

Analyze the Effect of Social Stereotypes on Intergroup Relations in Society and Social Equality

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ABSTRACT

Social stereotypes are common, often unfair views of certain groups and can affect interactions between groups in society. This article examines how stereotypes are formed and their impact on social relations between different groups, as well as their effects on social integration and equality. Existing stereotypes can exacerbate tensions between groups and create barriers to more productive and harmonious interactions. In many cases, stereotypes serve to reinforce prejudice and discrimination, which in turn hinders the development of healthy and inclusive social relationships. To address this issue, educational approaches that teach the importance of respect for diversity are needed. Policies that support social equality and combat discrimination should also be introduced to minimize the negative impact of stereotypes. Overall, efforts to reduce stereotypes can lead to a more just, peaceful and integrated society, where relationships between groups are more harmonious and respectful. With the right approach, social stereotypes can be turned into opportunities to create greater equality and stronger social relations.

INTRODUCTION

Social stereotypes are views or assumptions developed in society about groups or individuals based on certain characteristics such as race, ethnicity, gender, or social status. Most social stereotypes are formed in response to visible or internalized differences, and often simplify the complexity of individuals into easily recognizable labels. The impact of these stereotypes can be wide-ranging, from discriminatory attitudes to tensions in relationships between social groups (McGarty et al., 2002). Social stereotypes serve as triggers for the formation of certain group images, both positive and negative, which ultimately affect how individuals interact in society (Klein et al., 2015).

Stereotypes often create dividing lines between different groups, leading to increased social inequality and tension between groups. In many cases, these stereotypes exacerbate prejudices against other groups, creating a social environment of mistrust and suspicion. Societies shaped by stereotypes tend to see differences as a threat, leading to fewer opportunities for dialogue or cooperation. This creates barriers to building healthy and productive relationships between individuals from different social backgrounds (Chekuri et al., 2018).

The research on how social stereotypes affect interactions between social groups has grown rapidly in recent decades. Many research studies reveal that the influence of stereotypes can shape patterns of behavior that are not only limited to individuals, but also to large groups in society. For example, stereotypes about minority groups can influence how they are treated in various settings, from the workplace to education, which in turn affects the quality of interactions between social groups. On the other hand, individuals who hold stereotypes tend to avoid contact with groups perceived as different, further exacerbating social divisions (Floranza, 2022).

On a further level, social stereotypes can also exacerbate inequalities that already exist in society, thus creating a system of social hierarchy that is more difficult to change. In many cases, social stereotypes not only create misunderstandings, but also influence important decisions taken by individuals or groups, such as labor recruitment or education policies. It is important to delve deeper into how stereotypes are formed and operate in society and their impact on relationships between social groups (Mocanasu, 2014).

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One of the main problems arising from social stereotypes is the emergence of discrimination and prejudice that leads to tensions in relationships between social groups. When individuals or groups are considered inferior or superior based solely on their social identity, unequal treatment occurs in various social situations. Discrimination arising from such stereotypes worsens intergroup relations and creates social tensions that are difficult to unravel. In many cases, these stereotypes lead to inequalities in social interactions that affect various aspects of life, including educational opportunities, employment and access to public services. Stereotypes that are seen as valid knowledge are often internalized by individuals and groups, making them more difficult to question or dismantle. Individuals begin to see themselves through the lens of the stereotype, which impacts their self-confidence, aspirations and social interactions. This leads to difficulties in creating an inclusive society that values diversity (Tritt, 2009).

Interactions between social groups are often hampered by the presence of stereotypes that lead to polarization. Stereotyped groups often feel marginalized, while dominant groups tend to feel superior. When negative stereotypes are attached to certain groups, interactions between groups become full of suspicion and prejudice. The distrust fostered by these stereotypes can worsen intergroup relations, which in turn reduces the quality of communication and cooperation needed to build a harmonious society. These inequalities exacerbate social polarization and hinder the creation of an inclusive and harmonious environment. This has implications for the overall quality of social life (Schaefer, 2015).

The importance of researching social stereotypes and their impact on intergroup interactions cannot be overstated, especially in an era of globalization and technological advancements that accelerate interactions between individuals from different backgrounds. This increasingly connected world often requires individuals to work with those from different cultures, ethnicities and worldviews (Jenkins et al., 2018). Unconscious stereotypes can arise in various forms of interaction, both in person and through digital media. A deep understanding of social stereotypes is necessary for individuals to navigate differences in healthy and productive ways. Without a proper understanding of the impact of stereotypes, intergroup conflicts will continue to arise, which can undermine social integration and limit the development of more inclusive relationships. Inter-group conflicts triggered by miscommunication and prejudice will be a major obstacle in building strong social relations.

