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The Harry's Masculinity Report, Germany 2022

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SUMMARY

Men are going through some difficulties, as shown by high rates of suicide, homelessness and substance abuse. Some people say masculinity itself is problematic in various ways, and terms like 'toxic masculinity' are commonly used. Others suggest that we should be careful not blame men for the problems they are experiencing, and that the positive aspects of masculinity - characteristics that can help men deal with problems - are being overlooked and undervalued.

So what are men like in Germany today? This report represents a litmus test of men's feelings and opinions from a survey in January 2022. It is the fourth in the series of Harry's Masculinity Reports, and it asked 2002 men in Germany about their values in various aspects of life. As with the UK survey in Dec 2021, it included questions not seen in the UK 2017 or US 2018 reports, about how men perceive the impact of masculinity on their behaviour. This online survey was analysed using multiple linear regression.

The main findings were that (a) men typically value honesty and reliability more than being adventurous and being athletic, and (b) the main predictors of mental positivity (measured using the Positive Mindset Index) were Personal Growth, Age (being older), not taking a Negative view of Masculinity, Health Satisfaction, and taking a Positive view of Masculinity. Two of the key findings were that greater mental positivity was predicted by a tendency to view

masculinity as having a positive influence on one's behaviour rather than a negative influence. The findings almost exactly replicate the UK 2021 survey, and are similar to the UK 2017 and US 2018 reports, apart from Job Satisfaction being less significantly related to wellbeing this time.

Overall, the findings of this survey reveal many positives about men. It is speculated that the timing of the survey, around a period impacted by altered working practices due to covid-19 restrictions, and the inclusion of new questions, created new findings compared to the 2017 and 2018 surveys. However the survey replicates very well the findings from the 2021 UK survey, which used an English language version of the same questionnaire.

BACKGROUND

In the history of psychology, to the degree that masculinity was noticed at all, it had generally been seen in relatively benign and recognizable terms, characterized by adjectives such as 'active', 'dominant', 'self-contained' and 'aggressive' (Barry et al., 2020). This began to change around the 1980s, with masculinity being increasingly constructed as 'misogynistic' and 'homophobic' (Mahalik et al., 2003), bad for physical and mental health and even connected to sexual assault perpetration (APA, 2018). This blurring of benign adjectives with undesirable traits was influenced by ideas imported from sociology, such as patriarchy and 'hegemonic masculinity' (Connell, 1987), and male power and privilege (Arfken, 2017).

Although these negative constructions of masculinity have spread to the media and many institutions worldwide (e.g. much of academia, the media and government), there are signs that such ideas are not so popular outside these institutions. For example, a survey of 203 men and 52 women found that around 80% of participants thought the term 'toxic masculinity' insulting, probably harmful to boys, and unlikely to help men's behaviour (Barry et al., 2020). Amongst the male participants in that survey, greater acceptance of traditional masculinity was significantly associated with better self-esteem and mental wellbeing. A study of men in Lithuania found that masculinity is protective against suicide risk (Grigienė et al., 2022).

Despite the known benefits of masculinity, the majority of masculinity researchers are still locked into the 'paradigm fixation' of presuming that masculinity is not to be valued (Iacoviello et al., 2022). Although their findings are typically unconvincing, the sheer number of

papers they produce, and the eagerness of the media to promotes such findings, creates the impression that there must be some be something wrong with masculinity.

Since the 1990s there has been a movement within psychology towards a more balanced view of masculinity, characterized by the Positive Psychology/Positive Masculinity (PPPM) model in the US (Kiselica & Englar-Carlson, 2010). This has been followed by the development of male psychology as an academic field in the UK (Liddon & Barry, 2021). The basic idea behind these views, which are based mainly on clinical, social, evolutionary and humanistic psychology, is that there is more to be gained by recognizing and utilising the positive aspects of masculinity rather than focusing only on the negative.

A popular aspect of this more positive view of masculinity has been the Harry's Masculinity Reports, which surveyed the views of 2000 men in the UK in 2017, 5000 men in the US in 2018, and 2000 men in the UK in December 2021 (J. Barry, 2022). The first two surveys had in common the findings that the core values most important to men were honesty and reliability, and the things that are most associated with mens' mental wellbeing are job satisfaction, being older, and taking an interest in their health. The UK 2021 survey was run during covid-19 lockdown, and included new questions about how masculinity impacts behaviour, and found that mental wellbeing was more strongly associated with a positive view of masculinity than with job satisfaction. These Harry's survey findings are in stark contrast to the conclusion found by studies using negative definitions of masculinity. The Harry's surveys have been met with an overwhelmingly positive response from the media and the public (J. Barry, 2021a).

The present survey of around 2000 men in Germany aimed to discover the factors that predict mens' mental wellbeing, using the same questionnaire as the UK 2021 survey, with the language adjusted for German participants.

METHODS (see Appendix 2)

RESULTS (see Appendix 3)

DISCUSSION

This survey of 2002 men in Germany in January 2022 shows that men value moral characteristics (e.g. being honest) over physical characteristics (e.g. being athletic), and the best predictor of their mental wellbeing is satisfaction with their personal growth.

