

Stereotype Perception of the Professional Role of Women in Formations Implementing Tasks for National Security

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Abstract

Objectives: The aim of the research was to solve the research problem contained in the question: What is the genesis of shaping gender stereotypes and what is their impact on the perception of the professional role of women by men in the army as a formation carrying out tasks for national security?

Methods: The methods adopted in the research process are, first of all, a meta-analysis of a wide range of source materials, including publications, scientific articles and information materials, as well as the results of the own questionnaire. The theoretical methods characteristic of the safety sciences, i.e. analysis, synthesis, comparison, inference and abstraction, were supplemented by participant observation. The use of this method was possible because the author cooperated with soldiers many times.

Results: The results of the conducted research confirmed that gender stereotypes can significantly influence the perception of the professional role of women in the formations carrying out tasks for security. Women and men are characterized by a different approach to perceiving professional roles. Therefore, gender stereotypes can significantly affect the professional roles of women and men and the sense of occupational security.

Conclusions: The most concrete effect of the arguments made is the emphasis on the fundamental importance of the transformation of stereotypes. Both historical experiences and the assessment of the contemporary professional safety environment in terms of stereotypical perception are in line with the needs of ensuring the occupational safety of women and men in formations carrying out tasks for national security.

Introduction

Security is one of the most basic human needs. Together with the passage of time, the threats accompanying mankind changed, and this resulted in the need to adapt to the prevailing difficult conditions and overcome them. In recent years, many issues related to military security have changed, and more and more women appear in the uniformed services.

The events of recent years - enormous social and political changes, migratory movements in Europe, rapid changes in the field of employment, changes in the structure of the family and related to the performance of professional and social roles by women and men - cause the way we perceive ourselves and others, becomes an issue that can have a strong influence on people's behavior. We would like to be able to predict this impact, therefore modern women and men use stereotypes, including gender stereotypes, to describe themselves and others.

Certain patterns of behavior and conduct begin to play an increasingly important role in our social life. Due to external factors (e.g. media, Internet) a huge amount of elements of human behavior - once resulting from elections - now seems obvious to us, accepted in advance, as if subjected to stereotypical choices.

Functioning in uniformed services is a special type of professional activity. The preparation of soldiers now needs to take into account both combat skills training and psychological preparation to deal with gender stereotypes as a result of development and security. In the process of preparing an individual to act in difficult situations, the tendency to perceive reality through the prism of gender stereotypes seems to be significant. The implementation of tasks puts the requirements for soldiers much higher in all their spheres, including stereotypical attitudes.

In this article, the author presents the issue of how stereotypes work and functioning in public space and their impact on professional roles in the environment of uniformed services. The article presents the results of research on source and empirical materials on the essence of functioning and operation of stereotypes of a kind in public space and their impact on the perception of the professional role of women in formations carrying out tasks for national security.

The aim of the research was to solve the research problem contained in the question: What is the genesis of shaping gender stereotypes and what is their impact on the perception of the professional role of women by men in the army as a formation carrying out tasks for national security?

The methods adopted in the research process are, first of all, a meta-analysis of a wide range of source materials, including publications, scientific articles and information materials, as well as the results of the own questionnaire. The theoretical methods characteristic of the safety sciences, i.e. analysis, synthesis, comparison, inference and abstraction, were supplemented by participant observation. The use of this method was possible because the author cooperated with soldiers many times. The results of the conducted research confirmed that gender stereotypes can significantly influence the perception of the professional role of women in the formations carrying out tasks for security. Stereotypes already formed in the course of early socialization and sustained by the social structure constitute cultural models in relation to professional roles, they also apply to the practice of behaviors considered safe for women and men. Women and men are characterized by a different approach to perceiving professional roles. Therefore, gender stereotypes can significantly affect the professional roles of women and men and the sense of occupational security. The conclusions from the conducted research clearly indicate the legitimacy of expanding the knowledge about stereotypes of the gender among soldiers in order to increase the sense of professional security of women and men in the face of the process of changing the stereotype of a professional soldier in the state security system. The most concrete effect of the arguments made is the emphasis on the fundamental importance of the transformation of stereotypes. Both historical experiences and the assessment of the contemporary professional safety environment in terms of stereotypical perception are in line with the needs of ensuring the occupational safety of women and men in formations carrying out tasks for national security.

