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THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER STEREOTYPES ON YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF FAMILY

This article explores the psychological aspects of gender labels that influence the family concepts of university students. The analysis identifies how emotional, cognitive, and motivational components, as well as established perceptions of gender roles, affect students' personality development and decision-making processes. The findings reveal that traditional gender stereotypes prevalent in society continue to play a major role in shaping students' family models and future plans. This trend demonstrates that, despite the emergence of advanced notions of gender equality in contemporary times, traditional perceptions still dominate among student youth.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the assertion that the psychological effects of gender roles within the family significantly influence not only personal decisions and choices but also emotional relationships and social expectations. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the psychological mechanisms underlying gender-based expectations and the division of gender roles in students' attitudes toward the family, to examine the influence of emotional, cognitive, and motivational components formed in this process, and to offer scientific insights aimed at overcoming existing gender stereotypes.

In order to achieve this goal, the study sets out the following objectives:

To conduct a theoretical analysis of the psychological dimensions (emotional, cognitive, and motivational) of gender labels and stereotypes; To determine the role of ethnic identity, family environment, and social factors in shaping students' perceptions of gender roles; To comparatively analyze female and male students' attitudes toward male and female roles within the family; To investigate how gender identity and the process of sexual self-awareness influence students' decision-making and their models of family structure; To identify how traditional gender stereotypes impact young people's professional choices, family life, and social behaviors; To reveal the mechanisms through which social and psychological stereotypes affect students' personality development and emotional relationships.

Key words: youth, family values, gender roles, gender stereotypes, student youth relationships.

Зульфія Мусаєва. ВПЛИВ ГЕНДЕРНИХ СТЕРЕОТИПІВ НА СТВОРЕННЯ СІМ'Ї МОЛОДДЮ

У цій статті досліджуються психологічні аспекти гендерних ярликів, що впливають на сімейні уявлення студентів університетів. Аналіз визначає, як емоційні, когнітивні та мотиваційні компоненти, а також усталені уявлення про гендерні ролі впливають на розвиток особистості студентів та процеси прийняття рішень. Результати дослідження показують, що традиційні гендерні стереотипи, поширені в суспільстві, продовжують відігравати важливу роль у формуванні сімейних моделей та майбутніх планів студентів. Ця тенденція демонструє, що, незважаючи на появу передових уявлень про гендерну рівність у сучасний час, традиційні уявлення все ще домінують серед студентської молоді.

Наукова новизна дослідження полягає в твердженні, що психологічний вплив гендерних ролей у сім'ї суттєво впливає не лише на особисті рішення та вибір, але й на емоційні стосунки та соціальні очікування. Зокрема, дослідження має на меті вивчити психологічні механізми, що лежать в основі гендерних очікувань та розподілу гендерних ролей у ставленні студентів до сім'ї, дослідити вплив емоційних, когнітивних та мотиваційних компонентів, що формуються в цьому процесі, та запропонувати наукові висновки, спрямовані на подолання існуючих гендерних стереотипів.

Для досягнення цієї мети дослідження визначає такі завдання:

Провести теоретичний аналіз психологічних вимірів (емоційних, когнітивних та мотиваційних) гендерних ярликів та стереотипів; Визначити роль етнічної ідентичності, сімейного середовища та соціальних факторів у формуванні сприйняття студентами гендерних ролей; Порівняльно проаналізувати ставлення студенток та студентів до чоловічих та жіночих ролей у сім'ї; Дослідити, як гендерна ідентичність та процес сексуального самоусвідомлення впливають на прийняття рішень студентами та їхні моделі сімейної структури; Визначити, як традиційні гендерні стереотипи впливають на професійний вибір молоді, сімейне життя та соціальну поведінку; Розкрити механізми, за допомогою яких соціальні та психологічні стереотипи впливають на розвиток особистості та емоційні стосунки студентів.

Ключові слова: молодь, сімейні цінності, гендерні ролі, гендерні стереотипи, стосунки студентської молоді.

Introduction. One of the key factors shaping the cultural and social structures of society is the institution of the family. Expectations about how to build and manage a family are often determined by gender-based social stereotypes – gender labels. These stereotypes guide individuals' thoughts about the roles they should play within the family.

The characteristics of student youth's gender perceptions about family life manifest in various concepts. These concepts include ethnic identity, character, stereotype, orientation, behavior, ethnic consciousness, auto-stereotype, hetero-stereotype, national thinking, national-spiritual qualities, and so on. In the structures that adhere to the standard, traditional approach in young

people's gender perceptions, stereotypical role behavior within the family takes a leading role. Stereotypical role behavior is defined as a set of actions that carry a stable, consistent character in any environment and have moral significance. The analysis of student youth's social behavior can be better explained by examining this category through the context of sexual morality. In this regard, there is a growing need to approach this issue through the integration of modern sciences.

