

The Relationship Between Cultures Context, Gender Identity, Gender Stereotypes, and Their Impact on Individual Mental Health

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Abstract. With the development of globalization, differences in how gender roles and expression are understood across cultures have become increasingly evident. The impact of cultural norms on individual gender identity and mental health has also received more and more attention. This study focuses on the relationship between gender identity, gender stereotypes and mental health, and analyzes how different cultures affect the formation and conflict of gender identity through value systems and social expectations from a cross-cultural perspective. The research mainly adopts the method of cross-cultural comparison, summarizes the sample characteristics, research methods and main conclusions in the existing research, and focuses on the strictness of cultural norms, the strength of gender stereotypes and the regulatory role of social support systems. Research results show that the stricter the cultural norms, the more likely individuals are to internalize gender identity conflicts and stereotypes, resulting in negative problems such as anxiety and depression. In a relatively open cultural environment, social support systems can effectively reduce stress and significantly improve mental health. In addition, the direction of influence of different cultures is consistent, but the degree of influence varies from culture to culture. The research concludes that culture is an important factor in determining the development of gender identity and mental health risks, and social support is an important mechanism for buffering cultural pressure. This study emphasizes the importance of cultural sensitivity and provides theoretical reference for the mental health of diverse gender groups.

Keywords: Culture, Gender identity, Gender stereotypes, Mental health

1. Introduction

In different social backgrounds and cultural systems, people's understanding of gender often comes from the shaping of historical, traditional and universal values and social systems. Gender is not only a personal trait, but also a core element of social functioning and people's daily interaction. Whether it is the division of labor in the family, the way of education, the social role, the media narrative, or the legal norms, the definition of gender and the meaning it carries are significantly different in different cultures. Therefore, gender-related issues often show multi-level and multi-dimensional complexity in cross-cultural situations, which makes researchers have to start from the

cultural structure and understand the social framework of different cultural backgrounds. As more people begin to pay attention to gender equality and the expression of multiple identities, the discussion on how culture affects the construction of gender concepts has gradually become an important topic in cross-cultural psychology and social sciences.

Studies have generally pointed out that the severity of cultural norms is closely related to the depth of gender stereotypes, and these factors can directly or indirectly affect the development of gender identity and mental health of individuals. However, there are significant differences between different cultures in value systems, social structures and gender expectations, which leads to diversity of psychological outcomes on gender issues. This study aims to integrate major cross-cultural findings and further explore how cultural differences influence the mechanisms of gender identity formation and mental health.

By sorting out cross-cultural samples, research methods and conclusions, this study takes the relationship between cultural norms, gender stereotype internalization and mental health as the theme, and takes cross-cultural comparison and theoretical analysis as the main methods. The goal of the research is to reveal how culture shapes gender identity conflicts, how to internalize stereotypes to affect individual mental health, and summarize cross-cultural consistency and differences to provide a more culturally sensitive understanding framework for gender issues.

2. Research background

With the deepening of globalization and cross-cultural communication, how cultural background shapes individual gender identity and its psychological impact has gradually become an important issue of concern for both academia and the public. In real life, gender-related issues not only affect individuals' understanding of themselves, emotional regulation, and social adaptability, but also profoundly and widely affect the mental health of everyone, especially adolescents and adults. Therefore, when exploring mental health, cultural norms and gender role expectations are key factors that cannot be ignored. The aim of this study is to illustrate how culture determines, changes, and influences the understanding of "male," "female," or "gender diversity," and how these societal expectations further affect individuals' psychological states and mental health. In today's society, gender issues are highly valued by people. Whether it's media presentation, family interaction, or school education, gender stereotypes and cultural norms permeate people's daily lives and thoughts through institutions, values, and other means, constantly shaping their behavior. Many cultures have developed stable gender role norms over the long term, such as men being expected to have masculine qualities, rationality, and they are primarily responsible for making money, while women are expected to be family oriented and gentle. With the development of current gender equality concepts, these traditional ideas have been challenged to varying degrees in different regions and cultural backgrounds, resulting in significant differences in gender identity conflicts, freedom of gender expression, and mental health status among different cultures. From a macro perspective, whether it is the cultural value system at the national level, the expectations of individuals in the social environment, or gender norms in family interactions, all of these collectively constitute cultural influence. There are significant differences in people's acceptance of gender diversity across different cultural backgrounds. The more culture emphasizes traditional gender boundaries, the greater the psychological pressure individuals face when expressing themselves outside of normative gender identities. In some cultures, profound gender stereotypes and gender norms can increase the risk of shame, self-doubt, anxiety, and depression among adolescent populations; In regions with more open cultures, due to the weakening of gender stereotypes, people are able to express their true selves relatively freely without being evaluated, and with the assistance of a more

