EXPLORING YOUNG PEOPLE'S INFORMATION LANDSCAPES IN THE CONTEXT OF GENDER AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN SCOTLAND

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Overview

MSc Science & Technology Studies (STS)

University of Edinburgh

Supervised by Catherine Lyall

ESRC/SDS Sponsored

Background & Rationale

A critical evaluation of the "information landscapes" of young people in Scotland.

Explore the relationship between gender, career development and vocational choice.

Interdisciplinary study covering intersections between career development, information science and social science.

Gap in extant knowledge about the impact of gendered information landscapes.
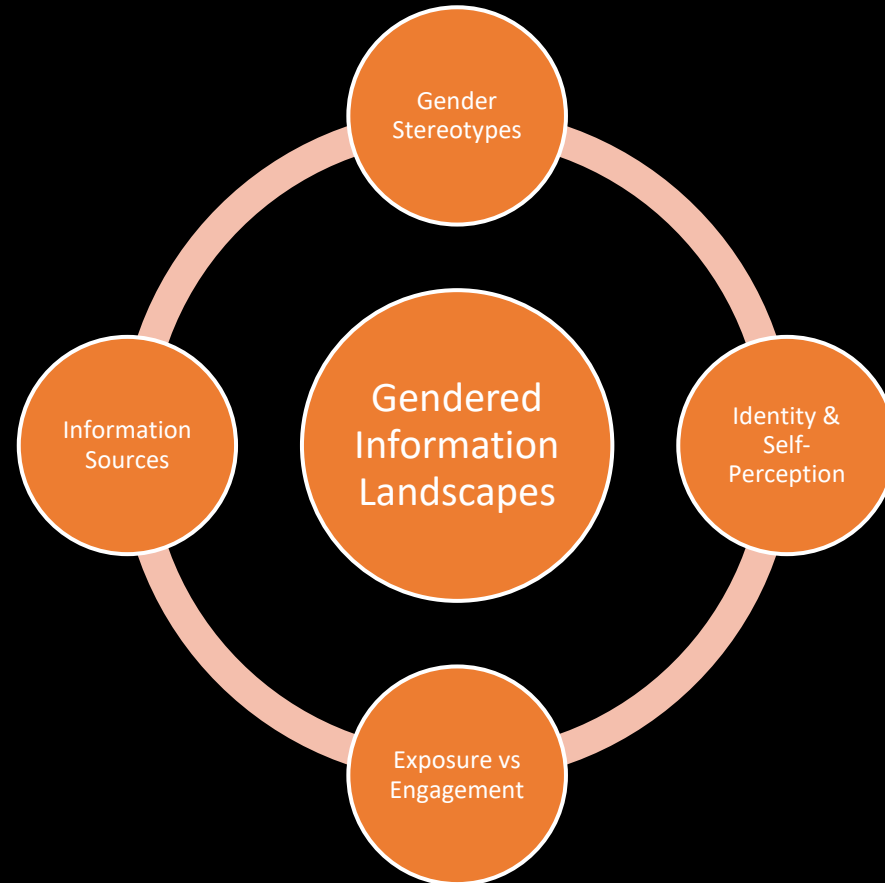
To address skills shortages and occupational segregation in STEM and HEED

To inform future SDS policy and practice

Pilot study for thesis – testing research method

Key Concepts

Research Questions

RQ1 To what extent do young people have control over how their information landscapes form, and how much agency do they have within them?

RQ2 What type of sources do young people in Scotland get careers information from and how might these sources be gender-stereotyped?

