The Relationship between Stereotypes and Misbehavior

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Abstract: A stereotype is a preconceived and oversimplified image or concept of a certain person or object. Prior research indicates that physical attractiveness and aggression are related, and crime and violence are connected with stereotypical black faces. Through reviewing of previous literature, the relationship among stereotype, aggression, and violence are discussed in this paper. Physical attractiveness such as beauty or ugly often lead to aggression. The reaction to physical attractiveness among males and females is different. Male participants were more likely to engage in unprovoked and reactive aggression if they were unattractive. Attractiveness predicted derogation of opponents more than any other psychopathic trait among female participants. Furthermore, stereotypical Black faces such as wide nose and full lips linked to crime and violence. The Black facial features sometimes lead to memory error. Moreover, factors such as envy and restrictive emotionality have a strong connection with stereotype and aggression. In conclusion, stereotype is both associated with aggression and violence. Limitations from previous research and suggestions for potential future studies are discussed.

1. Introduction

A stereotype is a fixed and oversimplified image or notion of a specific type of person that is widely held, such as physical attractiveness or facial traits, that can lead to aggression. Different types of stereotypes can lead to various reactions or impressions. Some of them are nonverbal cues such as physical attractiveness or facial features. There is a relationship between physical attractiveness namely beauty or ugly and aggression like neglect and bullying. Furthermore, stereotypical Black faces are often associated with criminality and brutality. These facial features also could lead to memory error in decision processes. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to discuss the relationship between physical attractiveness and aggression, how stereotypical black faces relate to crime and violence, and why stereotype would induce aggression.

2. Physical attractiveness and aggression

2.1. What is physical attractiveness and its relation to aggression

Physical attractiveness (beauty or ugly) and aggression are related. Previous research has found a "pretty is good effect" as well as that unattractiveness is linked to negative attitudes and behaviors from others, leading to stereotypes such as "beauty is good" or "ugly is bad" [1]. For example, Unattractive infants are more likely to encounter negative views from their parents and onlookers, and unattractive children may be adversely influenced by preschool teachers and bullied more throughout their pre-teen years later in life [2]. Aggression later in life is linked to negative attitudes from caregivers and peers. Therefore, unattractiveness may result in negative treatment from others [3].

There is a link between unattractiveness and aggression risk factors (neglect and bullying). Lower attractiveness has been connected to negative mental health consequences [3]. In correlational and experimental investigations, personality qualities such as dominance, self-centeredness, and unemotionality have been linked to interpersonal aggressiveness. Thus, beauty and risk factors, as well as personality qualities connected to violence, are linked [3].

2.2. Gender difference serves as vehicle for aggression

Males with low attractiveness were more likely to engage in physical aggression and denigrate their opponents [3]. Alternatively, attractive women may be more sensitive to insult. High attractiveness predicted derogation of opponents' beauty, particularly "opponent's photo" after an ego threat in females more than males [3].

Environment correlates to antisocial behavior. Male children who are unattractive are subjected to negative parental and peer attitudes, as well as aggressive behavior. Therefore, childhood maltreatment could be a factor in male unattractiveness and violence [3]. Another factor could be testosterone associated with aggression. It has been discovered that men with broader cheekbones are more aggressive [4], faces in "masculinization" of photographs are rated as less attractive, more socially dominant, and less warm, honest, and cooperative by observers [3]. As a result, due to negative emotions from caregivers early in life, unattractiveness may function as a risk factor for violence. Later, testosterone may be linked to lower attractiveness, as well as more socially dominant, aggressive conduct [3].

Higher female attractiveness is linked to increased derogation of the opponent. When it comes to primed status motives, the research revealed that women engage in indirect aggression [5], and women experience greater pressure to appear attractive, which is especially intense among attractive women who are more appearance-conscious and emotionally sensitive to criticism than unattractive ones [3]. Because societal expectations influence their probability to aggress indirectly rather than physically, attractive women may defend themselves more vehemently against "beauty ego threats" suggesting a stronger interest in retaining attractiveness [3]. Attractiveness and the influence of attractiveness on interpersonal violence may be related. Furthermore, (un)attractiveness may put people at risk for environmental conditions linked to aggression, such as physical abuse in men or pressure on women to preserve beauty-related social standing [3].