Core values

Table 2 (see Appendix 3) shows the ranking of importance of a list of 35 values (e.g. loyalty, honesty, etc.). The finding that men typically value honesty and reliability more than fitness and being athletic replicates the three other Harry's reports. Table 2a (Appendix 3) shows the German sample is similar to the UK 2017 and US 2018 samples. Although the UK 2021 ratings are a little lower than in the other three surveys, the differences between countries, and between the UK 2017 and 2022 scores, are not very large, and one might speculate that the changes are the result of chance fluctuations that are not of real significance.

One interesting finding was that although the German men highly valued being respectful (third highest ranking) as did the men in other reports, the German men much less highly valued being respected, which was second lowest ranking in the German survey, but mid-ranking in the other three surveys. One might speculate that this reflects a greater modesty in German men that the US or UK, or greater self-confidence, although the fact that the two variables are positively correlated with each other ($r = .5$), and with PMI ($r = .2$) implies that the low ranking of being respected might be a chance finding.

Main predictors of mental positivity (PMI)

Table 3 (Appendix 3) shows that the five main predictors of PMI across Germany were Personal Growth, Age (being older), not taking a Negative view of Masculinity, Health Satisfaction, and taking a Positive view of Masculinity. The findings almost exactly replicate the UK 2021 survey, except that in the top five in the UK, Education Satisfaction replaced not taking a Negative view of Masculinity. The findings regarding age and health are similar to those of the UK 2017 and US 2018 surveys, but other three findings are from variables that were added to the present version of the survey i.e. Personal Growth Satisfaction and the two masculinity variables. The absence of Job Satisfaction is notable given its prominence previously, and is discussed below.

Personal growth satisfaction

The more satisfied participants were with their Personal Growth, the higher their PMI (β = 0.160; t = 5.023; p<0.000001). As Table 4 shows, the four personal growth items that significantly predicted PMI were Mental Wellbeing (β=0.276; t = 10.081; p<.03^{-21}), Being the Real Me (β= .074; t = 2.629; p<.01), placing less importance on Spiritual Development (β= -.062; t = -2.102; p<.05), and being less inclined to Put Myself First (β= -.057; t = -2.006; p<.05). The fact that mental wellbeing was highly correlated with mental positivity might not seem surprising, but it in fact suggests an important point: people who take their mental health seriously have greater mental positivity. Thus for those who want to have good mental health, it makes sense that they should make it their priority. The significant relationship between PMI and 'Being the real me' suggests that good mental health involves some amount of introspection. One might speculate that the negative relationship between Spiritual Development and PMI could indicate that people who have low wellbeing seek out methods of spiritual development to help boost their wellbeing. It is interesting to note that being less inclined to 'Put Myself First' was a significant predictor of PMI, albeit a marginal one. This finding goes against the advice to 'put one's own personal happiness before the personal happiness of others' (Carstensen, 1995; Ellis & Becker, 1982), though it is in line with the idea that being selfless leads to happiness (Dambrun, 2017).

Age

In this study, being older was a significant predictor of mental positivity (β =0.125; t = 4.075; p<.00005). Although older age is often seen as being associated with poorer health and therefore less quality of life, this study – like the three other Harry's reports - found that older age was associated with higher PMI. This is in line other research for the past two decades which has found – in contrast to findings in the 1940s and 50s - that older people report being more happy than younger people (Putnam, 2000). There are various explanations for this, for example, happiness may increase with age because of improved regulation of emotion and orientating one's life toward maximizing happiness (Carstensen, 1995). The positive correlation between PMI and age might also reflect greater maturity, and a moving away from the growing pains of the teens and early 20s, a phase of life that has been characterized as 'young male syndrome', in which delinquency is not uncommon (Wilson & Daly, 1985).

Negative view of masculinity

Table 3 (Appendix 3) shows that not having a Negative View of Masculinity was the fifth strongest predictor of PMI (β =0.118; t = 3.897; p<.0001). Taking each of the four items in the Negative View of Masculinity subscale, three of them were significant predictors of PMI: thinking that *Masculinity prevents me from talking about how I feel about my problems* was associated with significantly lower PMI (β = -.093; t =-3.311, p<.001), as were thinking masculinity made them inclined to be violent towards women (β = -.105; t =-3.157, p<.002), and prevented them from taking covid-19 safety precautions (β = -.066; t =-1.961, p<.05). These three findings suggest that men are less happy if they view masculinity as something that has a negative impact on their behaviour.

Health satisfaction

Health was the third strongest predictor of a positive mindset (β =0.118; t = 3.897; p<.0001), in other words, those who valued health had a higher PMI. Table 5 shows that higher PMI was linked to placing importance on: Feeling good (β =0.141; t = 4.656; p<.000003), Exercise (β =0.81; t = 2.888; p<.004), Living Longer (β =0.071; t = 2.700; p<.007), and Mental Health (β =0.065; t = 2.138; p<.033). Interestingly, lower PMI was significantly related to placing importance on Looking good (β =-0.067; t = 2.702; p<.007), which might indicate that people who have a less positive mindset place undue importance on their physical appearance. On the other hand, the US 2018 sample found that 'looking good' was associated with higher PMI, which might indicate a cultural difference between the US and Germany on this issue.

It is interesting that these predictors were different to the findings in the UK 2021 sample, where the significant Health domain predictors of PMI were Living Longer and Physical Health.