Overcoming social stereotypes is an important step in improving the quality of interactions between groups in a diverse society. Stereotypes, which are often formed from inaccurate information or limited experience, can create psychological and emotional barriers in relationships between individuals. Addressing the problem of social stereotypes that affect intergroup interactions will not only increase the quality of interpersonal relationships, but also allow society to develop in a more just and equal atmosphere. By raising awareness of the adverse effects of stereotypes, individuals and groups will be better able to overcome existing prejudices and create a more harmonious social atmosphere. A closer look at how stereotypes affect intergroup interactions is key to creating more positive and inclusive social change.

The purpose of this research is to explore how social stereotypes shape interactions between different social groups, and how they affect the creation of tension or harmony in intergroup relations. By understanding the mechanisms of stereotypes and their effects, we can find ways to reduce social divisions and create a more inclusive and just society.

RESEARCH METHOD

Literature study is an effective approach to understanding the influence of social stereotypes on interactions between social groups. It allows researchers to examine existing theories, concepts and research in the field, providing a comprehensive picture of how stereotypes are formed and function in society. Through literature analysis, researchers can explore various perspectives, including social identity theory, prejudice theory, and intergroup interaction approaches to identify common patterns that exist in social interactions between different groups. This approach also provides space for researchers to critique shortcomings in existing research and explore gaps in the literature that need to be filled for further knowledge development (Jost & Banaji, 1994).

These literature studies often include sources from various disciplines, such as social psychology, sociology and political science, to create an understanding of how stereotypes affect relationships between social groups. In analyzing the literature, researchers usually look for patterns in previous studies and see how stereotypes can lead to social conflict or integration. For example, some research has shown that the reduction of social prejudice can be achieved through the introduction of more frequent and meaningful interactions between groups, while others have highlighted the importance of inclusive policies that can reduce the influence of stereotypes in everyday life (Brown, 2010).

With this approach, researchers can assess the effectiveness of various social interventions in reducing the impact of stereotypes on intergroup relations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Social stereotypes have long been an important topic in the research of social psychology and intergroup interactions (Hinton, 2019). Understanding how stereotypes are formed and how they affect intergroup relations in society is crucial for creating harmonious and equal relationships. Stereotypes, while initially serving as a simplifying mechanism for information processing, often exacerbate intergroup tensions, create inequalities and exacerbate social discrimination (Hewstone & Giles, 1997). The process of stereotype formation can be very complex, engaging factors such as media, culture, and a history of social injustice (Dontsov & Kabalevskaya, 2013). Their influence on social integration and equality in society needs to be taken seriously.

Stereotypes are rooted in individual thinking and become part of broader social structures. They manifest in various forms, ranging from mild prejudice to more serious discrimination. Because stereotypes are automatic and often unconscious, they become part of everyday ways of thinking that appear normal, yet hold great potential for forming prejudices. This process has a major impact on social integration, as they can shape rigid views of certain groups and hinder intergroup collaboration and understanding. Societies that do not recognize and address the problem of stereotyping tend to divide into isolated groups, which exacerbates inequality and undermines social solidarity (Lee et al., 2013). In the long-term, this situation undermines social solidarity and weakens community cohesion.

Through further examination of how stereotypes affect intergroup interactions, it is hoped that ways can be found to reduce prejudice and strengthen intergroup relations. When people actively recognize and understand that stereotypes are often based on inaccurate and unfair information, they will be more open to changing their attitudes and views towards other groups. This is important for increasing the quality of social relations, and for creating a more inclusive and just society. By recognizing the negative impact of social stereotypes, people can begin to change their views and attitudes, towards a deeper understanding of diversity (Scoffham, 2013). This process not only improves the quality of social relationships, but also fosters a community that is supportive, respectful and better prepared to face increasingly complex global challenges.