3. Stereotypical Black faces relate to crime and violence

3.1. Stereotypical Black facial features and how it relates to crime and violence

Stereotypical Black faces, such as those with a large nose and thick lips, are frequently linked to crime and violence. For instance, Black faces are recognized as angry sooner than White faces [6], When comparing the physical displays of anger to those of enjoyment, it is easier to categorize Black targets [7]. Furthermore, because of the relationship between Black men and supposed aggression or criminality, they are stereotypically associated with rage [8]. Even though even facial expressions can be unclear at times, Black men are perceived as more hostile and frightening than White males [9]. Moreover, the false image of Black males as physically menacing is seen as possibly hostile, resulting in hypervigilance in their evaluation [10].

Threat cues can also be seen in the craniofacial structure. For instance, face breadth and a low brow position can suggest aggressive tendencies and may be linked to aggressive conduct [11]. Therefore, facial form may signal possible threat and may even activate threat anticipation [11].

Certain faces may appear to be more racially distinctive, influencing the judgments made about that face. Because they are more closely identified with the category "Black", Afrocentric faces are more readily associated with negative racial stereotypes than non-Afrocentric faces [12]. In comparison to Black men without Afrocentric faces, men with Afrocentric facial traits are more prone to be misclassified into negative, criminal behaviors and are more likely to face the death penalty in murder cases [13]. White male faces, on the other hand, are often associated with Afrocentric traits. White males with Afrocentric face traits are likewise more likely than White men without Afrocentric features to be evaluated negatively [14]. Therefore, the link between Afrocentric facial traits and suspected criminality is not only influenced by skin tone, but also by subsequent judgment [15].

3.2. Afrocentric features lead to threat

Facial expression may be difficult to interpret as non-threatening if Afrocentric characteristics activate negative racial stereotypes. Face type as a visual signal may elicit instinctive responses [11].

Afrocentric faces, regardless of whether they are neutral or happy, might be viewed as threatening [11]. The findings reveal that stereotypical Black/Afrocentric faces are associated with danger. When stereotypical appearances were classified, the "threatening" response was more prevalent than when non-stereotypical faces were classified [11]. Furthermore, facial type and mood have a substantial perceptual connection. Moreover, at the level of the stereotyped face category, decision criteria were more biased toward the "threatening" reaction [11].

Afrocentric faces are more likely to get prejudiced assessments than non-Afrocentric ones because they relate to criminality and violence [16]. Because the news media and entertainment outlets frequently portray Black men as criminals, the public may establish a negative link between Black males and crime [11]. Anger (threat) expressions may be inherent in the Afrocentric face. Regardless of their intended emotion, men with Afrocentric faces are more likely to be perceived as threatening than men without Afrocentric faces [11]. The social category of Black males as criminal may support the view of Afrocentric faces as threatening. Small eyes, large nostrils, and a prominent jaw are all examples of cranial structures that are inherently threatening [11]. Aggressive attitudes are regularly connected with certain craniofacial traits, which influences the speed and accuracy of emotion identification [11]. Some traits of Afrocentric faces can be misinterpreted as a sign of aggressive behavior [11].

People interpret Black men's facial expression differently depending on their facial anatomy, which is influenced by varied perception and decision-making contributions. In a variety of situations, black men with Afrocentric traits may be perceived as aggressive [11]. Due to the automatic communication of interpreting facial cues, poor first impressions could have a negative impact on many aspects of daily life [11].