Positive view of masculinity

Table 3 (Appendix 3) shows that the fifth strongest predictor of PMI is a man's view of masculinity, in that men who think masculinity has a positive impact on their behaviour have a more positive mindset (β =0.097; t = 3.647; p<.0005). Table 7 shows that taking each of the three items in the Positive View of Masculinity subscale, two of them were significant predictors of PMI: thinking that *Masculinity makes me protective of women* was associated with

significantly lower PMI (β = 0.141; t = 5.532, $p<.0000005$), and thinking *Masculinity makes me want to be strong for my family* (β = .055; t =2.092, $p<.037$). In line with the above findings regarding negative views of masculinity, these findings suggest that men have a more positive mindset when they view masculinity as something that has a positive impact on their behaviour.

In the UK sample this domain was not significantly related to PMI, although the 'family' item by itself was significantly related (data not shown here).

Masculinity and age

Figure 1 (Appendix 3) shows that the view of masculinity tends to be more positive in the older men in this study. The scores on the vertical axis of Figure 1 shows that overall, men tend to moderately disagree that masculinity has a negative impact on their behaviour. Figure 1 shows that men across all age groups were on average moderately agreed that masculinity makes them feel protective of women. Disagreement that masculinity makes men feel violent towards women was much stronger in the older men than the younger men. In other words, although on average older men feel that masculinity does not impact their behaviour negatively, younger men do. We could speculate that the younger men, but not so much the older men, have from the 1990s onwards been exposed to a high enough volume of negative views of masculinity, perhaps at sensitive periods of their young life, to have internalised them. This survey might be seen as a litmus test of the impact of the negative narrative around masculinity from the media, and the cognitive dissonance this creates when it is met by a man's sense that his core identity of masculinity is actually something that is mostly perfectly benign. However, as American psychiatrist Mark McDonald put it: "healthy expressions of masculinity [...] have all been redefined as universally unhealthy" (McDonald, 2021),p. 52).

It is interesting to note that the difference between older and younger men is less stark in the German sample compared to the UK 2021 sample, where there was a steeper contrast in views between the ages of around 35 and 60 years old. This difference might reflect cultural differences in the timing of exposure to different messages about masculinity from the media and other sources, with German men having had a more steady erosion of the sense of masculinity over the years. Further research would be needed to address this question.

General discussion on masculinity findings

The impact of negative narratives about masculinity are of concern to many people, especially the potential impact on boys (Barry et al., 2020). It has been suggested that "Distorted narratives that put men perpetually in the role of toxic abuser, risk alienating men from themselves and others, leading to what might be called a state of *gender alienation"* (Seager & Barry, 2019). The mental health of people who are made to feel ashamed of a core part of themselves, such as their gender, might be harmed (Smith et al., 2019).

The findings regarding masculinity have important implications for clinical psychologists and therapists, because it suggests poorer mental health for men who believe that masculinity – which is a core part of a man's identity – is a negative thing, leading to 'gender alienation'. It might seem obvious that if a man has a negative view of masculinity he will consequently feel less wellbeing, but this finding contradicts the trend in the social sciences to see masculinity as something negative. This negative view in academia is partly explained by the fact that much of masculinity research these days is based on samples of college-aged men, who may not have grown out of 'young men syndrome', but the problem is that findings from these young men are unjustifiably generalized to all men (Liddon & Barry, 2021). The trend to a negative view has been taken up by psychological organisations like the American Psychological Association (APA, 2018) in the US, Australia's APS (Australian Psychological Society, 2017), and in the UK, in a highly publicised document called the Power Threat Meaning Framework (PTMF) (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018).

The findings of the present study indicate that more research is needed in order to elucidate which factors are most strongly causing men to take a negative view of their masculinity. This will involve the beginning of large scale discussion amongst clinicians, academics, politicians, the media and the public on whether taking a negative view of masculinity is endangering the mental health of men.

Job satisfaction in 2021 compared to 2017

Like the UK 2021 report, but unlike the first two Harry's reports, job satisfaction was not a significant predictor in the German 2022 sample. This finding is most likely due to including new variables in the present study (the 16 masculinity items and 10 new items on satisfaction with various domains of life), as well as possibly related to the fact that this survey was run only 2 to 7 months (depending on region in Germany) after covid-19 lockdowns, when working conditions had changed dramatically for many people e.g. working from home instead of an office. There is also the interesting possibility that values are shifting; although there is not much research on this point, it has been suggested that the past few years have seen a radical shift in the attitude of employees to their working conditions and work-life balance (Novak, 2022).

Interpretation of PMI findings for clinical purposes

The PMI is a good way to measure men's mental wellbeing: it is very brief, it doesn't need to ask potentially awkward questions about feelings of depression or suicidality, because it already known that the PMI correlates negatively with measures of mental disturbance, so it can be interpreted both as a measure of mental wellbeing and a measure of (lack of) mental illness (Barry, 2021).

The mean PMI in the present sample was 3.6 (SD=0.8), which is very slightly lower than the 2018 US sample (3.7; SD=0.8), but higher than the UK 2021 sample 3.3 (SD=0.9) and the 2017 UK sample (3.4; SD=0.7). Although rates of depression in men has been found to be slightly lower in Germany than in the US or UK, it is normal for there to be slight variations when measurements are taken at different time points or with different measures (Gallup, 2012).