complete social support system, the negative impact of culture on individuals is significantly reduced. Therefore, this study focuses on the relationship between cultural background, gender identity, gender stereotypes, and mental health, systematically analyzing how cross-cultural differences affect individuals' gender identity and their mental well-being. The goal of the research is to organize how cultural norms shape gender identity and generate conflicts, reveal how internalizing stereotypes affects mental health, and summarize the similarities and differences of these mechanisms in different cultural backgrounds. Through these analyses, this study aims to further illustrate that understanding gender issues cannot be separated from cultural backgrounds, and the intervention of cultural sensitivity and the improvement of social support system.

2.1. Key concept

When people discuss cross-cultural psychology and gender-related research, the four parts of "culture", "gender identity", "gender stereotypes" and "mental health" are the basic concepts for people to understand individual behavior and their psychological state. These keywords are not only theoretically well-defined, but also help people understand and analyze cultural differences and gender issues in subsequent discussions and research. In this part, the author will combine classical psychological theory with recent research results to systematically sort out and explain these keywords, and lay the conceptual foundation for the analysis of subsequent relationship narratives.

2.2. Culture

In social psychology and cross-cultural psychology, "culture" is usually defined as the values, norms, beliefs and behaviors shared by a group of people at a specific time and place. Culture can deeply influence people's understanding of gender roles, social status, rights and obligations through family education, social norms and media narratives. Therefore, it is an important entry point for the study of gender identity differences.

The Social Identity Theory of Tajfel and Turner pointed out that an individual's self-concept partly comes from the social group to which it belongs, and "culture", as a macro-group framework, regulates the way individuals view themselves and others [1]. On gender issues, the value system shaped by culture usually defines gender, regulates the code of conduct for men and women, etc., and thus affects behavioral expectations and social judgment [1].

Many studies have pointed out that countries with high cultural regulation (such as East Asian societies) will place more emphasis on clear gender role boundaries, while countries with more open cultures (such as Nordic societies) tend to encourage or be more accepting to transgender expression and gender diversity, and will not define single-gender behavioral standards, such as men must be strong, and women must be gentle. This makes culture a fundamental factor in understanding the differences in gender issues in different societies.

2.3. Gender identity

Gender identity refers to people's understanding and definition of their own biological and psychological gender. It is a deep and relatively stable inner feeling, which may either align with or diverge from traditional social norms and consistent with social norms. That is to say, a person who is classified as a binary male at birth due to his physiological structure may think that he is a woman or other non-binary gender due to psychological factors.

Gender identity is affected by many factors, including biological factors, family environment, social culture, personal growth experience, etc. However, cross-cultural studies show that "cultural norms" are the key influencing factors that promote gender identity conflict and psychological pressure of gender minorities. This is because the stricter the norms and narratives of gender roles within a culture, the lower the possibility and freedom for individuals to deviate from this criterion, and the greater the difference between self-gender identity and social definition, the more likely individuals are to experience psychological pain, social exclusion and pressure.

Therefore, in different cultures, gender identity is not only an individual's intrinsic experience, but also reflects the degree of tolerance of society for diversity and differences.

2.4. Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes refer to the general fixed expectations that society should have about the characteristics, behaviors, interests, emotional expressions, etc. that men or women should have. For example, men should be persevering, rational and outgoing; women should be gentle, obedient and virtuous. These stereotyped expectations are everywhere in social life and are constantly strengthened through education, media, family structure and language construction.

Bem Gender Schema Theory points out that people will form a cognitive framework in the process of growing up to explain what "behaviors suitable for their gender" are. These frameworks are passed on from generation to generation in culture through language use, family interaction and trading systems, which in turn affects individuals' understanding of their own gender identity and others' judgment of their behavior [2].

Research shows that highly gender-stereotypical societies are more likely to reject transgender or atypical people, and will also strengthen the punitive response to "violation of gender roles" within heterosexual groups. Therefore, gender stereotypes are the core variables in cross-cultural gender research.

