CONFORMITY OF MASCULINE NORMS AS A PREDICTOR OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIONS AMONG THE CISGENDER MALE COLLEGE STUDENTS OF CEBU CITY

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Abstract – *Men's ability to express emotions is greatly influence by the crucial role of the norms of masculinity. The study aimed to determine whether conformity to masculine norms could predict negative emotional expression among the 250-cisgender engineering male students of Cebu City. Students who answered the Conformity to Masculine Norms – 46 (CMNI-46) and Negative Emotional Expressions (NES) were randomly selected. Descriptive analysis showed that majority of the students both had a moderate level of conformity to masculine norms and negative emotional expression of emotions. Predictive analysis revealed that conformity to masculine norms significantly predict negative emotional expressions (p = 0.033, r2 = 1.53%). Future research could explore on mediating factors that could give a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between masculine norms and negative emotional expressions.*

Keywords – *Conformity to Masculine Norms, Engineering Cisgender Male students, Negative Emotional Expressions*

Introduction

Expressing emotions is part of what makes a person a human being. One's emotional expression usually relates to how an individual behaves. Men often feel the need to be self-reliant and provide for their loved ones, which may lead to the belief that expressing their emotions is inappropriate. Sociological research continues to indicate that emotional work is strongly associated with femininity, meaning that 'women' do most of it (Duncombe & Marsden 1993; Erickson 1993; 2005), while 'men' who engage in it are likely to feel feminized (Campbell & Carroll 2007; Hanlon 2009).

Numerous studies focus on conformity to masculine norms indicate that men who adhere more strongly to masculine norms are more likely to experience negative emotions. Conformity to masculine norms can lead to men internalizing their negative emotions and discourage college men from seeking help for mental health problems. Men may perceive seeking help as a sign

of weakness or failure and fear being stigmatized as unmanly (Mahalik et al., 2003).

The study aimed to address the lack of studies done in the Philippine setting on how conformity to masculine norms influence negative emotional expressions among Filipino college men. By potentially contributing to the growing body of knowledge in this area, the study provide empirical evidence of conformity to masculinity as it influence the expressivity of negative emotions. In addition, the study can pave way in promoting a more inclusive environment not just among the selected population but for society at large.

Methods

In a Descriptive Predictive survey study, a total sample of 250 cisgender Engineering male students, 18-25 years old ($M = 19.1, SD = 1.23$), not involved in romantic relationships, or in a cohabiting relationship, and had no kid/s at the time of participation participated in the study. The distribution of the students who participated according to the year level are as follows, 47 (first), 40 (second), 107(third), and 56 (fourth).

There were two (2) measurements used to measure Conformity to Masculine Norms and Negative Expression of Emotions. Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory-46 (CMNI-46) by Mike C. Parent and Bonnie Moradi (2009) is a 46-item likert-type scale that measures conformity to nine masculine norms: winning, emotional control, the primacy of work, risk-taking, violence, heterosexual self-presentation, playboy, self-reliance, and power over women. CMNI-46 subscales has an internal consistency ranging from.78 to.89, with a median value of.82, which also falls under the good or excellent range. Negative Expressivity Scale (NES) by Kimberly A. Barchard (2001) is a 10-item likert-type scale that measures emotional expressivity in terms of anger, sadness, and fear. It has a Cronbach coefficient Alpha of .75 for men and.75 for women, which fell under the good or excellent range.

Results and Discussion

The study found insightful results among the participants who participated. Table 1.0 shows that the majority exhibited moderate conformity to conformity to masculine norms (81.6%, n=204) and the least moderate conformity 18.4% (46 out of 250). Conformity to masculine norms is an act of following the standards of how men should behave and their roles as men that were cultivated by society. These norms may dictate behaviors that reflect the assumption of a protective and 'tough guy' role. Hence, if men consistently and strongly follow these expectations and embrace these traits, they are said to exhibit extreme conformity to masculine norms. Men who firmly deviate from these expectations and associated behaviors fall on the spectrum of extreme non-conformity. It is important to note that masculinity is a spectrum, and the levels exist on a continuum, not as absolute categories.

Table 1.0

Level of Overall Conformity to Masculine Norms

Levels of Conformity to Masculine Norms	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Extreme conformity	0	0%
Moderate conformity	204	81.6%
Moderate non-conformity	46	18.4%
Extreme non-conformity	0	0%
Total	250	100%

The CMNI-46 assessed adherence to traditional masculine norms across nine (9) dimensions: winning, emotional control, risk-taking, violence, power over women, playboy, self-reliance, primacy of work, and heterosexual self-presentation. In Table 2.0 shows that emotional control (65.2%, $n=163$) and risk-taking the least (10.4%, $n=26$) contributed the moderate level of

conformity to masculine norms. In addition, the least domain in moderate conformity to conformity to masculine norms was 'risk-taking', 26 out of 250 (10.4%),

