

Gender Role Stereotypes: A Comparative Study Among Male and Female University Students

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Abstract

Objective: Examining the frequency and variations of gender role stereotypes among male and female **university students** is the goal of this study. Specifically, it uses the Gender Stereotypical Roles (**GSR**) **Scale** to examine how traditional gender role ideas differ by gender.

Background: Socially generated ideas known as gender role stereotypes attribute particular characteristics, actions, and duties to people according to their gender. These preconceptions frequently impede both professional and personal development and reinforce structural injustices. These preconceptions can have a big impact on students' attitudes, decisions, and interactions during university life, which is a crucial time for identity building and career development. Patriarchal standards frequently endure in academic settings despite heightened societal awareness, which calls for more research.

Methodology: The study used a comparative cross-sectional design. 150 university students (90 men and 60 women) between the ages of 18 and 24 as defined by the **World Health Organization** (WHO) for youth in higher education were chosen from a variety of academic institutions using purposive sampling. An established instrument for evaluating traditional gender role ideas, the **Gender Stereotypical Roles** (GSR) Scale, was used. To examine gender-based variations in stereotyped views, independent samples t-tests were used.

Results: GSR values showed a substantial gender difference, according to statistical analysis. While female students showed more egalitarian views, male students showed a greater commitment to traditional gender norms. Even in educational environments where gender awareness is supposed to be more progressive, these data demonstrate the persistent influence of patriarchal views.

Recommendations: According to the study, colleges should provide gender sensitivity instruction, support inclusive teaching methods, and foster discussions about **gender norms** and stereotypes. These programs can promote more egalitarian learning environments, challenge antiquated gender standards, and aid in each student's personal growth. In order to monitor changes in gender role beliefs over time, future research should use longitudinal methods and reach bigger, more diverse groups.

Keywords: Gender Stereotypes, University Students, (GSR) Scale, Gender norms, World Health Organization

Introduction

Stereotypes about gender roles have a big influence on educational and career paths in addition to forming personal identities. Early exposure to gendered norms has been frequently demonstrated to have an impact on academic subject choice, classroom participation, and perceived proficiency in particular fields (Eccles & Harold, 1991). For instance, male students may choose not to pursue the humanities, nursing, or early childhood education because of societal stigma, while female students may steer clear of mathematics, engineering, or the physical sciences because they believe these fields are more suited for men. Such decisions are impacted by the desire to fit in with socially acceptable gender stereotypes rather than being solely determined by interest or skill. Occupational segregation is perpetuated by these early educational selections, which frequently have long-lasting implications on job choices, earning potential, and society contributions. Whether these prejudices are challenged or reinforced depends heavily on institutional culture. Through their policies, courses, and role models, universities that support gender equity, inclusivity, and equal representation can inspire students to challenge stereotypes and develop critical thinking skills. On the other hand, organizations that disregard or implicitly condone traditional gender roles run the risk of upholding antiquated customs. Religious, cultural, and economical issues further impact gender dynamics in the South Asian context, particularly at Pakistani colleges. Traditional societal institutions and contemporary educational objectives interact in a complicated way, frequently producing contradictory messages about gender roles and appropriate conduct for young men and women. The hidden curriculum is one element that keeps gender stereotypes alive in academic settings. Even when official regulations support parity, peer dynamics, institutional policies, and classroom interactions can all send unspoken, implicit messages that perpetuate traditional gender roles (Jackson, 1968). For example, teachers can unintentionally assume female students to be more helpful and loving, or call on male students more frequently in science classrooms. These small-scale interactions help create a learning environment that discourages deviance from normative norms and favors particular gendered behaviors over others.

Additionally, how gender is portrayed in textbooks, instructional resources, and educational media is also very important. Academic information discreetly but effectively conveys what is valued in each gender when it disproportionately portrays males in leadership or professional roles and women in domestic or supportive roles. Students' goals and self-perception are shaped by these representations. Even minor modifications to textbook wording or imagery may encounter opposition in conservative civilizations, highlighting the significance of thoughtful, culturally aware curriculum design that fosters equality without offending stakeholders.

