

# ***Analysis of the Importance of Gender Identity Information and Sex Education in Social Media and School***

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**Abstract:** “Rose adolescents” are a group of people with different behaviors that differ from their biological gender identity. But few people in society pay attention to this group. This is inseparable from the role played by the media in communication and the education of sexual knowledge. Biased general cognition will harm this group physically and psychologically, leading to social problems, such as school bullying. They need to be understood by the public, and the physical and mental health of young people also need to be protected and given attention from multiple dimensions. So, the paper will use three theories related to gender, media, and diversity, analyzing public stereotypes of gender diversity and, the social impact behind it. How does the media play an essential role in guiding public comments? What can sex education do to help? In the end, the article believes that when mass media is widespread and biased in disseminating social information, the resulting erroneous or misleading information needs to be managed and guided by the press and the family, school, and society for the mental health of young people.

**Keywords:** sex education, gender identity, femininity, social media, masculinity

## **1. Introduction**

Most gender-oriented articles analyze the causes and effects of sex and gender cognition from a biological and physiological perspective. In research, a theory of mind (Tome) is the social cognitive ability to explain and predict the actions of others based on underlying mental states, such as beliefs, intentions or feelings [1]. From the perspective of social psychology, the establishment of masculinity and femininity seems to have biased the perception of gender in society. According to the gender social norm index released by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), nearly half think men are better suited than women to be political leaders; more than 40 percent think men are better suited to be business executives and when employment is scarce. In addition, the rationality of men to work outside the home is stronger than that of women. 28% think domestic violence is normal [2]. In today’s Internet age of digital media, more and more people, especially young people, can quickly master and use social software and electronic devices. The resulting network norm management issues deserve the attention of the media and regulatory authorities. Therefore, this article wants to expand on the previous theories and analyze how adolescents’ gender cognition is shaped and changed from the perspective of the media and its communication

characteristics. The article is narrated from three parts: the relationship between masculinity and feminism and the media, the advantages and disadvantages of social media in the flow of information, and the relationship between gender knowledge and society, family, school, and social media. Hongzhi Ye, a 14-year-old Taiwanese teenager who lost his life due to school bullying, is also called “Rose adolescent”. Roses do not represent flowers, nor do they only belong to one gender. It means a type of teenager who can still bloom their lives beautifully in different gender self-awareness. They need to be understood and respected by society, family, and peers. Therefore, the article also mentioned that schools play a positive role in gender education. The research results of this article help to transfer more positive energy: society needs to take more care of people of different genders and treat people with gender barriers equally.

## 2. Literature Review

### **The theoretical development of sexual temperament**

According to The Early Development of Gender Difference, the primitive biological structure of human beings determines sexual temperament [3]. To be more specific, the little contribution of the endocrine system to the maintenance of adult sex differences in empathy and dominance, particularly with regard to androgens like testosterone. Testosterone concentration is the physiological manifestation of male hormones, playing an important role in men’s health and well-being. Studies have shown that male hormones are negatively correlated with female aspirations (women’s career plans or self-realization [3]. Although biological gender divides male and female characteristics in a certain way, gender differences are also shaped by social processes. In other words, the evolution of sociological theory and social development are inseparable.

### **Social constructionism**

Social constructivism focuses on such an artifact. It is created through social interaction and group common assumptions. The modern origin of social learning theory is personality theory, and in particular, Roth’s desire to explain individual differences in behavior without reference to psychodynamic models [4][5]. Rotter assumes that behavior is goal-oriented, and emphasizes that expectations of reward and perceived reward value are fundamental to modeling one’s behavior from the behavior of others [5]. Behavior is easily guided by the surrounding environment. Although we have so-called codes of conduct such as student handbooks, based on the virtuality of the network, such behavioral deviations and irregularities are prone to uncertainty. Especially for adolescents whose minds are fully mature, it is necessary to guide rather than regulate correct behavior. As one of the most important functions of media, communication becomes a key factor. People make friends, express their personalities, and solve problems through daily communication. People make their voice every day, even in the vote for president speech; communication skill is an essential process. One of the communication skills the author wants to mention is using and texting on social media professionally.