It is widely accepted that having meaning in one's life is crucial to mental health, as noted in Viktor Frankl's famous book 'Man's Search for Meaning' (Frankl, 1985). The present study highlights some of the factors that are an important source of meaning for men. Accordingly, therapists who are treating low mood in male clients should find out how much the variables listed in Table 3 are contributing to their mood, and whether there is any scope for improving any of these as a way of improving mood. This might be a sensible adjunct to conventional

therapy, especially as conventional therapy might work less well for improving the long term mental health of men compared to women (Wright & Macleod, 2016).

Single items vs multi-item scales

An interesting aspect of the new survey was the inclusion of several single-item measures (e.g. 'satisfaction with interactions with family') that corresponded with the multi-item domains (e.g. the 11 items regarding the importance of various aspects of family interactions). The received wisdom is that multi-item scales are preferable to single items because they are able to tap into various aspects of a complex phenomenon, though on the other hand some studies have found that single items can work better than composite subscales (Wilkerson et al., 2016). In recent years the weight of evidence is tilting towards the idea that single items are perfectly valid for simple constructs with large sample sizes (Sauro, 2018). They also mean that you don't need to test internal reliability (e.g. Cronbachs alpha), though you can still do other tests of reliability (e.g. test-retest).

In the present study, when the analysis was run with the single items and their multi-item equivalents, the single items were stronger predictors in every case (e.g. the single health satisfaction item was a stronger predictor than the multi-item health domain). Indeed the findings overall were unchanged, with a few exceptions. The biggest change was that Job Satisfaction fell from top predictor in the previous two studies, and was replaced as strongest predictor by personal growth prospects. This new top result is in many ways unsurprising, because it most likely taps a similar construct to PMI.

Limitations of this study

Although the findings of this study are valid in their own right, the inclusion of 23 new items (8 satisfaction, and 15 masculinity) makes it difficult to compare the findings of the present study to those of the previous Harry's reports. However, this is the inevitable price of developing a questionnaire, and it could be argued that the new findings are worth the cost.

Unlike previous Harry's studies, the current study did not allow space for 'free text' responses (i.e. answers expressed in the respondent's own words). Although this made the survey quicker

for participants to complete, the deeper meaning behind their answers to Likert-scaled questions could not be assessed.

The coding of 'relationship status' didn't offer an option for 'going steady but not cohabiting', so it is unknown how men were just dating. Some may have selected the 'domestic relationship' option, but it is unknown how many. This makes it difficult to compare findings on the 'relationship status' variable to findings from previous Harry's reports.

Eight new items were added to the 'values' section of the Germany 2022 survey asking about overall satisfaction regarding each set of values. The satisfaction items were either phrased in a way that allowed everyone to answer, or had an option to indicate non-applicability. However due to an oversight, the item about relationship satisfaction was phrased in a way that did not allow people who were not in a relationship to not answer. For this reason, the romance satisfaction item needed to be excluded from the analysis. Future studies should of course include options for 'n/a' responses where necessary.

Another limitation of this study - and all cross-sectional surveys analysed using regression methods - is that statistical correlations between variables do not prove a causal relationship. For example, does the Negative View of Masculinity cause the PMI scores to reduce, or does lower PMI cause the man to have a more Negative View of Masculinity? Or, it could be that a third variable e.g. psychological trauma, causes both a lower PMI and a negative distortion in the view of masculinity. This grey area around causality applies in particular to the finding about age, because we did not follow people through their lifetime. This means we cannot say that, for example, the link between age and PMI is not just specific to a generational cohort rather than the general process of aging on the individual. For example, men born between 1946 and 1964 ('baby-boomers') might have throughout their youth always been happier than men born between around 1980 and 1996 ('Millennials'). This issue could be addressed, but only with an ambitious longitudinal study following men throughout their lifespan.

Strengths of this study

The large sample size of this study gives it an advantage in terms of statistical power, in that it is likely to have been large enough to detect relevant correlations and group differences, except where groups happened to be small e.g. smaller demographic groups.

The present study is strong in terms of originality. The 15 new items directly addressing men's views of masculinity, from which the two subscales were derived, is innovative, given that most other masculinity questionnaires don't ask men how they think masculinity impacts their behaviour, but ask men about their behaviour or feelings e.g. the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory (CMNI) (Mahalik et al., 2003), or ask about men in general e.g. the Brannon Masculinity Scale (Brannon & Juni, 1984). The novel approach of the present survey gives us a greater sense of what men think about their masculinity, and has yielded some important insights, especially in regards to the link between having a negative view of how masculinity impacts behaviour and lower PMI.

A further strength is that it replicates very closely the findings of a previous study using an English version of this survey with a UK sample of 2023 men.

