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Gender Identification in the Personalized I Image of the Youth

Gender is a basic characteristic of a person that determines his or her psychological and social functioning. Gender relations characterize the degree of democracy in a society, as they determine the division of roles in the political, socio-economic and professional lives.

The goal of this research is to determine gender perceptions among the student youth, specific gender ideals in the self-concept, beliefs about traditional and egalitarian gender roles, and construction of the real and ideal self.

The young age is connected with gender self-determination, establishment of the gender role fitting behaviour and stable image of the "I" of men/women. As Erik Erikson emphasized, "the young age is the most important period of the development when the main crisis of the identity occurs" [5]. Uncertainty and indecision in gender identity is dangerous because it can hamper identity development.

The task of the research are:

1. To establish peculiarities of gender identification and its influence on life choices in young adulthood;

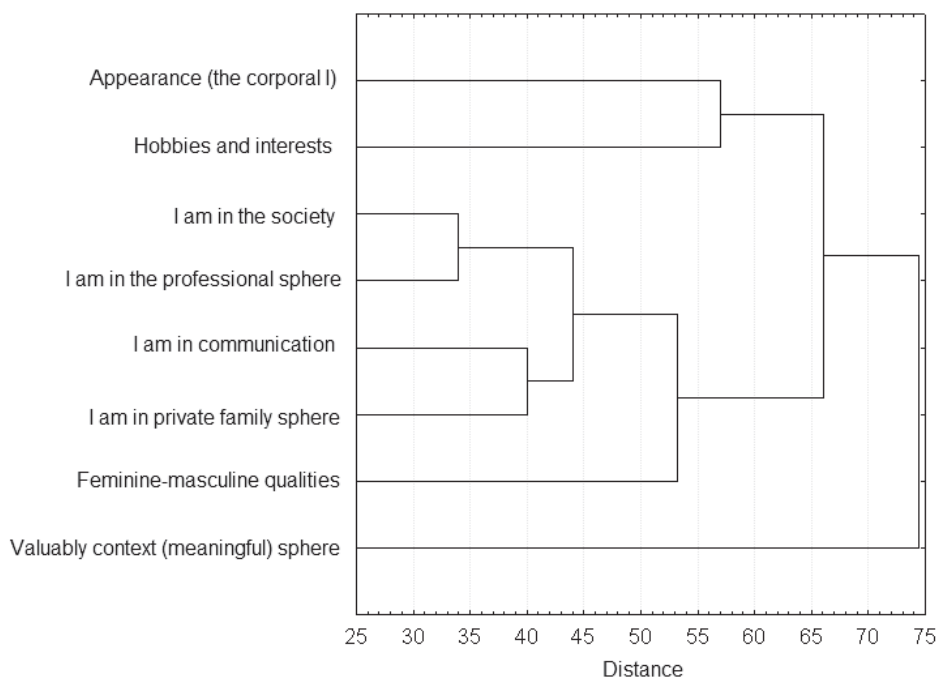
2. To illuminate the determining factors and conditions of the self-determination of young men and women.

The methods for determining gender orientations in the self-concept included the following surveys: ego-identification (D. Marcia), masculine-feminine behavior (S. Bem), goal determination and goal pursuit (M. Rokich), interpersonal attraction (T. Leary), and narratives "Me in 20 years", "Who Am I" (M. Kun, McPartland).

400 students of pedagogical universities in Kyiv, Ternopil and Chernihiv participated in the research; men comprised 38% of the sample.

Our hypothesis was that the student youth is heavily influenced by both the traditional and egalitarian gender orientations in deciding upon their private and public roles. Hypothesis was tested with Fisher coefficient, Mann-Whitney U-criterion, correlation coefficient and factor analysis.

The most influential in the value system and perceptions of the future for both men and women are family roles; such roles are also dominant



Picture 1. Cluster analysis of the narratives «Who Am I»

in the self-concept descriptions. Men view the ideal image of a woman in more traditional terms than women see themselves – women portray an ideal female as more intellectual and socially advanced. The findings show that while there are many similarities in self-views of young men and women, men are more oriented on traditional male values, whereas women maintain values of both traditional and egalitarian nature.

The results of content-analysis of the narrative “Who Am I” show the dominating gender roles in private family and public professional spheres of young men and women (picture 1).

As the cluster analysis shows, **gender belonging is shown through personal qualities**. We initially selected two large clusters. The first one

Table 1.

