

Gender equality messages about marriage and family mentioned in the mass media in Vietnam

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ABSTRACT: Marriage and family are “hot” topics that are frequently mentioned in the media under many different aspects. This study explores which topics on marriage-family are mentioned the most, and how images of men and women appear in the family, specifically: on gender equality; affirming and honoring the position, role and ability of women in building, maintaining and developing Vietnam's traditional economy, politics, society and culture. Through research to overcome and gradually eliminate gender stereotypes in media messages, contribute to promoting gender equality through mass media in Vietnam.

Keywords: Gender equality; Gender stereotypes; Marriage and family; Media message; Vietnam.

I. INTRODUCTION

In many media products, the issue of gender equality has been integrated, making an important contribution to orienting and changing the behavior, thoughts, attitudes and feelings of women and men, gradually eliminating stereotypes, gender antagonism.

However, there are still many media products that reinforce gender stereotypes unconsciously. Articles and stories in the press often emphasize the roles of women and men based on gender stereotypes such as: women often do simple, service-related jobs and are always associated with domestic work, family, child care, housework; In married life, they are always patient, service-minded wives who lack independence. Men often do important jobs, participate in prominent fields with high income; being the breadwinner, having a decisive voice in the family and holding power; Active, independent, successful.

In addition to gender stereotypes that are unintentionally reflected in journalistic works, gender stereotypes are also reflected in the questions, comments, and instructions of some journalists that women must know how to cook well, be a hard-working housewife and pampering

all family members, especially her husband's family.

This study explores which topics on marriage-family are mentioned the most, and how male and female images appear in the family. Gender equality issues; affirming and honoring the position, role and ability of women in building, maintaining and developing Vietnam's traditional economy, politics, society and culture.

II. THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE GENDER EQUALITY MESSAGE ON MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MENTIONED IN THE MASS MEDIA IN VIETNAM TODAY

The family is the solid spiritual foundation of society, a resource for socio-economic development, and an important endogenous force for the sustainable development of the country. President Ho Chi Minh once affirmed: "Many families add up to form a society, a good society makes a better family, a good family makes a good society. The nucleus of society is the family".

For nearly 2 years now, the COVID-19 epidemic has been causing significant disturbances in society, upsetting the lives of many people and families. However, this is also a time for many people to find family values, bond together by activities that they are usually busy with, and do not have enough time for each other.

Humans were born on earth with a great desire to create and enjoy happiness. Therefore, under any circumstances, this human desire still burns strongly. When the Covid-19 epidemic is raging in many parts of the earth, people still find ways to express their desire for happiness. At this time, the concept and feeling of happiness is different from normal - happiness is understood deeper, wider, closer to reality. Happiness right now is not a bright smile next to the flowers with bright colors, but the calmness and alertness to cope with fierce challenges.

Happiness is a concept with extremely broad connotations; Each person at a different time has different conceptions and feelings about happiness. And so, happiness always exists around each person, in each person; the color and size of happiness can vary; happiness can be great things like world peace, people all over the planet don't worry about hunger and thirst; Happiness can also be in the small, simple things when a mother earns money to buy milk for her child, or when two children share a hat when it rains. Therefore, there will be many answers to the question "What is happiness?", because each person has his own concept and way of feeling happiness.

When the world becomes peaceful and peaceful, for every adult, happiness is having a family, having children, being able to do a job that is suitable to their ability and enjoying a worthy enjoyment of their efforts. . It is the simplest kind of happiness for hundreds of millions of people. As for those who have aspirations, have great ambitions, happiness can be at a higher level; that is always thinking, searching to do more good things, contributing more to the society. This is the driving force to promote excellent people in the fields of science, art, production and business; These motivations turn them into creative workers, creating breakthrough products in technology to make them rich. However, when they are rich, they bring their property to charity, to help the poor have jobs and jobs; have housing, have conditions to study.

More importantly for everyone, happiness is sharing joys and sorrows; be cared for, loved, taken care of loved ones; live in harmony and kindness in a large community. Therefore, the message "Love and share" has been a message throughout the five months since the world had the International Day of Happiness. In 2020, when the whole world was preparing to welcome the International Day of Happiness, a great disaster struck: An acute pneumonia caused by corona virus that sickened many people, originated in the Chinese city of Wuhan and spread rapidly. all over the world. At this point, little attention has been paid to where the virus came from; people are only interested in how to prevent this virus from causing harm. People of many countries around the world uphold the message of "Love and share" to "fight" together against the epidemic officially called Covid-19.

