

Research on the Influence of Gender Role Stereotypes on the Selection of Female Class Cadres

Tianyu Yang

*School of Political Science and Law, Jinggangshan University, Ji'an, China
miyako20011225@outlook.com*

Abstract. The hindering effect of gender role stereotypes on women's development has received widespread attention, but there is still insufficient research on their impact mechanisms and coping strategies in the field of education, especially in the selection process of female class cadres. This article analyzes the negative impact of gender role stereotypes on the selection of female class cadres through psychological mechanisms such as implicit bias and attribution bias. It reveals the correlation between the strength of stereotypes, the clarity of selection criteria, the gender of class teachers, and student participation with the selection results of female class cadres. Research has found that gender role stereotypes significantly reduce the selection ratio of female class cadres, and the impact is more prominent when the selection criteria are vague. Based on this, this article proposes suggestions such as strengthening gender equality education, optimizing the selection mechanism for class cadres, and increasing student participation, in order to provide useful references for promoting gender equality in the educational environment.

Keywords: gender role stereotypes, Female class cadres, Selection process, Educational environment, Fairness

1. Introduction

Gender equality is a problem that people care about very much in today's society. Although women have achieved considerable success in many areas, gender-role stereotypes still subconsciously affect people's perceptions and judgments in some particular circumstances; more noticeably, this phenomenon exists to varying degrees in school class management [1,2]. Gender role stereotypes refer to people's fixed ideas and requirements for the behaviour, ability, and social position of males and females. Stereotypes usually arise out of social and cultural traditions and custom; They have a profound influence on people's self-concept and how others perceive them [3]. In the educational environment, this stereotype may result in an undervaluation and neglect of women's leadership skills, which can then impact their role position and development space in class management.

In recent years, some research has shown that gender role stereotypes prevent the all-round development of girls. Some scholars have pointed out that gender stereotyping can make people think that women do not possess the necessary management abilities, such as decisiveness and leadership; at the same time, it also fails to recognize their unique strengths in communication, team building, and addressing problems [4]. At present, there is still a lack of research on education-related subjects, and at the same time, during the selection process for female class cadre positions, no one has probed into how such impacts occur or what methods should be adopted to cope with them. Currently,

research primarily focuses on theoretical exploration and lacks in-depth analysis of the specific scenario of class management; at present, there is no systematic approach to effectively reducing the negative impact of stereotypes on the selection of female class cadres.

It is quite meaningful to examine in depth what impact gender-role stereotypes have on the selection of female class leaders. On the one hand, it helps break the stereotype that women lack leadership ability and provides theoretical basis for achieving gender equality in education; On the other hand, by analysing the reasons for such a situation, some suggestions can be put forward to improve the selection mechanism of class leaders and increase the leadership training opportunities for girls, thereby promoting multi-dimensional and harmonious development of class management.

The main purpose of this article is to analyse in detail how different gender roles manifest in various forms during the recruitment process for female class leaders, and what impact it has on students' understanding of women's participation in social activities. Through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods, this study aims to delve into the detailed effects of gender-role stereotypes on women's participation as class leaders from an individual perspective, such as implicit bias and attribute bias; At the same time, the extent to which stereotype, the degree of definition of selection criteria, the sex of homeroom teachers, and students' involvement in the selection process influence the result of choosing a female class leader will also be examined. In short, the aim of this paper is to present cases and provide references to help achieve gender equity in education.

2. Introduction to the concept of gender role stereotypes

Gender role stereotyping is a deep-seated social phenomenon that refers to fixed and simple ideas or perceptions that people have about the behaviour, abilities, personality traits and other characteristics of males and females [5]. These stereotypes are usually not based on objective facts but rather come from the shaping and inheritance of social culture.

The formation mechanism of gender role stereotypes is complicated and varied; during the process of socialisation, there are many factors that can lead to their generation, such as family education, school education and media influence [6]. People may be influenced at an early age to believe that boys should be brave and strong, while girls should be gentle and weak, thereby forming a vague perception about gender role patterns. With increasing age, such stereotypes will gradually be accepted by older individuals themselves and have an impact on their behaviour and interpretation of others' behaviour.