Conclusion

One of the main strengths of this study is that it confirms some of the commonalities that the other Harry's reports have found: men's mental wellbeing is related to age and an interest in their health, and they value honesty and reliability above all other core values. Moreover the present study adds the knowledge that how men view their masculinity may have a significant impact on their mental wellbeing too, so if we want men to have good mental health, it might be a useful strategy to help them to appreciate the ways in which their masculinity can have a positive impact on their behaviour and the people around them. This goes against the trend these days, where even global corporations have adopted the trend of taking a negative view of masculinity. For example, Unilever have been promoting the masculinity-critical 'Man Box' concept, associated with Promundo and Axe. However the think-tank *Policy Exchange* has noted that firms such as Unilever have drawn criticism for putting too much emphasis on their 'social purpose' (Owen, 2021). A clear example of this was the wave of public criticism of Gillette, who lost $8 billion because of their anti-masculinity 'We Believe' campaign in 2019, which showed a marked deviation from their previous male-friendly campaigns such as 'The best a man can get'.

Although men in general tend not to think much about their masculinity and don't much want to discuss it with others, clearly the negative narrative so common today impacts them deeply. Against this backdrop, the positive message from the Harry's Masculinity Reports may play an important role in helping to create a more realistic narrative about men and masculinity.

Conflict of interests

None to declare.

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Appendix 1. The survey

Germany Masculinity
Report Final Question

Appendix 2. Methods

METHODS

Design

This study is a cross-sectional online survey analysed using multiple linear regression. Demographic variables (e.g. age, educational level) were used as predictors. The dependent variable was mental positivity, measured on the Positive Mindset Index. Data were analysed using SPSS software, Version 27.

The survey was similar to the previous two Harry's surveys (Barry, 2020), though like each survey in the Harry's series, had minor adaptations e.g. questions about issues of current interest. Participants needed to answer all questions i.e. there was no option to skip any.

VARIABLES

Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this study is mental positivity, measured using the Positive Mindset Index (PMI) (Barry et al., 2014). This self-report scale consists of six items (happiness, confidence, being in control, emotional stability, motivation and optimism) on a 5-point Likert scale (Appendix 1). The scale is short, easy to use, and shows good psychometric properties e.g. good internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.926) and good concurrent validity with the psychological subscale of the SF-12 (r = .678) and other validated measures of mental health, suicidality, and wellbeing (J. Barry, 2021b).

Predictor variables

Age

Age was measured in years, and for some analyses was categorized into five-year age groups (18-23, 24-29 etc.).

Gender

There were three options: male, female, identify in another way, prefer not to say.

Sexual orientation

There were three options: heterosexual or straight; gay or lesbian; bisexual; other. For the purpose of analysis, these were combined into the two categories of 'heterosexual' and 'non-heterosexual'.

Relationship status

Relationship status was operationalized as single, married, domestic partnership, separated, divorced, widowed, prefer not to say. For the purpose of analysis, two categories were created: 'married and domestic partnership', and 'single, separated, divorced, widowed'.

Parent status

The number of children was given, and coded into 1=has one or more children; 0=has no children.

Military service

Several options were given (see Table 1). These were coded into 1='active duty now or in the past', or 0= 'basic training only, or no training'.

Employment status

The options are shown in Table 1. These were coded with 1='working full-time' as the reference category, and others coded as 0.

Educational level

The options are shown in Table 1

Political views

Participants were asked to identify which political party they supported, if any, from a list.

Income

Participants were asked their gross annual income

Region

Participants stated which of the 12 regions of the UK they currently lived in

Value domains

Value domains were operationalized as shown in Appendix 1. The eight domains were: Work, Friendships, Romantic Relationships, Family, Sport & Leisure Activities, Health, Community, and Education (see Appendix 1). Each domain was described by several items, for example, the Sport & Leisure Activities domain asked how important winning, fun, feeling healthy, etc. were to participants. These were very slightly modified from the previous Harry's report (US, 2019) for the present study.

The eight value domains showed satisfactory psychometric properties. For example, principal component analysis with oblimin rotation (as described by (Field, 2005) found that all item loadings were over the threshold of >.4, and 94% of the items had loadings >.6. The Cronbach's alphas for the domains ranged from 0.875 to 0.935, which are all above 0.7, which is the usual threshold of acceptability (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2000).

Satisfaction with value domains

Related to each of the eight domains was a single item (as advocated by Wanous et al., 1997), asking, for example, *How satisfied are you with your job?* The Likert-scaled options were from 6 = Highly satisfied to 1 = Highly dissatisfied, or, for some items, 'not applicable'.

Masculinity

Additionally, this survey included 15 item on masculinity. These were created for this study by John Barry and the Harry's team.

Psychometric properties of the masculinity subscales

The 15 masculinity items were analysed using principle components analysis with oblimin rotation (as described by (Field, 2005) in order to identify subgroups clustering within the items. Two subscales emerged, characterized as 'men thinking that masculinity has a *negative* impact on them' and 'men thinking that masculinity has a *positive* impact on them'. Both subscales showed acceptable psychometric properties. Item loadings were all over the >.6, which is considered acceptable. The Cronbach's alphas were .895 for the Negative View of Masculinity

Cronbach's alpha, and .682 for the Positive View of Masculinity, both of which can be considered acceptable values by some authors (van Griethuijsen et al., 2015), though the latter is very slightly below the usual threshold of 0.7 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2000).