In the program "New Vitality" broadcast on November 6, 2017 with the theme "Women working in science", viewers got to know a female character who is good at information technology. However, this was considered unusual through the

questions and comments of the host (MC) "When you came to France, you used to do many men's jobs, can you tell about those things? yes" or "Have you had much success in the men's field?". Such questions carry the stereotype that the information technology industry is only for men. The MC and guests further commented that being an "information knight" for a woman is special, because of the biological difference between men and women. Women who have to give birth and raise children should have little time to research, so becoming a famous scientist is rare. In such analysis and commentary, the MCs and guests both clearly expressed their prejudices about the inferior ability of women compared to men and even considered it to be normal and a rule.

There are also some shows that showcase successful female figures, but when it comes to their success, viewers can see that implicit gender stereotypes are still perpetuated.

In the program "For fans", introducing singer Siu Black, viewers see next to her outstanding success an image of a lonely, unhappy woman in family life. This seems to implicitly confirm that a woman who is successful in her career has to sacrifice something. Their success is mentioned as something very extraordinary that a common woman does not have.

Another concept bearing a strong gender stereotype is the expectation that women must know how to cook well, be a hard-working housewife and please all family members, especially the husband's family.

In the article "Women do not lose themselves", published in the topic "Family life" (of the Capital Women's Newspaper) No. 40, (May 14, 2019), there is a paragraph "What's wrong with cleaning the house? there's not much, but some women also hire someone a week to clean, wash once a week... Some people have wondered why they got married? when women are deprived of all household chores, they themselves lose their role as "keepers of the fire in the house", so the atmosphere in the house becomes somewhat cold. Criteria and standards for evaluating the qualities and values of women carry heavy prejudice against women.

The article "Rethinking a little about gender equality" published in Tien Phong newspaper (December 20, 2020), also supports the view that women should stay at home to do housework. job, should we encourage some women after getting married to give up their work to men to focus more on their families, husbands just have to thank them for always having sticky rice and

sweet soup waiting at home? home, and have more opportunities to show off as a man."

In the program "New Vitality" (November 16, 2020), the MC asked the first question in the program "The brides-in-law, when they return to their husband's house, are most confused about the kitchen, right?". This is a leading question, but it implicitly reflects the notion that cooking is important for women; "If the bride gets up late, goes to the kitchen to find her mother-in-law has returned from the market and is preparing to cook and looks at her with unhappy eyes, what should the bride-to-be do?" once again affirming the above prejudice, "During the meal, what if the father-in-law said that salt in the market was reduced in price, son? what should a woman do?", the guest said that "in this case, a woman should join the customary profession and learn from experience to cook to suit everyone's taste". The guest gave advice: "If a woman wakes up late, she loses a lot of things, men are often afraid of their wives oversleeping, so they try to get up early", the MC gave a solution to sleeping late as "should change." new watch", the guest's advice and the MC's solution implicitly affirmed: cooking at home is women's work; Women have to get up early to cook for the whole family, to know how to cook well and to satisfy everyone's wishes. To be loved by everyone in the family, a woman must do a lot of work, sometimes make sacrifices and this is also the criterion to evaluate their perfection.

Along with reinforcing the stereotype that women have to take care of the kitchen and children, some articles even support the male breadwinner role in the family, such as "the man gives the woman what she has." feeling of being dependent on material life" (Man's bravery - Football Newspaper, May 19, 2020), or "No matter how talented a woman, when at home, she should retreat to her position. herself: a good wife, gentle, modest and a little obedient to her husband. If that wife relies on her to "be violent for money", to make decisions for the whole family, to encroach on her husband's power, inadvertently the "cathode" is turned into an "anode", but those two "anodes" repel each other is inevitable. weak. With Asian traditions and psychology, the main role still belongs to the husband. No matter how talented a woman is, she really feels happy and secure when she is nestled in her husband... Therefore, with big decisions in the family such as building a house, buying expensive items, orienting for a family. children study... the wife should only give her opinion for her husband's reference and decision-making authority" (VnExpress, May 13, 2020). This opinion has directed readers' awareness to

gender stereotypes that are barriers, preventing women from promoting their strengths to contribute to family and society, contrary to the policy of the Party and State to promote , encouraging each gender to make positive contributions to the family and society.