Gender norms are also reinforced by socialization that takes place outside of the classroom, such as in the family and through media consumption. Gender-based expectations are strongly embedded in many Pakistani households, where girls are frequently directed toward caring and household duties while boys are encouraged to pursue leadership and financial independence. Students' perceptions of their academic and career prospects are influenced by these parental expectations, which they internalize. Furthermore, traditional gender roles are frequently romanticized in Pakistani television plays, movies, and ads, which portray male control and female submissiveness as normal or even desirable. Even in educational environments that support gender parity, these representations have the power to subconsciously mold students' attitudes and reinforce patriarchal norms.

Gender discourse in Pakistan is further complicated by religious views. Despite the fact that many Islamic teachings support gender equality and respect, cultural customs frequently confuse

religious instruction with tradition, using religion as an excuse for discrimination or restrictions based on gender. Students from different religious origins may experience different perspectives on gender roles in academic settings, which could either confirm or challenge stereotypes. Religion as a personal belief system and its cultural appropriation as a means of upholding gender hierarchies must be distinguished from one another. Without compromising religious sensitivities, this distinction enables fruitful discussion on gender parity in educational settings.

The problem is made more complex by the interconnectedness of gender with other identity aspects including class, ethnicity, and the urban-rural split. Global media, coeducational schools, and liberal parenting practices may expose urban students especially those from middle- or upper-middle-class families to more progressive gender ideals. On the other hand, because of their restricted exposure and the more stringent demands of their communities, kids from rural or economically deprived backgrounds might be more likely to conform to traditional norms. Creating successful treatments that appeal to a variety of student populations requires an understanding of these contextual variations. Furthermore, the binary divisions of male and female are not the only examples of gender stereotypes. Universities are starting to recognize the experiences of transgender and non-binary people as a result of growing awareness of gender variety. Even though a third gender is legally recognized in Pakistan, there is still little institutional support and social acceptability for it. Students who identify as gender non-conforming frequently experience discrimination, isolation, and limited access to facilities or support networks. It is essential to include these perspectives in gender studies in order to establish academic settings that are really inclusive and uphold the dignity of every student.

According to psychological study, mental health might suffer when strict gender roles are followed. While women may suffer from anxiety, low self-esteem, or internalized inferiority when expected to prioritize appearance, submission, or caregiving, men may experience emotional repression, violence, or risk-taking behaviors as a result of social pressure to adhere to hypermasculine standards. Restrictive gender norms may make these psychological burdens worse throughout university, which is already a time of stressors like relationship difficulties, career uncertainties, and academic pressure. As a result, combating gender stereotypes is important for students' welfare as well as equity.

According to developmental psychology, young adults are forming their identities and sense of autonomy. According to theories like Erikson's psychosocial development framework, one of the main goals of this stage of life is identity building (Erikson, 1968). Stereotypes about gender roles can affect a person's sense of self and limit their ability to express themselves authentically if they are absorbed during this stage. On the other hand, settings that encourage critical thinking, diversity, and a range of role models can support the development of a healthier identity and produce empowered, socially conscious people.

It is morally and socially necessary to eliminate gender prejudices in universities because of their enormous impact on the development of future leaders, professionals, and legislators. Encouraging gender equity in higher education entails changing institutional cultures, attitudes, and behaviors in addition to equitable representation. Gender role stereotype research can help educators and administrators implement measures that promote inclusive attitudes and practices by highlighting areas of openness and resistance.

By investigating the gender role attitudes of Pakistani university students, a group at the nexus of tradition and modernity this study places itself within the larger conversation on gender equality in education. The study intends to measure and compare male and female students' views on gender roles using the Gender Stereotypical Roles (GSR) Scale. The scale assesses stereotypes in important domains such interpersonal interactions, academic engagement, job expectations, and family dynamics. The study offers factual support for gendered belief patterns and their possible ramifications by examining the mean differences across groups and evaluating the effect sizes.

Additionally, national educational policies, teacher preparation programs, and student services that support gender-sensitive education can benefit from the study's conclusions. The findings might also be used as a starting point for creating focused interventions including workshops on gender equity, peer mentorship schemes, and inclusive curriculum changes. Teachers and legislators should focus their efforts to address the underlying reasons and uphold egalitarian values by pinpointing the precise locations where stereotypes continue to exist.

