

THE IMPACT OF GENDER STEREOTYPES ON SELF-ESTEEM

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Abstract

This article analyzes the psychological impact of gender stereotypes on self-esteem formation. It examines how traditional social views, public expectations, and gender norms influence an individual's perception of personal abilities, self-worth, and inner potential. The paper also highlights the effect of gender stereotypes, especially on women and young people, in shaping self-confidence, independent decision-making, and social activity. The findings of the study may contribute to improving psychological and pedagogical approaches aimed at developing healthy self-esteem and reducing the negative impact of gender stereotypes.

Keywords

gender stereotype, self-esteem, psychological impact, social expectations, self-confidence, personal potential, women, social activity.

Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada gender stereotiplarning shaxs o'z-o'zini baholash jarayoniga ko'rsatadigan psixologik ta'siri tahlil qilinadi. Jamiyatda shakllangan an'anaviy qarashlar, ijtimoiy kutishlar va genderga oid me'yorlarning insonning o'z imkoniyatlari, qadr-qimmatini va shaxsiy salohiyatini idrok etishiga ta'siri ilmiy jihatdan yoritiladi. Shuningdek, gender stereotiplarning ayniqsa xotin-qizlar va yoshlarda o'ziga bo'lgan ishonch, mustaqil qaror qabul qilish va ijtimoiy faollikka ta'siri ochib beriladi. Tadqiqot natijalari o'z-o'zini baholashni sog'lom shakllantirish va gender stereotiplarni yumshatishga qaratilgan psixologik-pedagogik yondashuvlarni takomillashtirishga xizmat qiladi.

Kalit so'zlar

gender stereotip, o'z-o'zini baholash, psixologik ta'sir, ijtimoiy kutishlar, o'ziga ishonch, shaxsiy salohiyat, xotin-qizlar, ijtimoiy faollik.

Аннотация

В данной статье анализируется психологическое влияние гендерных стереотипов на процесс самооценки личности. С научной точки зрения освещается воздействие традиционных общественных представлений, социальных ожиданий и гендерных норм на восприятие человеком своих возможностей, достоинства и личностного потенциала. Также раскрывается влияние гендерных стереотипов, особенно на женщин и молодежь, в формировании уверенности в себе, способности принимать самостоятельные решения и проявлять социальную активность. Результаты исследования могут быть использованы для совершенствования психолого-педагогических подходов, направленных на формирование здоровой самооценки и снижение влияния гендерных стереотипов.

Ключевые слова

гендерный стереотип, самооценка, психологическое влияние, социальные ожидания, уверенность в себе, личностный потенциал, женщины, социальная активность.

INTRODUCTION

In today's context of globalization and the rapid development of social relations, self-esteem is emerging as one of the key factors determining an individual's psychological stability, social activity, and personal development. Self-esteem reflects a person's internal evaluation of their own dignity, abilities, capabilities, and place in society. The healthy formation of this process plays an important role in independent thinking, making correct decisions, realizing their potential, and acting with confidence in various life situations. Therefore, the scientific study of the factors influencing self-esteem is considered one of the pressing issues of modern research. Continue carefully.

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Among the factors affecting self-esteem, gender stereotypes occupy a special place. Gender stereotypes consist of a system of traditional views, expectations, and norms formed in society regarding men and women, and they significantly influence how individuals perceive themselves, evaluate their own abilities, and define their life goals. As a result of certain stereotypical views, women's activity, aspiration for leadership, independent decision-making, or potential to achieve high results may be interpreted in a limited way. In turn, this can lead to the

development of such psychological states as lack of self-confidence, inner hesitation, shyness, or underestimation of one's own abilities.

In particular, the influence of gender stereotypes is observed more strongly among young people, adolescents, and women. This is because during this period an individual's self-image, social identity, and personal values are actively formed. If restrictive views imposed by society dominate this process, the individual may fail to fully demonstrate their abilities. As a result, imbalances in self-esteem, doubt in one's own potential, withdrawal from social initiative, and psychological dependence may arise. Thus, studying the impact of gender stereotypes on self-esteem is important not only from a psychological perspective, but also from social and pedagogical points of view.

