

What is the impact of the Man Box attitudes on young Australian men's behaviours and well-being?

Impact of Man Box attitudes

As part of our analysis, each man obtained a 'Total Masculinity Score' by totalling his survey responses to the 17 Man Box rules (or questions) under each of the seven pillars which reflect different dimensions of masculinity. We then sought to understand the unique impact of Man Box attitudes on a number of life outcomes controlling for demographic variables such as occupation, where someone lives, sexuality, education level and cultural heritage.

Our analysis found that men's adherence to Man Box attitudes is over:

25^x

more accurate than any other demographic variable in predicting the use of physical violence, sexual harassment, verbal bullying and cyber bullying

22^x

more accurate in predicting the experience of physical violence, verbal bullying and cyber bullying

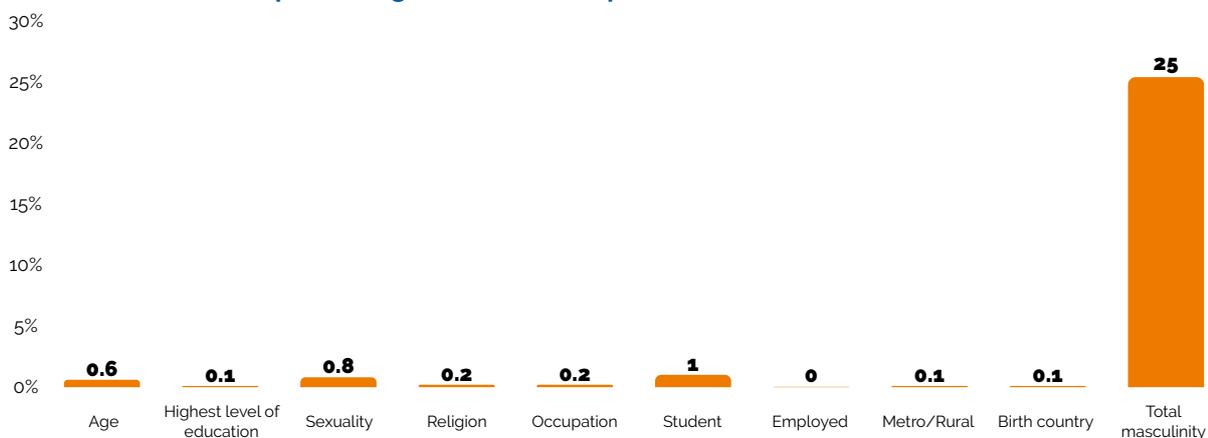
11^x

more accurate than demographics at predicting very risky drinking

10^x

more accurate than demographics at predicting negative feelings and emotions

Mean percentage of variance explained across all violence variables



*Violence variables include perpetration and experience of physical violence, verbal and online bullying, as well as perpetration of sexual harassment of women

The following table shows the high level of unique correlations between the Man Box attitudes and a range of life outcomes, after controlling for other potential influential demographic variables.

| Life outcome | Unique correlation between Man Box attitudes and life outcomes |
|---------------------------------|--|
| ■ Positive Affect | Not Significant |
| ■ Negative Affect | .32** |
| ■ Life Satisfaction | Not Significant |
| ■ Depressive Symptoms | .20** |
| ■ Relationship Satisfaction | Not Significant |
| ■ Body Satisfaction | .19** |
| ■ Binge Drinking | .39** |
| ■ Pornography Access | Not Significant |
| ■ Experienced Verbal Bullying | .44** |
| ■ Experienced Online Bullying | .51** |
| ■ Experienced Physical Violence | .51** |
| ■ Perpetrated Verbal Bullying | .49** |
| ■ Perpetrated Online Bullying | .53** |
| ■ Perpetrated Physical Violence | .51** |
| ■ Perpetrated Sexual Harassment | .52** |

Non-significant model
 Low contribution
 Medium contribution
 High contribution

There were also a number of life outcomes that took on only two values – for instance, whether or not someone has suicidal thoughts. These results are not directly comparable to those above. Using the odds ratios in Table 6 from the report, some of the findings include:

For a 1 unit increase in someone's Man Box score, on average, we would expect a:

- 1.9% point increase in the thoughts of suicide
- 1.8% point increase in the risk of traffic accidents; and
- 0.89% point decrease in the likelihood of having a friend to talk with about an emotional issue

Overall, allowing for all of the other factors in a young man's life that might be contributing to his attitudes and

behaviours, high levels of endorsement of stereotypical masculine norms are a major factor driving harmful behaviours and causing poorer life outcomes.

The study also found that there were a small number of differences for young men who endorse compared to those who do not endorse Man Box attitudes. Men who were slightly more likely to endorse Man Box norms are more likely to be heterosexual, a student, religious, and from an urban location.

Finally, those young men who perceive high levels of societal pressure to adopt Man Box attitudes are also more likely to endorse these attitudes themselves. Given we know that personal endorsement of Man Box attitudes is associated with a number of harmful behaviours, societal pressure has an indirect impact on men's lives. The messages we send men through societal pressure (in the media, in our workplaces, sports fields, social gathering and more) have an impact on the beliefs men hold.

Our research found men who perceive high levels of societal pressure to adopt Man Box attitudes are more likely to also endorse those attitudes. As we have outlined above, the men who endorse the Man Box rules are at much high risk of poor health outcomes and harmful behaviours such as violence and sexual harassment. While this societal pressure to be a 'real man' is indirect in it's influence over outcomes, there is a strong connection that needs to be recognised and addressed.



1.9%

point **increase** in the thoughts of suicide



1.8%

point **increase** in the risk of traffic accidents



0.89%

point **decrease** in the likelihood of having a friend to talk with about an emotional issue