Factors influencing gender stereotypes and discrimination and their relationship to gender oppositions

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Abstract. With society developing at a rapid pace and higher education opportunities for the public, more and more individuals realize the potential for gender stereotypes and discrimination in our daily lives, especially for women. Even some media utilize this situation to construct gender opposites in order to catch a specific target. According to this phenomenon, this paper is supposed to search for the factors that cause gender inequality in order to relieve this situation and analyze the relationship between gender stereotypes, discrimination, and gender opposites. The approach for this paper is to search considerable literature and related database to prove the viewpoint and list three main factors that influence an individual’s erroneous cognition. Moreover, this paper concludes that the one reason some individuals have gender oppositional psychology is because of gender stereotypes and discrimination. Therefore, this paper comes up with suggestions to improve it from the education aspect, the society aspect, and the media aspect.

1 Introduction

Nowadays, it is prevalent to find the phenomenon of gender inequality everywhere in society, which arouses tremendous gender problems. In general, females feel gender discrimination in both their work environment and their relationships with men. However, some of them are mistakenly guided by the media or extreme groups. Up to now, there is considerable literature to research the topic of gender discrimination and stereotypes. However, the literature on gender opposites is scarce, so this paper is supposed to fill this gap. This paper’s parts are divided into three main sections: gender stereotypes and discrimination, gender opposites, and their relations. The approach is to search the relevant literature and introduce it properly to complete a literature review. In addition, this paper includes the author’s own ideas as well as suggestions. After that, a brief conclusion will be shown at the end.

2 Gender stereotypes and discrimination

Gardens described gender discrimination as a generalized belief or presumption about the various characteristic that men and women have, ought to have, or ought to fulfill [1]. Tracing back to human history, even nowadays, the male is constantly located in a possessive position. In order to further retain their dominant position, they will act accordingly when their dominant position is threatened. When women get the opportunity to obtain higher education, they gradually become aware of the inequality and unfair treatment between men and women. For example, the Randstad 2022 Gender Equality in the Workplace report discovered that 72% of the women either experienced or witnessed inappropriate behavior from male coworkers at work and that 67% of women experienced some form of gender discrimination [2]. In addition, the report reveals regional differences in women's educational attainment and employment (See Figure 1). As a result, the person can learn that this is a common occurrence. Additionally, gender stereotypes are the act of assigning specific traits, qualities, or tasks to a woman or man just because she or he belongs to the social group of women or men, according to the United Nations Human Rights

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The male is often considered the symbol of ambition, bravery, and strength, but the female is described as having tenderness, virtuousness, and beauty. It seems that a male or female who only possesses that quality, which this paper mentioned above, can be seen as a good man or woman. However, it is not comprehensive, and it ignores the uniqueness of every person. Every individual has the right to choose what they want to do and what they want to be. Society cannot utilise old-fashioned criteria or bias to restrain freedom for every single person.

3 Risk for gender stereotypes and discrimination

With the influence of gender discrimination and stereotypes, sexual relations become worse and worse. Specifically, individuals have some misunderstandings about the opposite gender, which is harmful to harmonious social development. The literature on gender stereotypes comes to the conclusion that they may have far-reaching ramifications and repercussions in terms of gender inequalities in human capital investment and outcomes, and that they are partially to blame for one of the alleged kinds of discrimination against women [4]. According to survey, they discuss whether or not gender stereotypes affect boys’ or girls’ human capital outcomes [4]. And they found that although female students surpass male students in all subjects except English on state external exams, it is still hard for females to get into STEM careers. Stereotyping is supposed to encourage bias, which in turn encourages discrimination. In other words, it is claimed that ideas about members of a social group evoke liking or hatred for the group and the degree of preference for the group will deepen the corresponding impression. In recent years, women have still endured labour market discrimination and stereotypes in terms of both employment possibilities and compensation [5]. Without the equal opportunity to get a stable job for women, it will be harder for women to fight for affirmative action.