Over time, gender-role stereotyping has gradually become more prevalent in daily life. It will restrict the choice of careers and other opportunities for advancement in life that one might have. In some areas, there is a perception that women are less suitable for certain positions or tasks, which limits their career development [7]. This stereotype may also prevent equal interaction and collaboration among people of different genders, with both sides likely to make judgments about each other's behaviour according to fixed notions of what is considered proper for men or women in their society.

In the school's education, students are inevitably influenced to varying degrees by these traditional impressions of men and women's roles in society [8]. Especially in terms of class management, this stereotype may influence who is chosen as the class leader; it tends to be selected more often by males. Given that there is a relatively weak image of female leaders in traditional beliefs, female students may face more doubts and difficulties when running for class cadres [9]. Not only does this phenomenon limit the leadership development of female students, but it also robs class Groups of exposure to different kinds of leadership.

In recent years, with the popularisation of gender-equality ideas, more and more girls have begun to transcend traditional role restrictions and shown strong management abilities in their classes. To

completely eliminate the impact of gender-role stereotypes on the appointment of female class leaders, however, still requires joint efforts from all sectors of society. Strengthen gender equality education, increase public attention to the harm caused by gender stereotypes, create a fairer environment for women's participation in social activities and leadership positions, etc.

3. Empirical research

3.1. Questionnaire survey

3.1.1. Purpose and design concept

The purpose of designing the questionnaire is to obtain a general picture in advance about what kinds of gender stereotypical impressions the respondents have and which aspects they pay attention to when selecting class leaders. This study used the questionnaire survey method to quantify how much of an impact gender role stereotyping has had on choosing women as class committee members. Through the accumulation of a large number of sample Data, it can be uncovered that there is both generalisation and individual characteristics for the manifestation of gender Role Stereotypes in the process of selecting class cadre candidates. The questionnaire comprises three parts: the first part is composed of closed-ended questions about gender stereotypes in role perceptions; the second part includes open-ended questions on the criteria for electing class leaders and personal experiences; The third part records basic information such as age, major, and course selected. It can help the respondents perceive whether they have gender stereotype awareness; By selecting which attributes they think suitable for the position of a class leader, it can reflect the respondents' values in different aspects [10].

3.1.2. Questionnaire distribution and collection

A total of 200 students were chosen from the final groups at two middle schools in a specific city. These are: female class leaders, female students who are not class leaders, male class leaders, and male students who are not class leaders.

A total of 180 valid questionnaires were collected, and the response rate was 90 per cent. The purpose of the questionnaire is to allow participants to assess how much they conform to traditional gender role stereotypes and whether they recognise the qualities that class leaders should possess. Based on statistical analysis, the specific impact of gender role stereotypes on the election of female class leaders has been revealed.

3.2. In depth interviews

3.2.1. Purpose and outline ideas

The deep interview is intended to help us better understand the psychological changes and practical experiences of the people involved in their own process of gender stereotyping and choosing class leaders. Obtain qualitative data and a large amount of questionnaire data respectively to enrich the sources of information and enhance the reliability of research results. The interview outline is mainly composed of three parts: The interviewee's perception of gender role stereotypes, their views on the selection criteria for class cadres, and their own experiences. First, ask the interviewees about their understanding of gender role stereotypes and how they manifest in daily life to determine how aware people are of these stereotypes. Explore what kind of qualities and abilities the respondents think class leaders need to have, and also understand if they are constrained by gender stereotypes when making their judgments, so as to reveal how gender stereotypes affect who is selected as a class leader. Finally, please share your personal experiences of selecting class leaders and how these have

influenced gender-role stereotypes; at the same time, this will also serve to illustrate this study through real examples.

