SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE CONSEQUENCES OF GENDER STEREOTYPES IN THE MEDIA

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Abstract: This article explores the recurring presence of gender stereotypes in mass media and their impact on both social structures and individual psychology. It examines how these stereotypes are reinforced through media content and how they influence societal perceptions of gender roles, career choices, and interpersonal relationships. From the perspective of cognitive psychology, the paper analyzes how such stereotypes are internalized subconsciously and how they affect decision-making processes in both children and adults. Empirical research and examples from Uzbek media are utilized to illustrate the role of mass media in shaping public attitudes toward gender. The article also highlights the social responsibility of media in promoting gender equality.

Keywords: gender stereotypes, mass media, social psychology, cognitive psychology, subconscious influence, media effects, gender equality, social roles.

Gender stereotypes are beliefs and assumptions about what men and women should be or have. They often relate to personal qualities, physical characteristics, social roles, and occupations. Some stereotypes form gender ideologies—systems of beliefs about what men and women should be.

Gender stereotypes and ideologies are very powerful, influencing many aspects of our psychological functioning, including perception, attention and memory, social behavior, interests, and self-esteem.

Young people also learn the gender norms of their culture from those around them—from parents, teachers, and peers. The media is a powerful source of these norms. There are several reasons for this.

First, there are hundreds of images in the media that reflect gender stereotypes. These characters are far more numerous than those we might see in our family or among friends. For example, adolescents spend a lot of time watching television, movies, or on the Internet, and they draw conclusions from the images they see as role models for themselves through these media. In addition, media images are often idealized. Such images are perceived as role models in the minds of the viewer.

Thus, media characters, with their perfect appearance, self-confidence, and strong social position, are reflected as ideal role models. The viewer may see them as a way to achieve success in life. This, in turn, reinforces gender stereotypes, because the media only shows images of a certain type of man and woman and does not represent other types of appearances.

Secondly, media consumption is very high among young people, especially adolescents. According to statistics, children consume an average of 4 hours and 44 minutes of media content per day, and adolescents - 7 hours and 22 minutes.

Third, the media are very convenient for studying social norms, because they regularly repeat simplified, often one-sided rules and behaviors. Of course, the media is not the only reason, but it is an important factor.

Therefore, the main purpose of this article is to present scientific achievements regarding the role of the media in the formation of gender stereotypes.

As noted above, the formation of gender stereotypes in the media is a very complex and multi-factorial process. Gender stereotypes are widely and frequently repeated through the media, advertising, films, music videos, television programs and other entertainment materials. These repetitions, in turn, lead to the strengthening of traditional views and concepts of gender in society.

One of the most important features of the media is the production of content that is distributed in large quantities and to a wide audience. The media plays an important role in the formation of gender norms in society, because it attracts the attention and consciousness of adolescents and young people. Gender stereotypes are often portrayed through responsible, high-status, and perfect images. Male and female characters are often portrayed in traditional roles (men as workers and women as housewives), which in turn affects the personal and social lives of adolescents and young people.

Examples of this are the TV shows "Olov pazanda" and "Kelgindi kelin" broadcast on Sevimli TV. In both shows, brides are portrayed as housewives who serve everyone in the family and take on all the household chores.

Gender stereotypes are also widely used in advertising and marketing, especially to sell products. Men are often portrayed as strong, successful, and dominant, while women are portrayed as beautiful, delicate, family-oriented, and caring. Through these images, views of what is most important and valued in society are reinforced. For example, portraying women in advertisements for household appliances as if they were expected to play a role only in household chores reinforces gender roles and makes them easier to accept in society.

Examples of this can be found in advertisements for Shedroye leto butter and CocaCola.

Films and television programs also play a major role in shaping gender stereotypes. In many films and series, male characters are often associated with heroism, leadership, and fighting danger, while women are portrayed as caring, needy, or helpful. Such images reinforce fixed ideas about what gender roles should be among adolescents and young people.

Gender stereotypes are further reinforced through repetition in the media. The integral and persistent models contained in the media are reinforced in the minds of adolescents, and they adapt these images to their own lives. Media content also does not only create gender norms through images and depictions, but also shows gender issues in economic, political, and social situations. For example, topics such as the role of women in politics, business, or participation in sports are also disseminated through the media, and these stereotypes influence views on gender equality in society.

Gender stereotypes are formed and reinforced through the media, advertising, film, music videos, social media, and many other channels. These stereotypes reinforce societal views of

gender roles and are then enacted in society. Therefore, the extent to which media content promotes fairness and equality is crucial to advancing gender equality in society.

It is important to note that current research has focused primarily on the participation of girls and women in the media, but relatively little has been done on boys and men as media characters and research participants. Masculinity in the media is often associated with characteristics such as power, dominance, aggression, and risk-taking. This type of content can shape young men's understanding of masculinity and how they should behave.

It is also important to examine the impact of boys on media content and how it affects women. Some studies have linked young men's exposure to sexually objectifying media content to the formation of their objectification of women.

Therefore, a broader and deeper analysis of the role that media influence plays in shaping young men's and men's broader views of women and femininity is needed. More research in this area will help to better understand the influence of media on boys and young men.

Uzbek media series and programs, in particular, such as the aforementioned "Olov pazanda" and "Kelgindi kelin," play an important role in reinforcing gender stereotypes in society. In these programs, how brides perform household chores, especially cooking and housework, is depicted mainly through the demands and evaluations placed on them. This, of course, reflects traditional gender roles in society. Women's responsibilities for housework and the high demands placed on them reflect the views of women in Uzbek culture.

In addition, the main part of Uzbek TV series is often focused on depicting conflicts between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, women's intrigues and mutual conflicts. Such shows also reinforce stereotypical views of women in society and perpetuate gender inequality. The limited opportunities for self-expression of daughters-in-law are shown through their relationships, conflicts and social roles at home. Such shows, especially among young people, encourage them to explore traditional gender stereotypes and subconsciously shape them. The depiction of men in Uzbek media is also associated with specific stereotypes. Men are often shown as criminals, drug addicts or aggressive, powerful and aggressive individuals. Such images are created as a kind of symbol of "dominance" and "power" for men, further limiting their social roles. Associating men only with power and aggression does not give them the opportunity to express themselves. At the same time, depictions of men's emotional vulnerability, compassion, etc. are rare, which limits the necessary changes for men in society.

Therefore, it is necessary to develop new and innovative content in Uzbek media to overcome gender stereotypes and respect women's rights. In new programs and series, presenting positive role models that promote gender equality will be important in combating gender inequality in society.

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