In conclusion, the examination of gender role stereotypes among university students is both timely and essential. As Pakistan navigates the complexities of globalization, cultural preservation, and social change, the role of education in shaping equitable societies becomes increasingly important. Universities, as spaces of learning and transformation, have the potential to challenge traditional norms and foster a generation of leaders who value diversity, inclusion, and justice. This study contributes to that vision by shedding light on students' attitudes toward gender roles and highlighting the need for ongoing dialogue and reform in higher education.

Literature Review

A lot of research has been done on the idea of gender roles in fields including psychology, sociology, and education. The idea that gender roles are acquired behaviors influenced by media representations, religious teachings, familial expectations, and societal conventions is a major issue in this work. The gender schema hypothesis, first put forth by Bem in 1981, asserts that people form "schemas" or cognitive frameworks that direct their thoughts and actions in conformity with socially acceptable gender norms. Early learning of these schemas and ongoing reinforcement from the environment create a self-reinforcing cycle of gendered behavior.

Gender socialization frequently begins in the household. Whether intentionally or inadvertently, parents communicate expectations for both boys and girls. According to studies, parents tend to promote girls to be cooperative, obedient, and nurturing, while encouraging boys to be assertive, autonomous, and goal-oriented (Lytton & Romney, 1991). Media portrayals of male characters as leaders or adventurers and female characters as caregivers or objects of affection serve to further reinforce these early teachings (Signorielli, 2001).

Gender stereotypes can take many different forms in educational environments. Based on gender, teachers may have skewed assumptions about their pupils' aptitudes. For example, it may be expected that guys are better at math and science, while girls are better at the arts and humanities (Eccles & Jacobs, 1986). A phenomenon known as the "self-fulfilling prophecy" can result from such expectations, which can have an impact on student perceptions of themselves, instructor behavior, and classroom relationships (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968).

Gender stereotypes affect leadership roles and classroom involvement in addition to academic aptitude. Male students were more likely to get attention, comments, and appreciation from teachers than female students, especially in coeducational settings, according to Sadker & Sadker (1994). These tendencies make female pupils feel insecure and give the impression that aggressiveness and leadership are innately masculine qualities. Gender role expectations in Pakistani society are heavily impacted by patriarchal family structures, religious beliefs, and cultural rituals. Male Pakistani university students are more likely than female students to support traditional gender roles, according to research by Qureshi et al. (2014). This is a reflection of larger cultural attitudes that consider women as homemakers and men as the breadwinners. These views endure even among young people who have received an education, indicating a gap between societal change and academic exposure.

Aspirations for careers are also influenced by cultural norms. Eccles (1994) asserts that students' perceptions of gender-appropriate roles have a significant impact on their career decisions. Because engineering and computer technology are seen as being incompatible with femininity, girls may steer clear of these fields, while boys may avoid early childhood education or nursing.

Economic inequality and occupational segregation result from these decisions, which are frequently internalized and rarely challenged.

Gender stereotypes are also maintained in large part by rules around masculinity. The Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI), developed by Mahalik et al. (2003), gauges how closely males conform to stereotypically masculine traits as emotional control, risk-taking, and dominance. According to the study, more adherence to these standards was linked to less aggressive behavior, emotional expressiveness, and a reluctance to ask for assistance all of which are detrimental to psychological health and gender parity.

Gender role expectations are further complicated by intersectionality. Gender intersects with race, class, religion, and geography to provide distinct experiences of privilege or disadvantage. For example, because rural students have less access to media, education, and exposure than their urban counterparts, they might have more traditional gender views. The degree of flexibility or rigidity in gender norms within families can also be influenced by socioeconomic level.

There is proof that attitudes are changing in spite of these obstacles. Twenge (1997) identified an overall trend toward more egalitarian views, especially among women, in a meta-analysis of gender role attitudes from 1973 to 1993. But she also pointed out that advancements slowed down during times of political conservatism or economic uncertainty, indicating that gender equality is strongly related to larger social circumstances.

