

Masculinity vs. Femininity

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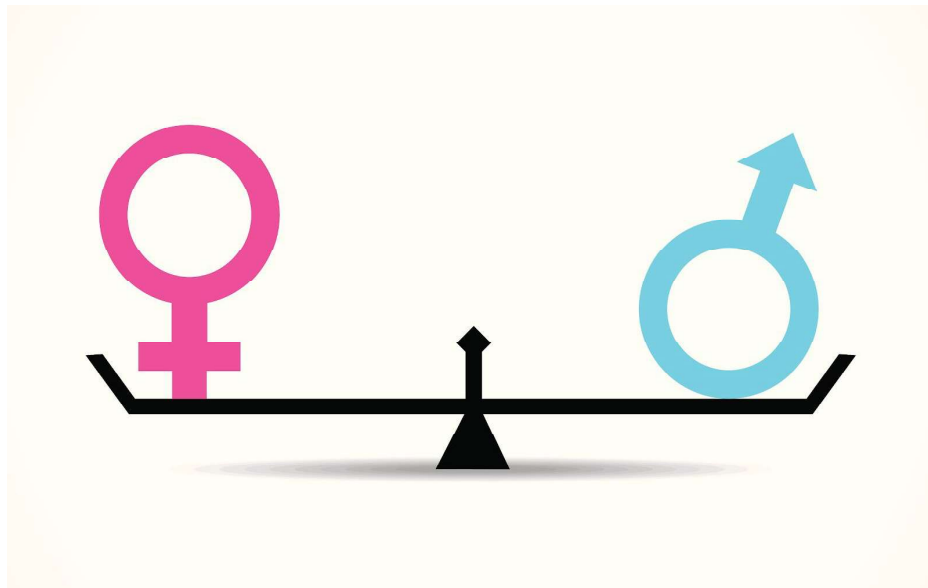


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Introduction

In this day and age, many roles and responsibilities are done and filled by anyone regardless of sex and gender. Although, due to many different beliefs, cultures and stereotypes, certain tasks are thought to be meant for a certain sex, such as baking cookies is more feminine and fixing a car is more masculine. Someone is not born thinking that, but rather introduced to gender and sex and so called “roles” early in toddlerhood (Wright). Parents begin a process called socialization, which is one generation passing their knowledge and beliefs regarding culture to the next generation (Wright). That of course comes with societal influences and that is what stems whether a certain sex should perform a certain task. One example of how a parent uses socialization is by treating their son or daughter differently. Parents will emphasize specific concepts regarding gender and sex and use it, such as dressing girls in pink and boys in blue (Gelman, Taylor and Nguyen, 2004).

Back then, certain roles were meant to be filled by a certain sex and it was frowned upon if someone of the opposite sex did it or it was just not allowed at all. For example, in the 1950's (and before), women working was frowned upon. Men wanted their wives tending to their homes and children. That was the culture at the time, but as the years went by society changed their beliefs, but many did not. A main reason that certain roles were filled by a certain sex was because it was believed that one or the other could not do that task. A lot of scrutiny came with and still comes with

certain sexes performing tasks and jobs that are stereotypically meant for the opposite sex.

Method

The research team consisted of 9 students, each of whom were instructed to survey 5 individuals. A total of 45 participants were chosen, all with diverse demographics, and provided with a survey consisting of 10 questions. The surveys were completed through in person interviews, phone/text interviews and email interviews.

Participants were given a brief explanation of the study and were provided with the three answer choices available for each question (feminine, masculine or both). Informed consent was received with each individual participant.