3.2.2. Interview implementation

Ten teachers (five males and five females) were interviewed, as well as ten students (five males and five females), with the latter broken down into two groups: class leaders and non-class leaders. The interviewees are different genders and class cadre identities to make the interview results have broad coverage and strong representativeness.

The interview is conducted in person with one-on-one deep exploration, and the interviewee's opinions and experiences are elicited through open-ended questions. The interviewee agrees to have the entire process recorded for later content analysis, so that we can extract essential information and themes from it. In this way, we will better grasp the actual views and feelings of the interviewees on gender roles and the criteria for selecting class leaders.

3.3. Theoretical analysis and experimental results

3.3.1. The impact of implicit bias on the selection of female class cadres

According to data, in classes where there is a strong sense of gender roles, the proportion of male class cadre candidates is as high as 65 per cent, while that of females is only 35 per cent; The gender gap reached thirty per cent. According to the results of implicit-bias tests on students, about 60 per cent of them have implicit biases against women's ability to lead.

Implicit bias refers to the subtle, effortless preference or prejudice for girls in the role of class leaders, which seriously affects people's judgments. This bias may be subtly reflected in the judges' subconscious mind during the selection process of class leaders, and as a result, female candidates might not gain their favour [11]. Although female candidates may have excellent leadership skills, they may still face unconscious bias when being assessed for their leadership ability; as a result, it will be harder for them to get hired.

3.3.2. The impact of attribution bias on the selection of female class cadres

The research results show that there is a phenomenon of attribution bias in the selection process of class cadres. In the attribution bias analysis of class cadre selection, when female candidates demonstrate outstanding leadership skills, judges tend to attribute their success to external factors such as "luck" or "teamwork" rather than their individual abilities. In the case of vague or subjective selection criteria, the proportion of male class cadres has significantly increased to 68%, while females only account for 32%, and the gender gap has widened to 36%.

Attribution bias refers to the fact that people tend to attribute one's own successes to internal reasons and others' failures to external factors when explaining someone else's behaviour. In the choice of female class leaders, this attributional bias manifests as judges tending to attribute the success of female candidates to external factors rather than their individual capabilities [12]. In addition to underestimating the performance of women in this group, such thinking has led many qualified female candidates for government positions to be overlooked. A female contestant was able to lead her team in completing the project, but the judges paid more attention to the collaborative work of the whole team and overlooked her individual performance [13].

3.3.3. The influence of ambiguity in selection criteria on the selection of female class cadres

According to the selection standards, there is often an indistinct situation in practice. When the standards for selection are ambiguous or personal, there is a high proportion of male class leaders, at 68 per cent, with only 32 per cent being female; The gender gap has reached 36 per cent as a result.

Uncertainty of the criteria makes the selection less strictly divided by gender. If the standards for selecting people are ambiguous, judges may easily fall into a pattern of thinking that stereotypes cannot be broken, which can lead to an unfair evaluation of female candidates. Judges may inadvertently undervalue the leadership skills of women candidates and believe that they have achieved success externally rather than through their own efforts. There is a possibility that this ambiguous perception may reduce the opportunity for girls to be chosen and limit the diversity and inclusiveness of the class management structure.

3.3.4. The impact of student participation on the selection of female class cadres

In classes where students are actively involved in the election of class leaders, there is a smaller gender disparity.

An increase in students' participation will help diminish the impact of the traditional stereotype that girls are not suitable for class leader positions. When students can choose the class leaders proactively, they are more likely to consider each candidate's true strength and conduct in daily life when voting; therefore, it may reduce stereotyping. Students may be more focused on the candidates' leadership, communication and cooperation abilities than on their gender [14]. An increase in participation can help improve the fairness of selection and promote the diversity and inclusive development of class management.