## 3. Gender Identity and Sex Education in Social Media and School

### 3.1. Social Media

Social media is a technology based on computers, which shares ideas through virtual networks and communities. Similarly, social media is based on the internet because it provides fast and convenient electronic communication, such as documents, personal information, videos, and photos [6]. The user can engage in social media via computer, official website, application, and smartphone. Today’s popular and common social media apps are TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter. Admittedly, the different countries of social media applications play similar roles in society, for example, collecting public information, communication, and entertainment. Social media “plays

a significant part in children's daily activities and is used by the majority of children in the United Kingdom (UK)," according to Statista. A survey conducted in October 2021 revealed that 87 percent of 15 to 16-year-olds accessed social media and that 91 percent of them had a personal profile [7]. Media influence can be indirect and deliberate. For instance, advertising is often directed at children of all ages, which means that people of all ages are increasingly conscious of brands and images. Additionally, some indirect social media, such as Snapchat and YouTube, contain messages of sex, violence and vulgar language, according to new research. These are the potential dangers of social media. So, it may negatively influence teenagers' behavior and attitudes in certain areas [8].

Communication is a primary function of media. In the research from Kanso, he mentioned the factors that impact media communication. Media availability, real economic level, linguistic diversity, language competence, cultural understanding and legal norms are all factors that affect media communication [9]. Besides the media, other factors may also affect communication, such as personal interest, gender, national identity, and education. Gender inequality and antagonism between the sexes is always a hot topic in social media. It catches the user's attention and takes high clicks to the media platforms.

How has information in social media impacted teenagers' gender cognition? The mainstream information decides most of the people's knowledge base. Typically, the media divides gender into two categories, male and female. A Male cannot wear a dress; a female should look beautiful. Male words are more likely to refer to bravery, strength, and intelligence, whereas female words are sexy, virtuous, and feminine. The stereotypes of gender have been constructed subconsciously. Especially for adolescents and young adults, some of their self-images and values are just beginning to be constructed or may change with external information. Genes determine human sex. But their gender will be impacted by many factors, including their growth environment, family, etc. These are differences in biology and psychology that may change. Misinformation in the media allows people to subconsciously reject behaviors that are different from those that their genetically determined sex exhibits. This gender conflict can create stereotypes, affecting adolescents' physical and mental health such as the occurrence of school violence. According to new research, nearly 90 percent of teens who use social media say they have seen something cruel or mean towards someone on social media [10].

Since children and teenagers commonly use social media, apps, and sites, they become the main object of cyberbullying. It is necessary to regulate the language use of young people in media messages and divide content rights according to age groups. According to Eke Ash in her interview, Seven Dimensions and Communication Skills Everyone Needs, it should have some principles covering texting and social media. When she texts someone, she will first consider whether the use of language would be respectful. She argued that you are sensitive about when you text [11]. Those words will be published on social media, and everyone can see them. It is our responsibility to provide a secure online environment because our kids are spending more and more time online, according to Etienne Krug, Director of the WHO Department of Social Determinants of Health [12].

## **3.2. School**

### **3.2.1. Masculinity Studies & Femininity**

Social theory may construct the traditional, old recognition. When people differ in their sexual behaviors, that will cause stereotypes. It commonly happens at school, and gender-based bullying is one of the types. It refers to the blaming and bullying of behaviors that do not conform to the stereotypes of men and women, such as language violence, verbal abuse of others, indecent nickname; Physical violence, physical aggression against others; Sexual harassment [13]. Gender

temperament refers to the sexes' typical characteristics and behaviors — for instance, masculinity and femininity. Men and boys are typically connected with certain traits, behaviors, and roles that are referred to as masculine. Both socially and physiologically defined elements make to masculinity. Traditionally, qualities associated with men are bravery, independence, and aggressiveness. Femininity is linked to females and girls in counterparts. Muliebrity, tenderness, empathy, and sensitivity are some characteristics that are traditionally associated with women. On the other hand, this classification of gender characteristics just restricted the diversity of gender identities. It causes social stereotypes. In other words, the possibilities of gender diversities will be constricted by sex identity. But sex and gender are different perspectives to analyze people's identity, as mentioned above. People should consider aspects of social processes and education.

