

PsychTests Releases Results Of A Gender Roles Study: Some Old Ways Die Hard

Psychtests.com reveals a few gaps between men and women's views on gender roles.

Montreal, Canada – April 20, 2010 – PsychTests AIM Inc., one of the web's foremost source of personality assessments, released their Gender Roles Test in February 2010, with a separate version for men and women. According to their statistical results, while people are slowly adopting more modern views as to men and women's place in the world, there are still some traditions that we find difficult to let go.

If you're a man, how would you feel about being a subordinate employee to a high-powered and very assertive female manager? If you're a women searching for a reputable nanny, would you think twice about a male caretaker for your children, despite his exceptional references? Some people may be all for narrowing the gender gap, but when the issue hits close to home, being politically correct doesn't come easy.

When it comes to their work life, women who took PsychTests' gender roles test generally had more modern attitudes towards gender roles. Women were not only more comfortable with the idea of challenging traditional gender roles at work, but they were also more likely to act in accordance with their modern attitudes by, for example, wholeheartedly pursuing traditionally male positions, hiring women for traditional male positions or vice versa, or turning to a male colleague for emotional support and encouragement at work. Male test-takers, on the other hand, felt that there are certain job positions that are more appropriate for men (judge, carpenter, prison guard), and others more suited to women (nurse, administrative assistant). In addition, men are more likely to endorse stereotypic traits of how males behave at work, such as male employees are more "intimidating", and more likely to "steal your ideas" than women are.

When PsychTests assessed men and women's views on gender roles in the personal life realm, the opinions revealed a mix of modern and traditional opinions. Both men and women enjoy chivalry (who says it's dead?), but the majority of men (53%) felt that they should pay for the first date, while the population of female test-takers had a variety of views, from going "Dutch" to suggesting that whoever initiated the date should pay. But it isn't all knights in shining armor and damsels winking coquettishly. Both men and women added a modern twist, generally believing that it's ok for a woman to ask a man out on a date - and to propose.

"These results are preliminary – we are still collecting data." points out Dr. Jerabek. "But the initial results are already fascinating. We seem to be all over the place, with modern views in some situations and hanging onto traditional ones in others. For example, 67% of the men said that they don't mind helping around the house, but 42% of men don't like the idea that their lady might have had more sexual partners than they've had. And the stigma of being considered promiscuous if they initiate sex with a man is fading for women (only 2% of women think it's inappropriate and 12% of men), but there are still some ladies out there (36%) who want to be fully taken care of financially by their men. So in the end, while we may think progressively, there are just some beliefs and preferences that die hard."

An area in which men and women seemed to differ significantly was in their views on childhood gender roles. Men were more likely to encourage children to take on gender roles that are “appropriate” for them, particularly in regards to their own kids. It seems that some men are uncomfortable with the idea of their sons stepping away from what would be considered traditional hobbies and behaviors (e.g. choosing to play with dolls instead of more masculine toys), and more men than women (51% and 27% respectively) would actively discourage such behavior. A greater percentage of women than men would encourage their daughters to reach for any goal, despite it being considered more appropriate for boys, while more men than women (18% versus 6%) would teach their son that crying and whining is not acceptable behavior.

PsychTests’ statistical analysis also revealed that women are more comfortable with their femininity than men are with their manhood. In essence, women are more comfortable in that they don’t need to *act* like a woman in order to *feel* like a woman. For instance, most women were totally at ease with the idea of pursuing a career that defies tradition, of not getting married and having children, of being tomboyish, and would be fine making more money than their partner. Not to mention the fact that they feel equally feminine whether they’re wearing a ball gown or a pair of jeans! Contrarily, many men are less comfortable stepping away from what is considered stereotypical masculine behavior, and still uphold the idea that “macho” is equivalent to “masculine”. Many of the male test-takers felt that they would be less of a man if they lost their job and were unable to support their family (58%), or if they didn’t beat someone up for harassing their girlfriend/wife (77%). In addition, only 31% of men were comfortable with the idea of having gay friends.

Based on the results of their research, PsychTests believes there is no right or wrong when it comes to gender views, unless we try to force our opinions on others. The world is still moving forward, and while change is inevitable as the world progresses, there are some traditions that will be hard to drop. It’s all a matter of personal attitudes. So men, feel free to open the door for a woman even if she doesn’t say thank you, and ladies, reach for that brass ring and refuse that diamond one if you so choose to. As Oscar Wilde said, “Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.”

For women who wish to take the gender roles test, go to <http://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/2435>
For men, use the following link: <http://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/2436>

About PsychTests AIM Inc:

PsychTests originally appeared on the internet scene in 1997. Since its inception, it has become a pre-eminent provider of psychological assessment products and services to human resource personnel, therapists, academics, researchers and a host of other professionals around the world. PsychTests staff is comprised of a dedicated team of psychologists, test developers, researchers, statisticians, writers, and artificial intelligence experts. PsychTests was founded and is led by Dr. Ilona Jerabek, a specialist in the field of psychometric assessments and Vrat Jerabek Ph. D., a researcher and authority in the field of artificial intelligence.

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