

PRESS RELEASE

Australian Sex Survey reveals the complexity of gender identification for females and offers insight into why historical roles may have formed and self-reinforced stereotypical binary behaviour.

SYDNEY, Australia – October 11, 2018.

A study conducted by The Queensland University of Technology and Australia's largest online dating group adultmatchmaker.com.au (Giga Pty Ltd) explored factors relevant for individuals who self-identify as one of the many possible non-binary gender options (i.e. not man or woman). Using data from 7479 Australian respondents, the study is the first of its kind to conduct an analysis using a large sample of non-binary individuals.

The study gauged the relationship between biological and social processes and new gender identification terms and categories that expand on historical man-woman polarity.

The study supports the existence of a broad and diverse range of gender identities outside the generally accepted dualities of "masculinity-femininity" or "man-woman", with appreciable numbers of individuals who self-identify with non-binary genders.

Dr Stephen Whyte, from QUT's Business School, said the most interesting finding of his research was how multi-faceted non-binary gender identification was for females, compared to males.

Females in their early 20s were considerably more likely than males of the same age to identify as non-binary. Likewise, women in their 50s and older were less likely than males of the same age to do the same.

"While gender can no doubt be a complex issue for males, our research showed just how many factors can influence a female's decision, including reproductive pressure, labour market inequality and disproportionate levels of education - even female height was a statistically-relevant factor, with taller females more likely to identify as non-binary," Dr Whyte said.

The study also reinforced previous findings about variations in femininity, masculinity, and other gender aspects for individuals as well as these changes within an individual's lifetime, thus highlighting the importance of understanding and exploration of these differences, not only for sciences that study human sexuality but also for policy makers and society as a whole.

"A lack of education around such polarising topics often means information asymmetries and stereotypes are perpetuated. Society and policy makers thus have not only an obligation but also a valuable opportunity to embrace wider acceptance of those wishing to identify as non-binary."

Participation:

The Australian Sex Survey was conducted via a portal on australiansexsurvey.com.au where participants were invited to complete a short, 15-minute anonymous survey. The survey collected basic demographic information (sex, age, gender, height, education, income, marital status, number of children, residence postal code, and occupation) as well as data on sexual orientation, gender identity, and frequency of sex in an average week. It included a Kinsey scale of sexual responses, which measured the degree of same-sex attraction.

Survey Partners:



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Further information:

For survey data, including information about future studies, please visit: australiansexsurvey.com.au

The results of the study have been published in *Archives of Sexual Behaviour*:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007%2Fs10508-018-1307-3>

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