The items in the two subscales were:

Negative View of Masculinity

- *Masculinity prevents me from recycling and other environmentally friendly behaviours*
- *Masculinity prevents me from taking safety precautions related to Covid-19*
- *Masculinity makes me inclined to be violent towards women:*
- *Masculinity prevents me from talking about how I feel about my problems*

Positive View of Masculinity

- *The idea of 'traditional masculinity' may have a helpful impact on boys if they hear or read about the term*
- *Masculinity makes me inclined to be protective towards women*
- *Masculinity makes me want to be strong for my family*

The items that did not fit into these two subscales were:

The idea of 'toxic masculinity' may have a helpful impact on boys if they hear or read about the term; Not being understood or respected prevents me from talking about how I feel about my problems; Traditional masculinity (being strong, in control of my emotions, and earning a good amount of money) is outdated in today's society; The things I buy should reflect my views on masculinity; My favourite brands and companies should drive the conversation around mental health forward; I like answering questions about masculinity; Masculinity has got nothing to do with how I go about my daily life; Changes to the English language, such as the use of 'aviator' instead of 'airman' or 'airwoman' are helpful to me.

For the purposes of the main analyses of masculinity in this paper, only the two subscales were included.

Setting

The setting was online.

Participants

Participants were men aged over 18. They were recruited from a panel of thousands of people across the UK by *Savanta,* a professional data collection company with a professional membership and ISO certified. A quota sample of men, stratified by age and national region were recruited.

Exclusion criteria

i. Not meeting age and gender criteria

ii. Not indicating consent to participate

Sample size

Based sample size calculations for multiple linear regression with the number of predictors in this study suggested around 500 cases would give sufficient statistical power (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2000).

Procedure

During December 2021, potential participants who met the inclusion criteria for this study were identified from the panel. These people were contacted by Savanta, and the study ran until the quota was reached. The recruitment quota was achieved after several days. The questionnaire survey is shown in Appendix 1. Survey data was collected using Savanta's survey software.

Ethics

Informed consent was given before the survey could be started. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any point. Participants were not required to give any identifying information, such as contact details. The data are confidential and treated in accordance with the Data Protection Action (1998). For any participants who might have become upset due to reading the survey questions, contact details for support were given in the patient information section of the survey (info@wellbeingofmen.com). The survey followed the British Psychological Society (BPS) code of human research ethics (BPS, 2021). Ethical approval for the study was granted by an independent expert after review, as per Section 12 of the BPS code of ethics.

Statistics

Means and SDs and parametric tests were used where relevant assumptions were met. Data were analysed pairwise, so that where a participant gave some information but had not given responses to all items, data for the responses they gave could be included in the analysis. Participants who completed the survey in unrealistically fast time (210 seconds or lower) were excluded from the analysis. The predictors of mental positivity were identified using the enter method with multiple linear regression. For the main analyses, the significance threshold was $p<.01$, two-tailed, as per the previous Harry's reports. Subscales were identified in the new masculinity items using principle components analysis. All statistical analyses were carried out using SPSS statistical software for Windows, Version 27 (IBM Corp, Armonk, NY, USA).

Appendix 3: RESULTS

The final sample consisted of 2002 people, 100% who identified as male, in Germany. Their demographic characteristics are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for the whole German sample (N = 2002), with slight variation where information was missing).

		N	%
Age groups	18-25 years old	199	10.0%
	26-41 years old	488	24.5%
	42-57 years old	567	28.5%
	58-76 years old	676	34.0%
	77-99 years old	61	3.1%
Age (mean, SD)	49.82 (17.02) years old		
Gender	Male	2002	100%
	I identify in another way	0	0%
	Prefer not to say	0	0%
Marital Status	Single	527	26.7%
	Married	917	46.4%
	Domestic Partnership	273	13.8%
	Separated	40	2.0%
	Divorced	178	9.0%
	Widowed	41	2.1%
Occupation	High managerial, admin or professional	156	7.8%
	Intermediate managerial, admin or professional	305	15.2%
	Supervisor, admin or professional	195	9.7%
	Skilled manual worker	466	23.3%
	Semi-skilled or unskilled manual worker	136	6.8%
	House-wife / house-husband	41	2.0%
	Unemployed	102	25.1%53
	Student	79	3.9%
	Retired on a state pension	478	23.9%
	Retired on a private pension	44	2.2%
Sexuality	Heterosexual or straight	1735	86.7%
	Gay or lesbian	105	5.2%
	Bisexual	78	3.9%
	Other	84	4.2%
Region currently living in	Baden-Württemberg	219	10.9%
	Bayern	243	12.1%
	Berlin	128	6.4%
	Brandenburg	62	3.1%
	Bremen	36	1.8%
	Hamburg	66	3.3%
	Hessen	142	7.1%
	Mecklenburg-Vorpommern	48	2.4%
	Niedersachsen	176	8.8%

	Nordrhein-Westfalen	434	21.7%
	Rheinland-Pfalz	97	4.8%
	Saarland	27	1.3%
	Sachsen	110	5.5%
	Sachsen-Anhalt	71	3.5%
	Schleswig-Holstein	78	3.9%
	Thüringen	65	3.2%
Number of children	None	838	41.9%
	One	451	22.5%
	Two	488	24.4%
	Three	142	7.1%
	Four or more	70	3.5%
	Prefer not to say	13	0.6%
Military Service	Non military	849	42.4%
	Military experience (any)	1153	57.6%
Political views	SPD	531	26.5%
	CDU	301	15.0%
	CSU	85	4.2%
	GRÜNE	189	9.4%
	FDP	224	11.2%
	AfD	233	11.6%
	LINKE	150	7.5%
	Other	47	2.3%
	No party represents my views.	242	12.1%
Income	Under 24,999 €	462	24.5%
	25,000 - 49,999 €	760	40.3%
	50,000 - 74,999 €	396	21.0%
	75,000 - 99,999 €	150	8.0%
	100,000 - 149,999 €	76	4.0%
	150,000 - 199,999 €	27	1.4%
	200,000 or more €	14	0.7%

Core values

Participants were presented with a list of 35 values (e.g. loyalty, honesty, etc.) and asked how important to them each were on a scale from 1 to 6, where 6 indicates 'very important'. Table 2 shows the ranking of importance of these values.