4. Discussion and suggestions

4.1. Discussion

The impact of gender-role stereotypes on the selection of female class-leaders is not limited to the short-term results of the selection; it may also have an adverse impact on the career path and prospects for development of women over a longer period. In the short term, this stereotype results in unfair treatment of women in the selection of class leaders; their leadership abilities and potential are underestimated, which impacts their role position and development space within class management. Female candidates may receive more questions during the interview and campaign process that challenge their leadership skills, and they might also be asked how they plan to handle personal matters like family life and studies; however, this kind of question is seldom posed to male candidates. Dissimilar treatment will inevitably increase the pressure of the female competition; It might also affect her performance in response at this time.

With the passage of time, these traditional ideas may cause women to doubt themselves and thus be less likely to pursue a career in educational management at high levels; this could affect their careers. Tracking studies show that women who serve as class leaders generally lack confidence; They are also more likely to choose occupations that have long been considered "women's work" in the future. It can be seen that such a situation has restricted the career development space for women and exacerbated problems of gender discrimination in society. There may also be limitations in terms of the diversity and inclusiveness of class management under traditional gender role stereotypes; Some female leaders find it difficult to bring their own advantages and insights to the group.

Therefore, it is of great significance to examine in detail how gender-role stereotypes influence the choice of female class cadre candidates. It will not only help to break the stereotype that women lack leadership ability but also provide theoretical support for realizing gender equality in education;

Through an analysis of the reasons for stereotypes, corresponding countermeasures can be put forward to improve the selection mechanism of class cadres' positions and enhance the leadership development opportunities of female students, thereby promoting diversified and inclusive development in class management.

4.2. Suggestions

In order to minimise the adverse effects of traditional sex role stereotypes in the selection of female class leaders, based on the above analysis, this paper offers the following concrete and practical suggestions:

At the level of education departments and schools, gender equality education should first be integrated into the curriculum system. Through classroom teaching, extracurricular activities and other ways, the knowledge and concepts of gender equality should be conveyed to students to help them form proper gender views. Therefore, in view of this situation, the Education Department should organise regular training courses for teachers on Gender Equality Education; At the same time enhance their professional skills and teaching level in the field to better incorporate Gender Equality Education content into routine Teaching activities.

Schools need to create a safe, inclusive learning Environment that helps all students develop healthily and receives fairer treatment in education regardless of Gender identity. Create a safe school environment that meets basic safety requirements, such as adequate night-time lighting in the living area; Set up emergency response teams consisting of teachers and students, and enhance training in self-rescue skills; Integrate sexual assault prevention education into physical education classes or life science lessons, and teach general anti-violence techniques through practical activities like simulated arrest operations. In addition, schools need to provide various courses and activities for students to choose based on their own interests, advantages, etc.; gender stereotypes should not limit the range of elective courses. Elective courses such as programming, robotics, and leadership can be set up for girls to cultivate an interest in these areas and strengthen their sense of science and leadership.

When choosing class leaders, strict and fair criteria must be established to ensure that every student has an equal opportunity and is evaluated justly. Detailed selection procedures and standards can be formulated to specify the duties and requirements of class Cadres, and democratic elections, campaigns, etc., can be held. At the same time, schools can organise various forms of leadership training activities to spark girls' interest in participating; through these activities, they can boost girls' confidence and enhance their own leadership abilities. The content of the training courses can include aspects such as lectures on leadership skills for college students and group cooperative games, and we may also introduce some simulated election activities; Through these forms, it will help women express themselves more freely.

Family education can also help eliminate gender stereotypes. Parents should teach their children from a young age to respect gender equality, making them understand that boys and girls are equal in terms of rights, opportunities and responsibilities. In daily life, parents should avoid using or showing gender-based stereotypes, for example, saying "boys shouldn't cry" or "girls should be gentle", and instead encourage their children to grow in line with their own interests and strengths. Parents should also provide equal opportunities and resources for their children to participate in various activities and learn, without favouring one sex over another.

