

A sociology study of male self image

Business



The research chose to examine whether the male self image has been changed by feminism. The stated aims of this research were to:

- * Investigate attitudes to masculinity from a representative sample of males in the local population
- * Compare these views with those of a group of his peers and fellow sixth formers at Christleton High School
- * Examine how his findings can be explained, evaluated and understood in the light of other sociological studies

Other aims the author wanted to explore were:

- * How far the practical demands of feminism in terms of the fair division of domestic labour between the sexes has affected the everyday lives of a group of ordinary men
- * How far any concept of the 'new man' has entered the consciousness of actual men.

His primary method was 40 structured questionnaires therefore the method used collected quantitative data and adopted a positivist approach. The research may have decided to adopt a positivist method to conduct his study because he wanted to compare the views of his peers those of a mixed group drawn from the adult's population of Chester. The main focus of his investigation was to evaluate and compare two distinct age groups. Access to the younger sample was easier to obtain than the older sample and where to draw the older sample from was more of a problem. As he wanted a sample with social characteristics of the wider population he distributed his questionnaires to two areas in Boughton to eliminate one group dominating in terms of a class or age.

(260)Section C: The author did mention that there were problems in delivering the questionnaires to the older sample because of limited time and the fact that delivery and collection had to be done by hand, because of

a low response rate he then decided that he would double the amount of questionnaires given in the older sample so that he would retrieve the original amount that he wanted. It is likely that Laza decided to use structured questionnaires to compare the views of his peers with those of older males. He chose to only question males self images. By using questionnaires Laza could gain an appropriate number for this type of research. Laza was a sociology student carrying out a pilot investigation therefore there were practical issues to consider such as time, resources and administration.

To deal with issues with such as a low response rate is always a common problem with postal questionnaires. Laza distributed 25 questionnaires in Boughton and 25 Boughton Heath then used the first 10 successfully recovered in each location. Quantitative data was useful for measuring the relationship between age and the 'male self image'. As a student his research was influenced by a number of practical issues by using self-completion questionnaires it limits the expense, it is cheap to classify. It was possible to survey a larger sample (i. e.

both Boughton and Boughton Heath). It also allowed Laza to analyse his results faster. By collecting quantitative data he could then identify patterns and trends as well as correlations. Therefore Laza could examine the relationship between male self-image, social class and age his sample was representative of the population he wanted to investigate i. e. males with characteristics of the wider population.

(283)Section D: The findings of this new research were that most of the participants who completed the questionnaire were familiar with the term ‘ new man’ and did seem to want to agree with some ‘ new man’ policies. One of the first results concluded was that ninety-seven per cent of the respondents agreed with a woman’s right to choose an abortion, with this result most of the respondents agreed from both sectors apart from one sixth former from the first sample frame who disagreed (probably because of religious reasons, or conscientious objections etc). This could mean more acceptance of feminism which is part of the ‘ new man’. Another finding was that every respondent stated in the questionnaire that they use some type of specified male grooming products, the most popular choice being deodorant which was not surprising. With this result it turned out that with the sixth form sample all of them said that they use deodorant unlike just seventeen of the adult population.

Evidently theoretically the males in lazas research had been affected by feminism, and lazas choice of methodology allowed him to verify his hypothesis. Self completion questionnaires allowed laza to draw interesting conclusions from the respondents answers. It allowed allowed him look at the effect of feminism on the mens behaviour. However the length of questionnaire ran to three pages which treated two problems. Firstly it may have deterred respondents as it would be time consuming. Secondly for laza to analyse the answers it would be time consuming.

Respondents may not have understood the questions, therefore their answers may have been incomplete, illegible, or in comprehensible. Closed questions may also have limited their responses, therefore this may have

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effected the validity of lazarus research. However by using a quantitative method he increased the reliability of his findings. Lazarus tried to ensure that his sample was representative with regards to social class by distributing his questionnaires in two areas one predominantly working class and the other middle class. This sample was also representative in terms of age two distinct groups were represented.