The media has come to both support and contradict gender norms. Although normative roles are frequently reinforced by traditional media, counter-narratives can be found on new media channels. Gender issues have gained more attention because to social media campaigns like #HeForShe and #GirlsCan, which also offer role models who challenge conventional norms. However, the ability of media to change very conservative societies is limited since access to and interpretation of media information are influenced by pre-existing ideas.

Gender beliefs are greatly influenced by peer pressure, especially throughout college. Students frequently follow group norms in order to be accepted by others, which, depending on the group's orientation, can either support or contradict preconceptions (Leaper and Friedman, 2007). Myths and misconceptions regarding gender roles and skills are reinforced by gender-segregated socialization, which also reduces opportunities for meaningful cross-gender relationships.

Another area of interest is the psychological effects of strict gender norms. According to research, those who adhere to traditional gender roles are more likely to experience anxiety, despair, and lower levels of life satisfaction, especially if their personal characteristics don't match those of society (Klonoff & Landrine, 1995). While men who show weakness may be mocked or shunned, women who aspire to leadership positions may encounter criticism or "double binds."

Educational solutions must be grounded in a thorough comprehension of the particular gender dynamics at work within a particular cultural setting in order to address these problems. Stereotypes can be challenged with the aid of tactics including faculty training, inclusive curricula, student-led discussions, and gender-sensitive pedagogy. Their success, though, hinges on institutions' readiness to acknowledge gender bias as a systemic rather than a personal issue. The research concludes by pointing out that gender role stereotypes are both firmly established and flexible. They have an impact on many facets of life, including relationships with others, mental health, and professional and academic choices.

Since university students' attitudes and actions will influence the workforce, leadership, and society in the future, it is imperative to comprehend these stereotypes. By examining gender role preconceptions among Pakistani male and female university students, the current study advances this understanding and provides empirical data to guide educational policy and practice.

Method Research Design

A comparative cross-sectional design was used in this investigation.

Sample

150 university students from different fields were chosen as a purposive sample. 90 male and 60 female, ages 18 to 24, made up the sample, which was in line with WHO's (2018) definition of young adulthood.

Instrument

Beliefs and attitudes about traditional gender norms were measured using the Gender Stereotypical norms (GSR) Scale. Previous studies have shown that the measure has acceptable validity and reliability.

Procedure

After being told of the study's objectives and given the assurance of confidentiality, participants gave their informed consent. Paper-based administration of the GSR Scale was place during regular class hours. SPSS was used to code and analyze the data.

Ethical Consideration

Participants gave their signed agreement to participate after receiving written information about the study.

Results

Table 1

Demographics with percentage (N=150)

Demographics	Group	f	%
Gender	Female	60	40
	Male	90	60

In table 1, the gender distribution of the study participants is shown in the demographic information in the table. Of the entire sample, 90 male (60%) were men and 60 female (40%) were women. Given that men make up three-fifths of the sample as a whole, this suggests that there are more male participants than female participants.

The gender disparity may be the consequence of the sampling strategy used or it may represent the demographic characteristics pertinent to the study setting. This discrepancy should be taken into account when evaluating the study's results because gender differences may have an impact on the variables being examined.

For example, the results may not be as applicable to women if the study focuses on subjects where gender roles or behaviors are important due to the high proportion of male participants. For the results to be more applicable to both genders, future studies should strive for more balanced gender representation. Furthermore, examining gender-specific patterns or answers in the data may offer important new information about possible distinctions between individuals who were male and female.

Table 2

Comparison of Gender Mean Scores with t-test Outcomes, Effect Sizes, and Levels of Significance

Gender	M	SD	t	P	r	Cohen's d
Male (N =90)	21.80	4.45	2.63	.011	0.32	0.68
Female (N = 60)	18.70	3.90				

Note: M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation; t = t-test with 58 degrees of freedom; p = significance level; r = effect size correlation; Cohen's d = standardized mean difference.

The results in Table 2 indicate a significant difference between male and female students in their endorsement of gender role stereotypes, with males showing higher mean scores. This suggests that male students tend to hold more traditional views about gender roles compared to female students. The moderate effect size (Cohen's d = 0.68) reflects a meaningful difference between the groups. These findings highlight the persistence of gendered attitudes among university students and emphasize the need for interventions promoting gender equality.