Literatura review. The literature review indicates that traditional gender stereotypes continue to play a significant role in shaping family relationships. Within the framework of such stereotypes, men are perceived as the primary financial providers and active participants in public life, while women are predominantly associated with domestic tasks and child-rearing [1; 2]. These traditional views are reflected in students' perceptions of family models and gender roles.

On the other hand, contemporary gender approaches emphasize transformations such as women's aspirations for career development, equal participation in family life alongside men, and a revised division of labor [3; 4]. These perspectives influence students' personality development and decision-making processes, giving rise to individual choices that often conflict with traditional stereotypes.

The literature used in this study covers various aspects – gender theory, ethnopsychology, family values and culture, as well as the psychological development of adolescents and creates a broad scientific basis for a comprehensive study of the topic. Abasov A.S., Mirzazade R.S. – “Introduction to gender” [3] This resource explores the basic concepts of gender, its social and psychological nature, gender stereotypes, and issues of gender inequality in society. This book is valuable from the point of view of theoretical justification of gender issues and their application in the Azerbaijani reality. Asian Development Bank – “Analysis on Gender and Development Issues” [4] This document presented by the ADB analyzes the status of gender policy, structural issues, and development directions in developing countries, including Azerbaijan. The research is significant in terms of comparison and political framework within the international context. Bayramov A.S. – “The Book of Dede Korkut” – The Reflection of Ethnic-Psychological Characteristics in the Epic Tales” [1]. This source studies the national psychological nuances, gender roles, and historical-ethnic foundations of family relations reflected in epics. This is important for explaining the roots of young people's traditional ideas about the family model.

Aliyev R.I. – “Ethnopsychology: globalization and nationality” [2]. The author analyzes national identity, the impact of globalization, and the changes in family structures from an ethnopsychological perspective. The role of culture and ethnic identity in shaping young people's attitudes toward family values is covered in this work.

Research methods. In this study, students' perceptions of male and female roles within the family, as well as their views on career and domestic responsibilities, were used as the basis for assessing attitudes toward gender roles. Psychological indicators analyzed included students' emotional attitudes (emotional responses to gender roles), cognitive components (knowledge and beliefs about stereotypes), and motivational tendencies (motives underlying the choice of family model).

The research was conducted during the 2022–2023 academic year at various faculties of the Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University. The participants consisted of 188 undergraduate students (95 female and 93 male). The sample was selected on a voluntary basis, with participants ranging in age from 18 to 25. Particular attention was paid to ensuring a balanced distribution with respect to ethnic-cultural affiliation and social background.

Result and discussion. Although gender identity is based on the core of one's sexual identity, it is not the same thing. Gender identity refers to the conscious and unconscious interactions with others, which are patterns related to gender. The structure of student youth's perceptions about their own gender is based on delicate interactions with parents that begin from birth. That is, these perceptions depend on the parents' attitude towards their child's biological sex, as well as on their sexual self-awareness, that is, whether they feel like a man or a woman, etc. As a result, both girls and boys develop certain gender images about themselves as a result of all these influences. In young students, behaviors that are accepted or not accepted in society are formed based on ideas about sexual self-awareness. Most importantly, these behaviors are also influenced by gender stereotypes regarding their family life.

In psychology, the concept of stereotype refers to the mechanism of thinking, the characteristics of manifestation, and the disclosure of an individual's position in cognitive activity. *“For example, perception stereotypes or cognitive motives, etc. We are more interested in the psychological content of social or ethnic stereotypes and orientations. Because within the problems studied in ethnopsychology, ethnic stereotypes or orientations hold a special place.”*

First and foremost, let us focus on the psychological content of the concept of social stereotype. Social stereotype or stereotyping refers to the perception, classification, and evaluation of social objects and events based on certain ideas, opinions, and considerations. In another sense, social stereotype refers to relatively stable and simplistic perceptions or systems of reasoning about social objects” [1].

Gender stereotypes can negatively affect a person's self-recognition and, at the same time, become an obstacle to the development of their personality. In this sense, stereotypes may conflict with the desire of student youth to realize their potential and demonstrate their abilities. For example, a female student who sees her abilities primarily in the field of management, which is typically reserved for men, may find herself compelled to give up on her desire due to the influence of these stereotypes.