2.5. Mental health

Mental health not only refers to the fact that individuals have no mental illness, but also refers to a state of well-being, emotional stability and good social adaptability. This includes individuals being able to feel the happiness in life, making effective adjustments in the face of pressure, and finding a balance in life.

In the field of gender research, mental health is often used as an important indicator to observe the impact of cultural differences. Cross-cultural research points out that the stricter the restrictions on gender roles in a society and the more prejudices faced by gender minorities, the lower the overall mental health level. Many teenagers in a cultural environment where gender expression is restricted are more likely to show anxiety, depression, self-repression and social disorders.

Therefore, "mental health" is an important variable to test the impact of cultural differences, because mental health can most directly reflect the impact of cultural norms on individual emotional experience and social adaptation. At the same time, mental health is also an important indicator to evaluate the negative impact of gender norms on individuals in different cultural environments.

Cross-cultural research consistently highlights the important role of cultural norms in shaping gender identity, gender stereotypes and mental health. With the acceleration of globalization, diverse gender groups are gradually seen all over the world, but there are still large or small differences between different countries, and these differences are often rooted in differences in social systems, religious traditions and value systems. Culture's definition of gender and tolerance for gender

nonconforming behavior not only shape individuals' self-perception but also influence their access to social support, peer acceptance, and institutional protection, thereby determining whether they can express their gender identity safely and healthily. This section will summarize the influence mechanisms of different cultural environments on the formation of gender identity, gender conflict and mental health through several typical studies.

3. Detailed article analysis

3.1. Exploring the association between gender norms and adolescent depression across cultural differences

Koenig et al. used the data of Global Early Adolescent Study, GEAS, to carry out a large-scale multi-site cross-sectional study across regions and countries, including Belgium (Flanders), Ecuador (Cuenca), China (Shanghai) and two cities in Indonesia (Semarang and Denpasar). The research focuses on the relationship between adolescents' perceptions, stereotypes and internalization of gender inequality and their depressive symptoms [3]. The results show that adolescents perceiving stronger gender inequality report higher depressive symptoms, although the cross-sectional design limits causal inference [3]. This model is highly consistent among multiple study sample countries, indicating that the stricter the norms of "how to be a boy or a girl" in the culture, the greater the negative psychological impact on teenagers.

Although the study did not focus on transgender or other non-binary gender groups, the results still show that gender behavioral expectations and gender stereotypes transmitted in culture can deeply affect the emotional health of ordinary teenagers [3]. The study found that boys are more likely to internalize gender norms discouraging emotional expression, which may increase healthy coping and increase internalized distress; while girls are required to be "gentle, quiet, virtuous and socially conformable. These gender expressions of expectations and gender stereotypes will make women show higher vulnerability to depression [3].

In summary, research shows that gender norms in culture are an important source of gender-related psychological stress in adolescents. The more unequal or rigid and strict gender norms and gender stereotypes are, the greater the psychological burden on teenagers, which further shows that there is a close relationship between cultural norms and mental health.

3.2. Presenting patterns of gender disparities in global adolescent mental health

Campbell et al. systematically analyzed the relationship between gender norms and adolescent mental health in different cultural backgrounds using large-scale international data from 73 countries and more than 560,000 teenagers [4]. The study found that in countries where gender norms are more traditional and gender inequality is higher, the overall symptoms of depression among adolescents are significantly higher, especially girls who show stronger mental health vulnerability [4]. This shows that the strict expectations of gender roles such as "men should be strong" or "women should be obedient, gentle and virtuous" in culture will increase the pressure of teenagers in self-emotional regulation and social adaptation to a certain extent [4].

At the same time, the study also points out that the level of socio-economic development and the degree of gender equality at the national level will significantly affect the size of gender differences [4]. For example, in countries where social culture is more traditional or gender is more unequal, teenagers are more likely to be restricted from gender expression and are more easily affected by gender role pressure, resulting in increased self-doubt, depression and negative psychological

effects. In countries where gender equality is relatively equal, such psychological differences will significantly weaken [4].

This result is consistent with the core point of cross-cultural research, that is, the stricter the gender norms in the culture, the greater the negative impact on teenagers will be in the process of growing up, and the gender stereotyped social environment will amplify the risk of teenagers' emotional health.