The survey questions are as follows:

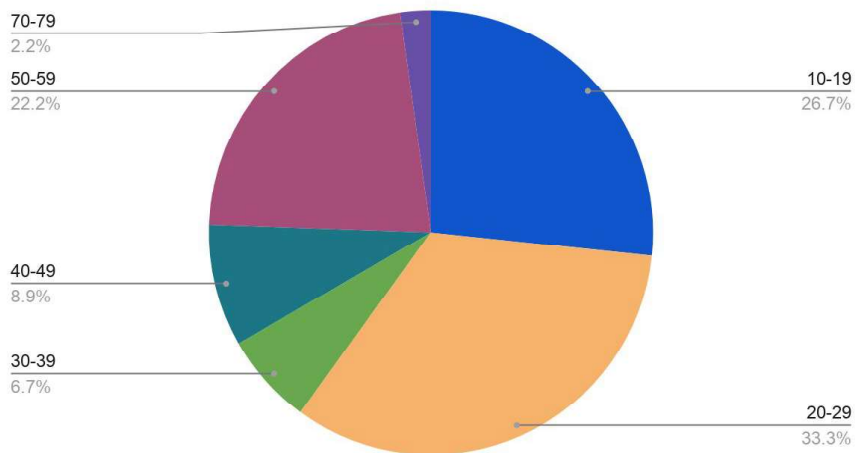
1. cooking hamburgers on a grill
2. baking cookies
3. changing a baby's diapers
4. doing yard work
5. watching sports on TV
6. owning a dog
7. owning a cat
8. reading a book for fun
9. becoming a doctor
10. becoming a nurse

Demographics

For this project each of the nine group members surveyed 5 people. Questions for the survey were based on whether certain activities were masculine or feminine. By looking at the graph below you will see that respondents age's range from 10-77.

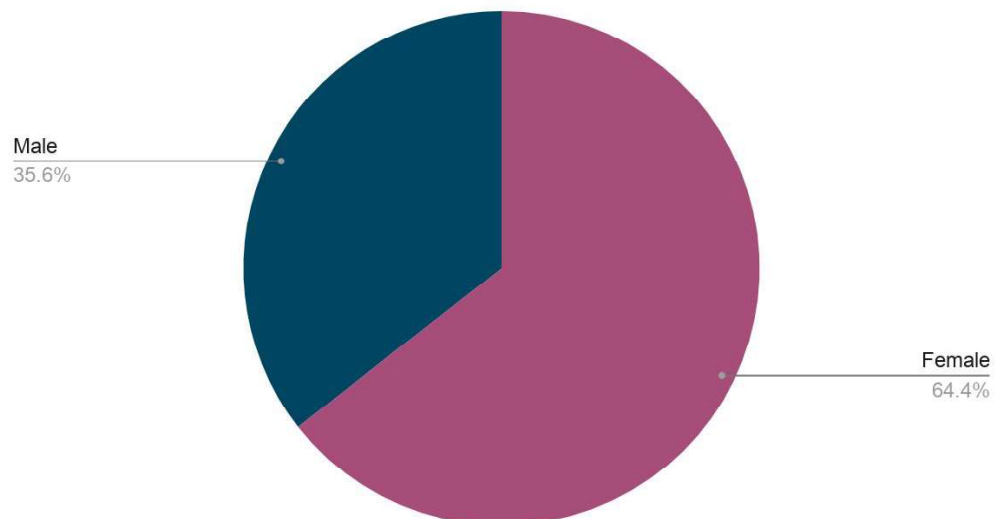
The majority of the respondents were between the ages of 20-29 (33.33%).

Respondents by Age Range



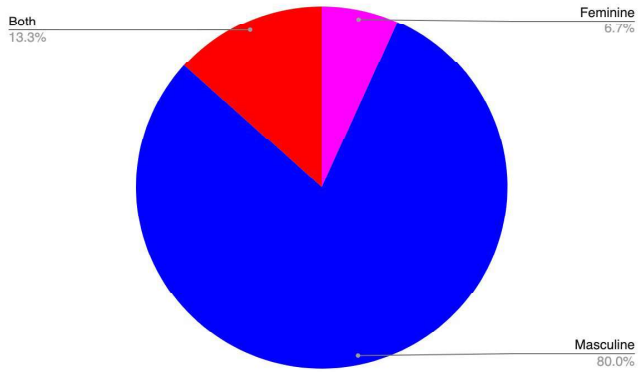
The second graph shows that out of the 45 respondents 29 (64.4%) were female and 16 (35.6%) were male.

