

**GENDER STEREOTYPING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
AND AFTERMATH OF THE SOCIALIZATION: A CASE
OF MOROGORO MUNICIPALITY**

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Abstract

Society turns males and females into masculine and feminine beings through a process of socialization or gendering. The difference with which children are addressed, handled, treated and clothed and, through regulation, taught how they should behave to be part of the society they are born into. The study was conducted in Morogoro Municipal to assess the impact of socialization on gender stereotyping in secondary school education, Specifically it aimed at; examining the role of teachers in socializing secondary school students, determining the gender stereotypes resulted by the socialization process in secondary school education and examining the impact of socialization in academic arena of secondary schools. A total of 50 respondents were interviewed by the use of semi structured questionnaires, Focus Group Discussion and direct observations were employed to obtain the required information. Results reveal that, academically, socialization process increases gender equality, cooperation and participation, promotes effective learning and teaching and eventually raises students' performance. Results further show that the more prominent gender stereotypes in secondary schools include "boys are intelligent", "boys prefer studying science subjects", "girls are capable in art subjects", and "girls are inferior". The study concludes that different social mechanisms teach children masculinity and femininity of personality and make them internalize behaviour, attitudes and roles. Education stakeholders are advised to promote equal opportunity to girls and boys in order to reduce gender gap and remove bad attitudes against girls.

Key words: Socialization, gender stereotypes, gender gap, affirmative actions

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1.0 Introduction

According to Macionis (2001), socialization refers to lifelong social experience by which individuals develop their human. Unlike other living species, whose behavior is biologically set, humans need social experience to learn their culture and survive. In other words, it is the means by which people learn the roles, knowledge, beliefs, and values of their culture. Human beings are deeply influenced by and involved with other people (Farley, 1998). “Through socialization people adapt and learn to modify their behaviour, thoughts, feelings and attitudes according to the requirements of their culture and society” (Romer, 1981). Through socialization gender stereotyping are learned. Gender stereotyping greatly influence how people think and behave. According to traditional stereotypes male are strong and dominant, Whereas Female are submissive. A gender stereotype has disadvantage and discriminate female in education. A gender stereotype creates bias and prejudices against females.

Gender stereotyping refers to structured sets of beliefs about the personal attributes, behaviours and roles of a specific social group, (Wakhungu, 2008). Cuz, 2012, defined gender stereotyping as putting down someone because of their “sex” or not believing they are able to do something because they are either male or female. According to Women information centre (2005), gender stereotyping occurs when certain characteristics or roles are persistently attributed to men or women, thereby creating the belief that these are invariably linked to sex. For instance, the perceptions that all men (boys) are intelligent and breadwinners and that all women (girls) are less intelligent and able to make caring children are frequently encountered gender stereotype.

Education is one of the pivotal institutions in term of socialization. “It deal with the change of people’s attitudes towards themselves, their lives and the surrounding world, brought on by the introduction of ‘modern education’” (Tjernstrom, 2005). Since human lack highly developed instincts an inborn knowledge, the knowledge and the technology necessary to make life easier must be transmitted to each new generation.

Before modern times, the family was most responsible for these transmissions. It consists mainly of the teaching of skills necessary for survival in the society. As a result of transition from agricultural society to industrialized societies, the educational institutions needed a big

transformation as well as other pivotal institutions (agents of socialization) among which are the family, religion, peer groups, state, mass media and work place from informal to formal education (Romer, 1981). Because family members could not teach all that a child needs to know, formal education, known as schooling, took most of the mission of the family during that time. This process seems to go forward; the more complex society, the more lengthily educational process. Idealistically, in modern societies, a central element of education is a belief that schools offer equal opportunities for all individuals. This is devoted to exhibit that, in reality our modern democracy is much more far away from this ideal.