Fig 1. Women aged 20-29 who have completed upper secondary school, by location and wealth, selected countries, 2015-2019 (percentage) [2].
4 Factors and reasons for gender stereotypes and discrimination

The reason why researchers should discuss the factors that lead to gender discrimination and stereotypes is that this situation need to be improved in order to construct a more balanced and harmonious society. In this literature review, the author supposes that the nature of gender discrimination is gender inequality. First, different roles in families affect men’s and women’s positions. Disparity between men and women exists within families, while gender disparity outside of the family institution both influences and contributes to family structure [6]. In a traditional family environment, men command more opportunity to make money, which is considered the highest support prop to hold the family together. However, women’s character in families is often ignored, especially housewives, who do not work for money but instead work for their husband and child. Additionally, tracing back to history, men are still in a dominant position in society. States or governments have the power to enforce conformity to their rules. However, most countries’ rulers are male, and male as the object who enjoy privilege and priority hardly empathize with vulnerable groups, not to mention to struggle rights for them. In society, male has greater influence, so that might passively permit the unequal actions. Maintaining influence over political processes is a core feature and goal of socially powerful groups, and men's lengthy monopoly on political power has revealed and perpetuated gender inequity [6]. Third, the media play a role in promoting gender inequality. Individuals who are the target of media influence, as long as they do not shape their own value, will be easily influenced. In reality, the customer has the choice of which outlets to pay attention to; however, some people are not sensitive enough to judge the content with an objective attitude.

5 Gender opposite

Opposing sexes and opposite genders have various conceptions. The term 'sex' refers to physical characteristics that frequently determine what function people are assigned at birth. However, the term 'gender' refers to the cultural and societal roles or functions that people are assigned or identify with [7]. With social development becoming furious, men and women are inevitably producing tremendous contradictions. Males and females are affected by considerable factors to shape into two sex groups in trend. According to the real phenomenon, males show disrespect to females, and females feel uneasy about males, so the social marriage rate and fertility rate decrease rapidly.

6 Risk for gender opposite
With the intensifying gender opposite, social structural problems will not be solved. As this paper mentioned above, as soon as gender opposite has shaped, the group of heterosexuals will be affected; they might suffer from androphobia or misogyny trends; the fertility rate will decrease constantly; the social aging rate will also increase; and the society will lack talented youth to promote the development of society. Additionally, gender opposites will enhance individuals and groups’ negative emotions. For instance, in recent Chinese news, a woman who was on the subway doubted a man was creepily shooting her, and this situation went viral. However, the public amplified the contradictions between the patriarchy and feminism yet ignored the essence of this matter: how to protect civil privacy. Consequently, this paper supposes that gender opposites intensify a situation of antagonism and hatred, and this phenomenon will let individuals deal with problems irrationally.

7 Factors and reasons for gender opposite

Shaping the gender opposite phenomenon has multiple factors and reasons, so this paper will list three factors to illustrate them specifically. Firstly, the school’s educational approach affects the normal mingle between sexes. According to Liu and Elley, China's generally orthodox educational environment causes students to be intrigued and apprehensive about romance and to engage in heterosexual relationships at school [8]. Gender distinctions are implemented in Chinese schools beginning in the primary grades, separating boys from girls in supervisor mode. For example, in this setting, girls "did not often speak to boys," they attend class in separate groups, and they had to sit at separate tables [8]. Without a corporative relationship between boys and girls, children may feel anxious when discuss and model heterosexual relationships in the classroom due to the insufficient sexuality education provided in Chinese schools and the negative or even stigmatizing attitudes toward kids’ love adventures. Secondly, parents own bias and children's own religion could shape gender opposites. Khan & Malik suggested that their findings were in line with the conceptual framework of the study, which elaborated on the mechanisms relating the prejudices of parents and children, as well as religious choice of children and development of negative emotions [9]. The development of the child's values, personality, and concepts depends greatly on parents. Parents who treat boys and girls with different attitudes could, to some extent, intensify the gender opposite. Additionally, various religions could also be influenced by gender opposites. For example, the most Arabian religion is Islam, which has a low position for women. Therefore, the male who is Muslim might show a superiority complex toward the female. Thirdly, the media mistakenly guides the public to cultivate gender-opposite emotions. With the rapid development of the internet, the public has more ways to know the news, some of which are even far from their district. The media, including both the internet and traditional legacy media, continues to have a significant impact on people's beliefs and perceptions about girls' and women's roles in society. Hedegaard claimed that one out of every five specialists interviewed by the media are women [10]. In movies and advertisements, women are usually portrayed in stereotypical and overly sexualized ways, which has long-term social implications [10]. Additionally, 27% of management positions are held by women, compared to 73% held by men. Therefore, the findings suggest that gender stereotypes and the opposite are deeply influenced by the media. Ultimately, leading to gender opposite phenomenon exist tremendous elements. The reason why this paper analyze the factors is to improve this situation.

