Cultural Perception of the Femininity/Masculinity Scales of California Psychological Inventory

Iftikhar Ahmad
Govt. College University,
Lahore, Pakistan.

The study is about assessing the cross-cultural use of Femininity/Masculinity (F/M) Scale of California Psychological Inventory (Gough, 1957) in Pakistan. Post-graduate psychology students (37 women) were asked to judge rationally and intuitively, whether the 32 items of the scale, adequately portrayed behaviors characteristics to men's and women's behavior in our society. Only one item out of the total thirty one item scale was found to be a cultural reversal. The scale was thus deemed as relevant for use in Pakistan. Interestingly the study found that differences exist between the respondents' rational judgment and self report of their perception of Femininity and Masculinity roles. The women students who had rated nearly all items of F/M scale as relevant to men's or women's behavior gave atypical self report responses on 11 items. Implications of the findings have been discussed.

Keywords: femininity/masculinity scale; California Psychological Inventory; cultural perception.

Over the course of 20th century, research interest on the conceptualization and measurement of personality characteristics has increased and measures developed in the United States are enjoying wide use with Asian populations as well (Butcher, 1996; Butcher & Clark, 1997). Among several personality variables masculinity/ femininity has had universal meanings and relevance to human behavior in several contexts. Women movement of 1970s had a contributory effect on the promotion of masculinity and femininity as two independent traits. Lippa (2001) held gender as a personality trait since Masculinity and Femininity conceptualization distinctly overlapped with the Big Five factors of personality in that dominance and neuroticism underlie masculinity and nurturance whereas agreeableness factors are associated with femininity.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Iftikhar Ahmad, Government College University, Katchery Road, Lahore, Pakistan. E-mail:iftimir@yahoo.com

Among other measures, the California Psychological Inventory (Gough, 1957) also taps masculine and feminine psychological characteristics in persons through F/M contents depicting gender role differentiation, beliefs, values, occupational interests typical of men and women. Examples: I would like to be a nurse (F); I want to be an important person in the community (M). Persons scoring high are feminine in orientation and are described as gentle, sensitive, and worrying and those scoring low are masculine in attitude and behavior and can be described as confident, aggressive, and strong.

The California Psychological Inventory is acclaimed to measure personality variables including femininity/masculinity that are relevant to all cultures in all times termed as 'folk concepts'. However societal and developmental changes in a society might call for realigning certain roles among men and women overtime. This calls for reassessing validity of the F/M scale periodically for diverse groups of people of distinct social classes, education levels, etc. The objectives of the study were:

1) To find out how well F/M items are rationally and intuitively held as relevant to people in Pakistan.

2) To ascertain response patterns of the university students as they self report on the F/M scale.

Method

Sample

The sample of the present study comprised of 37 women students and 14 men students of postgraduate psychology classes. The age of women students ranged between 20-23 years with mean at 22 years. The mean age of the comparison group of men studying in post graduate classes was 22.6, with range being 19-26 years.

Procedure

Post-graduate psychology students (37 women) were asked, in their regular class hours, to self report on the F/M scale. They were given another copy of the F/M items and were asked to rationally or intuitively judge incognito, each items as relevant to either men or women in Pakistan in the present times on the basis of their every day observation.

To compare the perceptions of the women students, a sample of 14 men students was also administered the F/M scale. They were asked to self report their agreement or disagreement with the items of the scale. All students received course credit for the research. Data was collected and analyzed to assess comparisons between Rational Judgments and Self Report.

Results & Discussion

Rational Judgment (RJ) about item contents as being typical of men or women behavior was found as conforming to the empirical classification (of F and M categories) for 31 of the 32 items. Only one item was found to be a reversal (I think I would like to do the work of a librarian). The girl-students took this behavior as typical of men whereas it was empirically classified as women's behavior by Americans. Even in America 54 per cent of the women answered 'yes' to this item compared to 37 per cent of men in a sample of 3000 men and 3000 women (Gough, 1966). Rate of RJ ranged between 51-100% on individual items with an average of 68 per cent (see column RJ in Table 1). The F/M scale can be thus deemed as relevant for use in Pakistan as a cross cultural measure.

The girl students predominantly responded to 21 items/keyed direction in their self report (See Table 1) and the remaining 11 items in the other direction although they had rationally judged nearly all the items as representing typical women or men's behavior in the behavior in direction of the key (the key was set for the scale in a standardization sample in America). Thus they tended to appear less feminine than women in general whom the scale contents typically represent. In other words, the F/M score of the university students would be lower, having less stereotyped gender role perception, than that of the women folk in general.

This discrepancy in responding might be attributed to the impact of university education and their higher social class member ship as a sub-culture of the general population. For example they answered the following typically feminine statements in the negative: *A windstorm terrifies me*; *Sometimes I have a dream over and over again*; *I am somewhat afraid of the dark*; *Sometimes I feel that I am going to go into pieces*; *I would like to be a nurse*; *I feel sort of scared when I move to a strange place*.

Table 1
*Agreement between Rate of Rational Judgment (RJ) and Self Report
(SR; N=37)*

Item no. [a]	RJ %	SR %
True		
28	97	70
35	90	95
58	75	61
71	92	68
110	88	51
187	85	56
244	51	61
278	61	66
False		
19	92	80
30	81	97
82	100	100
87	83	51
114	88	76
123	85	63
129	100	59
171	90	56
210	95	78
214	92	95
249	92	85
256	85	54
274	84	71
Average	86	71

[a] Item No. indicates the numbering of items in the original version of
Femininity/Masculinity scale of CPI.

Whereas the following were answered in the positive: *I like to be
with a crowd who plays jokes on one another; I would like to be a
soldier; I think I would like the work of building constructor; I like
adventure stories better than romantic stories; At times I feel like*

picking a fist fight with someone; I think I would like to drive a racing car; I want to be an important person in the community.

Table 2

Discrepancy between strength of Rational Judgment (RJ) and Self report (SR) responses (N=37)

Item No.[a]	RJ %	SR %
True		
64	100	24
78	61	39
115	95	27
144	100	34
217	36	20
232	93	20
240	100	15
272	97	36
False		
100	61	39
143	56	29
199	95	31
Average	82	28

[a] Item No. indicates the numbering of items in the original version of Femininity/Masculinity scale of CPI.

The role expectations from the young university graduates of middle and upper class women seem to be becoming more equalitarian in a developing country like Pakistan. The upcoming university women are becoming less gender conscious and their socialization and life styles bear on their androgynous attitudes and behavior as evidenced from their responses to F/M scale. It implies that when testing special populations such as university students, the demographic characteristics of the respondents such as social class, level of education and age may also be kept in view as context factors.

As a whole the contents of the scale appeared valid for people in general in Pakistan as nearly all the items were held as culturally relevant by rational judgment of the participants of this study.

Furthermore, the respondent women obtained a mean score of 18.15 ($SD = 3.45$) on the scale as against a comparable but a small sample of 14 men whose mean scores were 14.75 ($SD = 2.74$). The scale therefore successfully differentiated between men and women and is valid for use in Pakistan. There is nevertheless a need to apply the scale in diverse population settings and on larger samples of men and women for a conclusive decision. The present exploratory findings do hold promise for the scale. It might also set the trend of looking into other constructs/concepts across cultures.

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