1.1 Problem statement

Although education is very important in the community development, but formal education still has biasness among female and male student that is why today there are too many boys in secondary schools compare to girls. In secondary schools the impact of socialization is vivid because majority of teachers do believe that boys students are born intelligent than girls. This more expressed in performance, responding to questions, undertaking of science and arts subjects where by teachers tend to favour boys over girls. Also, most of employed teachers in secondary schools are men than women, hence they do advice boys differently as they do to girls in terms of selection of subject undertaken. For instance, boys advised to take science subjects while girls advised to take arts subjects. At the same times boys are praised than girls to show that, they intelligent. In these context boys seems to be good in performance compare to girls, something which is not true. It is from this experiences that the researcher decided to investigate the impact of socialization on gender stereotyping in secondary education from four wards in Morogoro Municipal, in order to come up with clear understanding to what extent is the problem and suggest the possible strategies to overcome it.

By using four wards of the Morogoro Municipality, this study assesses the impact of socialization on gender stereotyping in secondary school education. Specifically the study aimed at;

- i. To examine the role of teachers in socializing secondary school students.
- ii. To determine the gender stereotypes resulted by the socialization process in secondary school education.

iii. To examine the impact of socialization in academic arena of secondary schools.

2.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Researchers of this study adopted a case study design. A case study of Morogoro municipal was applied in four wards (Mbuyuni, Boma, Mafiga and Mwembesongo) with different respondents.

2.2 SAMPLING

2.2.1 Sample and sample size

Researchers interviewed students from four (4) secondary schools which are SUA, Morogoro, Mafiga and Kayenzi, Heads of schools, Teachers, WEO, MCDO, WECO, School inspectors and Parents. The sample size of the study was fifty (50) respondents.

Table 1: Sample size distribution

Respondents category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
MCDO	01	02
Schools inspector	01	02
Heads of schools	04	08
Teachers	08	16
WEO	04	08
Parents	08	16
Students	24	48
Total	50	100

Source: Field data, 2012

2.2.2 Sampling procedures

Various sampling procedures were employed to capture appropriate information. Both probability sampling and non probability sampling were applied. In probability sampling, researchers applied simple random sampling technique in selecting a total of 24 students (6 from

each secondary school), 8 teachers (2 from each secondary school), and a total of 8 parents (2 from each ward). Under non-probability sampling, purposive sampling technique was used to select one MCDO, one Municipal secondary schools inspector, 4 heads of schools, four WEOs one from each ward.

2.4 Data collection methods and tools

Taking into consideration the nature of study, Data collection includes primary sources and secondary sources. The study used interviews, questionnaire, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and observations as a primary source of data collection. While, secondary source of data collection included books, internet, newspapers, government and NGOs publications together with different reports by radios and televisions. And questionnaire was used as tool of data collection.

Interview

In order to collect information the study used questions (semi structured questionnaires) guideline that helped to capture information from the MCDO, School inspector, Heads of schools, Teachers, WEO, and Parents.

Questionnaire

In the sense of logical questions order, questionnaires were used as tools for data collection to get the primary data concern the impact of socialization on gender stereotyping in secondary education in Morogoro municipality. Under questionnaire system the open ended questions was used and administered to the MCDO, School inspector, Heads of schools, Teachers. The questions were so simple and direct for easy responses.

Documentation

Documentary included the use of books, internet, newspapers, government and NGOs publications together with different reports were reviewed. This helped the researchers to capture the require information pertaining to impact of socialization on gender stereotyping.

Observation

Ocular findings were obtained by open eyes through observing the real life situation on how socialization was taking place, especially aspects like lifestyles, interactions, behaviours, total number of boys and girls in school and other similar nature from different school in Morogoro municipal.

Focus group discussion (FGD)

The study used this method by discussing with students from Morogoro, Kayenzi, SUA and Mafiga secondary schools. By forming subgroups concerning the issues of socialization, gender stereotypes and their impacts to the schooling matters, this method was applied in order to boost the answers to questions which was not answered correctly using other methods and was specifically applied to students.

2.5 Data processing, presentation and analysis

Data processing

Data collected in Kiswahili language were processed in English language. Moreover, data obtained from the field were edited, coded, classified and tabulated as collected data so as to be amenable for analysis.