1. Gender stereotypes as a result of development and security

The term "stereotype" finds its place in colloquial language today. It is even a very frequently used expression today. The colloquial meaning of this term is something that simplifies reality, and more precisely, the objects of this reality to which it refers, is something that cannot be changed, rigid, even distorting the image of reality. The scientific definition of this concept is much more complex. According to K. Olechnicki and P. Załęcki, the stereotype "is a mental construction, usually common among members of a given social group, based on a schematic and simplified perception of reality (phenomena, social, cultural or a certain category of people) with an evaluative tinge, often based on prejudices and uncertain knowledge". Gender, which is a universal feature and easily identifiable, it is particularly prone to the formation of stereotypes.

Stereotypes, constituting a set of simplified and rigid beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people or social categories, e.g. women and men, as gender stereotypes describe beliefs that particular beliefs characterizing one sex do not apply to the other.

The term "gender stereotypes" is used interchangeably in the literature on the subject with the following terms: "gender stereotypes", "psychological gender stereotypes", "sociocultural gender stereotypes", but also less frequently used terms such as "male and female stereotypes" or "gender stereotypes".

Gender, which is a visible universal feature, is a special basis for creating stereotypes. Gender role stereotypes mean that some specific behaviors of one gender do not apply to the other. Gender stereotypes are, therefore, 'a set of beliefs about the personal attributes of a group of people characterized by simplification and stiffness' (Aronson, 1977).

Candace West and Don Zimmerman (1987) represented a different approach. They believed that gender was a feature of an interacting situation rather than an individual feature. People do not so much "have" as "cultivate" the gender. Gender is an active process accompanying interpersonal interactions. Researchers who ignore the complex context of gender-related social behavior fail to see important aspects for operational safety.

Gender stereotyping already affects very young children. Sherry Gorelick (1994) came to this belief by observing the reactions of the environment. She concluded that adults are always willing to give sexual meaning to boy interactions and girls and impose roles on them that often do not suit a specific child at all. It proves that by using gender stereotypes, adults confirm the system of values prevailing in culture. In addition, categorizations are useful to them and give them a sense of security. At the same time, stereotypes of gender impose such limitations that interfere with individual human development. It follows that stereotypes are useful but also potentially dangerous. The gender role consists of behaviors demonstrated more often by representatives of a given gender. For example: in the United States, repairing cars is associated mainly with men, and repairing clothes is mainly associated with women. In this way, gender behaviors have become part of a pattern considered masculine or feminine — not because of some inherent differences between men and women, but because of association.

The gender stereotype is made up of beliefs about the mental characteristics of men and women as well as actions that are appropriate for one gender or the other. Gender roles are determined by behaviors, while the stereotype is based on beliefs and attitudes towards masculinity and femininity. The concepts of role and stereotype are intertwined. When people begin to associate a pattern of behavior with women or men, they sometimes fail to recognize individual differences or exceptions and conclude that the behavior is once and for all assigned

to one type and does not fit the other. Thus, the genre role can lead to a stereotype. The influence of gender stereotypes is enormous - they determine the way people think about women and men, and they define social categories for the kind mentioned by Gorelick. These categories represent human beliefs which, even if they do not correspond to reality, can strongly influence the individual's own or other people's judgments.

Today's gender stereotypes have their roots in nineteenth-century culture. Many of their elements can be found in Victorian notions of masculinity and femininity. The industrial revolution changed the lives of most people in Europe and North America - men began to earn money outside the home, while women took care of the farm and children. People had to adapt to this unprecedented division by creating new patterns of behavior. With the changes, new ideologies appeared - the Doctrine of the Two Spheres and the Cult of True Feminine. The doctrine of Two Spheres is the belief that the scopes of interests of women and men do not coincide with each other. Both sexes have separate reins of influence (Lewin, 1984). The domain of women is home and children, while the domain of men is work and the outside world. These are two separate spheres which have so little in common that they can be regarded as opposite. Lewin claims that this conceptualization of opposites is not only the basis for social ideas about the type, but also the formula used to measure masculinity and femininity.

