

# Breaking a gender norm



Breaking Gender Norm Breaking Gender Norm Socially constructed ideals regarding the way an individual either male or female are referred to as gender norms because they establish the activities an individual can engage in and the way to engage. Culture pressures men to abide by specific societal standards that usually equate manhood with being strong, capable and in control. In violating gender norms, I had the liberty of defying the typical way culture embody a real man by dressing like a female in a long dress at a public event, which is against the way men are encouraged to be stoic in proving their masculinity. Since culture defines expectations of a man, a man wearing a dress goes against the norm and is viewed as feminine because of wearing a dress; although, men in west Africa wear overall dresses in official and unofficial occasions (jewa6961, 2011). College shows double standards between men and women because men feel the desire to exercise dominance for them to be accepted in society. Although I found it easy to violate the male norm of dressing, the feelings of violating the dressing norm in men in a public place is quite uncomfortable regardless of the fact that women are proud of their appearance. I felt the need to act in a way that would conceal my feelings in an attempt to avoid consequences associated with violation of the norm. I had a feeling of fear regarding the way the people around would receive the gender deviant behavior because I knew there would be social penalties because I was behaving in way that is incongruent to the norm regarding male dressing.

Due to preferred male dominance in the country, dressing like a woman exposed me to the double standards in violating the male dressing norms; moreover, acting in this way made me feel like I managed to break away from standards set out by the society. By wearing a dress evoked stereotype

judgment aimed at me due to the violation of expected genders norms associated with men dressing because dressing in men is essential in showing their masculinity. However, to a certain extent I felt that people could be embracing actions of deviance aimed at gender norms because some people showed signs of comfort even when I broke norms of men dressing. However, traits related to gender can vary in accordance with culture, gender norms being what is considered socially acceptable in all genders advocates strict adherence to the norms in each gender. By violating the dressing norm in men I developed feelings of being socially unpredictable, confusion regarding norms, undermined trust regarding people behavior and diversion of resources in controlling the behavior. Because of violating the gender norm in men dressing, other members in the public initiated their normative differentiation, which made male members to severely me and sought distance between them and me. I felt that this was caused by people tendency to reprimand members who violate norms considered morally wrong like wearing women clothes. Moreover, this reaction from men I felt could have come from the need to express normative attitudes (Mercer University, n. d).

#### References

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