There are still many articles when reflecting on the reality of domestic violence that do not put the story of violence in the local or national context, only stopping to describe the violent behavior at the time of occurrence; providing incomplete and inaccurate information on the nature of domestic violence, causing harmful misconceptions in the community; limited story sources and lack of expert opinions. Some journalists even implicitly advocate for the issue of gender violence by the husband to resolve conflicts with his wife.

Some articles used language accusing the victim such as: Husband killed his wife because he was denied "love" (Vietnam.net), including the passage that Defendant Nguyen Tan Trung strangled and killed his wife, Cao Thi Nga, making a 7-year-old child an orphan simply because he refused to have a "marital relationship", the essence of this case is sexual violence because the victim does not agree with her husband's desire to have sex (Law on Domestic Violence Prevention and Control). The husband used force and authority to demonstrate the behavior of "forced sex". The fact that a husband strangles his wife to death is not only because he cannot satisfy his lust, but also proves his absolute ownership in the marriage relationship. The author should have strongly condemned the husband's violent behavior after reporting the phenomenon, but the article gave too brief information, such a way of reporting made the public pay attention to the behavior of the husband. wife's rejection than husband's sexual violence. Therefore, the public may very well turn to blame the wife - the victim.

There are still journalists implicitly advocating gender-based violence, for example, "and until today, when I couldn't stand Da Thao's excessive habits, Liem had to slap a slap like "heaven" as if expressing frustration. his uncontrollable betrayal", "grieved his conscience, Da Thao felt that he was nothing... That "heavenly" slap, Da Thao had to receive for a long time, had to ...". (Mother-in-law is like a mother - "Family Happiness" magazine of PNVN newspaper No. 83, September 5, 2020). Using violence to resolve conflicts is wrong and violates the physical rights of others. It should be analyzed so that the public can understand that it can still be resolved without using violence, but the author gives a message of

approval and support for the husband's use of violence to resolve conflicts. This is an indirect way to reinforce the view of many people in society: violence against women is an acceptable behavior, an effective way to force others to change.

Recently, on VTV3, the multi-episode series "Programming the heart". The film revolves around issues of love, marriage, family ... of modern social life. In which the journey to love and happiness of the characters is a process of confronting the gender stereotypes of each family, each person as well as the whole society. The character Vu Vu represents a new type of woman, very dynamic, confident, dare to think, dare to do... but always faces obstacles from gender stereotypes. After graduating from university, Vu Vu had to be skillful to overcome the barrier in his father's habit of looking down on women: "I told you before, girls who study a lot are only stubborn, just drag them back to get them for them. it's done with a husband" (episode 1). When she found a job, she was determined to strive to rise up at work, affirming her position and talent. But almost all the goodwill or malice of male colleagues towards her comes from irrational gender assumptions: "it's a girl, you have to take care of her lest she feel sorry for herself" (episode 3), " girls must be gentle, slow... not yelling, not exaggerating" (episode 4). Vu Vu's initial success in her career is also the time when she has to face the risk of family happiness being fractured. The cold wall erected between her and Hoang Lam is a series of gender stereotypes that used to exist in the traditional way of thinking (the inferiority complex of the husband, the tall wife, requiring the woman to take care of the housework, to give way. patience, obedience, loss...). Even at the time she fell into sadness, confusion and almost despair because her husband had fallen into the arms of another woman, the view of the family and the community did not seem to condemn her husband properly. like what he did. All efforts of relatives to defend her are only admonition and consolation in the direction of acceptance: "as a wife, you should endure patiently" (words of mother-in-law - vol. 35); "A man with five wives and seven concubines...the essence is that he still loves his wife..." (Vu Vu's father- vol. 37)...

