



Woman in Culture and Arts

The Functioning of the Family Institution in Correspondence to the Drivers of Governance in the Safavid Era With an Emphasis on the Role of Women

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article type:</p> <p>Research Article</p> <p>Article history:</p> <p>Received: 1 December 2024</p> <p>Received in revised form: 19 December 2024</p> <p>Accepted: 4 January 2024</p> <p>Published online: 2 October 2025</p> <p>Keywords:</p> <p><i>Activism, Driving Force of Governance, Family, Rational Action, Women.</i></p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>While the family is also influenced by external institutional policies, the actions of women within the family, a fundamental social component, can have a significant impact on larger institutions by disrupting established patterns.</p> <p>The research problem is the ineffectiveness of a disaggregated comprehension of history, as it has resulted in the neglect of the entirety of history, which has exacerbated the lack of social history. This perspective is based on a systematic approach. Conversely, the aforementioned issue may be resolved by reevaluating the family in light of potential influences from the field of politics and governance. This approach may also establish organic relationships between the microscale, such as the family, and the macroscale, such as the drivers of governance, and compensate for the absence of social history in relation to historical data on the family. Therefore, the present study attempts to demonstrate the extent to which the institution of governance has influenced the development of women's rational action by examining the institutional determinants of governance. In accordance with this hypothesis, it endeavors to resolve the inquiry of whether the pertinent action was uniform or diverse. Additionally, are there any similarities between this action and the policies of the governance structure of the time?</p> <p>The answers to the aforementioned inquiries are only feasible in the context of the following constraints:</p> <p>The actions of women were indirectly influenced by the drivers of Safavid governance. This research examines the indirect relationship between macro structures and micro-level actors in accordance with middle-range theories.</p> <p>The impact of the propelling forces of Safavid rule on the actions of women during this era is not necessarily certain and is a matter of possibility. "Theorems of the determination of an element of society by another element must be expressed in the language of probability" (Aron, 1998: 586), according to Weber's theory. It is neither feasible nor preferable to establish a definitive correlation between phenomena as a result of the ambiguous nature of contemporary science. If the falsifiability and possibility of science is not a defect but an advantage of modern science, then the science of history is no exception to this rule.</p> <p>The examination of the influence of these two institutions, namely the family institution (which is focused on women) and the political institution (which is focused on the drivers of governance), is contingent upon the audience's attention to these two as the executive arms of the present research. This is due to the fact that one of the pillars of the present research is the actions of women, while the other relies on the impact of the drivers on these actions.</p> <p>The final caveat is that the drivers of Safavid governance were not uniform and varied in intensity and frailty over time. Nevertheless, the drivers of the political institution have consistently exerted a significant impact on social conditions, including rational action directed at women, despite their weakened state, as per theories regarding the drivers of governance.</p> <p>Methodology</p> <p>In a descriptive-analytical manner, the present study investigates the rational actions of Safavid women as a key element of the family and presents the potential relationships between these actions and the driving force of governance at the time, utilizing an</p>

interdisciplinary strategy and the documentary loading of historical data in Max Weber's theory.

Results

Despite the existence of certain restrictive familial stereotypes, the research results suggest that women's actions were present during the Safavid era. Value-oriented rational action included endowment, acquiring education and some skills, and warfare. These actions are driven by factors such as the appointment of positions to oversee endowment-related affairs, the transition from Sufi Shiism to jurisprudential Shiism, and the absence of gender discrimination in the context of the aforementioned rational actions. Safavid women also engaged in goal-oriented rational actions, such as writing books, exchanging goods, traveling, divorce, receiving dowries, and managing the country. These actions were a result of factors such as the legal system, which was based on Safavid jurisprudence, the Safavid transition from Ghaliyyah to Imamiyyah, the Safavid departure from the ethnic foundation of the monarchy, and the absence of government restrictions on certain rational actions.

Conclusion

The present study's research process revealed that the assessment of the drivers of Safavid governance yielded findings that suggested the potential for the impact of certain drivers on the limitation or development of rational action that is centered on value and purpose. Nevertheless, the impact of these specific drivers on women's actions was typically indirect. Women of the Safavid era engaged in value-oriented rational actions, such as endowment, education, and the acquisition of certain skills. They also committed courageous acts, such as participating in battle situations (trans-traditional actions such as war-making) to maintain the currency's integrity. This type of action has been influenced by two categories of positive policies: direct and indirect policies and negative but direct policies.

Rational actions that are goal-oriented are rational in terms of the objective and the methods used to achieve it. Accordingly, certain actions of women of this era, including those of the upper and lower classes, have exhibited manifestations of such actions that are rational, trans-traditional, and trans-emotional in nature, both in terms of the goal of the relevant action and the means of achieving it. These actions encompass the acquisition of education and certain skills, scientific activities such as the composition of books, social interactions such as the exchange of goods, the pursuit of certain rights, such as the right to travel, the utilization of legal capacities such as divorce and dowry, the filing of lawsuits, and the management of the country by certain women of the court.

Despite the restrictions placed on women as a key element of the family, women of the Safavid era displayed a dual and diverse expression of actions and roles. Although the magnitude of these actions was undoubtedly not equal. A secondary but crucial point is that the actions of women during the Safavid era were influenced by a variety of factors, including the drivers of Safavid rule. Therefore, the current investigation endeavored to reflect the status of women in other dimensions, despite the assumption that they were restricted to the confines of family responsibilities, and to investigate the relationship between women and the family in relation to a macrostructure, such as governance.

Conflict of Interest

This article has no conflict of interest.

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