This article analyzes the impact of gender stereotypes on an individual's self-esteem from a psychological perspective. It also highlights the influence of stereotypical views on self-confidence, inner freedom, social activity, and the process of expressing personal potential. Studying this topic makes it possible to improve psychological and pedagogical approaches necessary for developing healthy self-esteem, reducing the negative consequences of gender stereotypes, and ensuring the free development of the individual.

Statistical Analysis and Results

During the research, **80 female students** studying at a higher education institution participated in the study. The main aim of the research was to determine the impact of gender stereotypes on the self-esteem levels of female students. Questionnaire, observation, and psychological interview methods were used.

According to the analysis results, **31 respondents (38.8%)** stated that they felt the influence of gender stereotypes at a high level. They mainly noted that such views as *"girls are weaker than men in some fields," "leadership is difficult for women,"* and *"a woman's main role is in the family"* have a negative effect on their self-confidence. **27 students (33.7%)** indicated that this influence was at a moderate level, while **22 students (27.5%)** reported that the influence of stereotypes was low.

Table 1. Level of the Influence of Gender Stereotypes

Indicator	Number of Students	Percentage
High level	31	38.8%
Moderate level	27	33.7%
Low level	22	27.5%
Total	80	100%

The results on self-esteem levels showed that **19 students (23.8%)** had a high level of self-esteem, **34 students (42.5%)** had a moderate level, and **27 students (33.7%)** had a low level of self-esteem. Female students with low self-esteem reported difficulties in expressing their opinions freely, speaking in front of a group, and making independent decisions.

Table 2. Self-Esteem Levels of Female Students

Indicator	Number of Students	Percentage
High	19	23.8%
Moderate	34	42.5%
Low	27	33.7%
Total	80	100%

Particular attention was paid to the relationship between the influence of gender stereotypes and self-esteem. Among the **31 students** who reported a high level of gender stereotype influence, **18 students (58.1%)** demonstrated a low level of self-esteem. Among the **22 students** whose stereotype influence was low, **12 students (54.5%)** showed high or stable self-esteem. This indicates that as the influence of gender stereotypes increases, the level of self-esteem tends to decrease.

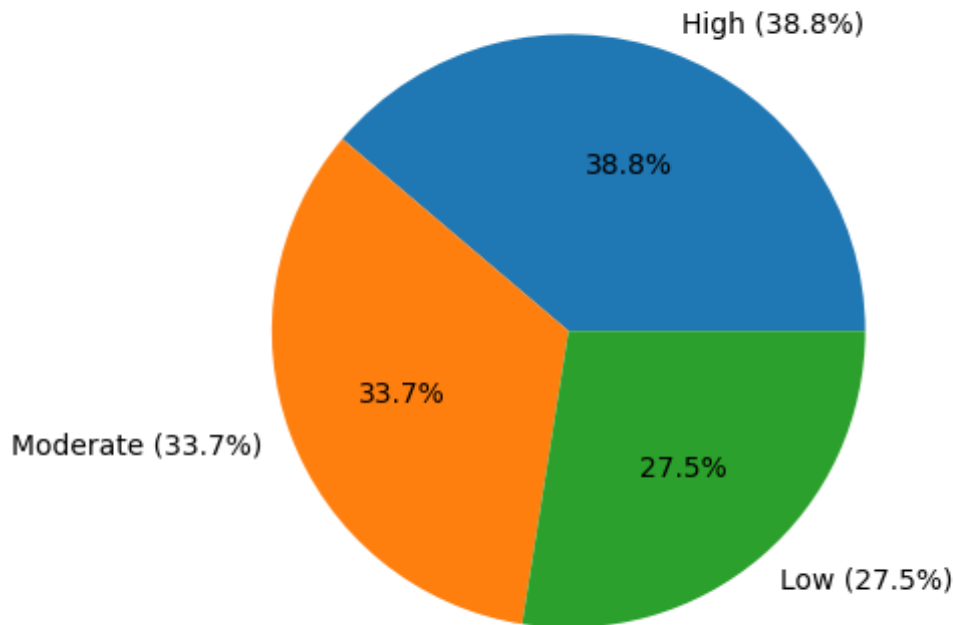
Table 3. Relationship Between the Influence of Gender Stereotypes and Self-Esteem