Average statistical levels of self-descriptive thoughts of young men and women in “Who Am I” narratives

<i>Characteristics of self-description</i>	<i>Mean M</i>	<i>Mean F</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>P</i>
Appearance (physical I)	0,33	1,43	-3,74	48	0,000488
I am in the society	0,67	0,65	0,04	48	0,97
Feminine-masculine qualities	0,85	0,74	0,42	48	0,68
Interpersonal roles	0,67	0,83	-0,67	48	0,50
I am in the professional sphere	0,11	0,26	-1,21	48	0,23
Hobbies and interests	1,26	0,91	0,96	48	0,34
Valuable context (meaningful) sphere	0,89	1,04	-0,36	48	0,72
Emotional characteristics “positive”	3,26	4,83	-2,17	48	0,03
Emotional characteristics “negative”	0,44	1,43	-1,93	48	0,06
Emotional support of others (ability for emotional sharing)	0,59	0,91	-1,13	48	0,27
Confidence in oneself	0,22	0,78	-2,56	48	0,01
Successes in realization family roles	0,74	1,00	-0,63	48	0,53
Ability for self-opening	8,48	4,39	3,59	48	0,00
Individuality	0,80	1,17	-1,50	48	0,14
Belonging to the group (identified “We”)	0,55	0,68	-0,83	48	0,41

determines the characteristics of the individuality of a person, such as: appearance, interests and hobbies. The second cluster refers to social descriptions, such as: public-political, professional and domestic roles.

We found no meaningful gender differences in such spheres as professional and domestic roles, interpersonal and gender qualities, hobbies and interests, which suggest the prevalence of personal, individual self-determination of the I in the samples of both sexes. At the same time the statistically meaningful (Student's t-criterion) differences were found in such subjective descriptions as the physical I ($t=-3,74$ at $p=0,0004$), emotional sensitivity ($t=2,17$ at $p=0,03$), confidence in oneself ($t=-2,56$ at $p=0,01$) and ability for self-expression ($t=3,59$ at $p=0,00$).

The role of physical attractiveness in descriptions of the physical I is considerably higher (almost 4 times) for young women. Another gender difference in the image of the I is emotional sensitivity (4,86 for young women : 3,26 for young men) that is represented in higher meaningfulness of emotional sphere for personal self-determination of young women. We explain that gender differences with different level of adaptation of young men and women to the new social roles of a student and a future professional. Young women acquire more confidence in themselves, and that, in our opinion, is influenced by a) young women's higher social activity; b) fewer gender expectations in relation to young women's social roles and considerably more expectations in relation to the realization of masculine roles by young men. In this age male students begin to feel the pressure of gender stereotypes of a bread-winner, protector etc. while having few possibilities for financial self-realization. The gender difference in the meaningfulness of self-openness (as for young women, its level reaches the mark of 8,48, while for young men it is 4,39) is possible to explain by the influence of gender socialization, as the society expects more empathy from young women. The statistical analysis of descriptions in the images of the real and future I shows similarities of the personal self-determination in different spheres of vital activities of young men and women (table 2).

In the ratings of meaningfulness of different spheres of self-determination, the sphere of professional self-realization takes the leading place. In the image "I am today" the meaningfulness of professional sphere for young men is lower in comparison with the image "I am in future". At the same time, in the image of the future I for young women the leading place is taken by the emotionally expressive sphere. These findings are confirmed through the analysis of descriptive self-

characteristics presented by young men and women in narratives “Me in 20 years”. The qualities which are marked by young men as necessary for a woman have truly feminine character, for example, “faithful”, “beautiful”, “tidy”, “thoughtful”, “tolerant”, “tactful”, “complaisant”. The responses for young women include unique feminine qualities, for example: tenderness, meekness, love, and children. The anti-ideal qualities are completely opposite to afore-named ones, as, for example, “negative”, “fickle”, “bad hostess”, “has bad habits related to alcohol and smoking”. It is not surprising that 94 per cent of young people think that the image

Table 2.

The meaningfulness of the spheres of self-determination in female and male samples

<i>Characteristics of self-description</i>	<i>Arithm. mean I am today</i>	<i>Arithm. mean I am tomorrow</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Appearance (physical I)	0,27	0,60	-0,84	25	0,41
I am in the society	0,64	0,80	-0,29	25	0,77
Feminine-masculine qualities	0,95	0,40	1,25	25	0,22
Interpersonal roles	0,68	0,60	0,22	25	0,83
I am in the professional sphere	0,05	0,40	-2,44	25	0,02
Hobbies and interests	1,36	0,80	0,84	25	0,41
Valuable context (meaningful) sphere	0,86	1,00	-0,24	25	0,81
Emotional characteristics “positive”	3,27	3,20	0,07	25	0,95
Emotional characteristics “negative”	0,55	0,00	1,19	25	0,25
Emotional support of others (ability for the emotional sharing)	0,55	0,80	-0,52	25	0,61
Confidence in oneself	0,23	0,20	0,11	25	0,92
Successes in realization family roles	0,64	1,20	-1,22	25	0,24
Ability for self-opening	8,05	10,40	-1,12	25	0,27
Individuality	0,82	0,70	0,28	25	0,78
Belonging to the group (identified “We”)	0,50	0,75	-0,91	25	0,37