The sexual stereotypes of young students are divided into several groups. The first group of sexual stereotypes is personality stereotypes (masculinity-femininity). This includes socio-psychological qualities and style of behavior that are specific to men and women. The second group of gender stereotypes of youth is based on the process of dividing the roles performed and expected in the family between a man and a woman. The execution of roles is mainly based on behaviors that are traditionally shaped according to male and female gender. This is, of course, based on the division of labor between the sexes that has existed since ancient times. The main criterion in this division is the ability of women to bear children. In this sense, the role of «housewife» is considered the most important social role for women. Men are expected to be more active in public life, to be successful in their profession, to take responsibility for the financial well-being of their families, etc. The third group of gender stereotypes for young people includes the characteristics of the content of their labor activities. According to traditional views, certain specific areas of activity are considered suitable for women's work. In this sense, women are more likely to work in fields such as commerce, healthcare, and education. For men, professions that require strength, as well as creative and managerial activities, are considered more appropriate.

In psychology, the interaction between ethnic stereotypes and gender stereotypes has been confirmed [1]. Ethnic stereotypes, on the other hand, stem from national (ethnic) characteristics. These characteristics include national identity, behavioral norms, stereotypes, archetypes, heterotypes, and so on. A.S.Bayramov states

that “*national character is a socio-biological phenomenon. It is conditioned by the hereditary acceptance of genetic natural possibilities, upbringing and culture in the broadest sense of the word*” [1].

Highlighting the role of ethnic stereotypes in the formation of national character, the researcher grouped their aspects that are still preserved in intra-family relationships. [4].

a) stereotypes reflecting family relationships: deep respect for the mother and the dignity of women, respect for the father, love between siblings, valuing family honor and family reputation;

b) stereotypes related to morality, ethics, manners, and behavior: hospitality, listening to the words of the wise, being merciful, «not chasing away the fugitive,» not killing the beggar, helping the hungry and naked, avoiding betrayal, deceit, and cowardice, etc.;

c) domestic stereotypes: the expectation of stereotypical (role) behaviors that are masculine in boys and feminine in girls.

Gender stereotypes can negatively affect the self-knowledge of a man and a woman, as well as become an obstacle in the development of personality. In this sense, stereotypes may conflict with the desire of student youth to realize their potential and demonstrate their abilities. For example, a female student who sees her talent in a field of management that is primarily reserved for men may be forced to give up her desire due to the influence of these stereotypes.

Another condition for the formation of gender perceptions in students is determining their social role related to their gender within the family. It is known that, unlike other living beings, humans regulate their behavior and actions with the help of consciousness. Gradually, individuals gain the opportunity to adopt role behaviors within the family. This process continues throughout a person's life. In this way, young people, by representing various social groups, internalize the behavior models that align with the accepted demands of those groups.

As can be seen, the gender perceptions of young students develop by encompassing, on the one hand, their typological characteristics, and, on the other hand, a number of psychological aspects, such as the biological, socio-cultural, and ethnic character that forms them. Students' gender perceptions are shaped by their personal experiences, social lifestyle, family values, and ultimately, role expectations and levels of assertiveness. The role of ethnocultural factors in this process is prominent. The researcher, who emphasizes the role of ethnic stereotypes in the formation of national character, has grouped their

aspects that are still preserved in intra-family relations [4].

The purpose of this article is to examine the psychological aspects of gender labels in young students' approaches to family life and to determine how these perceptions affect their level of preparation for family life.

The research findings reveal the simultaneous presence of both traditional and modern approaches in students' attitudes toward family values, gender roles, and views on marriage. These findings can be compared to similar studies within the Azerbaijani academic literature.

In their book *Introduction to Gender*, Abasov A.S. and Mirzazade R.S. [3] provide an extensive analysis of the impact of gender stereotypes on socialization and family relations. Their perspectives on changing expectations concerning women's career and family roles align with several findings of the present study:

- “A woman should establish her career before starting a family” – 83.9% agreement among female students
- “Being a housewife is boring” – 51.3% agreement among female students

These results indicate a growing departure among female students from the traditional

«housewife» model and a stronger inclination toward professional self-realization, which supports Abasov and Mirzazade's argument about the evolving nature of gender roles.