The Cult of True Femininity proclaimed that "Attributes of True Femininity - which are the criteria for assessing a woman, are used by herself, her husband, neighbors and society - they are based on four foundations: piety, chastity, docility and homework. " (Welter, 1978). The combination of these virtues guaranteed happiness and strength, and without them, a woman's life has no real meaning. At the time, society saw women as creatures inherently more religious than men. According to this doctrine, men were prone to sin at best - and beastly at worst. Their relationship with the Real Woman was supposed to bring them closer to the ideal. The Real Woman was able to lift a man to a higher moral level. The third trait of a True Woman was submission — a trait that was neither natural nor desirable in men. Women were expected to be weak, dependent and shy, while the man was to be strong, wise and firm. The dependent woman needed a strong man, not a sensitive one. It was the man who provided and was the security.

The last of the four virtues, domesticity, was related to both submission and with the Doctrine of the Two Spheres. The Real Woman was a wife, absorbed in household affairs - the household and raising children. Her duties included cooking and caring for the sick, especially for a sick husband or child. Women who embody these traits have passed the Real Woman exam. Of course, the criteria would be so exorbitant that only a few would be able to meet it, if

at all. Anyway. Anyway, since the nineteenth century the women's press, social and religious leaders have argued that these qualities are achievable. Women exhorted to strive for these virtues tried to conform to the ideal. Though the Cult of True Femininity flourished in the nineteenth century, it was his remnants linger in today's societies, evoking modern ideas about femininity.

The nineteenth-century ideal of a woman had a definite influence on the image of a man. The man was perceived in many ways - as the opposite of the woman, he was the basis of what Joseph Pleck (1981) called the Model Male Identity. It included four main statements:

1. Prohibition of being a "woman" - feminine features are stigmatized,
2. Man at the helm - a man needs success and a high position.
3. Hard as steel - a man should be tough, confident and independent.
4. I'll let them burn - a man should be accompanied by an aura of aggressiveness, bravado and violence.

The more closely a man follows these rules, the more he gets of a "real man." There is a strong pressure for a man to grow up to the ideal of masculinity - as unreal as the ideal of a Real Woman. Contemporary men - which can be observed - no longer want to submit to the Model Male Identity, increasingly abandoning this role, questioning its validity.

Research shows that the knowledge of genus consists of several elements, and the process of their acquisition begins in children around the age of two and finishes only at seven to eight year olds. The first thing to learn is gender labeling. Martin (1990) shows in his research that once a child learns to properly label genders, he begins to form stereotypes of gender, and these stereotypical expectations influence his behavior. These studies show that children learn to understand their own gender first and only later learn gender stereotypes for the opposite sex. Better knowledge of gender stereotypes involves not only their acceptance, but also the ability to make allowances for exceptions. This skill allows for generic flexibility, which slowly replaces the rigid compliance with stereotypes. Research on gender stereotypes involving people of all ages has confirmed that the ability to flexibly use stereotypes increases with age (Biernat, 1991). When assessing other people, the younger ones relied on information about type rather than information about the individual, while the older ones took into account information about deviations from stereotypes in their application, but the tendency to stereotyping never completely disappears.

Therefore, the process of forming gender stereotypes begins early - three-year-olds already know some of the behavioral differences associated with them. Older children and adults accept deviations from stereotypes, taking into account characteristics and future behavior of a specific

person. Nevertheless, gender stereotypes make up a system for classifying people that serves man as a standard throughout his life. Gender stereotypes influence his expectations of himself and others, and also ask him to judge people on the basis of related traits and behaviors with kind.