Table 3.**The meaningfulness of the spheres of self-determination in female and male samples**

<i>Characteristics of self-description</i>	<i>Mean male</i>	<i>Mean female</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Appearance (physical I)	2,00	1,00	1,99	21	0,06
I am in the society	0,10	1,08	-1,83	21	0,08
Feminine-masculine qualities	0,80	0,69	0,25	21	0,81
Interpersonal roles	0,70	0,92	-0,56	21	0,58
I am in the professional sphere	0,30	0,23	0,30	21	0,77
Hobbies and interests	1,10	0,77	0,67	21	0,51
Valuable context (meaningful) sphere	0,70	1,31	-0,78	21	0,45
Emotional characteristics "positive"	5,20	4,54	0,51	21	0,61
Emotional characteristics "negative"	1,80	1,15	0,61	21	0,55
Emotional support of others (ability for emotional sharing)	0,60	1,15	-1,28	21	0,21
Confidence in oneself	1,10	0,54	1,36	21	0,19
Successes in realization family roles	1,20	0,85	0,44	21	0,67
Ability for self-opening	2,60	5,77	-2,23	21	0,04
Individuality	1,55	0,88	1,72	21	0,10
Belonging to the group (identified "We")	0,58	0,77	-0,72	21	0,48

of an ideal woman has to have traditional nature, and 95 per cent consider that the image of a real man must be of traditional nature, too.

We should note that nothing is mentioned about the wife as a professional, statesman, about her possibilities to take up sports or hobbies. Only 40 percent of young men consider that professional employment of a wife is possible, but not obligatory, and only on the condition of "a good job", "that she is able to devote more time to her family and children".

Similar options are traced in the narratives by young women when they describe their future: "I am cheerful and tidy as I meet my husband when he comes from work. I gave lessons of English to my children, took

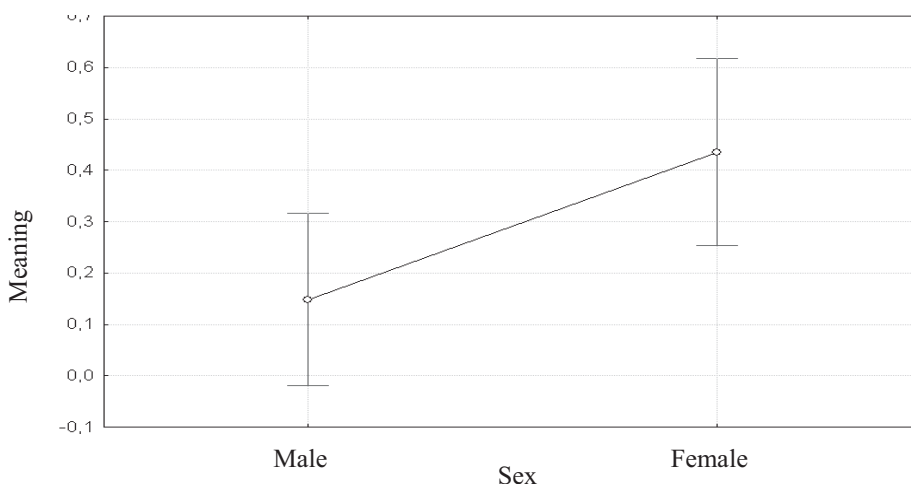
them to the pool, and while they were there, I visited the fitness center”, “I still have slender body and look young. I have time to take care of myself, visit a beauty salon”; “My wife brings me coffee in bed. She has time for sports and to take care of all family members”.

In the research we were interested in the dynamics between professional and private spheres for young men and women in their picture of the future. It was discovered that young men are oriented on building their career in identification of the future I to a greater degree (picture 2), while young women show greater dependence on the domestic sphere (picture 3).

