PSYC 208: LIFE SPAN DEVELOPMENT

GLOBAL ASSIGNMENT

Culture and Gender Role Expectations:

An important aspect of culture is expectations about gender-based behaviors and attributes. Researchers have investigated advertisements in many different countries to determine the messages conveyed about gender roles. These studies consistently find gender stereotyping across cultures (Milner & Collins, 2000). This assignment uses a content analysis of magazine assignments in order to explore culture and gender role expectations.

TO THE STUDENT:

Select two recent magazines, one targeted to men and one targeted to women. Read the descriptions of coding categories and then using the coding sheet provided; tally the number of advertisements that fall under each category. Note any additional findings of interest that might not be reflected in the number of advertisements. For example, you might see the same number of medication ads for me and women but for the men the advertisements are for muscle builders and for women they are antidepressants. Once you have coded your date, respond to the questions that follow.

CODING CATEGORIES:

Alcohol- beer, wine, liquor or beverage mix for alcoholic drinks

Apparel- clothes (except sport shoes) glasses, watches, jewelry. handbags, wallets and other accessories

Automotive- car, trucks, car repair services

Beauty and Personal Care- cosmetics, hair products, skin care, deodorants, toothpaste, feminine hygiene, cologne/perfume, breath fresheners

Child and Baby Care-diapers, baby food, toys, books, music for children

Cleaning-laundry detergent, furniture polish, household cleaners, deodorizers

Crafts and Collectibles-hobby related objects, collectible objects

Electronic Products- computers, software, fax machines, printers, phones, TV’s, speakers

Entertainment-movies, events, music

Financial Services- banking, brokerage services, tax preparation

Food and non-alcoholic beverages- anything to eat or drink

Home Products-appliances, furniture, flooring, fixtures

Medication and Vitamins-all

Pets-food, services and accessories for pets

Sports and outdoor equipment-exercise equipment, bikes, gym bags, skis, sport shoes

Tobacco products

Travel-information on travel destinations, tours, travel products

MAGAZINE CODING SHEET

PRODUCT WOMEN’S MAGAZINE MEN’S MAGAZINE

Alcohol

Apparel

Automotive

Beauty & Personal Care

Child &Baby Care

Cleaning

Crafts and Collectibles

Electronic Products

Entertainment

Financial Services

Food & Beverages (non-alcoholic)

Home Products

Medications & Vitamins

Pets

Sports and Outdoor

Tobacco

Travel

QUESTIONS FOR CULTURE AND GENDER ASSIGNMENT

1. Based on the data you collected, describe the cultural expectations of women and of men as depicted in the magazine advertisements.
2. To what extent do you believe these messages shape gender-typed behavior? Are these messages primarily reinforced or contradicted elsewhere in the culture? Please explain.
3. John Williams and Deborah Best (1990) found a great deal of consensus across cultures in the attributes associated with males and females. In a study of sex role stereotypes involving 30 different countries, being female in these countries was associated with, for example, being attractive, dependent, emotional, sensitive and weak, whereas being males was associated with being adventurous, dominant, independent and strong. Did you find any indications of these attributes in the magazine ads you examined? If so, please give an example.

References:

Milner, L. M. & Collins, J. M. (2000). Sex role portrayals and the gender of nations. Journal of advertising, 29, 67-79.

Williams, J. & Best, D. (1990). Measuring sex stereotypes. A thirty-nation study. Newbury Park., C.A. Sage.