Some of the gender stereotypes are so common that it's almost hard to find people who don't share them, no matter what culture or country they live in. Among such judgments, the perception that men do much better is at the forewith tasks that require abstract thinking, i.e. with mathematics (Hyde, Frost, 2002), and women lead the way in tasks where verbal and communication skills can be used, i.e. they are more talented at learning languages (Blum 2000, Cross, Marcus, 2002, Moir, Jossel, 1989). It turned out, however, that the actual differences in the level of mathematical aptitude and linguistic, between men and women are much smaller than the differences in people's beliefs about it (Wojciszke, 2002). It seems that assigning certain abilities to women and men is reflected in the assessment of their work, especially when they enter the "forbidden area", i.e. they start to operate in a field that is usually treated as typically "male", as it is currently the case in army. Occupational roles are viewed as a set of beliefs about being active, qualified as appropriate for women and appropriate for men and are stereotypes of gender roles. These roles are closely related to job stereotypes. Stereotypically, there is a belief that women are good in professions related to caring, helping, showing empathy, and requiring communication. Men, on the other hand, in professions requiring physical strength, determination in action, speed in making decisions, professions requiring management and leadership skills. Traditional job roles are therefore consistent with the content of gender stereotypes. The main focus of the soldiers is military training, of course and absolutely necessary to perform properly assigned tasks. Many of them are unaware and do not take into account the psychological effects of active participation in the process of changing the image of a soldier. The current stereotypical image: a soldier is a man - is increasingly being supplemented with a non-stereotypical image of a female soldier. Since these stereotypes are part of the social knowledge of an individual and have a large impact on social behavior, taking them into account is necessary for full training and taking actions increasing safety, both individual and collective.

2. Stereotypes - the dependence of individual and collective phenomena as a narrow perception of security

Stereotypes can be viewed from two different, complementary perspectives. To fully understand the stereotyping process requires the adoption of both points of view. On the one hand, they function in the mind of the individual. On the other hand, they are an integral part of the social structure, common to people belonging to a given culture.

Consider how stereotypes are represented (that is, stored for future use), both on an individual and collective level.

It has a tradition in psychology to say that stereotypes can be an individual as well as a collective phenomenon. As early as 1920, Wundt made a distinction between collective and individual psychologies. This approach was continued by McDougall (1920) - on the side of the collective - and Allport (1924) - on the side of the individual. At that time, these researchers were interested in the issue of whether "social reality" is shaped at the level of an individual or a group (as the so-called "group mind"). Today there is no doubt that social beliefs - including the view of stereotypes - that are part of all beliefs of an individual, are formed in the minds of individuals. An important difference between an individual and a collective approach is hidden determinants of social behavior in assuming the importance of shared social beliefs, which are considered more or less important than individual beliefs.

Thus, an individual approach focuses on the importance of a given stereotype for an individual. It can be said that, according to it, "neither the definition nor the measurement of stereotypes should be limited by the necessity of universal consent" (Hamilton, Stroessner, Drisoll, 1994).

On the other hand, for theorists who recognize a cultural approach, social consensus is of key importance. Social values and behaviors are the most important basis of stereotypes, therefore they are only relevant when they are common to a given culture (Gardne, Kirby, & Findley, 1972).

The individual approach to the representation of stereotypes is shaped at the microanalytical level and concerns cognitive systems that allow an individual to effectively store and use stereotypes. The cultural approach has a broader scope because it goes beyond the internal perspective. It assumes that society is a treasury of stored knowledge and considers stereotypes to be a collection of information about a given social group, disseminated among members of a specific culture. Hence, stereotypes are part of the "fabric of society", even though they exist "in the minds of a given community of audiences".

Stereotypes are one of the elements of the collective knowledge of society, including both ideas, myths, customs, religious systems and scientific knowledge.

In individual terms, the focus was on transmitting stereotypes through direct interactions with other members of the culture. In cultural terms, the acquisition of stereotypes takes place through indirect sources: it concerns information provided by peers, parents, teachers, political and spiritual leaders, authorities, and the mass media - which is of particular importance in the 21st century. In modern societies, the availability of information provided by the masses of the media, especially e-mail and the Internet, makes the representations of stereotypes widespread among millions or even billions of people, easily overcoming the limits of distances that cannot be exceeded for ordinary interpersonal communication.

When group stereotypes emerge in a given culture, expectations about the behavior patterns of members of stereotyped groups begin to function. Such expectations determine not only the behavior of members of these groups, but also social reactions to their members.