Social stereotypes are views that are often formed based on generalizations about certain groups in society, which do not always reflect the reality or complexity of individuals within those groups. This view often simplifies the characteristics of individuals in the group, without considering their uniqueness, social context or personal background. These stereotypes can be constructed based on a variety of factors, such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation. While stereotypes serve as a tool to simplify information, they often create social restrictions that exacerbate tensions between groups (Fiske, 2018). In interactions between social groups, stereotypes can exacerbate feelings of mistrust and resentment, further creating barriers to social integration and hindering equal relationships. It is important to dismantle and criticize the existence of social stereotypes in order to create more equitable, open and understanding-based cross-group relations.

When social stereotypes are internalized, individuals in the stereotyped group are likely to feel a negative impact on their self-esteem. This can create feelings of inferiority, which affects their participation in social interactions with other groups (Cohen & Garcia, 2008). At the same time, stereotyping groups often reinforce their beliefs about the inferiority of other groups, further exacerbating the cycle of discrimination and social segregation. This clearly affects social integration, as interactions between groups are not conducted in an atmosphere of mutual understanding, but rather based on prejudice and distrust. Deeply embedded stereotypes create psychological and social chasms between groups, leading to alienation, polarization, and even conflict.

Social stereotypes also play an important role in the process of social norm formation in society. These norms are unwritten rules that govern what behavior is considered appropriate or inappropriate in a particular social context. When norms rooted in stereotypes are widely accepted, they can reinforce patterns of inequality in society. As a result, stereotypes form the basis for social expectations of individuals based on their membership in a particular group, which often results in unequal treatment. For example, gender stereotypes that attribute certain roles to certain genders can prevent women from fully participating in the world of work or politics (Eagly, 2013). The norms formed from these stereotypes create social boundaries that limit the space and freedom of individuals to express themselves fully. This restriction is detrimental to the individual, and detrimental to society as a whole, as the great potential of the stereotyped individual is not fully utilized.

Social stereotypes play a major role in influencing power dynamics in society. Groups that are more dominant in social, political and economic terms often utilize stereotypes to maintain their position. For example, in societies that heavily favor majority rule, stereotypes of minority groups are used to justify inequality and injustice (Esses et al., 2001). These stereotypes are then legitimized through popular culture, media, education, or public policy, making them seem like a reality that cannot be disputed. By spreading negative views of certain groups, dominant groups create narratives that justify unequal treatment and maintain exclusive access to resources and influence. This affects intergroup interactions, as members of discriminated groups tend to feel marginalized and disrespected, further reducing their desire to integrate into the wider society. This sense of marginalization reinforces existing social gaps and hinders inclusive integration processes.

Stereotypes also impact social integration in the workplace and education, in addition to social impacts. In the professional world, for example, stereotyping of a particular gender, age or ethnicity can lead to difficulties in accessing equal opportunities (Crosby, 2004). This contributes to the formation of walls between groups in society and creates inequality in terms of access to resources and opportunities. In education, stereotypes can also affect how students are treated by teachers and peers. Students from certain groups may be seen as having lower potential or not taken seriously in learning, which then affects the expectations and treatment they receive. As a result, these students may lose motivation, experience psychological distress, or even be marginalized from the academic environment. These inequalities hinder the achievement of true social integration, where all individuals can participate equally.

The media also plays a large role in reinforcing social stereotypes. Through various platforms such as television, movies, news, and social media, the messages conveyed by the media not only reflect reality, but also contribute to shaping social reality itself. Unbalanced and often negative representations of certain groups in the media can reinforce biased views and influence people's perceptions of those groups. For example, the media often portrays certain ethnic groups negatively or ignores their positive contributions to society (Dixon & Linz, 2000). This creates inequalities in the way such groups are viewed and treated, and limits their opportunities to engage fully in social life. It is important for the media to perform its social function more responsibly, by presenting balanced, inclusive and reality-based representations.

The interactions between social groups created in society are also heavily influenced by existing stereotypes, which often exacerbate polarity between groups. Stereotypes act as cognitive filters that shape how individuals or groups perceive "the other," often prior to any direct contact. When negative stereotypes are ingrained, individuals are more likely to perceive differences as threats or weaknesses, rather than as potential or opportunities for cooperation. For example, groups with a deep history of tension and prejudice, such as certain racial or ethnic groups, are further alienated and polarized when adverse stereotypes persist and are reinforced. This polarity prevents productive collaboration between groups, which is needed for the achievement of common goals and social equality (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). It is important to erase stereotypes through positive intergroup contact approaches, such as cross-group cooperation in social projects, inter-community dialog, and multicultural education. By building deeper understanding and strengthening trust between groups, communities will be better able to overcome divisions and create a just shared space.