3.3. Briefly describe the conclusion of prior articles

3.3.1. Analyzing how gender equality enhances adolescent life satisfaction

De Looze et al. used data from 175,470 adolescents aged 11-16 ($M=13.6$, 52% girls) across 34 European and North American countries to explore the relationship between the degree of gender equality at the national level and the life satisfaction of adolescents based on large-scale data samples from many countries in Europe and North America [5]. Research shows that in countries with a high degree of gender equality, teenagers' overall life satisfaction and psychological happiness are significantly higher; while in a culture with gender inequality, teenagers are more likely to show lower emotional stability and happiness [5].

The study further pointed out that culturally defined gender role norms may influence the psychological burden experienced by adolescents [5]. In a society with a high degree of gender inequality and deep gender stereotypes, boys often face stricter norms of conduct, while girls are more easily influenced by the expectations of appearance, behavior and social obedience, so that both sides bear greater psychological pressure [5]. On the contrary, in countries where gender equality is more liberal and gender expression is relatively free, these gender differences are significantly reduced, which shows that gender equality at the cultural level and cultural discipline for gender expression can not only promote social development, but also effectively improve the mental health of adolescents.

In summary, the depth of gender equality and gender stereotypes can be regarded as important indicators to measure the degree of cultural openness, and can also predict the happiness, life satisfaction and mental health of adolescents.

3.3.2. Summarizing mental health characteristics among gender-diverse adolescents

In a systematic review of the mental health of transgender and diverse adolescents, Wittlin, Kuper and Olson pointed out that the cultural environment and social attitudes are one of the core factors affecting the mental health of sexual minorities [6]. Research shows that in a society with more rigid cultural norms and lower tolerance for behaviors that do not conform to traditional gender expectations, transgender and gender-diverse teenagers are more likely to experience discrimination, stigmatization, classmate exclusion and family conflicts and contradictions, thus showing a higher level of depression, anxiety and self-harm risk.

At the same time, in a society with a relatively open culture, more perfect legal protection, a more inclusive school environment and a higher degree of family acceptance, the mental health status of gender-diverse groups has improved significantly. The study pointed out that family acceptance, peer support, inclusive environment in schools, and gender equality policies at the social system level constitute a support system. These support a protective system that reduces minority stress and strengthens resilience, thus reducing the negative psychological impact of gender identity conflicts [6].

In summary, the discipline and restrictions on gender expression and gender roles in culture not only affect individuals' understanding of their own gender, but also deeply shape the mental health risks of sexual minority adolescents through social support systems and institutional structures. Stricter culture norms intensify conflicts, though their impact varies depending on institutional and socioeconomic context.

3.4. Characteristics of the research object

Generally speaking, the above research is more focused on teenagers, and the age of the selected samples is between 10 and 28 years old. This is because adolescents are a critical period for the development of gender identity, and it is also the age stage when people begin to face cultural norms, family pressure and social expectations.

Overall, the research subjects have a high degree of cross-cultural diversity, which not only covers teenagers, but also sexual minorities have appeared in the study sample, which provides a rich and reliable basis for studying culture on gender identity and its impact on mental health.

3.4.1. Summary of research and design

Most studies use questionnaires as the main methods, including the gender identity scale, the gender role attitude scale, the assessment of cultural norms and the mental health scale. Some studies include interviews, long-term tracking, etc. At the same time, there are also studies using macro-level indicators.

The common research steps are as follows:

First, select samples of teenagers in the target countries and use unified tools to measure gender identity conflicts, gender role attitudes, their perception of gender equality in their culture and mental health, then compare different cultural background differences, and finally evaluate the causal relationship between cultural factors and mental health.

The final results show that the stricter the cultural discipline, the stronger the conflict of gender identity and the worse the mental health of individuals.

3.4.2. Comparison of research conclusions

Combining the above studies, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Cultural norms are the main factors affecting gender identity and gender equality. Furthermore, the strictness of culture on gender roles will limit the freedom of individual gender expression. For example, in countries where traditional gender roles are emphasized, teenagers who deviate from norms are more likely to experience shame or identity conflicts, which causes certain psychological pressure and negative effects. At the same time, such influence is also multi-level. It is not only reflected in the macro-system level, but also rooted in the micro-interaction of families, schools and schools.

Gender identity conflicts can significantly affect mental health. No matter which country or region the sample is taken from, gender identity conflicts are positively related to anxiety. These associations may be mediated by factors such as perceived discrimination or family acceptance.

Social support is an important mechanism to cushion cultural pressure. In the relatively open cultural context, schools, communities, families, and even the whole society will provide more support, and the mental health risk of individuals will be greatly reduced under the influence of these factors.