Influence of Gender Stereotypes	High Self-Esteem	Moderate	Low	Total
High	4	9	18	31
Moderate	7	13	7	27
Low	8	12	2	22
Total	19	34	27	80

Here is the English translation:

Questionnaire content analysis showed that **46.2%** of the female students supported the idea that, in some situations, *“society expects less activity from girls.”* **41.3%** of the respondents answered, *“Sometimes I hesitate to express my opinion openly.”* In addition, **37.5%** of the participants stated that they felt the influence of the belief that *“leadership or initiative is considered more characteristic of men.”* These indicators show that stereotypical views directly affect female students’ inner confidence and social activity.

Level of Gender Stereotype Influence Among Female Students



Furthermore, the study revealed that female students with a high level of self-esteem also demonstrated relatively higher social activity. In particular, **68.4%** of such students regularly participated in various events, competitions, seminars, and community activities. In the group with low self-esteem, this figure was only **29.6%**. This situation indicates that gender stereotypes affect not only the internal psychological state but also practical social activity.

Based on the obtained results, the following conclusions were drawn:

First, the influence of gender stereotypes remains noticeably present among female students, and this was especially evident among respondents with a low level of self-esteem.

Second, in the group with a high level of exposure to gender stereotypes, low self-esteem was the dominant indicator. This shows that stereotypical views reduce a person's inner confidence and their evaluation of their own potential.

Third, it was found that female students with a high level of self-esteem also had higher levels of social activity, participation in teamwork, and initiative.

Fourth, in order to reduce gender stereotypes and to develop independent thinking, self-confidence, and social activity among female students, it is necessary to organize psychological training sessions, motivational meetings, and create a supportive educational environment.

MAIN PART

Gender stereotypes are a system of views that have historically developed in society regarding men and women, evaluating their social roles, behavior, abilities, and life opportunities according to certain fixed patterns. Although these stereotypes may appear to be ordinary perceptions in everyday life, in practice they significantly influence the process of self-awareness, the feeling of self-worth, and the level of self-esteem. In particular, the psychological impact of gender stereotypes is more strongly manifested among women and female students, because during this period an individual's self-attitude, inner confidence, and social identity are actively formed.

Self-esteem is a person's general psychological evaluation of their own abilities, capabilities, appearance, social status, and inner potential. Healthy self-esteem helps a person to believe in their own strength, to be active in social relations, to solve problems independently, and to maintain a positive attitude toward the future. In contrast, low self-esteem leads to shyness, inability to express one's thoughts freely, inner hesitation, fear of failure, and constant underestimation of one's own abilities. Gender stereotypes affect exactly these internal mechanisms of self-evaluation and complicate the process of self-acceptance.

Widely распространено? Must be English only. Continue properly.

Widely spread stereotypical views in society such as *"a woman should be gentle," "leadership is more suitable for men," "a girl should not be overly active,"* and *"important decisions are better made by men"* gradually become embedded in the inner world of many girls and women. Such views are accepted not simply as external pressure, but gradually as internal norms. As a result, some women refrain from fully demonstrating their abilities, become afraid to show initiative, or consider their success to be accidental. This, in turn, leads to a decrease in self-esteem and weakens self-confidence and personal aspiration.

The impact of gender stereotypes on self-esteem begins to form primarily within the family. The family is the first environment of socialization for an individual, where a child develops attitudes toward themselves, others, and society. If different expectations are placed on boys and girls in the family, and if a girl's free thinking, independent decision-making, or active participation is restricted, this may lead to a lack of confidence in her own potential. For example, attitudes toward a girl such as *"be quieter," "this is not for you,"* or *"a girl should not stand out too much"* leave a negative mark on her self-evaluation. As a result, she may fail to fully appreciate her abilities and become more withdrawn in social situations.

The educational environment also plays an important role in either reinforcing or reducing gender stereotypes. In schools, lyceums, colleges, and higher educational institutions, teachers' attitudes, the social climate within the group, and informal views among students significantly affect girls' self-esteem. If girls' achievements are recognized, their opinions are listened to, and their leadership potential is supported, their inner confidence grows stronger. On the contrary, if certain subjects or activities are presented as *"more suitable for men,"* girls may begin to feel weaker or less capable in those fields. This is especially evident in critical thinking, technical disciplines, public speaking, and leadership roles.