Discussion

The Gender Stereotypical Roles (GSR) Scale was used to compare male and female participants in order to investigate gender role preconceptions among college students. Male students showed stronger stereotyped ideas than female students, according to the data, which showed a statistically significant difference in the support of traditional gender roles. This discovery clarifies how gendered thinking still exists in academic settings today despite international initiatives to advance gender parity.

These outcomes align with previous gender research findings. Gender role attitudes have long been thought to be firmly anchored in cultural, social, and psychological structures by scholars such as Bem (1981) and Mahalik et al. (2003). The gender schema theory (Bem, 1981) describes how people internalize gender norms and utilize them as mental models to direct their actions. Male students' greater adherence to conventional roles might be a sign of the patriarchal standards' ongoing influence, especially in South Asian communities where being a man is frequently linked to control, power, and emotional reserve (Mahalik et al., 2003). Male students might be less open to egalitarian ideas because they are under more pressure to live up to strict gender norms.

On the other hand, female students' decreased support for gender stereotypes might be a result of their growing visibility and empowerment in leadership positions, the workforce, and academia. By exposing students to other viewpoints and giving them the confidence to question established conventions, education plays a crucial part in changing attitudes. Diverse discourses on social justice, women's rights, and gender equity are more likely to be encountered by female university students, particularly those attending coeducational institutions. They might reject stereotyped roles that limit female autonomy and perpetuate subordination as a result of these interactions.

Qureshi et al. (2014), who examined gender role perceptions among Pakistani youth, similarly corroborate the current findings. They discovered that male respondents frequently held conservative opinions influenced by conventional family structures and cultural norms, whereas female respondents were more likely to support modern and egalitarian viewpoints.

This implies that attitudes on gender roles are not just personal beliefs but are strongly influenced by socialization and life events. Boys and girls are brought up with different expectations about behavior, accountability, and future responsibilities in various countries, including Pakistan. These expectations later show themselves in their attitudes toward school and the workplace.

The disparity in exposure to gender equity activities may be another important factor contributing to the gender gap in stereotype endorsement. Scholarships, gender advocacy campaigns, and empowerment initiatives frequently focus on female students, which may raise their understanding of gender issues. Despite their advantages, these programs could inadvertently leave out male students, depriving them of organized chances to think critically about privilege, power, and masculinity. As a result, unless they are specifically involved in gender-sensitive treatments, men may still function according to old paradigms.

According to this study, the observed disparities between male and female students are significant and not negligible, as evidenced by the moderate effect size (Cohen's $d = 0.68$). This suggests that although there is some overlap in the attitudes of the sexes, the difference is significant enough to warrant interventions at the policy and educational levels. Because gender stereotypes are not evenly dispersed among student populations, educators and administrators must adopt tailored strategies that take into account the unique requirements and mindsets of both male and female students.

Interestingly, a generational shift in opinions is also reflected in the study's findings. While today's youngsters, particularly females, are more likely to challenge and reinterpret conventional standards, previous generations may have had even more inflexible ideas on gender roles. But the fact that a sizable percentage of the male sample still held stereotypical views shows that social change is not uniform and that educational reforms are necessary to promote it. The way that universities handle gender in their curricula, language, and practices can either reinforce or challenge prevailing notions. Universities are microcosms of society.

The social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), which highlights the importance of modeling and reinforcement in behavior acquisition, may also help explain the disparity in attitudes. Students internalize these roles through social approbation or direct reinforcement after witnessing parents, friends, instructors, and the media display gendered behaviors. Males who exhibit aggressiveness, dominance, and stoicism all characteristics associated with traditional masculinity are frequently praised, while those who do not may face societal repercussions. In a similar vein, women who exhibit caring tendencies, empathy, or submissiveness could receive social reinforcement. Not all students are willing to incur the social risk that comes with questioning these gendered assumptions.

Furthermore, it is impossible to overlook the media's influence. Stereotypical depictions of men and women are still prevalent in both traditional and digital media, which frequently objectify women and exalt traditional masculinity. Local cultural productions, such as television dramas, movies, and commercials, may continue to perpetuate antiquated conventions despite international media initiatives that promote gender diversity and inclusion. The disparity in how male and female students consume media content may also account for the differences in their perspectives.