3.3. Stereotypical Black features lead to memory error

3.3.1. Decision-making and criminal behaviors

False identification of Black men, who are the most affected ethnic group by identification errors, is supported by decision processes outside of police procedures [14]. Face classification based on ethnic stereotypes associated with certain face characteristics may influence face identification [14]. Aggression, brutality, and criminality are negative preconceptions of Black men's behavior, that have been linked to stereotypical face traits [17]. Men with stereotyped facial traits were projected to be more aggressive in the future, which has been linked to violence and criminality, as well as biased judgments in actual trial outcomes [14].

3.3.2. How stereotypical Black faces influence decision processes

For racial stereotypes and stereotypical Black faces, similar category-congruent effects were seen, have been discovered using race-based category activation. After being presented with a stereotypical rather than an atypical Black face, participants detected degraded photos of crime-relevant things faster [14]. Therefore, triggering a crime caused attentional biases toward stereotyped faces, resulting in misidentifications in a following face recognition task [17].

Black men with stereotypical characteristics are more likely to be misdiagnosed than those with fewer ethnically identifiable traits, and they are also more strongly linked to criminality [14]. Various facial types have been linked to various jobs and classifications. Criminal designations were linked to stereotypical facial traits [18]. Face recognition was influenced by connections between criminal category labels and highly ethnic facial traits in both Black and non-Black participants, according to the findings [14]. Participants made stereotypical associations. Black people are more likely to be associated with criminal categories than with neutral ones [14]. The link between criminality and ethnically Black facial traits applies to everybody who has these features, whether they are Black [14].

3.3.3. Why stereotypical Black features affect decision-making: racial category membership

Several research have shown that belonging to a racial category is a malleable concept. The search pattern was notably different for those who were primed with their White identification rather than their Black identity, which could explain how subjective context influences face processing flexibility

[14]. Face processing and categorization were influenced by subjective assumptions of racial category membership [14]. Stereotypic information related with face types and criminal activity were among the expectations that helped people retrieve equivocal memorial material [14]. The classification functions as a face-processing shortcut, giving in-group faces greater attention than out-group ones [19]. When a face is classified as criminal, the processing of key facial traits stops, making it impossible to distinguish the face from other faces when it is retrieved, perhaps leading to misidentification [14].

Numerous research in the social psychology literature have shown that Black men are unfairly judged as criminals. According to an examination of courtroom outcomes, Black men are evaluated unfairly because people have stereotypes about them [20]. This negative link could be traced back to societal norms influenced by past and present media coverage of Black men and criminal activity [14]. In addition, the media offers a stereotyped portrayal of Black women [21].

Males with stereotypical looks were more likely than men with uncommon features to be misidentified as criminals. Faces with conventional Black features were more likely to be associated with positive traits, while unusual faces were more likely to relate to negative ones [14]. The categorisation into the criminal category is based on stereotyped face traits. Therefore, regardless of gender or race, the link between criminality and Afrocentric characteristics is ubiquitous [14]. The adverse prejudices and judgments are most likely founded on long-held cultural and societal ideas that Black people are inferior to humans [22]. Regardless of the extent of prejudice or participant ethnicity within a grouping of individuals who hold ideas or are exposed to certain groups of people, this prejudiced connection is widespread in society [14].

4. Factors: why stereotype would induce aggression

4.1. Envy and stereotype

Because it is founded on social comparison processes, envy is an intrinsically social emotion that develops when people see someone else's relative advantage [23]. People are just as envious of groups as they are of individual targets when it comes to prejudice [23]. A successful out-group can inspire aggressive and group-based envy [23]. Because social comparisons are almost natural, confronting a high-status target may highlight an individual's own inadequacy. People are more prone to create contrastive feelings such as envy if a high-status target is likewise competitive [23].

4.2. Automatic activation requires no cognitive resources

The automatic activation of the criminal Black male stereotype does not use any cognitive resources [24]. When people categorize others, they make snap decisions and tend to confirm their first predisposition. If they are motivated, they will seek additional information [25]. According to a previous study, a Black furious prime generated adverse preconception, whereas a Black smiling prime reduced negative reactions [11]. Automatic racial stereotyping, which promotes perceptions of harm in everyday interactions, can be mitigated through emotional expressiveness [11].