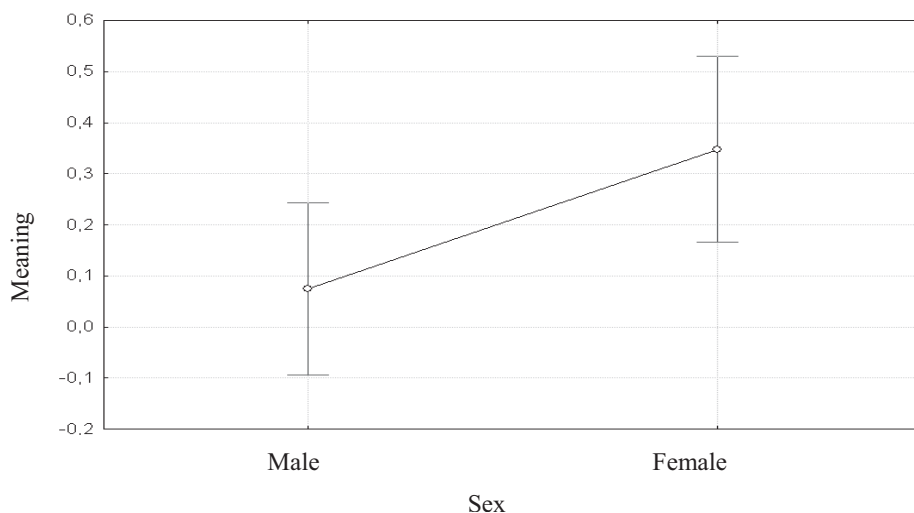
Both in the I-present and in the I-future, the dominant tendency is professional activity for young men and domestic activity for young women.

The general sample was 170 respondents – 86 young women and 84 young men aged 18-21 enrolled in a pedagogical university. The test showed high reliability due to internal consistency: the coefficient of correlation between the scales of egalitarian and traditional values is fold $r=-0,95$ ($p=0,0001$).

Majority of males in the sample agreed with the following statements: “there are a lot of words and phrases that cannot be pronounced by women but they are allowed to be spoken by men” and “women must not visit the same places which are visited by men, and women must not have the same degree of freedom as men”. The students are aware of the myth



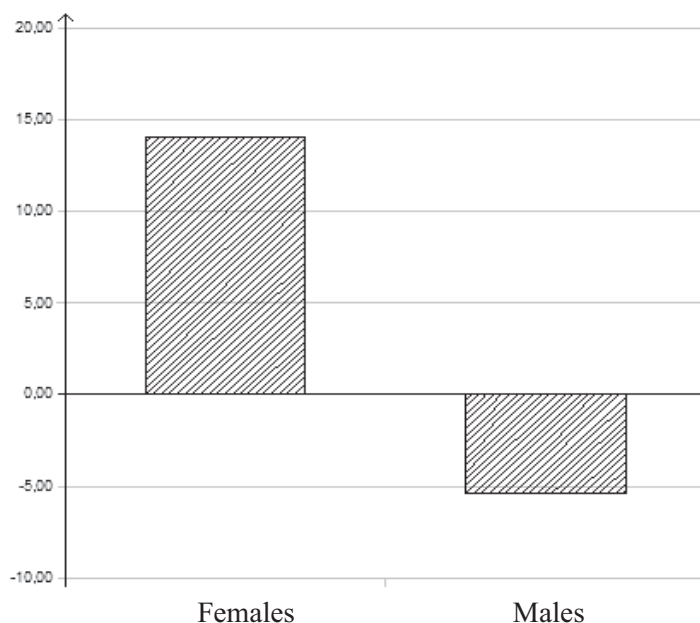
Picture 2. Differences between the sexes in professional activity



Picture 3. Influence of gender on the professional activity

of the “weaker sex” to be a subject to psychical disorders, depression and anxiety more frequently. These beliefs found the confirmation in the agreement with the statement “Women are too sensitive to become good surgeons”. The apotheosis of traditional opinions of young men was their rejection of the professional suitability of women for various types of activities: “Women must recognize their intellectual narrow-mindedness in comparison to men”. Young women showed more egalitarian views than men in relation to physical attractiveness of both sexes to taking care of the figure, keeping a healthy way of life etc. For example, women showed greater agreement with the following statements: “A modern woman is obliged to care about her figure no more than her husband cares about his” and “Youth and beauty of a woman are the main guaranty of her happiness”.

The analysis of results of the questionnaire based on M. Jenkins’ method showed that most young men and women share traditional (patriarchal) values to some degree. However, there were sex differences in gender orientations of young men and women. Young women are more oriented on egalitarian relations in the domestic sphere, in sex behaviour, marriage and pre-marital behaviour. Traditional views of young men refer to the social and politic legislative sphere. Bipolarity of judgments of young men and young women about traditional and egalitarian value are presented in picture 4.