8 The relationship between gender stereotypes/discrimination and gender opposite

Through all the findings of literature research, this paper concludes that there are two relations between gender stereotypes and discrimination and gender opposites. One is that gender stereotypes and discrimination will
lead to gender opposites. The other one is that the essence of gender opposites is gender stereotypes and discrimination. According to all the research, the author finds out that the object who enjoys sexual privilege finds it hard to truly empathize with vulnerable groups. Because as soon as they take actions to struggle for unequal treatment groups, such as women, to some extent, it means they automatically abandon their own rights. As men attempt to protect their own priority rights, women try hard to chase more rights for themselves. That is the reason why the form of gender is opposite: the essence of opposite is human nature in pursuit of rights. To demonstrate how gender stereotypes are present in the content and application of the law, how discrimination against women is reinforced and perpetuated by the law when gender stereotypes are used either intentionally or unintentionally, and how gender stereotypes are identified and destroyed to end discrimination, Rebecca examines national, regional, and international jurisprudence [5]. When someone divides individuals into groups based on preconceived notions about traits or qualities that people should have or roles that people should play because of their apparent membership in a group, that person is utilizing stereotypes. Therefore, if humans are supposed to construct a harmonious society, it is necessary to be relatively impartial.

9 Discussion and suggestion

Except for all the content mentioned above, there are still some inadequate and inaccurate parts that need to be improved. Some of the literature cited only involves a specific age range and does not include all the ages, so it is not comprehensive. Moreover, maybe ‘gender opposite’ is not a precise statement. Because sex is not binary; instead, it is diverse, and the opposite of different might be more comprehensive. For the gender opposite part, the present study mentioned this phenomenon could slow down social development. However, is it entirely a terrible matter? People could discover that numerous human psychological problems are affected by rapid social development. For the religion factor, there is the problem that some countries are non-religious, such as China, so this factor might not be suitable for all. Additionally, for the gender opposite school education factor, the school education is way more focused on Asian people, but it is not generalized. Consequently, the suggestions are to be more honest and work together with kids to figure out the best ways to help them deal with their interest and excitement about heterosexuality and gender roles [8]. Furthermore, considering different countries have different sociocultural contexts, everyone should respect them instead of showing discrimination. Last but not least, the media should guide the public properly. Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating sector progress must be put in place in order to promote gender equality in the workplace, in management, and in content.

10 Conclusion

This paper concludes that the essence of gender opposites is gender stereotypes and discrimination, as well as the risk and factors for gender discrimination and stereotypes. In all ages, males are the dominant characters in society. Fortunately, more and more people realize the essence of this phenomenon is unequal and unfair gender discrimination and stereotypes, and they decide to struggle for equality and rights. This paper offers specific suggestions to improve this situation in order to reach gender equality. This paper might help future researchers pay more attention to the search for gender opposites aspect and investigate database detail, which dominates someone who is interested in gender topics. In a bid to relieve gender problems, the government should make relevant laws to protect female rights, however hard it is. However, there are still some drawbacks, such as an insufficient database for gender opposites, and some factors and conclusions might be more focused on undeveloped countries, which have low status for women. In future studies, researchers should pay more attention to comprehensive statistics.
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