RQ3 In what way do gender stereotypes affect young people's sense of identity, perception of possible selves, self-efficacy, and career choices?
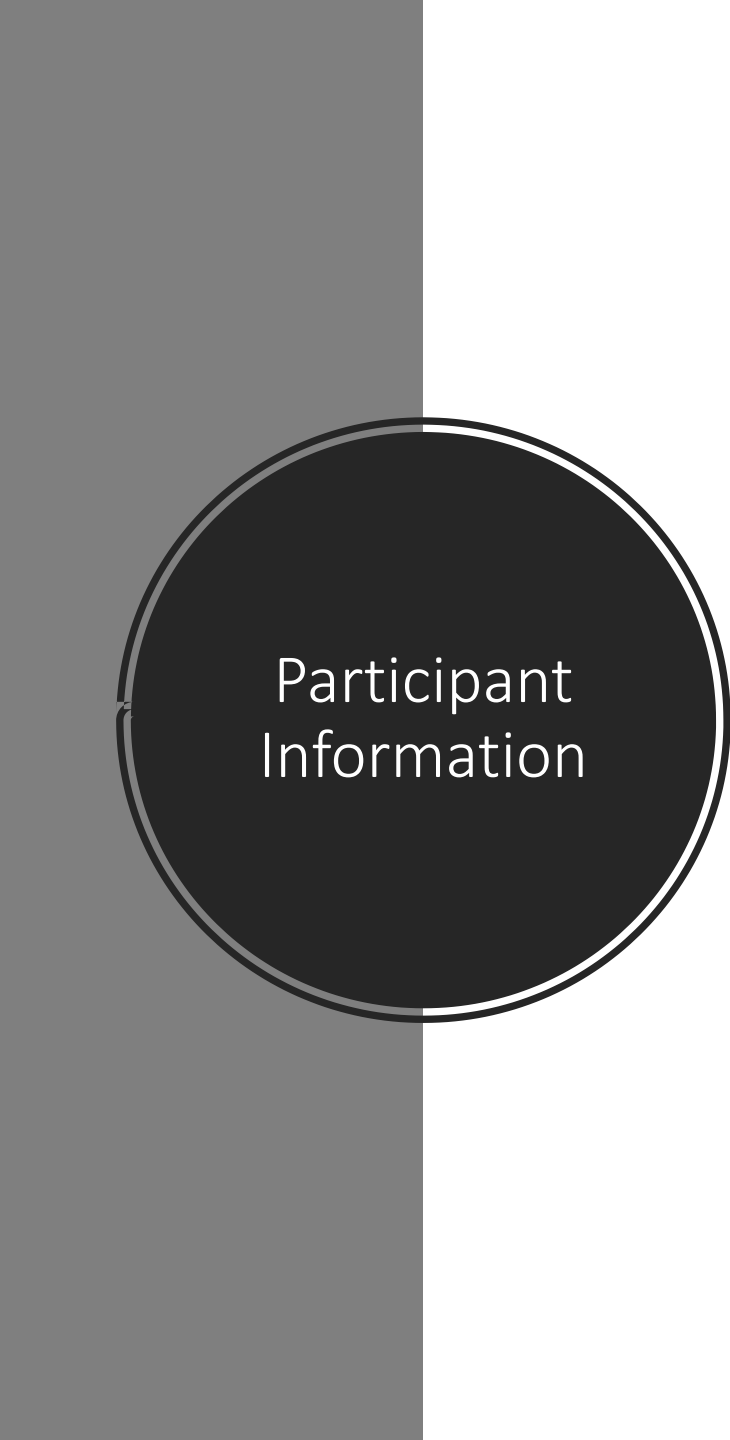
RQ4 Why have existing government initiatives failed to tackle gender stereotyping in career choice?

Methods & Methodology

- Theoretical framework informed by literature review

- 2 Small Focus Groups and 2 interviews with Scottish Careers Advisors employed by SDS

- Nonprobability (Purposive) Sampling

- Inductive, Interpretivist approach

Participant Information

LABEL	PSEUDONYM	GENDER IDENTITY	AGE RANGE	JOB ROLE
Participant 1	Poppy	Female	25-34	School/Post School CA
Participant 2	Lily	Female	35-44	Work Coach
Participant 3	Daisy	Female	45-54	School/Post School CA & Work Coach
Participant 4	Rose	Female	18-24	School CA
Participant 5	Violet	Female	18-24	School/Post School CA
Participant 6	Iris	Female	45-54	School/Post School CA
Participant 7	Heather	Female	25-34	School CA
Participant 8	Hyacinth	Female	35-44	Work Coach
Participant 9	Ivy	Female	35-44	School CA & Work Coach
Participant 10	Holly	Female	45-54	School CA
Participant 11	Dahlia	Female	25-34	School CA
Participant 12	Tulip	Female	25-34	Post School CA

Key Findings

Information Sources

- Despite the dominance of technology most young people find it easier to engage with information in non-digital formats especially that communicated by parents, teachers and peers

Agency & Career Maturity

- Information landscapes tend to be formed around young people through passive exposure

- Most participants thought that young people do not have the maturity or skills to be able to actively search for, process and use information for career decision making purposes

Gender Stereotypes & Identity

Gender stereotypes can influence identity, aspirations and self-efficacy from a young age

Traditional structures within education and the labour market can heavily reinforce stereotypes

Career Policy & Initiatives

- Some felt that policies and initiatives can be useful to introduce young people to other subjects/options, but many suggested they can have opposite effect

- The language used in policies can perpetuate gender stereotypes as can the people delivering the initiatives

Implications for Policy

Consideration needs to be given to the way that policies are written to ensure gender neutral language is used and that stereotypes are not reinforced

There is a need for greater cooperation, communication and alignment between different groups of stakeholders involved in creating and implementing gendered policies and career initiatives

Impact

- CIAG
- Academia & Educators
- Young People
- Employers & LM
- Economy
- Society

Thanks for Watching