By considering the influence of time-honored gender roles on women's behavior and men, we can see that the norms have a double power here. On the one hand, men and women feel pressured to comply with relevant social norms regarding gender, as the omission of norms risks collective humiliation. When group members follow the stereotype (whether consciously or not), their behavior reinforces and justifies the stereotype.

On the other hand, when group members want to act inconsistently with a stereotype, their ability to act can be very limited by the expectations of others based on social norms, which causes the phenomenon of behavioral confirmation (Jussin, 1920). They can influence the results of actions only because they are common, and members of stereotyped groups have a strong awareness of beliefs existing in a particular culture. As Wojciszke (1991) claims, the bias of human cognition is conditioned by the features of the human mind, mainly the schematic structure of the cognitive system. There is an excess of information in the human cognitive system, so much of it is automatically omitted and only those considered relevant in a given situation are included. As they are usually not sufficient to make a decision, the information encoded in the schemas is used, i.e. the information is supplemented. These additions are the so-called pseudo data. Wojciszke claims that people tend to remember behavior that was not there at all, and attribute properties for which there is no evidence. Thus, man has a natural tendency to use pseudo-data and is forced to do so for the normal functioning of the mind. Therefore, it creates stereotypes.

The stereotype is therefore associated with a certain number of features attributed to the addressees. These features are narrowed down and gradually reduced, thus leading to the

formation of prejudice as a specific form of exacerbated stereotype. The prejudice created in this way may cause the development of a set of negative features, revealed as hostile attitude towards representatives of a given group, e.g. men towards women. The initial stage of the formation of prejudice is the creation of a group that can be called "reducing", that is, qualifying certain people to a group characterized by certain specific properties.

Such a classification allows for a precise separation of the in-group, i.e. the group with which the individual identifies himself, from the foreign group, i.e. the one with which identification is impossible.

The overriding motive for doing so is to confirm self-esteem by identifying with the group. It is possible only when an individual perceives his own group as superior to others. For example, in many countries it is not enough to believe that there is a division between two genders who function independently. The people of these countries must be convinced of the dominant gender and have more rights.

The next stage in narrowing the field of social awareness is the tendency to perceive the homogeneity of the foreign group. The tendency to infer that all members of the group against which we direct the prejudice - "are the same" - that is, of course, assessed negatively - causes reduction inference through analogies. This means that if the opinion concerns one member of the foreign group, the prejudiced person treats it as binding for other representatives of this group. On the other hand, knowledge about a member of one's own group is not diagnosed in this way, because usually representatives of one's own group know exactly how unique they are and their partners are different.

3. Stereotypical perception of reality in the assessment of work in own research

The reality that we perceive, despite its objectivity, will always have a subjective element. Perception of the outside world is subject to distortions generated by our previous experiences, gender, current mood, used attributes or well-being. The perception of the outside world directly translates into a sense of security. The desire to satisfy it is essential for life and development, and the shaping of values and the right to safe life are today one of the most important problems bothering people on a global, local and individual scale.

The reality perceived through the prism of gender stereotypes is of great importance today in shaping a sense of security, especially in the context of the increasing number of women in the military.

The individual interprets each new situation reaching the consciousness, assigns it a rank of importance and assigns an emotional color to it. The first event triggers an attribution that is

assigned to it and which this reappearing event will trigger. This attribution is characterized by a fairly high degree of constancy. This means that change can take place, but there must be a factor of appropriate weight. This attribution plays the role of an informational metabolite that becomes the main driving force of behavior, but is also crucial in perceiving new situations, i.e. creating new attributions. Therefore, shaping attribution is of great importance in the perception of reality by an individual, as well as in the creation of new behavior patterns, including those related to gender stereotypes.

With the rise of female soldiers in units, there was a discussion about their service in the "male bastion." There are different opinions on this subject: from votes for, through negative, and even vulgar.

In the survey conducted among professional soldiers, the aim was to obtain the opinion of male soldiers about the service of female soldiers. The anonymous survey was conducted in 2019 and 2021. The respondents were men, representatives of the officer corps, non-commissioned officers and privates. In fact 425 people took part in the study: 202 people in 2019 and 223 people in 2021.

