

Assessing Hypergender Ideologies: Development and Initial Validation of a Gender-Neutral Measure of Adherence to Extreme Gender-Role Beliefs

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Hypermasculinity and hyperfemininity are two gender-specific personality dimensions that represent adherence to extremely traditional gender-role ideologies. The present studies were conducted to develop and validate a gender-neutral measure of adherence to these extreme stereotypic gender beliefs. From a pool of 142 potential items, item analyses resulted in an internally consistent 57-item Hypergender Ideology Scale (HGIS) that was significantly, positively correlated with hypermasculinity and hyperfemininity. Moreover, the HGIS was strongly correlated with scales that were used to validate measures of hypermasculinity and hyperfemininity. Implications for the study of adherence to stereotypic gender roles, and of hypergender ideology as a personality constellation independent of gender, are discussed. © 1996 Academic Press, Inc.

It has been argued that people are socialized from a very early age to accept that men and women are different. As a result, people are subjected to different sets of behavioral norms (Bem, 1984). Gender-role ideologies represent specific

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expectations that define how men and women ought to behave within society and with each other. For example, Griffin (1971) and others (e.g., Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991; Muehlenhard, Harney, & Jones, 1992; Weis & Borges, 1973) contend that men are socialized to be dominant and aggressive and to view themselves as sexual initiators, while women are socialized to be passive and submissive and to view themselves as sexual objects.

One way to classify gender-role ideologies is along a continuum ranging from contemporary to traditional beliefs (Best & Williams, 1993). Contemporary ideologies tend to be egalitarian, view men and women as equals, and reject the domination of one gender over the other. Traditional ideologies, in contrast, tend to be non-egalitarian, view men as more important than women, and accept as given that men exert control and dominance over women.

Many researchers have investigated the influence of adherence to traditional gender ideologies on behaviors, thoughts, and attitudes. Research indicates, for example, that gender stereotypes are common in the media, particularly television (Lovdal, 1989; Signorielli, 1989). Bem (1984) and others (e.g., Daniels, 1995) have found that sex-typed individuals were more likely to use self-generated, sex-typed terminology to describe themselves than non-sex-typed individuals. In addition, studies investigating gender stereotypes and leadership indicate that violations of accepted gender stereotypes increase negative affective reactions, particularly for women (Butler & Geis, 1990; Costrich, Feinstein, Kidder, Marecek, & Pascale, 1975; Crawford, 1988; O'Leary, 1974).

Gender stereotypes influence sex-related variables; for example, identification with gender-stereotypic characteristics appears to influence male and female self-reported sexual experience and arousal, as well as dating preferences (Garcia, 1982). Smith, Byrne, and Fielding (1995) found that members of dating couples were similar in their acceptance of extreme gender stereotypes at levels higher than would be expected by chance. Several researchers have reported significant correlations between adherence to traditional gender ideologies and variables related to sexual aggression such as rape myth acceptance (Burt, 1980) and the expectation of sexual compensation after paying for a date (Muehlenhard, 1988). Within a cross-cultural perspective, it appears that sexual aggression is most prevalent in patriarchal societies with rigid, traditional sex roles and social norms that included acceptance of interpersonal violence and the necessity of dominance and toughness in men (McConahay & McConahay, 1977; Sanday, 1981). From research on individual differences in people's acceptance of extremely stereotypic gender beliefs, two personality dimensions, *hypermasculinity* in men (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984) and *hyperfemininity* in women (Murnen & Byrne, 1991), have been identified that represent gender-specific adherence to traditional sex roles.

HYPERMASCULINITY

Several theorists have argued that sexual aggression is a major component of machismo (Brownmiller, 1975), that sexually aggressive men tend to identify

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