Although patterns are consistent, intensity varies with religion, institutions, and social norms. Even if the cultural background is different or even completely different, as long as their gender norms are stricter, the overall trend of poorer individual mental health is the same, but the intensity is different in different countries or regions.

3.4.3. Research defects and shortcomings

The cultural background and age stage of the selected samples are limited. The sample age is concentrated in the adolescent stage, which lacks research on gender identity of adults and the elderly and the mental health caused by it.

The scale has limitations. Such scales may carry semantic or cultural biases that affect participants' interpretation of items. Although the cross-cultural scale has been translated and adapted, cultural context differences may still affect the people's understanding of the problem, resulting in measurement errors.

Research cannot fully account for the mental health variables, and the mental health status will also be affected by family pressure, academic pressure, social class, past experience, etc. Culture alone as the main explanatory variable may ignore the impact of other factors on mental health.

Causal inference is limited. Many studies are one-time questionnaires, and it is difficult to systematically present the long-term dynamic changes in the formation of gender identity conflicts.

A country's overall gender equality and gender stereotypes under cultural discipline do not apply to all families, schools and communities. Therefore, the influence of culture may be underestimated or blurred.

4. Culture differences in gender stereotypes and their impact on mental health

Cross-cultural psychology research points out that gender stereotypes defined by cultural background not only shape individuals' understanding of their own gender roles, but also affect their behavior and mental health. In different cultural backgrounds, people have obvious differences in masculinity and femininity, which affect the psychological state, emotional regulation ability, self-concept formation and other aspects of adolescents and adults. With the acceleration of globalization, the collision of traditional cultural norms and modern gender equality concepts has become more frequent in media, education and family interaction, making this issue more practical.

Based on a number of cross-cultural studies, this section will systematically analyze the three aspects of "cultural differences in stereotypes", "internalization mechanism of stereotypes" and "the specific impact of stereotypes on mental health", and summarize their theoretical significance and limitations. The reason why it is developed from these three aspects is that they can systematically present the cultural sources and psychological results of stereotypes.

4.1. Detailed article analysis

4.1.1. Revealing cross-national perspectives on how gender influences adolescents' psychological states

Based on in-depth interviews with teenagers in 13 countries, Fine et al. examined how adolescents from different cultural backgrounds understand gender norms and how they perceive the impact of these norms on their mental health [7]. The study found that in most cultural environments, teenagers are generally aware that society has different expectations for men and women. For

example, men are encouraged to show strength and restrain their emotions, while women are required to maintain gentleness, fit in the group or take on the role of taking care of others [7].

Teenagers generally mentioned in interviews that the gender norms constructed by these cultures will affect their emotional expression, seek help, and understand their psychological state. For example, in some cultures, boys think that expressing their vulnerable side is an act of "losing masculinity", so they are more inclined to suppress their emotions; while girls think that the evaluation pressure from appearance, behavior or social norms will make them feel that their self-worth is challenged.

Although this study does not quantify the measurement of mental health, the study still points out that adolescents in different countries take the initiative to regard gender norms defined by culture as an important factor causing psychological burden. They believe that the more culture emphasizes traditional gender roles, the more likely it is for teenagers to feel limited emotional expression or behavior, thus forming a continuous psychological pressure [7].

Overall, the study shows that gender stereotypes in culture can profoundly shape the way teenagers understand mental health. At the same time, it also determines whether they can express their true emotions freely. This shows that cultural norms not only affect the formation of gender roles, but also indirectly affect the psychological experience and sense of psychological security of adolescents.

4.1.2. Elucidating ethnic variations in intellectual gender stereotypes

Shu et al. systematically sorted out and compared gender stereotypes related to "intellectual talent" through cross-cultural samples, and explored how different cultures link gender roles with abilities [8]. The study found that gender stereotypes are not universally consistent, but have significant differences due to different cultures, which are deeply reflected in family interaction, school education and media narratives. For example, in some cultures, people are more likely to associate "mathematical talent and logical ability" with men; while in other cultures, women are considered "more hardworking and smarter", so they are highly regarded in the stereotype of academic ability [8].

This study puts forward a key point: gender stereotypes can vary significantly with cultural history, social experience and social structure [8]. Therefore, the same "gender role" is not understood in the same way in different countries or regions. The study also pointed out that the more culture emphasizes the traditional gender division of labor, the more likely people are to form fixed stereotypes of gender roles. For example, men are born more suitable for science, while women are more suitable for liberal arts, thus limiting the self-awareness and development direction of teenagers.