Respondents Gender Ratio

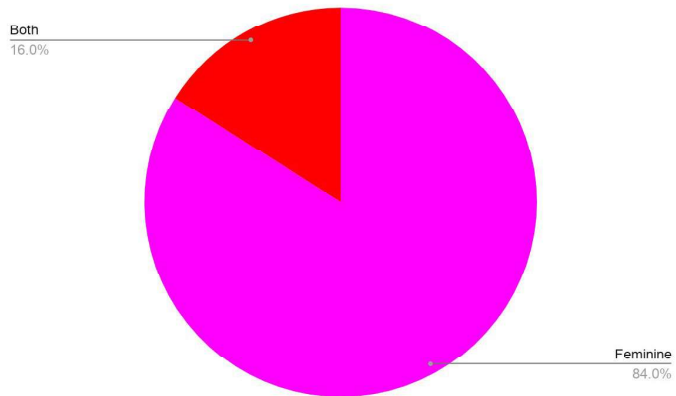


Results

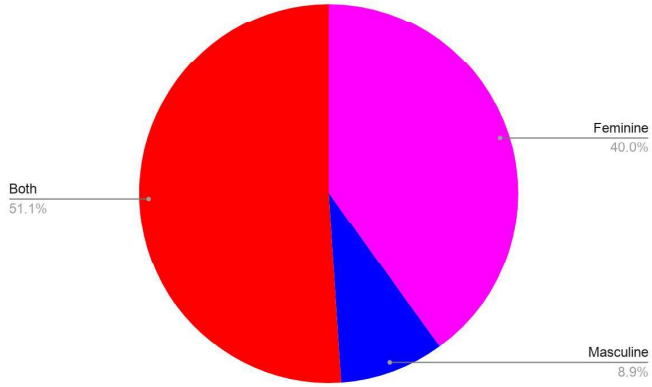
1. Cooking hamburgers on a grill:



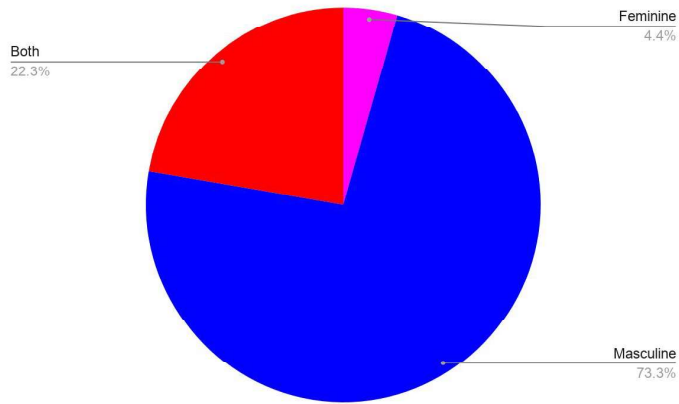
2. Baking cookies:



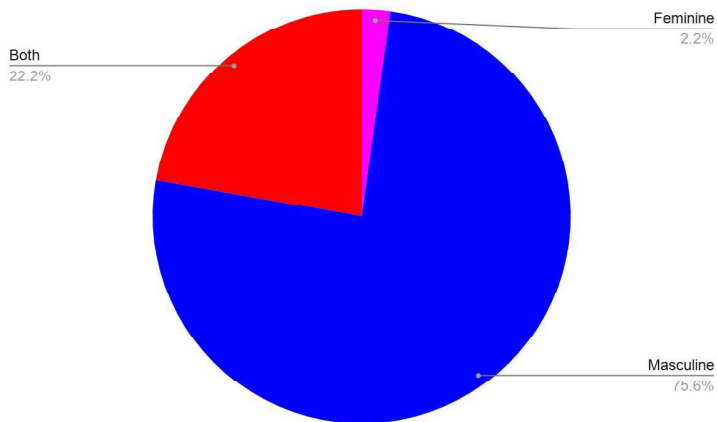
3. Changing a baby's diapers:



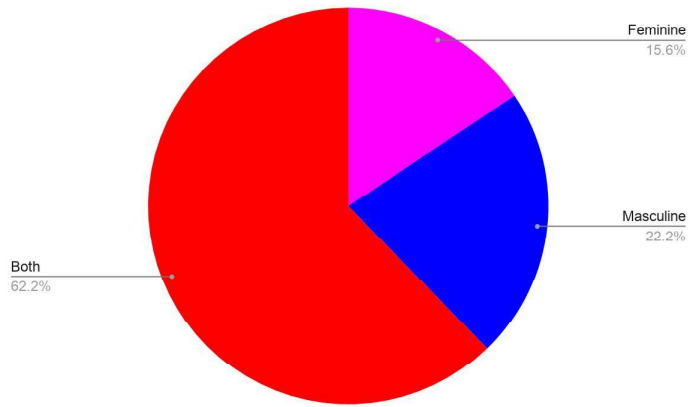
4. Doing yard work:



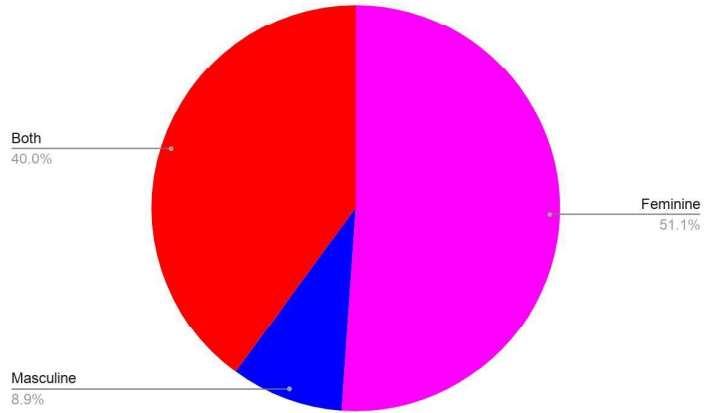
5. Watching sports on TV:



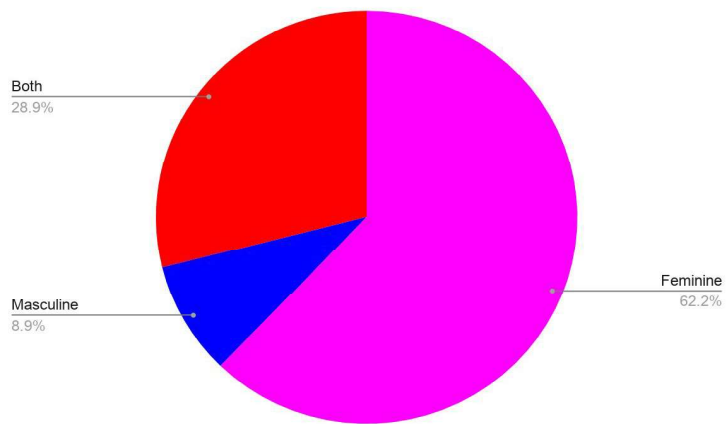
6. Owning a dog



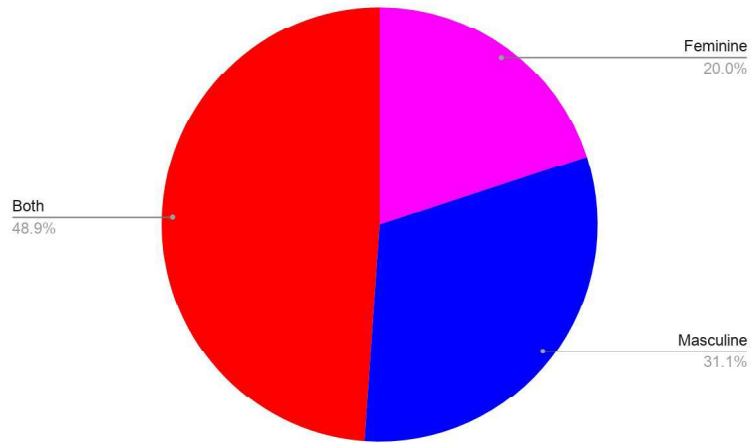
7. Owning a cat:



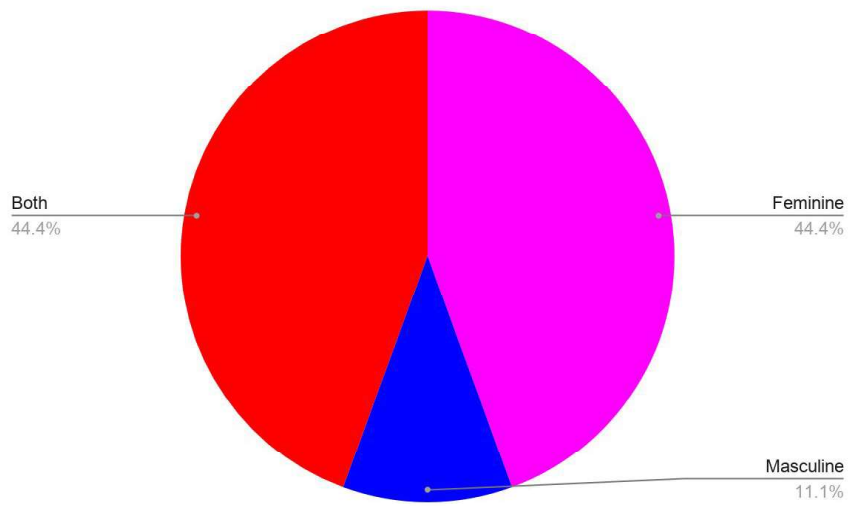
8. Reading a book for fun:



9. Becoming a doctor:



10. Becoming a nurse:



Conclusion

As per the results, many of the tasks led to one side more than the other. For example, the task “owning a cat” had 51.1% of participants select feminine, making it larger than masculine and both. When it comes to situations like this there are many possible factors as to why someone selected feminine, masculine or both. The main factor could be age. Older generations tend to associate tasks with gender and sex, such as yard work being for a man. Older generations have that more traditional mindset versus someone who is much younger. Societal influences are a huge factor as well. People will see certain sexes doing certain tasks and associate that with that sex having to do that task. The media and television portray that a lot, but over time that has changed. Other factors include how someone was raised, culture, religion and beliefs to name a few. When categorizing a task as to whether or not it should be identified under Masculinity, Femininity or both, the survey results clearly demonstrated a wide difference of opinion that came into play and that the perceptions of every human being is different. This Survey also demonstrated that regardless of sex, it is possible for a male or female to be capable of partaking in all the tasks surveyed regardless of sex. Although many of the tasks had more weight than others, between sex, it really all comes down to an individual's perception, culture and beliefs when categorizing female vs male tasks.

References

Wright. (2016). *Developmental Psychology: Stories in Context*. [VitalSource Bookshelf].

Retrieved from <https://online.vitalsource.com/#/books/9781524913298/>

Questions

- 1) Do you think society still plays a part in imposing gender roles?
- 2) Could your upbringing affect the way you think towards the opposite sex?
- 3) Do you think it is true that men are able to do certain things more naturally than women and vice versa?

Appendix A

Emma's Survey:

1) Data on Person Interviewed: Feb. 12. 2021 Age: 19 Sex: Female

Label each of the following as masculine (like a man), feminine (like a woman) or both

1. cooking hamburgers on a grill (**masculine**)
2. baking cookies (**feminine**)