Picture 4. Bipolarity of the division of gender orientations of student youth in sex selections

Traditional values are directed against the expansion of space of a woman in relation to the professional activities. Women students admit egalitarian with men in the domestic sphere, but they share patriarchal opinions in relation to financial and legal responsibility of a husband.

Conclusion. The present research shows that young women are more oriented on the egalitarian relations, whereas young men tend to endorse traditional gender orientations. Gender identity in both samples has perceptibly stereotypical nature, although less so among females.

The development of gender identity at the age of a young adult occurs on the basis of both conscious self-determination in continuum of masculine-feminine behaviour and choice of individual meanings of gender roles (a considerable percent of young men and young women reached the highest degree of individual identity in G. Marcia's test and the androgenic models of gender role behaviour in accordance to S. Bem's questionnaire as well). Number of students that "lag behind" at the level of diffusive identity (most of them are males), which demonstrate the sex-determined behaviour, or show complete confusion in relation to the gender role.

Although the majority of respondents of both sexes showed traditional orientations, the comparative analysis of their structure (from the point of view of the cognitive emotional and behaviour constituents of gender self-determination in M. Jenkins and S. Bem's questionnaires) show the signs of destruction of bipolar gender orientations of student youth. The proof of it appears in the similarity of repertoire of social roles in the self-determination of "I am a man/woman" and also in the context of narratives "Who Am I" (today). The gender roles selected by young men and women do not fit the "Procrustean bed" of their patriarchal division, as they contain quite a lot of egalitarian constructions of self-determination in professional occupations, identification, and communications. The future of students in their gender scenarios of life can also be described from the point of view of the ambivalent.

This research shows the necessity of creating and implementing the gender policies based on the psychological principles of parity and androgyny of sexes, and on self-development and full vital realization of an individual. Development of gender competencies among young Ukrainians will enable to form a fair attitude towards the capabilities and status of a person regardless of his/her sex and create the possibility for maximum self-realization in mastering some sphere of life activities.

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Abstracts

ОКСАНА КІКІНЕЖДІ, ТАМАРА ГОВОРУН, МАРІУС КІКІНЕЖДІ. **Гендерна ідентифікація у персоніфікованому образі Я юнацтва.** У статті представлено концепцію дослідження ідентифікації як соціально-психологічного феномену диференціації статі в онтогенезі. Створено психологічну модель статеворольової ідентифікації; узагальнено соціально-педагогічні чинники та особистісні детермінанти персоналізації гендерного Я. Розроблена та апробована модель гендерно-освітніх технологій як педагогічного супроводу статевої соціалізації особистості у період її дорослішання.

Ключові слова: гендерні ідентифікація, маскулінність, фемінність, андрогінність, образ Я.

OKSANA KIKINEŽDI, TAMARA GOWORUN, MARIUS KIKINEŽDI. **Identyfikacja genderowa w personifikowanym obrazie Ja młodzieży.** W artykule przedstawiono koncepcję badania identyfikacji jako społeczno-psychologicznego zjawiska różnicowania płci w ontogenezie. Stworzono model psychologiczny identyfikacji płciowej; uogólniono czynniki społeczno-pedagogiczne i osobowościowe determinanty personalizacji genderowego Ja. Ponadto opracowano i sprawdzono model technologii genderowo-edukacyjnych jako pedagogicznego uzupełnienia socjalizacji płciowej osobowości w okresie dorastania.

Słowa kluczowe: identyfikacja genderowa, maskulinizm, kobiecość, androgynia, obraz Ja.

ОКСАНА КИКИНЕЖДИ, ТАМАРА ГОВОРУН, МАРІУС КИКИНЕЖДИ. **Гендерная идентификация в персонифицированном образе Я юношества.** В статье представлена концепция исследования идентификации как социально-психологического феномена дифференциации пола в онтогенезисе. Создана психологическая модель полоролевой идентификации; обобщены социально-педагогические факторы и личностные детерминанты персонификации гендерного Я. Разработана и апробирована модель гендерно-образовательных технологий как педагогического сопровождения половой социализации личности в период её взросления.

Ключевые слова: гендерная идентификация, маскулинность, феминность, андрогенность, образ Я.

OKSANA KIKINEZHDI, TAMARA HOVORUN, MARIUSH KIKINEZHDI. **Gender identification in the personalized i image of the youth.** The article deals with the concept of research of identification as a social and psychological phenomenon of gender differentiation in ontogenesis. The suggested psychological model of sex-role identification helps to generalize external (social-educational) factors and personal determinants of the gender "I" personalization. The model of gender-educative technologies, as an educational accompaniment of personal sex socialization in the period of personal maturation, has been developed and tested.

Key words: gender identity, masculinity, femininity, androgyny, I image.