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Sex-role identity, workplace stress and thriving in South African employees

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to explore levels of perceived stress and workplace thriving in a sample of 485 South African employees, within the framework of sex-role identity. A number of research to date has begun to explore the influence of sex-role identities on a number of different organisational outcomes; however few have explored both the positive and negative aspects of gendered personality traits and thus this study aimed to contribute to existing research through utilising a differentiated model of sex-role identity.

Three self-report questionnaires were completed by participants, namely the EPAQ-R to assess sex-role identity, the Job Related Tension Index developed by Kahn et al. (1964) to establish levels of perceived stress and the thriving scale developed by Porath et al. (2012) was used to measure workplace thriving.

The results of the study highlighted a number of statistically significant differences between sex-role identities and perceived stress and thriving respectively. A number of these results were in line with the proposed hypotheses; however, negative masculinity proved to be inconsistent with the proposed hypotheses as these individuals did not differ from the positive identities in terms of workplace stress. Furthermore, negative femininity did not experience statistically significant differences with the positive identities.

The findings of the study provide support for a differentiated model of sex-role identity, as well as support for the Androgynous model of psychological wellbeing. Practical and theoretical implications of this research are discussed in the study.