According to the surveyed male soldiers, they believe that women should not be in the army. It should be noted that this opinion was shared by more than half of the surveyed men (57%) in 2019, and in 2021 there was an increase in similar opinions (63%). The number of people who share the opinion that female soldiers have more rights than male soldiers increased by 10% in 2021 compared to 2019. At the same time, the number of people who believe that women have dropped by 6% and men have the same rights in this regard.

There is a noticeable increase among the respondents, who believe that the presence of female soldiers has a positive effect on team relations from 14% in 2019 to 21% in 2021. At the same time, there was a significant decrease in 2021 (44%) compared to 2019 (56%) in terms of the opinion that the presence of female soldiers negatively influences relations in the team.

The vast majority of the surveyed soldiers - men (80% in 2019 and 74% in 2021) believes that superiors are more lenient towards female soldier in the case of undisciplined or poor performance of the task than in the case of male soldiers.

The vast majority of respondents do not see the difference between carrying out from tasks by male and female soldiers. The results are very similar: 64% in 2019 and 63% in 2021.

The vast majority of male soldiers surveyed believe that the most effective team consists only of male soldiers. This opinion is at a similar level of 77% and has not changed over the years.

Conclusion

Judgments based on gender stereotypes are triggered much faster and more easily than judgments based on personality traits, for example, which can cause them to be activated more quickly. There are talk of some important factors influencing the activation of gender schemas. Cross and Marcus include among these factors individual differences related to the level of education in patterns of one's own gender affiliation, as well as related to the type of situation in which a person finds himself. The internal representation of gender stereotypes called by Cross and Marcuss gender schemas significantly determine the attitude to human behavior, interpreting events (especially when events are of an ambiguous nature), and predicting the behavior of a specific group of people.

The situations presented in the study regarding the opinions of male soldiers on the evaluation of the work of female soldiers were clearly ambiguous and had the right to activate stereotypes of the type in question. The analysis of the conducted research showed that soldiers - women in the opinion of the surveyed soldiers - men should not be in the army. Moreover, they have more rights and privileges than male soldiers. The respondents believe that their superiors treat female soldiers more indulgently in the event of undisciplined or poor performance of a task, despite the fact that, according to the respondents, there is no difference in fulfilling from the assigned tasks between male and female soldiers.

There is a noticeable increase in the number of opinions among the respondents, according to which the presence of female soldiers has a positive effect on the relations in the team, from 14% in 2019 to 21% in 2021. At the same time, there was a significant decrease in 2021 (44%) compared to 2019 (56%) in the opinion that the presence of female soldiers has a negative impact on relations in the team. However, this does not change the opinion that the most effective team, according to the respondents, is the one consisting only of male soldiers.

Stereotypes in a group of soldiers are, in particular, gender stereotypes identified as a specific aggravated form of attitude towards something or someone, created as a result of generalizations derived from incomplete or false information, as well as their influence on the assessment of the value of work and being guided or not prejudiced by this assessment.

In the study group, it turned out that men to a large extent show attachment to the traditional model of roles in terms of assessing the work of women in a non-stereotypical role, which is the role of a female soldier. Although this study cannot be used to verify the entire army, it is worth taking into account the opinions of the respondents. Stereotypes already formed in the course of early socialization and sustained by the social structure constitute cultural models in

relation to professional roles, they also apply to the practice of behaviors considered safe for women and men. Women and men are characterized by a different approach to perceiving professional roles. Therefore, gender stereotypes can significantly affect the professional roles of women and men and the sense of occupational security. When gender stereotypes emerge in a given culture, expectations about the behavioral patterns of members of stereotyped groups begin to function. Such expectations determine not only the behavior of members of these groups, but also social reactions to their members and have an impact on individual and collective safety.

Attitudes and behaviors determine the effectiveness of organizational processes. Treating knowledge about stereotypes in a broad way, as any, even small improvements in the mutual relations between women and men, may lead to the conclusion that the aim should be training in knowledge about stereotypes, thanks to which it is possible to it will model opinions, and also influence the creation of an organizational climate that will be conducive to influencing stereotypical thinking and mutual good relations.

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