Table 2.0

Level of Conformity to Masculine Norms Based on domains

Domains of Conformity to Masculine Norms	Levels of Conformity to Masculine Norms			
	Extreme Non-Conformity $f(\%)$	Moderate Non-Conformity $f(\%)$	Moderate Conformity $f(\%)$	Extreme Conformity $f(\%)$
Winning	2 (0.8%)	113 (45.2%)	132 (52.8%)	3 (1.2%)
Emotional Control		87 (34.8%)	163 (65.2%)	
Risk Taking	12 (4.8%)	210 (84.0%)	26 (10.4%)	2 (0.8%)
Violence	1 (0.4%)	169 (67.6%)	78 (31.2%)	2 (0.8%)
Power Over Women	18 (7.2%)	144 (57.6%)	74 (29.6%)	14 (5.6%)
Playboy	22 (8.8%)	185 (74.0%)	38 (15.2%)	5 (2%)
Self-Reliance	12 (4.8%)	185 (74.0%)	53 (21.2%)	
Primacy of Work	9 (3.6%)	182 (72.8%)	56 (22.4%)	3 (1.2%)
Heterosexual Self Presentation	2 (0.8%)	98 (39.2%)	148 (59.2%)	2 (0.8%)
Total	78	1373	768	31

Table 3.0 explored how frequently and intensely people express negative emotions like anger, sadness, and frustration. It categorizes these expressions into three levels: high, moderate, and low, based on score ranges, to understand how often individuals exhibit these emotions in various situations and interactions.

Table 3.0
Level of Overall Negative Emotional Expressions

Level Of Negative Emotional Expressions	Frequency (*f*)	Percentage (*%*)
High	4	1.6%
Moderate	134	53.6%
Low	112	44.8%
Total	250	100%

Negative emotional expressions convey how men express their negative emotions through verbal and non-verbal. For those men who consistently display intense emotions verbally and non- verbally, this might involve avoiding displays of sadness, vulnerability, or fear. From the results, more than half of the study population have moderate level of negative emotional expressions. Having a moderate level denotes that one expresses negative emotions, and sometimes do not. However, expressing negative emotions does not mean it is not normal; it depends on how the individual shows or expresses the emotions towards themselves and others.

Furthermore, Table 4.0 shows most students reported moderate levels of negative emotions (53.6%, *n*=134), with sadness (66.8%, *n*=167) being the most prevalent. This means that the majority of the responses to negative emotional expressions generally come from the experience of general sadness.

Table 4.0
Level of Negative Emotional Expressions based on its types

Types of Negative Emotional Expressions	Levels of Negative Emotional Expressions		
	Low Negative Emotions *n (%)*	Moderate Negative Emotions *n (%)*	High Negative Emotions *n (%)*
Anger	119 (47.6%)	121 (48.4%)	10 (4%)
Sadness	77 (30.8%)	167 (66.8%)	6 (2.4%)
Fear	129 (51.6%)	103 (41.2%)	18 (7.2%)
Total	325 (100%)	391 (100%)	34 (13.6%)

Linear regression analysis of conformity to masculine norms and negative emotional expressions revealed a positively weak relationship with the *r* value of 0.124. Meanwhile, the adjusted R^2 value of 0.0153, which indicated 1.53% of the variance in negative emotional expressivity, is explained by the predictor, suggesting that there are other factors that influence negative emotional expressions.

Table 5.0

Linear Regression of Conformity to Masculine Norms and Negative Emotional Expressions among the Respondents

Model Fit Measures

Overall Model Test

Model	R	R²	Adjusted R²	F	df1	df2	p
1	0.124	0.0153	0.0119	4.59	1	296	0.033

Table 5.1 Model of Coefficients

Predictor	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	β		
Constant	58.348	4.555		12.81	< .001
Conformity to Masculine Norms	0.282	0.138	.118	2.04	0.042

Dependent Variable: Negative Emotional Expressions

Table 5.1 showed the predictor and its corresponding contribution to predicting the dependent variable. As shown from the results, conformity to masculine norms was statistically significant with negative emotional expressions ($β$ = .138, t = 2.04, p <.042). Surprisingly, the p-value of

0.033 was less than 0.05, which led the researchers to reject the null hypothesis. They then concluded that conformity to masculine norms as a predictor is statistically significant (F = 4.59, *p-value* = .033). Cisgender Engineering male students who experienced negative emotions were likely to conform to masculine norms, but other factors are likely more significant in explaining negative emotional expressivity. These could include personality traits, social experiences, or biological factors. Findings could implicate that individuals who exhibit high levels of neuroticism are more prone to experiencing negative emotions (Mroczek & Almeida, 2004).

Conclusion

Conclusively, the conformity of cisgender male students to masculine norms varies depending on the circumstances; they exhibit high emotional control compliance but occasionally deviate from taking risks. Their moderate expression of general sadness could be explained by their moderate adherence to emotional control norms. Conformity to masculine norms can predict negative emotional expressions among cisgender male college students, despite the correlation coefficient being low. From this context, future research could explore on mediation and multiple regression analysis on other factors such as personality traits, social experiences, biological and cultural factors.

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