

Gender Stereotypes at the Court of Georgia: Perceptions of Attorneys on Gender Bias

Authors : Tatia Kekelia

Abstract : This paper is part of an ongoing research addressing gender discrimination in the Court of Georgia. The research suggests that gender stereotypes influence the processes at the Court in contemporary Georgia, which causes uneven fights for women and men, not to mention other gender identities. The sub-hypothesis proposes that the gender stereotypes derive from feudal representations, which persisted during the Soviet rule. It is precisely those stereotypes that feed gender-based discrimination today. However, this paper's main focus is on the main hypothesis, describing the revealed stereotypes, and identifying the Court as a place where their presence is most hindering societal development. First of all, this happens by demotivating people, causing loss of trust in the Court, and therefore potentially encouraging crime. Secondly, it becomes harder to adequately mobilize human resources, since more than a half of the population is female, and under the influence of rigid or more subtle forms of discrimination, they lose not only equal rights, but also the motivation to work or fight for them. Consequently, this paper falls under democracy studies as well – considering that an unbiased Court is one of the most important criteria for assessing the democratic character of a state. As the research crosses the disciplines of sociology, law, and history, a complex of qualitative research methods is applied, among which this paper relies mainly on expert interviews, interviews with attorneys, and desk research. By showcasing and undermining the gender stereotypes that work at the Court of Georgia, this research might assist in rising trust towards it in the long-term. As for the broader relevance, the study of the Georgian case opens the possibility to conduct comparative analyses in the region and the continent, and, presumably, carve the lines of cultural influences.

Keywords : gender, stereotypes, bias, democratization, judiciary

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