

Gender roles in thailand



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Thailand is located in South East Asia where it is one of the oldest countries full of history and rich in culture and has been sustained for a long time, until the new globalization, it never has been colonized to other countries and has been affected by things such as religion, the senility system making younger people believe and listen to older people in the old principle and teachings. In the past Thai families have a lot of members and have very close relationships, most of the men are commonly known as a leader, working outside the home, but women are known as a follower, taking care of children and household chores. Even if nowadays the western culture makes Thai women have more freedom in human rights, working more outside the home and getting more opportunities in education, being more powerful and influential in politics and economics but because of the old cultures and Thai society men still have more effect and power and still have more advantages than women.

First of all, if mentioned in Thai society as Thailand still keeps old cultures and traditions from the ancient time men went out because of the war women would stay home look after their children and families, responsible for all kinds of work on the farm as Thailand mainly produces from Agriculture. Also the senility is very important in Thailand, younger people listen to older people, child listen to their parents. Thai women still listen and believe in old principles that make Thai women stereotypes, and are very good at motherhood, love to take care of their children and families, good manners and follow their husbands as an old Thai saying, men are the front legs of the Elephant and women are the back. But according to this reason and in wedding ceremonies, the groom needs to prepare a bride-price as a

gift to the bride's parents in the ceremony as it has been hard work for looking after his future wife and shows the parents he has a good financial life, and can take care of their daughter in the future. In my opinion it seems parents sell their daughters, Thai guys are more concerned about making money rather than taking care of his wife and end up with men who possibly have several wives and still believe they can support or take care of all their wives and according to Ane (2004, p.. 130) " The practice of keeping major wives (mia luang) and minor wife (mia noi) still exist today and - when it comes to the wealthy, powerful or famous." On the other hand it will not be acceptable for women to have many husbands or even if some women remarried after divorce or the husband died, it is still unusual.

In religion, most of Thai are Buddhist, a temple is the center for all activities of the Thai communities, Buddhist is very influential and dharma principle is very strict in Thai society for example women are forbidden to touch and stay privately with a monk or even if standing higher. All Thai men need to be ordained to learn Bhuddhist as a monk from the belief that they will get good virtue and via it show gratitude to their parents as well, because of Buddhist principles as explained, almost all activities in the temple driven by men and women will be responsible only in preparing foods and some cleaning, same as if they are in the house. From these reasons it makes some Thai men still believe they are a higher level than Thai women in addition to Ane, (2004, p. 130) who gave an opinion that " Buddhism is often blamed for inequalities women in Thailand endure. At the center of Thai culture, it is seen by some as a kind of framework for male domination."

The Second mention in education. From the past, education begins from temples as there is a center of Thai culture and is taught by monks and Thai girls could not have education opportunities as boys because of the old culture and that Thai girls should learn households at home, but the system was changed after King Rama VI had studied from abroad and came up with the idea that Thai women should get education and human rights same as western women to help men develop the country. The king supported and built up schools and drove all issues necessary for example free education for children in primary schools both for male and female. Also the support from the government helps Thai people have free education in higher levels both in genders and Thai parents have more concern about the important things for getting good education as their children will get a good job and good life. Refer to Liza (2012, pp. 54-55) have shown the figures from the world bank website, school enrolments for men and women in percentage, the gender gap in primary and secondary school is decreasing rapidly from the past year 1971 to 1978 and almost the same percentage in year 1991 to 2009. On the other hand the percentage of women in the tertiary school is higher than men between year 1993-2009, that means Thai women can get education equally with men and have abilities to study higher level same as men.

In the third mention in Economics and Careers, women become more influential in Economics and get more opportunities in the work place because they have more opportunities in education than they have more capacities and are able to work outside home higher than they would in the past, whereas men are more involved in the household chores and look after

children instead. And also from the changing of Thai Economics, having more investments and industries effect to Thai people migrate to the big cities, women tend to work far from home than before, leaving their children with grandparents and believe they can better afford a life than staying home or working in upcountry.

The women roles in the past still occur in some areas of Thailand where as Western culture still is far away but controlling family business and finances is always the common roles for Thai women even from the past until now, big or small families and even in the big city through upcountry that means Thai women are very influential in Thai Economics, more than men.

In industry fields, Thai Men normally do more physical work or in heavier industries than women for example in construction, automotive and electronics but for Women more often work in the light industries for example in tourist, food production and textile industries.

Because of Thai culture, religion believes and practice and also the Physical human body make most of Thai men still believe that they are higher, has abilities and work harder than women. Discrimination in working place still appear in some career according to the website the Nation news (June 27, 2012) has comment on unequally system between Thai men and women in the police and military officer.

Thai women is still bad known in sex-trafficking even though it's illegal in the country but still appear by some reasons such as from women immigration to the big city but too difficult to find normal job then it directs them get involved in this business. By another reason is some women go straight to do <https://assignbuster.com/gender-roles-in-thailand/>

this business as they want to get easier money and Thai and Foreigner men still satisfy to pay. In my opinion, it same as normal market, it has demand and supply if don't have both then business can't be survive.

Final mention in Politics, Thailand is a Democracy country with strong believe in Royal family. Thai women can vote and get in a politics position same as men and nowadays from more opportunities in higher Education, Thai women have more space and powerful in politics roles. Thailand has changed politics history and will have changed in Thai women roles following to Yinglak Shinawat is the first women Prime Minister, boost government and create a lot of campaigns to support and develop Thai women roles all over Thailand for example setting up women fund to every cities to help any activities and improve women life especially women in South of Thailand where as more Muslim culture. But other point of view, Yinglak Shinawat still get some comments about her abilities and the way to get into this power as she is a sister of Taksin Shinawat, ex-prime minister of Thailand.

In conclusion, Thailand is still unequal between men and women from the reason of culture, religion and old practical, that make Thailand hard to change in the gender roles in short term. Also the new globalization effected to Thai women, need more education, more abilities and more responsibilities. It is hard thing for Thai women now that they need to be a good mother, good taking care of their family, working in households, control family financial and need to work outside home in the same time to be acceptable in Thai society and apply in new world effected from Western culture.