That said, some social approaches have been developed to mitigate the adverse effects of social stereotypes, such as affirmative action policies or more structured intergroup interactions. Research shows that when members of different groups can interact directly in supportive situations, stereotypes can be reduced, and better understanding can be built (Allport, 1954). One example is multiculturalism policies that encourage recognition and appreciation of cultural diversity as a strength in society, which can help reduce intergroup tensions.

While these policies and approaches can help reduce the negative impact of stereotypes, challenges remain. Social stereotypes are often very strong and entrenched in the culture of a society, so attempting to change individuals' ingrained views is not easy (Devine, 1989). Stereotypes are not only taught explicitly, but also conveyed implicitly through symbols, language, social practices, and even humor. As a result, individuals absorb stereotypes from an early age without realizing that these views are biased or erroneous. While efforts to reduce stereotypes and promote social integration have been made, more time and effort is needed to realize more significant changes in society. Collaboration between education, media, government institutions and civil society is needed to consistently challenge and correct discriminatory narratives. Only with a comprehensive and consistent approach can a more just and stereotype-free social transformation be truly realized.

On the other hand, it is also important to recognize that changes in social mindsets often start with individuals and then evolve into broader social norms. Educational programs designed to increase understanding and tolerance between social groups can play an important role in changing society's view of stereotypes. Education that teaches the importance of valuing diversity and stopping the formation of stereotypes early on can help reduce prejudice and promote equality (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008).

Finally, the impact of social stereotypes on social integration and equality requires serious attention. Stereotypes not only affect relationships between groups, but also create disparities in access to opportunities and resources that are important to social life. It is important that societies continue to work towards reducing stereotypes and strengthening intergroup relations based on understanding and respect for differences (Smith, 2018).

While much work has been done to understand and address the impact of social stereotypes, the work is clearly not done. Stereotypes remain a major challenge in creating balanced social integration and equality among groups. In many cases, stereotypes can be long-lasting because they have become internalized in prevailing social norms. People often feel trapped in preconceived mindsets, which reinforce differences and limit opportunities for individuals to develop equally (Kim & Loury, 2019).

Change is still possible with concerted efforts from various elements of society, including the government, educational institutions and the private sector. Educational programs that emphasize the importance of respecting diversity and stopping the formation of stereotypes from an early age can be one of the effective measures to reduce the impact of stereotypes in the future. So can policies that promote equality and inclusiveness across social, political and economic sectors. All of this requires a strong commitment from all parties to create a more just society (Durante & Fiske, 2017).

Overall, while social stereotypes will always exist, awareness of their influence on intergroup relations can be a starting point for change. This awareness helps individuals recognize the biases within themselves, and begin to critique the views they inherit from their social environment and the media. By continuing to promote education that teaches the importance of tolerance and understanding, society can move towards more harmonious social integration, which will benefit all parties and create a healthier and more competitive social environment. Integration is not mere coexistence, but the active involvement of all groups in social life without fear of judgment or discrimination.

CONCLUSION

Social stereotypes play an important role in shaping relationships between social groups in society. While stereotypes initially serve as tools to simplify information processing, they often lead to discriminatory patterns that disadvantage certain groups. The existence of these stereotypes hinders more inclusive and sustainable social processes, and adds to inequalities within society. When stereotypes develop into prejudice and discrimination, they worsen intergroup relations and create barriers to constructive understanding and cooperation. It is important to continue to explore how stereotypes are formed and how they can be overcome.

Efforts to reduce the negative impact of social stereotypes require the engagement of various parties, be it from the education sector, government policies, or other social initiatives. More in-depth education about diversity and teaching about tolerance and respect for other groups can be a long-term solution to this problem. Policies that favor equality and the elimination of discrimination at the social and political levels are needed, so that relations between groups in society can run more harmoniously and fairly. With a more conscious approach to the impact of stereotypes, society can move towards more productive and inclusive interactions between groups.

Education and public policy should focus attention on reducing social stereotypes from an early age, through programs that foster an understanding of diversity and the importance of valuing differences. The education sector can introduce curricula that teach the importance of acceptance and respect for different groups. Mass media and digital platforms need to take responsibility for presenting content that does not exacerbate social stereotypes, but rather promotes inclusive values. At the government level, policies that support social, political and economic equality should be strengthened to ensure that discrimination and social prejudice are minimized. In the long-term, these changes can create a more just, peaceful and productive society.

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