The study's findings may also be influenced by cultural and religious beliefs. Gender roles are strongly linked to communal ideals and religious interpretations in many collectivist nations, such as Pakistan. It's possible that male students are conditioned to associate caregiving, domesticity, and modesty with femininity while viewing leadership, authority, and public presence as fundamentally masculine qualities. Cultural interpretations frequently maintain gendered divisions of labor and responsibility, even while religion itself does not advocate for

injustice. Students may continue to support these ideas without question if they are not critically analyzed in academic settings.

The theory of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1995) is another pertinent concept. It asserts that some masculinities are dominant over others and establish a benchmark for what it means to be "a real man." Not only does this type of masculinity marginalize women, but it also does the same to males who don't fit the mold. Hegemonic masculinity can be either challenged or reinforced in university environments, depending on academic participation, peer cultures, and institutional norms. These hegemonic ideas, which place a premium on power and discourage emotional vulnerability, empathy, or teamwork, may be internalized by male students in this study, as seen by their increased endorsement of gender stereotypes.

It's also critical to take into account how gender attitudes are shaped by peers during college.

Erikson's psychosocial theory (1968) states that young adulthood is a period of identity formation during which people look for acceptance from their peers and a sense of belonging. Students may embrace stereotypes because they are accepted by their peers rather than because they genuinely believe in them. Particularly among male peer groups, actions deemed "feminine," such as expressing emotions or taking an interest in gender equality movements, may be discouraged. Peer pressure restricts the possibility of change and perpetuates established gender norms.

Support for conventional gender norms can have an effect on mental health from a psychological perspective. Rigid gender roles have been linked in studies to higher levels of stress, anxiety, and relationship problems (Mahalik et al., 2003). Men who conform to traditional masculine norms may experience internalized discomfort as a result of their difficulties with intimacy, emotional expression, and asking for help. On the other hand, women may feel role tension while attempting to strike a balance between conventional standards and contemporary goals. Addressing gender role assumptions is so important for both equity and wellbeing.

Academic achievement and career goals are also impacted by the current findings. With males underrepresented in caregiving professions and women underrepresented in STEM disciplines, Eccles (1994) observed that gender views have a major influence on educational choices. Male students may be less inclined to pursue a variety of academic options if they still identify particular professions with femininity or masculinity. Likewise, female students who absorb preconceptions can be reluctant to take on leadership responsibilities or stand up for themselves in competitive settings.

The study's sample size ($N = 150$) and concentration on a specific university or area are two limitations that could restrict how broadly the results can be applied. To further understand how different social factors intersect to determine gender role, future research should take into account intersectional characteristics including race, class, and rural-urban background.

The significance of inclusive education policies is also emphasized in the report. The way that gender is portrayed in textbooks and instructional materials should be critically evaluated by curriculum designers. Male characters frequently predominate in literary, scientific, and historical accounts, whereas women are either stereotyped or missing. The study's overall conclusions highlight the continued seriousness of gender role norms in higher education. Male students could need more assistance to challenge and unlearn patriarchal notions, whereas female students seem to be shifting toward more egalitarian viewpoints. It is crucial to establish inclusive, safe venues for discussion, introspection, and experimentation. Gender parity must be viewed as a human issue that impacts everyone's potential, freedom, and growth, not just women.

Conclusion

The gender role preconceptions of male and female university students were examined in the current study, and a considerable discrepancy between the two groups was discovered. While female students tended to be more egalitarian, male students were more likely to have traditional ideas about gender roles. This is a reflection of larger societal dynamics in which strongly ingrained patriarchal views continue to exist, particularly among men, despite a progressive evolution in gender standards. The results are in line with earlier research that emphasizes how cultural conditioning and societal expectations impact gender attitudes at a young age and continue to mold people's viewpoints throughout adulthood (Bem, 1981; Mahalik et al., 2003; Qureshi et al., 2014).