Data analysis

The measure searching and rephrasing made relationship exist among the data-groups. With maintain their meaning precisely to determine with validity data can be said to make conclusion. Further, in analyzing the data various statistical presentations was used and results presented by tables, for nice interpretation where necessary was used.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 The role of teachers in socializing secondary school students

Table 2: The role of secondary school teachers in socialization and gender stereotyping

Roles of teachers in socialization	Frequency(n=50)	Percentage (%)
Bridging gender gap	21	42
Promote equal participation	12	24
Eliminate patriarchal system	07	14
Promote respect and obedience	10	20

Source: Research findings, 2012

Bridging gender gap

21 out of 50 respondents said that teachers form a potential group who can create gender equality because most of time they are close to students both girls and boys. This means that the teachers are “special group” of promoting and encouraging gender equality, gender equity and gender awareness through teaching in classes and in outside activities. If they teach aspects of gender equality then they stand in a good chance to enhance and improve understanding and practices to students. They need to be gender aware especially to know consequences of applicability of bad gender stereotypes among students as it may interfere their intellectual capability.

Respondents said that, teachers play a role of removing gender inequalities by stimulating students both girls and boys to engage equally in school activities sports, debates and school cleanliness. Moreover, teachers promote gender equality through discouraging negative attitudes over girls and encouraging both girls and boys to participate in education aspects like asking and answering questions and participate in group discussions and different clubs so as to improve their academic merits. One respondent gave his view that;

“To educate both girls and boys that their equal in all aspect except biological reason. Aim is to create positive thinking on gender equality and eliminate such type of gender stereotyping. Being intelligent is not associated with gender” Kalista Mtamihela.

Ocular finding by researchers shows that sitting arrangement in classes was mixture pattern between girls and boys, also teachers asked and responded fairly to questions from both sexes. This was evidenced from Kayenzi and SUA secondary schools.

Promote equal participation

12 out of 50 respondents said that, teachers try their level best to ensure that there is equality in access to and sharing between girls and boys to academic matters, school activities and sports and games. It can be noted here that, teachers can promote equal participation between boys and girl only if they concur to human rights principles at their workplaces such that; every person/people are entitled to active, free and meaningful participation in contribution and realize freedom. Other principle is equality and non discrimination in teaching environment which recognizes that “all individual are equal as human beings and by virtue of their inherent dignity”. In so doing, all the biases, prejudices, bad stereotypes, barriers to education opportunities over girls will be eliminated. Human Development Department (HDD) (2009), documents that “Equality of access to education for boys and girls at secondary levels of education, does not only imply that girls and boys have equal access to schooling. It also means that the processes of schooling must ensure that boys and girls are able to access the full range of opportunities and experiences that are available to expand their capacities, develop their potential so that they can contribute to the development of a more just, and compassionate society.

Elimination of patriarchal system

The counseling helps to guide both girls and boys to be aware that no one sex is superior over other, and everyone have rights to benefit equal opportunity in school. One student supports this idea by saying;

“Guarding and counseling help to take care for students and advise us to respect each other. Any prejudice over another sex is strongly discouraged” (Elizabeth, 16 years old).

07 out of all respondents said that teachers play role in socialization through good guarding and counseling students on importance of gender equality in schools. Teachers do counsel those students who violate rules and regulations including discrimination against girls. This case of

guarding and counsel witnessed by support of second master in SUA secondary, who narrated that;

“We have the office of guarding and counseling students. So, all matters of gender stereotypes being addressed and solved by that office” Mr. Kayombo.

Promote respect and obedience

10 out of 50 respondents said that teachers promote respect and obedience amongst students (both girls and boys) and this maintains gender equality. This role discourages gender stereotypes and disparities among students thereby improve cooperation and participation in academic context. This gives impression that if students respect their teachers and respect each others then they stand a good chance cooperate and participate in academic context, in turn it has meaning to effective learning and thereby improves students' intellectuals. One student supports this idea by saying;

“Our school has regulations whereby each student (girls and boys) have to obey and whoever goes against it the strict punishment is imposed”. (Sara, 15 years)

However observation by researchers shows that, teachers were punishing students in classrooms which shows that those students infringed rules and regulation were summoned and punished to maintain orders.