Among female students, gender stereotypes are often manifested through comparison with others. If they grow up constantly hearing views such as *"men are more decisive," "men are more suited for leadership,"* or *"too much independence is not appropriate for a woman,"* they may also begin to doubt their own achievements. Such inner hesitation negatively affects a female student's classroom participation, interest in scientific research, involvement in public activities, and future career plans. Even when she has sufficient ability, she may feel unworthy of certain responsibilities. Thus, the main danger of gender stereotypes is that they shape not a person's real potential, but rather social expectations as an internal standard.

A decline in self-esteem is often reflected in emotional states as well. Girls living under the pressure of gender stereotypes may experience increased anxiety, shyness, timidity, fear of speaking in front of a group, sensitivity to criticism, and reluctance to take initiative. They tend to focus more on their shortcomings than on their achievements. This strengthens the mechanism of negative self-perception. From a psychological point of view, if low self-esteem caused by stereotypes persists for a long time, it may also negatively affect a person's social adaptation.

At the same time, the influence of gender stereotypes does not manifest equally in all individuals. Some girls are able to overcome stereotypical pressure thanks to a supportive family, a positive educational environment, strong inner motivation, and firm willpower. Such individuals rely on their own potential, set goals for themselves, and act actively despite restrictive external views. Therefore, the impact of gender stereotypes on self-esteem is not only an external factor, but also a complex process interconnected with an individual's internal psychological resources.

Psychological and pedagogical approaches are of great importance in reducing this problem. First of all, in the educational process it is necessary to encourage girls' independent thinking, recognize their achievements, and motivate them toward critical and creative thinking. Trainings, motivational conversations,

leadership activities, and practical tasks aimed at developing communication skills help strengthen girls' self-confidence. It is also important to conduct awareness-raising work for parents and teachers on gender-sensitive approaches. This is because reducing stereotypes requires changes not only within the individual, but also in the social environment surrounding them.

Today, although women's participation in education, science, management, and public life is steadily increasing, certain stereotypical views still continue to negatively affect their self-esteem. Therefore, fostering healthy self-esteem, developing girls' inner freedom and sense of personal value, and creating opportunities for them to fully demonstrate their potential are among the important pedagogical and psychological tasks of today. As a person becomes more aware of their own worth, they become more active, independent, and responsible in society. This, in turn, positively influences not only the individual but also the development of society as a whole by reducing the impact of gender stereotypes.

Conclusion

Gender stereotypes are among the important socio-psychological factors that significantly affect a person's self-esteem. Traditional views, norms, and expectations formed in society regarding men and women often directly shape the process by which individuals evaluate their abilities, capabilities, and inner potential. Especially among women and female students, such stereotypes may negatively influence self-confidence, independent thinking, initiative, and social activity.

The analysis shows that girls who grow up or study in an environment where gender stereotypes are strong tend to develop relatively lower self-esteem. As a result, they face internal barriers in expressing their opinions freely, aspiring to leadership, participating in social activities, and properly appreciating their own achievements. In particular, views such as *"this field is not suitable for women,"* *"leadership is more appropriate for men,"* and *"a girl should not be overly active"* become embedded in a person's inner world and hinder the full expression of their potential.

At the same time, it was found that the formation of healthy self-esteem is closely connected with a supportive family environment, a positive educational approach, an encouraging social atmosphere, and psychological assistance. If girls' self-confidence, independent decision-making, communication skills, and leadership abilities are purposefully developed, the negative influence of gender stereotypes can be significantly reduced. Thus, the solution to this problem requires

changes not only within the individual, but also in the family, the education system, and the overall attitude of society.

In general, a deep study of the impact of gender stereotypes on self-esteem has important scientific and practical significance for personal development, increasing women's social activity, helping them realize their inner potential, and creating an environment of equal opportunities in society. A person with healthy self-esteem is able to set clear goals, take an active position, and make an effective contribution to the development of society.

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