These findings have significant ramifications for educational establishments. Universities are social settings where identities are formed, questioned, and altered in addition to being centers of academic study. They therefore have a tremendous deal of potential to positively impact gender views. Gender stereotypes can impede students' academic progress, career goals, and interpersonal relationships if they are not addressed. Additionally, they have the potential to perpetuate discriminatory practices that result in gender-based disparities in leadership, employment, and social roles outside of academic institutions.

It is not just an academic interest but also a social duty to identify and overcome gender role stereotypes in higher education. More deliberate effort must be made to encourage male students in particular to critically think about conventional gender norms and their effects. However, students are not the only ones who bear accountability. In order to establish a culture where gender equity is not just welcomed but expected, faculty, administrators, and legislators must work together. Universities should challenge outmoded gender stereotypes and promote a more respectful and balanced community by implementing inclusive policies, curricular reforms, faculty training, and student participation. To guarantee that treatments have a long-lasting effect, long-term plans and regular evaluation are equally crucial.

Future studies should also look into intersectional issues including religion, class, and ethnicity, as these could either reinforce gender stereotypes or have differing effects on how they are expressed across different student groups. Deeper understanding of how gender views change over time and in various academic environments can be gained through mixed-method and longitudinal methods.

In summary, the prevalence of gender role preconceptions among college students indicates that more work needs to be done in both practice and study. In order to meet the challenge, educational institutions must foster a culture of respect, empathy, and equality. Universities can make a substantial contribution to the creation of a more inclusive and fair society by enabling students to challenge and go beyond strict gender norms.

Recommendations

A number of thorough and useful suggestions are put forth in light of the study's findings in order to lessen and ultimately eradicate gender role preconceptions in higher education. In order to promote a long-lasting cultural shift toward gender parity, these tactics seek to address both individual awareness and more extensive institutional reform. One of the main suggestions is to include gender sensitivity in all subject areas' curricula. This should be expanded to include disciplines like engineering, business, and medicine rather than only the social sciences. Students from a variety of academic backgrounds are more likely to critically examine their internalized ideas and cultivate inclusive attitudes when they are taught about the effects of gender norms on both a personal and professional level.

Regularly holding training sessions and awareness workshops is another essential step. These should involve all university stakeholders, including students, teachers, and administrative

personnel, and cover subjects like unconscious bias, gender equality, and inclusive leadership. Notably, the study emphasizes that male students are more likely to support established gender roles, making their participation crucial. These programs can be made more effective by using interactive forms like role-plays, debates, and storytelling. Institutions must support and execute gender-neutral policies to provide equal access to academic committees, leadership positions, and job openings inside the university in order to support this endeavor. In order to prevent gendered presumptions and promote inclusivity, language used in all official communications should also be gender-sensitive.

Mentorship programs have the potential to significantly alter students' viewpoints. Universities can establish support networks that go against conventional ideas of competence and leadership by matching students with mentors who support gender parity, regardless of gender. These initiatives can assist pupils in imagining gender-neutral futures. Institutions must also offer easily accessible and private channels for reporting instances of stereotyping or discrimination based on gender. Establishing a secure atmosphere where students feel heard and safeguarded is crucial to fostering institutional accountability and confidence.

Another crucial tactic is to promote male allyship. Teaching male students how gender norms can affect them negatively by limiting their ability to express their emotions or take on caregiving responsibilities can help them become more empathetic and less resistant to change. Men are more inclined to support justice and equity if they are aware of the wider effects of strict gender norms. Additionally, universities ought to actively encourage student-led campaigns for gender equality. The messages become more relatable and powerful among peers when students take the initiative to plan events or awareness campaigns.

A tangible and symbolic commitment to inclusivity is made by providing gender-neutral restrooms, prayer areas, and dorms. Students who don't fit into standard gender roles are respected and validated in these settings.

Lastly, community engagement and continued research are essential. Longitudinal studies should be carried out by institutions to track shifts in gender attitudes and evaluate the results of initiatives that have been put into place. Outreach initiatives that involve parents and the community help guarantee that gender-sensitive principles are upheld off campus. In summary, combating gender role stereotypes in higher education necessitates a consistent, well-coordinated strategy. If implemented methodically, these suggestions have the potential to change classrooms into welcoming settings that empower all students, regardless of gender.

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