Although the study did not directly measure the impact of stereotypes on mental health, the results show that gender stereotypes affect teenagers' perception of their own abilities and may change their tendencies in academic choice, interpersonal interaction and self-identification [8]. This means that cross-cultural gender stereotypes not only affect external behavioral expectations, but also deeply shape self-concept. These provide important evidence for understanding how culture affects mental health and state.

Overall, the research of Shu et al. shows that culture plays a central role in the process of building gender stereotypes, and these stereotypes affect how teenagers view their own abilities, future paths and social status. This further illustrates the differences in gender norms between different cultures, which is an important factor in explaining the differences in gender identity and psychological experience of adolescents.

4.2. Briefly describe the conclusion of prior articles

4.2.1. Examining the combined effects of gender and age on students' psychological well-being

Agormedah et al. conducted a large-scale empirical study on high school students in northern Ghana, focusing on the influence of gender and age on "sense of coherence" and "subjective well-being" [9]. The study pointed out that there are stable and profound traditional gender roles in Ghanaian society, and these cultural norms will implicitly affect the psychological state of adolescents. For example, boys are usually expected to show stronger independence and social competitiveness, while girls are expected to take care of and obey others [9].

Research results show that gender not only affects teenagers' self-understanding, but also plays a role with age, affecting their evaluation of the meaning of life and changing the way they deal with stress. Girls show low psychological consistency in some indicators, reflecting that traditional gender roles may limit the development of their self-efficacy and coping ability; while boys may show different psychological patterns because they are required to succeed [9].

Although the study did not directly measure mood disorders, the research team pointed out that stable gender roles in culture will have a long-term impact on the formation of self-concepts among adolescents. So as to further shape the subjective happiness and psychological resilience of teenagers. This result shows that gender norms in culture not only affect behavioral expression, but also profoundly affect the development of mental health indicators, which is a key factor that cannot be ignored in cross-cultural research.

4.2.2. Outlining evolving trends in gender stereotypes

Priyashantha et al. summarized the mechanism of formation and change of gender stereotypes in different cultural contexts through a systematic literature review [10]. Research points out that gender stereotypes are usually built by multi-layered social systems, including family interaction, religious beliefs, school education and cultural traditions, which together affect people's expectations of behavioral expression and gender roles that "men" and "women" should have [10].

The literature emphasizes that the stable gender division in traditional culture limits the individual's exploration of social roles and self-concepts. For example, society may expect men to show autonomy and competitiveness, while women expect to show caring, obedience or family-oriented characteristics [10]. These stereotypes are particularly strong in adolescence, because this is the critical stage for individuals to form gender role identity and self-concept.

The summary further points out that stereotypes are not fixed, but gradually change under the influence of the times, media narratives and the intervention of school education. However, in a society dominated by traditional culture, the behavioral expression of teenagers is still restricted, which will affect the self-efficacy and social adaptation experience of teenagers to a certain extent [10].

The literature highlights the cultural roots of stereotypes and their relevance for designing culturally responsive mental-health interventions. Moreover, its indirect impact on the psychology and development of adolescents shows that the more culture emphasizes traditional gender roles, the more difficult it is to change stereotypes, thus having a more far-reaching impact on the formation of individual gender identity.

4.3. Characteristics of research subjects

The samples selected by the research are basically teenagers (10-20 years old), because the age stage of the teenagers is a critical period for the development of gender identity, emotional ability and values. The rapid development of self-concept makes it easier to internalize the stereotyped expectations brought by cultural norms, and they are most easily influenced by cultural expectations. Most of the samples selected by the research come from areas with large cultural differences, such as East Asia, Europe and the United States, South Asia and Africa. The selection of these places can better show the differences in gender norms in different cultural backgrounds. Finally, these research samples have different socio-economic backgrounds, such as economic, educational level and cultural conservatism, which will enhance the psychological impact of stereotypes.

The research methods used in these studies include but are not limited to interviews, cross-cultural surveys, questionnaires and systematic literature reviews. Although different research methods are adopted, the final conclusions are consistent, that is, gender stereotypes are formed in different cultures, but they may indirectly affect people's psychological state.