Table 2. Mean and SD self ratings on core values, in order of most aspired to by German men

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Q 7 Honest	5.19	1.163
Q 2 Reliable	5.03	1.354
Q 19 Respectful	4.95	1.124
Q 15 Positive	4.84	1.107
Q 35 Thoughtful	4.84	1.074
Q 1 Dependable	4.81	1.543
Q 3 Loyal	4.80	1.249
Q 30 Listening	4.77	1.070
Q 16 Optimistic	4.70	1.134
Q 29 Equality	4.65	1.240
Q 26 Nurturing	4.65	1.145
Q 25 Loving	4.64	1.149
Q 14 Motivated	4.63	1.103
Q 6 Consistent	4.60	1.118
Q 11 Humorous	4.60	1.170
Q 23 Educated	4.57	1.161
Q 12 Fun-loving	4.55	1.169
Q 33 Collaborative	4.55	1.104
Q 4 Committed	4.52	1.141
Q 28 Empathetic	4.52	1.153
Q 34 Future-facing	4.47	1.118
Q 8 Efficient	4.46	1.131
Q 5 Open-minded	4.45	1.200
Q 32 Improvement	4.37	1.092
Q 18 Passionate	4.35	1.209
Q 17 Inspiring	4.27	1.159
Q 27 Humble	4.27	1.192
Q 31 Quiet Confidence	4.23	1.149
Q 9 Innovative	4.23	1.187
Q 10 Creative	4.16	1.244
Q 22 Courageous	4.07	1.216
Q 21 Fit	4.05	1.271
Q 13 Adventurous	3.90	1.362
Q 24 Respected	3.75	1.366
Q 20 Athletic	3.45	1.426

Table 2a. Core values, in order of most aspired to. The most common top three and most common bottom three values only are shown.

	UK (2017)		US (2018)		UK (2021)		Germany (2022)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Honest	5.3	1.0	5.40	1.0	5.0	1.2	5.2	1.2
Reliable	5.3	1.0	5.29	1.0	4.8	1.3	5.0	1.6
Dependable	5.3	1.0	5.24	1.0	4.8	1.5	4.8	1.6
Adventurous	3.9	1.6	4.25	1.3	4.1	1.3	3.9	1.4
Fit	4.1	1.1	4.39	1.2	4.0	1.4	4.1	1.3
Athletic	3.7	1.3	3.89	1.4	3.7	1.5	3.5	1.4

What factors predict men's mental wellbeing?

Table 3 shows that variables that were most significantly related to PMI.

Table 3. Top five factors that predict German men's mental wellbeing (Positive Mindset Index)

Variable	β	*t*	*Sig*	Interpretation
Personal growth satisfaction	0.160	5.023	0.000001	More satisfaction with personal growth linked to higher PMI
Age	0.125	4.075	0.00005	Older men have higher PMI
Negative View of Masculinity	-0.118	-4.014	0.0001	Those with more negative views of masculinity have lower PMI
Health satisfaction	0.118	3.897	0.0001	More satisfaction with one's educational level linked to higher PMI
Positive View of Masculinity	0.097	3.647	0.0005	Those with more positive views of masculinity have higher PMI

Of all of the predictors, the top five are shown in Table 3, in descending order of statistical significance. The following sections look more deeply into the the main predictors of PMI.

Factors related to Personal Growth Satisfaction

Personal Growth Satisfaction was the strongest predictor of PMI (β = 0.160; t = 5.023; p<.000001). Table 4 shows the four significant predictors of PMI, based on the Personal Growth domain items.

Table 4. The significant predictors of PMI, based on the Personal Growth domain items

Variable	β	*t*	*Sig*
Mental wellbeing	.276	10.081	$.03^{-21}$
Being the 'real me'	.074	2.629	.009
Spiritual development	-.062	-2.102	.036
Put myself first	-.057	-2.006	.045

Age

Age was the second strongest predictor of PMI (β =0.125; t = 4.075; p<.00005). This finding indicates that older men have higher PMI.

Negative View of Masculinity

Not having a Negative View of Masculinity was the fifth strongest predictor of PMI (β =0.101; t = -3.458; p<.001). Taking each of the four items in the Negative View of Masculinity subscale, three of them were significant predictors of PMI: thinking that *Masculinity prevents me from talking about how I feel about my problems* was associated with significantly lower PMI (β = -.093; t =-3.311, p<.001), as were thinking masculinity caused feelings of violence against women (β = -.105; t =-3.157, p<.002), and taking risks regarding covid-19 precautions (β = -.066; t =-1.961, p<.05).