4.3. Association among emotionality, stereotype, and aggression

4.3.1. Stereotype and emotionality

Women are more inclined to communicate their emotions with others and express their emotions more freely and confidently than men [26]. Women are not necessarily more emotional than men, but they do express their feelings more frequently. Women cry more often than men, which could be one of the reasons, or the stereotype of the emotional woman [26]. Furthermore, this stereotype may act as a self-fulfilling prophecy: because women are perceived to be more emotional, they are allowed and taught to be more emotional [26]. Therefore, there is an interaction between sex stereotypes and emotional expressiveness, rather than a one-way link [26].

Emotional displays may have varied societal consequences for men and women [26]. In comparison to males, women predict negative social consequences from their violent behavior, which explains the link between sex differences and aggression [26]. Even though men and women react emotionally in

many situations and in similar ways, women express their emotions more freely [26].

4.3.2. Emotionality and aggression

The link between restricting emotionality and aggression is mediated by emotional dysregulation. Men's aggressive behavior is influenced by restrictive emotionality (RE) and emotional dysregulation [27]. Rather than an overall incapacity to manage internal experiences, this is motivated by a lack of acceptance and inability to tolerate emotional events [28]. Emotional dysregulation has been linked to both children's troublesome behaviors and adult psychopathology. Therefore, emotional dysregulation is likely to have a role in the link between how males deal with their emotions and their aggressive behavior [28].

Aggression appears to be a coping mechanism for some males to manage emotional dysregulation and restore control over interpersonal circumstances involving feelings of vulnerability and negative affect arousal [29]. Hostile behavior can be seen as a maladaptive by-product of inefficient or maladaptive emotion and cognitive self-regulation, with ineffective or maladaptive self-regulatory abilities linked to a higher likelihood of violent behavior [30]. In addition, people who believe that anger is a good way to control emotions are more likely to act violently toward others [31].

The link between men's inclination to suppress emotions and their use of physical aggression is mediated by emotional control deficiencies. The two most powerful aspects of emotion dysregulation were engaging in no impulsive responses to emotions and accepting and enduring challenging emotional states [28]. Men's greater proclivity for emotional restraint may result in general weaknesses in their capacity to recognize, interpret, and tolerate emotional states [28].

Men's dread of their own emotions leads to aggressive behavior. As a result, worry brought on by emotional anguish may increase the likelihood of using aggressive tactics such as pushing, yelling, shouting, and posturing [28]. If men are unable to accept or distinguish the emotions they are experiencing, they may be unable to build adequate regulation skills to control those emotions and may resort to violence to end their feelings of vulnerability or confusion [32]. As a result, males who lack emotional understanding and an acceptable outlet to communicate with high RE may turn to externalizing behavior as their primary means of expressing negative interior sensations [33]. The findings imply that RE, which is linked to a diminished desire to accept emotion states, is linked to aggressive conduct in men [28].

The importance of violence prevention programs that teach men how to better recognize and accept vulnerable emotion states, as well as how to convey pain through nonviolent ways [28]. Men's ability to detect emotional states and establish nonaggressive ways to communicate psychological discomfort and manage emotions may improve with psychological treatments that debunk inaccurate thinking patterns about "appropriate" male behavior [28].

5. Conclusion

There is a clear relationship among stereotype, aggression, and violence. Stereotype generates both aggression and violence due to envy and restrictive emotionality. The targets who are high-status or competitive are more likely to be envied, which could lead to aggression and violence. The purpose of this review is attempting to reduce prejudice or even discrimination to certain groups of people within the society so that the tension among different groups and crime rate could decrease. The several previous research only focus on certain groups of people such as a large group of college students. Future research could employ a different methodology for data collection and focus on solving the problem.

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