Similarly, in *Ethnopsychology: Globalization and National Identity* [2], Aliyev R.I. emphasizes cultural-psychological approaches to family and gender roles. The dual romantic and practical attitudes of young people toward family are also reflected in the current research findings:

- “Partners should consider each other's financial situation before marriage” – 60.8% of males, 75.3% of females

- “A happy marriage should be based on love” – 85.5% of males, 89.25% of females

Bayramov Ə.S., in his work *Reflections of Ethno-Psychological Features in the Epic of Dede Qorqud* [1], outlines the historical and ethnic foundations of classical gender roles. The following results align with his views:

- “A man should build a career before starting a family” – 94.8% of males, 93.5% of females

- “A working woman holds more authority in the family” – 17.5% of males, 29% of females

These findings suggest that male dominance and the traditional division of roles remain

Table 1
Results of a survey conducted with girls and boys regarding family life

№	Questions	Boys				Girls			
		Yes		No		Yes		No	
		Stu-dents	%	Stu-dents	%	Stu-dents	%	Stu-denst	%
1	Married couples should consider each other's financial situation	59	60,8	38	39,2	70	75,3	23	24,7
2	A woman should start a family after building a career.	47	48,4	50	51,6	78	83,9	15	16,1
3	A man should start a family after building a career.	92	94,8	5	5.2	87	93,5	6	6,5
4	A happy marriage is built on love.	83	85,5	14	14,5	83	89,25	10	10,75
5	The foundation of a happy marriage lies in meeting material needs [house, car, good income].	38	39,1	59	60,9	44	47,3	49	52,7
6	A working woman has more influence in the family.	17	17,5	80	82,5	27	29,03	66	70,97
7	A woman can entrust her children to a nanny's care.	38	38	60	62	48	51,6	45	48,4
8	Being a housewife is a monotonous lifestyle.	31	32	66	68	48	51,3	45	48,7
9	In marriage, both partners must make all kinds of sacrifices.	94	97	3	3	78	83,9	15	16,1
10	A family without children cannot be happy.	40	41,23	57	58,77	40	43	53	57
11	The person I marry must be educated.	64	66	33	34	70	75,3	23	24,7

Source: elaborated by author.

relevant and are still perceived by a portion of youth as unchangeable.

There is also congruence with gender analyses conducted by the Asian Development Bank [4]. The following statements illustrate this connection:

- “A family without children cannot be happy” – 41.2% of males, 43% of females
- “A woman can entrust her children to a nanny” – 38% of males, 51.6% of females

These responses indicate that female students show a more favorable attitude toward women's integration into social and professional life, which confirms ADB's observations regarding the expansion of women's social roles.

The practical implications of the research findings suggest that they can be applied in areas such as education, psychological services, gender policy, and social awareness initiatives. For instance, the development of educational modules on gender equality could be incorporated into curriculum reforms, particularly given that students' attitudes toward family and gender roles

are shaped by stereotypes. Gender-related topics should be more prominently included in both general and higher education institutions.

Moreover, in the fields of psychological and pedagogical services, school and university psychologists can use these findings to identify and support students experiencing conflicts regarding gender identity, family models, and gender roles. In career counseling and family preparation programs, students' gender perceptions can be taken into account to organize individual counseling sessions and group workshops.

We are reporting on the survey we conducted with students to uncover all these perceptions. The survey measures students' positions and stereotypes about marriage, family, and the roles of women and men.

Source: elaborated by the author

The findings of our study can be generalized as follows:

- Among female participants, modern perspectives – such as career orientation, personal development, education, and non-