The basic reason for this situation is that the society's awareness of gender and gender equality and the media is not complete and profound in terms of theory and science. In addition, the roles, functions and responsibilities of the press in raising the community's awareness of gender equality have not been specified in the

state's legal documents on the press. The Press Law only stipulates the general tasks of the press such as: propagandizing, disseminating, contributing to the construction and protection of the Party's lines, guidelines and policies, and laws of the State... The National Action Plan for the Advancement of Women in Vietnam to 2020, the Action Plan for the Advancement of Vietnamese Women for the period 2016-2020 and the Law on Gender Equality do not mention the roles and responsibilities of women in Vietnam. In the press, there are regulations on the responsibilities of the Ministry of Information and Communications and the mass media, but it is directly and mainly related to domestic violence prevention. The association of the role and responsibility of the press with the cause of promoting gender equality and the supervision of the press management agencies on this issue is still loose.

III. SOME SOLUTIONS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THROUGH MESSAGES IN THE MASS MEDIA IN VIETNAM

In particular, the first is propaganda and education to raise awareness of gender and gender equality, in which, it is necessary to have a synchronous coordination between three environments: education, school, family and society. societies, where gender stereotypes exist. Gender stereotypes affect all subjects, regardless of age, gender or living situation. Accordingly, in order to eliminate gender stereotypes, gender equality education must be considered as one of the main educational contents and integrated in the curricula of all levels, from preschool to higher education.

Communication is also an important force contributing to change the misconceptions about women and men. In some developed countries, besides honoring women, the media also promotes the role of men in the family. For example, programs in the kitchen with celebrities, forums to bring fathers to the family's heart... are programs that are loved and supported by many people.

Currently, problems of knowledge, science and technology can change very quickly, while problems of perception and prejudice still exist and it takes a long time to change. Therefore, in the immediate future, we need to have a forecast on job loss, the impact of technology on workers' employment, in order to make basic legal policies to protect female workers. At the same time, it is necessary to prepare workers with the ability to learn for life, participate in vocational training, and

change careers flexibly to access the labor market when facing job loss. Because compared to men, women are being negatively impacted more in the digital age.

Currently, there are still many stereotypes about women leaders. For example, the stereotype that men make better politicians and business leaders than women. Women as leaders are scrutinized and noticed more than men and pose more rigorous problems.

Many gender experts expressed their views, along with propaganda, education, awareness raising, communication and solutions on policies and laws, etc., awakening the potential to live with passions, aspirations, the will and bravery of women, promoting the sense of responsibility, empathy, sharing and skills that are still hidden in men is also a positive way to gradually erase gender stereotypes, change the face of society, towards gender equality.

The above statistics show barriers and challenges in the process of achieving gender equality goals and eliminating gender stereotypes. Vietnam will continue to make efforts to increase awareness of gender equality and change attitudes and ideas about gender that are prejudiced in society; promote international cooperation in addressing gender equality, especially in disadvantaged groups and in strategic areas such as education, health care and employment.

Currently, the Government is developing a National Strategy on Gender Equality for the 2021-2030 period on the basis of identifying gender inequality issues that need to be prioritized to be addressed. The Vietnam Women's Union is actively carrying out social criticism, contributing to solving gender inequality issues in the coming time.

Gender-sensitive communication is also a way of empowering women to work. Accordingly, each story, each article needs to ensure that it is accurately, fair, objective, unbiased and empathetic. Means evidence-based and contextually correct; Respect for the voice of female migrant workers instead of defaulting to stereotypes; The interviewee must be properly and clearly informed about the purpose of the interview and the use case for the photo; Be careful with the selection of images to accompany the story because misleading and sensational images associated with crime, violence, and abuse can give the wrong impression of the nature of the story and can lead

to confusion. the women in the story become victims (double trauma).

To do that, communicators need to make sure the context of the story is provided and that the story is fairly recorded; Ensure that migrants' voices are heard; Focus on the status quo of the story; Get informed consent of the informant, and inform them of the plan to collect and use the information; For minors, child-friendly language should be used in the presence of a legal guardian; Avoid sharing or disclosing information that easily identifies/identifies the person experiencing violence, even if their real name is not revealed, being cautious of details that may reveal their identity; Avoid using language that promotes stereotypes; Do not comment on the respondent's appearance and voice; and Avoid using images that may create a negative impression of migrant women.

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