Attribution License - CC BY- 4.0
Copyrights: The author retains unrestricted copyrights and publishing rights