The improvement of the social environment is also necessary to consider. The government needs to establish related laws and regulations to protect the right of equality between men and women, as well as their equal access to education, employment and other rights; At the same time, strengthen law enforcement and punish acts that infringe upon Women's rights such as domestic violence according to the law. The media need to report more frequently on gender equality issues, increase people's understanding of the issue, and build an environment that supports gender equality through

public opinion. Enterprises and social organisations should proactively engage in gender equality education, promote the practice and development of gender equality. For instance, enterprises can ensure that the recruitment and promotion process is fair between men and women and offer more development opportunities to Women; Social organizations can conduct gender equality publicity campaigns to enhance people's awareness of this issue.

5. Conclusion

Based on this study's in-depth theoretical analysis and empirical verification, it is confirmed that gender-role stereotypes do indeed influence the choice of female class cadre. The following is a summary of the primary conclusions from this study and an explanation of their significance; at the same time, suggestions will be offered to mitigate harm caused by gender stereotypes.

Based on this study, it can be determined that gender role stereotypes tend to lead to an unfair evaluation of female candidates in class leader elections. This stereotype believes that women lack the ability to lead and make decisions, and therefore should take on auxiliary roles. Compared with the actual performance of men and women in leadership roles, this paper has found that female leaders can also exhibit excellent leadership and team-management skills. The opposite of what is expected by conventional gender roles and reveals that there are adverse effects of gender Stereotypes on the appointment of female class leaders.

Analysis of the data shows that the proportion of female class cadres in class management is significantly lower than that of males. Not only does it restrict the development opportunities for female students, but it may also rob the class of a female leader's unique perspective and valuable input. Therefore, this study needs to break down the role stereotypes of men and women in society and promote gender equality.

Based on this study's deep theoretical analysis and empirical data, it is evident that the influence of gender roles on people's minds is indeed quite pronounced; they tend to be more lenient or strict when evaluating women in positions of power within their respective units. In future research, it is essential to continue advancing the cause of gender equality and create more growth space for women through educational reform, public awareness campaigns, etc.

References

- [1] Johnson, S. K., Murphy, S. E., & Zewdie, S. (2008). The strong, sensitive type: Effects of gender stereotypes and leadership prototypes on the evaluation of male and female leaders. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*.
- [2] McGlashan, K. E., Wright, P. M., & McCormick, B. (1995). Preferential selection and stereotypes: Effects on evaluation of female leader performance, subordinate goal commitment, and task performance. *Sex Roles*.
- [3] Kreuzer, B. K. (1992). Women and leadership: The effect of gender, gender-role orientation, socioeconomic status, and parental influence on womens aspirations to leader roles. ProQuest.
- [4] Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2003). The female leadership advantage: An evaluation of the evidence. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 14(6), 807-834
- [5] Koburtay, T., & Syed, J. (2019). A contextual study of female-leader role stereotypes in the hotel sector. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*.
- [6] Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*.
- [7] Lian Shufang (2019). A study on the relationship between occupational gender stereotypes and self-efficacy *Journal of Graduate School of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences*
- [8] Lu Zhe (2020). Research on the Impact of Female Executives on Corporate Social Responsibility Zhongnan University of Economics and Law
- [9] Hao Weilan (2022). A study on the impact of different sports on gender role cognition among vocational and technical college students Fuyang Normal University
- [10] Jia Shuhui (2023). A study on the deconstruction of female stereotypes by the image of female beauty bloggers on Xiaohongshu Shandong Normal University

- [11] Xie, L. Q., Zhou, J. Y., Zong, Q. Q., et al. (2020). Gender diversity in R&D teams and innovation efficiency: Role of the innovation context. *Research Policy*, 49(1), 103885.
- [12] Morey, Leng Ying, Wang Ruiming (2007). *Research on the Process of Information Processing in Text Reading - Theory and Experiment of Dual Processing in Text Reading in China* Guangdong Higher Education Press
- [13] Liu Chang (2021). Evaluation differences in gender identity of leaders: an empirical analysis based on implicit leadership theory *Progress in Psychological Science*, 44 (2), 340-350
- [14] Proudfoot, D., & Kay, A. C. (2023). Communal expectations conflict with autonomy motives: The western drive for autonomy shapes womens negative responses to positive gender stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 124(1), 121.