

## Being an Afghan Woman in Australia; Stereotypes, Gender Roles, and Adaption with New Context

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**Abstract :** Introduction: The immigration is a complex process of transitioning and transformation. Immigrants are more likely to come from the patriarchal and hierarchical society with traditional gender roles and women's stereotypes. Changing the perception of women's gender roles may result in challenges between women and their family and community. In this article, Afghan women's perspectives on gender roles and stereotypes have been investigated as well as their experience of changes in the new context of Australia. Australian initiatives of challenging gender roles have provided the opportunities for Afghan women to emancipate from the traditional gender roles and pursue the value of gender equality. In this process, they may face many challenges in intersectional levels within their family, community and wider society which is a complex conflate of oppressive factors that may not be addressed easily and straightforward. Methods: This qualitative study has been conducted among Afghan women who have lived in Australia less than ten years. Semi-structured interviews either face to face or by phone have been used to collect data for this study. The interviews have been audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. Nvivo software has been used for data analysis. Findings: Many participants mentioned that they had been taught that a good Afghan woman is devoted, obedient and loyal to their family and community. They believed that for many Afghan families, Afghan women's natural place was inside the home as a housewife, mother, daughter involving so many responsibilities and expectation of making sacrifices. Many women stated that their attitudes toward gender roles and their feeling of being a woman had been changed since they came to Australia although the process of change for women was complex and diverse. Some had to deal with conflicts with their stereotypes, traditional gender roles as well as strong disagreement with their family and community. Conclusion: Moving to a different country with more gender equality is an opportunity for Afghan women to change their perceptions of gender roles and stereotypes. However, challenging traditional stereotypes and gender roles in the new context is a complex process comprising intersectional levels.

**Keywords :** stereotypes, gender role, immigration, Afghan women

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