3.2 Gender stereotypes as a result of socialization process in secondary school education

Table 4: Gender stereotypes contributed by socialization in secondary education

Gender stereotypes contributed by socialization	Frequency(n=50)	Percentage (%)
Boys are intelligent	17	34
Girls are capable in art subjects	13	26
Girls are inferior	11	22
Boys interest in studying science subjects	09	18

Source: Research findings, 2012

'Boys are intelligent'

Table 4 above shows that 17 out of 50 respondents said that boys are intelligent in the sense that they perform better than girls. This may be attributed by customs and traditions of most of Tanzanian societies (parents) which tend to deny girls with opportunities to do self study when they are at homes by assigning them domestic chores to fulfill. Moreover, schools operate through the interactions of groups and individuals, and how students and teachers construct gender in the classroom impacts the learning environment. In education programmes and activities, schools still exhibit bias against girls which tend to support more boys than girls.

The gender stereotypes that schools help to reproduce include the notion that girls are caring, nurturing, quiet, helpful, considerate of others, and place others' needs before their own. Academically able girls' achievements are attributed to their hard work, whereas successful boys are considered naturally gifted. In contrast, underachieving male students are considered lazy, whereas underachieving girls are regarded as less intelligent (not capable). Boys are viewed as rational, logical, unemotional, and strong and are also expected to be friendly, smart, and naturally academically talented. Overall, boys are more likely than girls to answer teachers' questions. Often they call out answers, a risk-taking behaviour expected of males, and seek the teacher's attention. In contrast, girls are more likely to receive criticism rather than praise for such risk-taking behaviour. Thus in schools, gender stereotypes attribute boys' academic success to innate intelligence and girls' achievements to hard work.

However, Customs and traditions put majority of girls under pressure of cultural belief that they are the once supposed to attempt reproductive role than studying, thereby discouraged them to study hard when at schools. Gender stereotyping occurs when a person is expected to enact a series of norms or behaviours based upon their sex, Campbell et al (1994). Although, girls depend upon their socio-economic status, but many societies reinforce and support gender stereotype that always male are breadwinners while female are housekeepers.

‘Girls are prefer to study in art subject’

13 out of 50 respondents showed that socialization has contributed to impart gender stereotypes in secondary schools. Gender stereotyping impacts students' perceptions of their abilities and their achievements. Similarly, research has shown that teachers' and parents' expectations of students' abilities, achievements and behaviours are influenced by gender stereotyping. Gender stereotyping is usually subtle, and often unrecognized or unchallenged.

In Tanzanian societies there are assumptions that girls are less intelligent in school but are capable in art subjects like history, Kiswahili and civics, and quiet and unassertive behaviour, can mean that they set aside their own learning needs for others. Boys are assumed to be intelligent. Gender stereotype suggests that they should have natural talent to achieve, and that they are expected to exhibit rationality and logic as well as loud, dominant behaviours. These cases of girls are capable in art subjects is supported by MCDO who said;

“Stereotyping at secondary schools is taken where by some teachers and learners consider that science subjects are for male only. Only male students can perform well in science subjects.. This is due to difference in attitude and thinking among the teachers, girls’ and boys” (Mama Lindi.)

Gender stereotypes remain strong influences in schools, community and the daily life in classrooms. Yet inequities because of gender issues are often rendered invisible to girls and teachers by their very occurrence in classrooms. A major challenge for teachers is to establish classroom environments that do not favour one group of students to the loss of another group. And recognize that gender stereotypes do not influence development of girls in schools' organization, instead of that practices students' attitudes and behaviours of feel being intelligent and less intelligent among girls and boys.

‘Girls are inferior’

Table 4 above shows that, 11 out of 50 respondents responded that girls are inferior. They explained that, there are differences in attitude and understanding between girls and boys. Experience of researchers with some teachers in the field shows that, ‘The acceptance of gender-stereotyped as normal behaviors, with boys being rewarded for assertive behaviour, uniqueness, and risk-taking, and girls for nurturing, conformity, and placing others' needs before their own, is often invisible to girls and teachers’.