### **3.2.2. Gender Role Stress / Gender Role Conflicts**

From the perspective of school violence, it has many types, such as cyberbullying, coarse language, and body attacks. The article discusses the aggression and violence suffered by Taiwanese teenager Hongzhi Ye from his peers, parents, school, and even society because of gender barriers, which eventually led to a 14-year-old “rose adolescent” ending his life. He is one of the victims who died from school bullying. The environmental pressure makes him feel anxious about his instinct behaviors. Classmates call him a sissy and check his genitals when he goes to the bathroom. The teacher asks him to see the psychologist and indirectly helps other classmates bully him. They required Ye to go to the toilet before the class ended, which mentally told him that he is the unhealthy people in school. These are all reasons that killed his life. Thus, it is important to consider our education in sex and gender identities. Maybe because society has ignored and ridiculed these “rose adolescents,” they have no voices to express themselves. By the end, the rose went to die. Children and adolescents who appear with gender dysphoria may feel confused and humiliated, despite advancements in awareness and acceptance of gender issues. People who have gender dysphoria frequently feel excluded from their families and peers. The risk for mental health issues and possibly suicide drastically rises in these circumstances.

## **3. Sex Education**

According to the new data from the WHO, in low- and middle-income countries, complications of pregnancy and childbirth are among the leading causes of death in young women aged 15–19 years [14]. Sex education is essential and needs to be universal. However, some countries have not regulated materials or made it mandatory to popularize sex education. The content of sex education should be standardized, such as relationships, communication, gender determination, identity, body language, sexually transmitted diseases, and contraception [15].

The debate on sex education is robust, even at times vitriolic. As Roemer and Paxman mentioned sex education law and policies, those who advocate expanded sexuality education programs for youth have been accused of, among other things, “brainwashing adolescents into embarking upon sexual careers” and of undermining “family and parental responsibility” [16]. Only a few countries, predominantly in Europe, utilize laws to have sex education compulsory. As a Swedish proverb goes, “Sex education begins at school.” The Handbook on Sex Instruction in Swedish Schools, revised in 1977, became the classic text on which instruction was based for all pupils in public schools from age 7 [16]. Except for the Republic of Ireland, all countries of western and northern Europe have introduced sex education in schools, although not all have made it mandatory. The socialist countries of eastern Europe do provide compulsory sex education in schools. For example, Hungary requires that family planning education be built into the school curriculum at every level and that relevant teaching materials be prepared. In Yugoslavia, under a resolution of the Yugoslav Federal

Assembly of 1969, all educational institutions are required to carry out sex education. In Hungary, state-mandated sex education is a compulsory course for 6-15 years old, from the first grade to the ninth grade. It is also required to provide students with a contraceptive course about childbearing convenience in the ninth grade [16].

#### 4. Conclusion

The paper analyzes the negative impact of media guidance, which triggers cyber violence and school violence. The media contains much information, which may have violence, sex, or coarse language. In addition, when the opinions of the vast majority of people become mainstream, the media is relatively subjective and misleading in the direction of public opinion. Therefore, as a browser, it is necessary to combine different information sources and self-understanding for healthy network usage to avoid negative results such as cyber violence caused by biased speech. Establishing a healthy network environment can help reduce cyber violence. Still, people have the right to know the truth, so identifying the objectivity and factuality of information depends on the media's supervision and the user's ability to distinguish. However, due to the immature psychological development of young people, the help of schools and parents is needed to popularize knowledge such as pertinence and gender awareness. A healthy educational environment should allow equal dialogue. It needs to give students a good psychological understanding of sex and gender information. It allows for multiple gender identities and avoids radical, subjective, and arbitrary views in the public sphere. It naturally guides individual behavior rather than personal criticism based on majority opinion. The violence caused by gender identity barriers is not only caused by the Internet. This is also inseparable from the inherent characteristics of gender cognition in people's ideology. In future studies, the author will continue to deepen the intertwined relationship between gender cognitive impairment and media communication. The formation of masculinity and femininity and the attitudes and changes in different countries shaped by the media are the directions that the author wants to continue to study.

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