Combining the conclusions of these studies, it can be concluded that:

First of all, culture is the source of gender stereotypes. All studies emphasize that families, schools, religions and the media in the social structure will jointly strengthen gender norms. And the stronger the cultural discipline, the more difficult it is to change the stereotype. Not only that, stereotypes are not only linked to gender, but also to social status and racialization.

Secondly, stereotypes may limit adolescents by shaping self-censorship and reinforcing punitive responses to deviation. In addition, stereotypes are also indirectly related to mental health and psychological happiness. Although research does not point out that stereotypes can lead to depression, strict gender norms will still weaken the psychological resilience, happiness and social adaptation of adolescents.

Finally, all studies show that although there are significant differences between cultures, as long as the stereotypes of cultural norms are defined, the greater the negative impact on the psychological level.

5. Discussion and suggestions

5.1. The overall conclusion of the current research

Based on the previous analysis, it can be found that the definition, norms and expectations of gender stereotypes and gender roles in different cultures are important social factors affecting mental health. No matter what the stereotype is, the direction of its impact on mental health is the same in different cultural contexts, that is, the deeper the stereotype, the more likely the individual is to be negatively psychologically affected and self-denial.

In addition, countries with relatively open cultures, school psychological counseling rooms, community services, family education and other social support systems can effectively reduce the negative impact of gender norms on individuals and reduce the impact of stereotypes. This can very well prove that the psychological state is not determined by the gender itself, but by the cultural discipline of gender.

5.2. Suggestions and revelations based on research

From the perspective of family, relevant practitioners should promote parents to improve and raise gender awareness. In traditional culture, the family is often the main unit that exerts gender stereotypes on individuals. It is recommended to carry out education for parents, so that parents can understand that forcing children to do behaviors that coincide with stereotypes will have a negative psychological impact on children; accepting children's behavior and gender expression that may be different from traditional cognition can effectively reduce the risk of anxiety and depression for children; In addition, schools should develop and implement systematic gender education curricula to help adolescents understand the gender spectrum, gender expression, and stereotypes at an appropriate stage. Research shows that the intervention of education can effectively weaken stereotypes and improve the emotional regulation ability of teenagers; and society should also establish a multi-gender-friendly environment. The government can promote anti-sexism policies, campus anti-bullying regulations and the construction of mental health service systems. Similar policies can reduce campus prejudice, and improve the psychological safety of diverse gender groups. The study points out that policy-level support can effectively reduce the suicidal tendency and depression indicators of adolescents; the mental health service system can provide psychological counseling adapted to local cultures. For example, mental health workers need to understand the differences in gender norms in different cultures and provide more culturally sensitive counseling methods.

5.3. Future research direction

Future research can consider expanding the cultural scope of the sample, such as choosing traditional communities and aboriginal cultures in the Middle East and Africa for further research and comparison; longitudinal research can also be carried out for long-term tracking to observe the long-term psychological impact of stereotypes on individuals for several years or even more than ten years; or explore others such as self-esteem, social Psychological indicators of participation and intimate relationship patterns; and develop new cross-cultural measurement tools.

6. Conclusion

This study discusses the relationship between cultural background, gender identity, gender stereotypes and mental health. The overall conclusion shows that gender norms and stereotypes defined by cultural background are important factors affecting individual mental health and psychological states. No matter what kind of cultural background the individual is in, as long as the stricter the restrictions on gender roles in society and culture, the more likely the individual is to internalize stereotypes and produce gender identity conflicts in the process of growing up, and then bear certain pressure in emotional regulation, self-concept and psychological adaptation. Research shows that cultural norms not only shape gender roles and gender expression, but also deeply affect individuals' understanding of themselves and self-worth, which leads to negative effects on individuals such as anxiety, depression and emotional depression more likely to occur in an environment with strong cultural constraints.

At the same time, research also shows that support from society can effectively alleviate the negative impact of culture. When society, schools and families can accept different gender expressions, the mental health risk of individuals will be significantly reduced, and the pressure

brought by gender norms will also be weakened. This also shows that psychological pressure does not come from gender itself, but from cultural discipline and social expectations.

Based on the research results, people should promote the development of support systems at the family, school and social levels, strengthen gender education, weaken stereotypes, and build a more inclusive social environment. Future research can expand the scope of the sample, adopt a vertical design, and explore more psychological indicators to further enrich the depth and breadth of cross-cultural gender research. The significance of this study is to emphasize the importance of cross-cultural understanding and provide a theoretical basis for improving the mental health of individuals in different cultural contexts.

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