Girls' motivation for succeeding in school is often related to satisfy others, such as parents and teachers, rather than themselves. This idea is supported by one respondent who said;

“Patriarchy and male dominance cause unequal power-relations and give women (girls) a subordinate position. This makes women/girls socially dependent on male counterparts. It is important to enhance the capacity of traditional leaders as well as religious leaders on gender issues so that they can advocate for vulnerable groups including women and girls against the harmful and cultural beliefs and practices” (Enedy Mwanakatwe.)

Girls' preference for a positive, personal connection with their teachers can also influence their course selection. For example, girls may avoid mathematics or science because they dislike the teacher. Another consequence of gender stereotyping for girls is learned helplessness. When girls struggle with learning material, teachers often give them the answer, propagating a status of learned helplessness. In other words, because they are given the answers, girls learn that they are inferiors in learning process.

Girls as a one group isolated, create different feeling, attitude, idea and direction as believing that they less intelligent. So, no need of study more hence deciding to engage in wrong behavior which bring out truancy, spread of diseases and early pregnancy because of wrong thinking towards the teachers, boys and learning environments. These mislead her, hence fall down academically.

‘Boys prefer studying science subjects’

09 out of 50 respondents said that boys prefer to undertake science subjects. Respondents believe that science subjects are difficult so it is only boys who can manage to study them because boys are also considered to be intelligent and great thinkers. Typical sex differences contributed to fewer female studies in the sciences subjects like physics and biology. Due to that assumptions, society tend to support more boys in educational matters as compared to girls thereby build assertive behaviour to boys which enables them to have more access to and control over school resources. For example, in classes boys dominate books and girls are relegated to roles such as listeners, data recorder, or cleaning up the classrooms etc. However, laboratory works can be important facet for girls to learn science subjects since they can be full engaged in carrying out experiments than sitting aside watching their counterparts doing exercises. Society’s views of science as a masculine endeavor may promote girls to perform passive roles.

Recent data shows that there are closely equal numbers of girls and boys enrolled in secondary school science classes, with the exception of physics and biology science courses. Girls prefer studying subjects that they perceive as having value, being connected to people or other living things and having relevance in their lives. Often science is taught without an emphasis on how the subject connects to the “real” world, Campbell et al (1994). Boys are viewed as less able than girls in reading and the language arts, subjects that are stereotyped as feminine. It is bringing back positive socialization which develops girls and boys academically in those art and science subjects.

3.3 Impacts of socialization in academic arena of the secondary education

Table 5: Impact of socialization in secondary school students

Impact of socialization in secondary	Frequency(n=50)	Percentage (%)
Increased gender equality	18	36
Increased cooperation and participation	14	28
Effective learning and teaching	10	20
Performance increases	08	16

Source: Research findings, 2012

Increased gender equality

Data collected from the field shows that 18 out of 50 respondents said that increased gender equality is a positively impact of socialization on gender stereotyping in secondary education. This point seems to be “a core source” of socialization in secondary education. This case of gender equality is supported by the witness of teacher from SUA secondary school who said;

“Parents, teachers and whole society need to adopt equal gender division of labour in home and school activities like cooking, sweeping, washing of kitchen utensils, and asking questions, slashing, punishments against girls and boys to create equality respectively” (Mr. Biyereza H. Gicha)

Teachings provided by teachers to students had great role to play towards socialization for instance, they expose students to school resources (libraries, laboratories and sports pitches). Such teachings are done in such a way that both girls and boys have equal opportunity to access and utilize resources. Observation by researchers shows that students-to-students interactions were in way that both girls and boys had chances to closely interact each others in debates, students’ clubs (fema and PCCB), sports and cultural aspects.

Increased cooperation and participation

Table 6, shows that 14 of all respondents said that, socialization lead to collaboration and participation among students while at school and even with their families at home. This implies that when students are socialized to work together it reduces chances of segregation among boys and girls. Also it means that equal socialization eliminate the notion that certain tasks are appropriate for either sex instead it impart perception of equality in accomplishment of responsibilities as assigned by their teachers. This case of cooperation and participation is supported by the witness of school inspector, who said;

“No significant gender difference between boys and girls in academic achievement. Girls and boys can share their challenges and come up with good solutions for specific challenge” (Mrs. Mercelina Baitilwake.)