Table 5. The significant predictors of PMI, based on not having a Negative View of Masculinity

Variable	β	t	*Sig*
Masculinity causes suppression of feelings	-.093	-3.311	.001
Masculinity causes violence against women	-.105	-3.157	.002
Masculinity reduces covid-19 precautions	-.066	-1.961	.050

Health

Health satisfaction was the third strongest predictor of PMI (β =0.118; t = 3.897; p<.0001). Those who value health had higher PMI. Table 5 shows the five significant predictors of PMI, based on the Health domain items. Higher PMI was linked to placing importance on: Feeling good (β =0.141; t = 4.656; p<.000003), Exercise (β =0.81; t = 2.888; p<.004), Living Longer (β =0.071; t = 2.700; p<.007), and Mental Health (β =0.065; t = 2.138; p<.033). Interestingly, lower PMI was significantly related to placing importance on Looking good (β =-0.067; t = 2.702; p<.007).

Table 6. The significant predictors of PMI, based on the Health domain items

Variable	β	t	*Sig*
Feeling good	.141	4.656	.000003
Exercise	.081	2.888	.004
Living longer	.071	2.700	.007
Looking good	-.067	-2.702	.007
Mental health	.065	2.138	.033

Positive view of masculinity

Having a Positive View of Masculinity was the fifth strongest predictor of PMI (β =0.101; t = -3.458; p<.001). Table 7 shows that taking each of the three items in the Positive View of Masculinity subscale, two of them were significant predictors of PMI: thinking that *Masculinity makes me protective of women* was associated with significantly lower PMI (β = 0.141; t = 5.532, p<.0000005), and thinking *Masculinity makes me strong for my family* (β = .055; t =2.092, p<.037).

Table 7. The significant predictors of PMI, based on having a Positive View of Masculinity

Variable	β	t	*Sig*
Masculinity helps protect women	.141	5.532	.0000005
Masculinity makes me strong for my family	.055	2.092	.037

Figure 1 illustrates the pattern of age differences in relation to views about the impact of masculinity on attitudes to women.

Figure 1. Line graph showing agreement about the impact of masculinity on behaviour towards women. Higher scores on the vertical axis indicate more agreement. 3=moderately disagree, and 4=moderately agree.
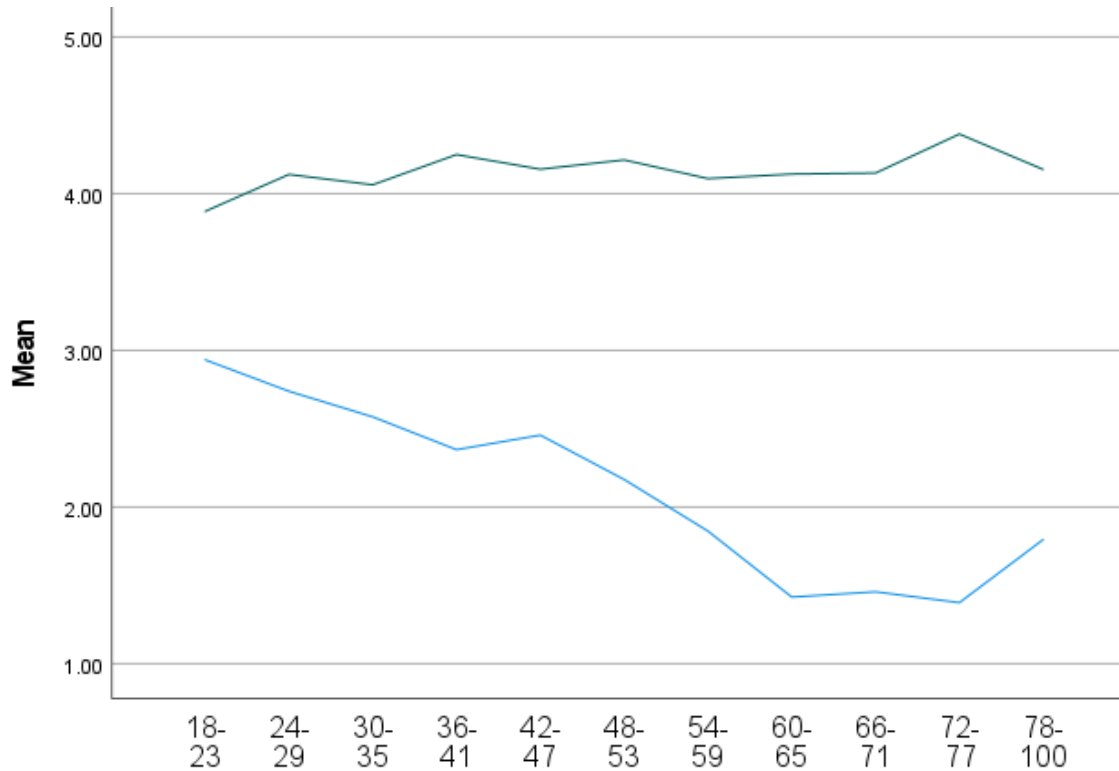
In Figure 1, the darker line shows responses to the statement *'Masculinity makes me inclined to be protective towards women'*. The light blue line shows responses to the statement *'Masculinity makes me inclined to be violent towards women'*.