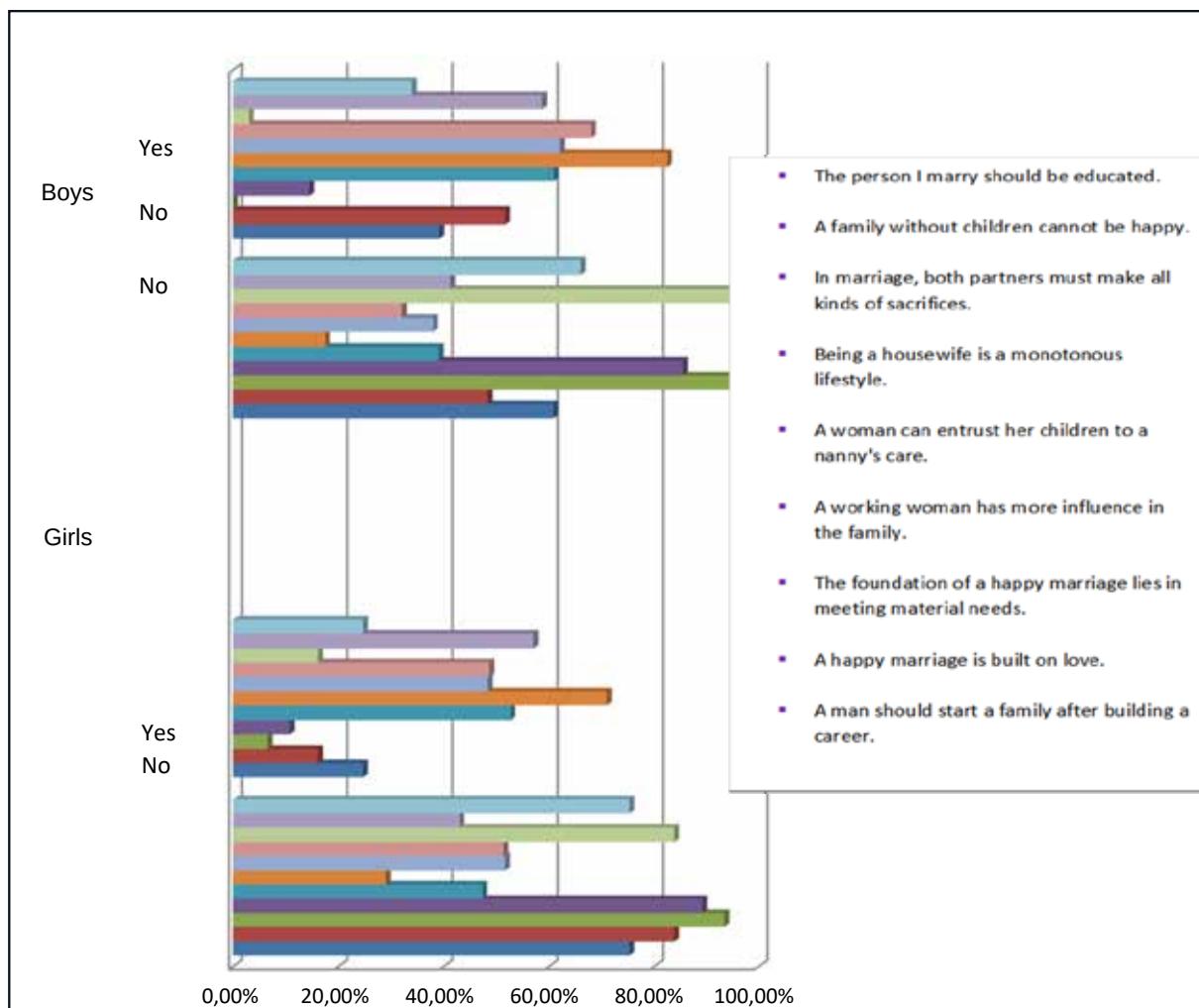


Fig. 1. Graph of young students' perceptions of family life

traditional family roles – are more prominently expressed.

- Male participants tend to uphold more traditional gender roles, emphasizing financial provision, sacrifice, and family prioritization.
- Both genders prefer marriage based on love and mutual understanding; however, emotionally driven decisions may involve certain risks.
- There are gender-based differences in prioritizing education and career aspirations.
- Overall, young people tend to integrate both traditional and modern elements in their approach to family matters.

As previously mentioned, contemporary university students exhibit a blend of traditional and modern perspectives regarding family values. Female students more distinctly express views oriented toward personal autonomy and self-development, whereas male students are more inclined to retain traditional gender roles in certain aspects.

Conclusions. These results indicate that contemporary youth are navigating a transitional phase between traditional and modern value systems. According to traditional gender perceptions, 68% of the surveyed students view men as the «head» of the family and women as the «caretaker of domestic responsibilities»—a view more prevalent among male participants.

However, a democratic approach is increasingly gaining ground: a significant proportion of female participants prefer principles of mutual cooperation

and shared responsibility within the family. This perspective is more commonly observed among individuals characterized by open, empathetic, and autonomous personality types.

At the same time, gender perceptions influence emotional relationships. Young people who adopt traditional gender roles tend to expect more authoritarian behavior in relationships and apply stricter criteria in partner selection. It becomes clear that gender identity and expectations regarding family life are closely interlinked.

Young individuals who define their gender identity as «traditional» also envision family life in alignment with that model. Conversely, non-traditional approaches emphasize personal responsibility and emotional reciprocity. If not appropriately guided, such perspectives may hinder the formation of families, cause delays in marriage, or generate conflict.

Moreover, gender differences between female and male students may negatively affect their preparedness for future family life, potentially leading to adverse outcomes. In particular, since female students tend to express more modern perspectives on family life, this could lead to serious conflicts in their future marital relationships. Divergences in values related to education and career also contribute to misunderstandings and problems between partners, ultimately increasing the likelihood of unsuccessful marriages.

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