However, socialization towards equality brings the sense of solidarity among boys and girls during learning process because it can help them to gain the sense of “we feeling” for instance they can work very well during their studies if boys and girls cooperate in studies. Also socialization in classes offers sharing and collaboration in academics which in turn creates unity and solidarity among students. Equal sharing socialized students have higher chances of well mental development through their participation in academic aspects. This phenomenon can build in students’ intelligence and eliminates all the negative attitudes about girls.

Effective learning and teaching

10 out of 50 respondents said that effective learning and teaching is an impact of socialization that stimulates and increases the effective learning among students. It was observed by researchers that, in classrooms, girl and boy share one desk, ideas and challenges against their studies. Under this context, students learn from each others without marginalize others. In learning process everyone feels freely to ask, be asked and approach anyone she or he think can be helpful. One teacher of Morogoro secondary school who said;

“ Under better socialization, boys and girls feel as equal beings in academic arena and competition will be encouraged between intelligence and less intelligence” (Mrs. Frola Mlangwa.)

Results from SUA secondary school shows that 2010 and 2011 were increased by 05% and 08% respectively. The strategies employed in such increased performance included more gender responsive teaching and learning environment. There were gender friendly school attitude and mentoring programs which focused boys and girls exclusively whereby students of different sexes were being taught on gender perspective, different life skills/experience and define intelligence in classes and outside school compound.

Performance increases

The study finding show that 08 out of 50 respondents said that increased performance of girls and boys, is among the impacts of socialization. Performance measured by their general

knowledge and skills on art and science subjects, and reading assessment scores. The students (girls and boys) seem to perform well due to being aware/socialized among themselves.

Teachers encourage students to form groups for discussion, academics clubs like mathematics, English, Kiswahili and biology clubs, and debates by taking into account gender equality in those groups. This phenomenon calls for students' participation in academic issues whereby learning from one another can be an opportunity to advance their performance. In that way, socialization improves and enhances good performance due to encouragement from other students who feel as closely friend or relative.

4.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusion

Teachers are the main agents' socialization as they help to promote gender equality among girls and boys students they equal exposure to school resources like books, libraries and laboratories. That means socialization play great role in creating equality, to remove gender stereotyping which seems to be sanction of equality in different schools. The students can understand that to be intelligent does not correlate with being boy or girl. It is own capacity of each one, there is no need to discourage one to another.

Teachers and community being aware with wrong tradition and custom like patriarchal system which giving boys feelings that they intelligent, strong and inherit, these behaviours discourage gender equality. Therefore different social mechanisms teach children masculinity and femininity of personality and make them internalize behaviour, attitudes and roles. Hence, removing stereotyping to create and promote positive socialization toward boys and girls, and feel that their equal in access to and control over resources available among themselves at schools.

However, girls and boys have equal and full access to an opportunity on secondary education, complete secondary school with equal preparation and assistance to facilitate passage. Throughout schooling, girls and boys to experience both equal preparation and treatment, within

the classroom by teachers and by school advisors, such that girls and boys can emerge with comparable skills sets to enter the workforce. Government and community members play major part in addressing negative gender stereotypes through different interventions which focus community as well as through socialization.

4.2 Recommendations

There is a need for teachers to be gender aware especially on issues relating to gender stereotypes so as to eliminate inequalities between girls and boys students in secondary education, and then to general issues that may improve well-being of students (girls and boys).

Various stakeholders of education sector including government, teachers, students and other community members are advised to promote equal opportunity to girls and boys in order to reduce gender gap and remove bad attitude against girls, this can be achieved through carrying out gender sensitive and awareness campaigns, trainings seminars and exhibitions.

The government should prepare a policy on gender stereotyping against students isolated due to wrong belief that they less intelligent. The policy should clearly define the concept gender stereotyping and identify affirmative actions on how to promote girls.

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