



Policy Brief 2

Gender Stereotypes

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Gender Stereotypes

- Gender stereotypes are simplistic generalisations about the gender attributes, differences, and roles of individuals and/or groups
- The stereotypes can be positive or negative, but they rarely communicate accurate information about others.
- Stereotyping affects life experiences of women and men and is related to education, work, relationships, social standing, wellbeing and health

Steps for Policy Action

1) Encourage and finance intersectional research that looks and monitors the effects of empowering one population group only (i.e. women)

- Identify the origins of stereotyping and their wide-ranging effects
- Explore the consequences of removing a stereotype
 - E.g. What are the effects on men of increasing women's role in the workplace? How does altering a fathers role in child care impact both on mothers and current service provision for children?
- Develop programmes of work that have a broadened scope of inclusion, to ensure both current and forthcoming challenges are efficiently named, their effects and consequences are known and possible solutions trialled

Steps for Policy Action

2) Encourage and finance actions that empower equally both men and women in their efforts to obtain better health

- Healthy ageing is a life-long process with efforts needed from pre-conception (in both the mothers and fathers) onwards
- Support a gender equal society where care provision is considered from the perspective of both men and women with targeted gender-specific health information
- Enable and skill girls and boys in school in healthy living
- Be creative in service delivery such that both men and women are able to benefit
- Provide for the ageing population to ensure active and productive older age

Steps for Policy Action

3) Encourage and finance research and actions that challenge behaviour based on gender stereotypes as well as on social categories such as such ethnicity and sexual orientation in order to ban actions that have detrimental effects on health

- Implement sensible suggestions to tackling stereotypes
 - E.g. The call to advocate for the use of appropriate complaints procedures to challenge negative stereotypes of men in advertising, public broadcasting and the popular press (Action 6.1.3 of Ireland's National Men's Health Policy 2010).
- Examine the associated bodies i.e. the media, those in marketing and on other stakeholder groups as on the affected individuals
- Improve studies to show effect (trials) or to allow new insights to emerge (explanations)
- Encourage research funders to embrace the wider possibilities that exist across the research spectrum to broaden their perspectives

Steps for Policy Action

4) Encourage involvement of all public bodies and institutions in the elimination of gender stereotypes in all spheres of private and public life

- Generate international pressure, through the promotion of gender mainstreaming, national policy through the enforcing of gender equality legislation and local initiatives
- As society changes, develop a more egalitarian society that builds on everyone's potential
- Recognise that a “one-size-does-not-fit-all” leads to inherent failures will emerge in the system in a population made up of men, women and transgender, it is not some amorphous mass

Steps for Policy Action

5) Encourage and finance research on femininity and masculinity and on strategies to eliminate gender stereotyping

- “First, know thine enemy”
- Deepen and refresh the understanding of the effects of male and female socialisation
 - How men and women come to perform in the world is influenced greatly by their and others expectations
- Build on existing resources such as ‘Men, Feminism and Gender Equality’
- Encourage new scholars to travel and share ideas with others to develop an international perspective



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