Gender Roles In Mexican Culture

Gender role is widely present in today's society. Our society has constructed the idea that gender role is based on the concept of how men and women are expected to act and behave. However, culture reflects on the differences in gender roles. The development of children who later grow up to become adults, generate different point of views towards other individuals around the world, often determined by their culture's gender stereotypes. As a Hispanic woman coming from a Mexican background, I have seen my family practice the two traditionally gender primary gender roles: machismo and marianismo.

The term "machismo" is the sociocultural term for Mexico and many other Latin American countries associated with males. Machismo implicates that a man should have a high place of value in which he demonstrates strength, independence, and knowledge. They are often well respected by others for their high self-esteem. Men who are considered to be machismo are those who are considered to be dominant and is corresponded to serve as the family provider. For example, my father was in charge with managing all of the house bills. There was a time period where my father worked two jobs. He did not work two jobs because he wasn't making enough money to sustain my family, on the other hand, he worked two jobs in order to be able to save money and to treat us with expenses that we personally desired. Another example of this gender role would be the way in which my mother talks to my baby brother in terms of the future. After my father deceased, my family now consists of me, my mother, my younger sister, and my baby brother. Since my father unfortunately does not stand within us anymore, she baby talks my brother and refers him to be the future "protector" and "the man of the house" since he is the only male in the family while the rest of us are all females.

"Marianismo" is the female aspect associated with gender role. The concept is relevant to how females are perpetuated as pure and should have strong morals. This identity can be an ideal representation of Roman Catholicism's iconography, the "Virgin Mary." Females are expected to be caretakers, dependent, gentle, and devoted to have responsibility to maintain house hold matters in order. An example of this concept is my dad's encouragement towards my mother when it came to working less. He propounded that she should stay home and provide more dedication to me and my siblings in order for us to do better in our academics. From a very early age, my mother would always emphasize how we should not always depend on her when it came to cooking or doing laundry for example. She suggested that it was important that we learned from an early age so by the time we had a family of our own, we wouldn't be so clueless.

Me and my sister had to always help my mother prepare the dinner table before everyone sat down and also clean everybody's dishes after we were done eating.

Although both "machismo' and "marianismo" have their own characteristics between both genders, sometimes there may be a specific gender that may do some characteristics of the alternative gender. An example would be a young boy getting his ears pierced. A traditional family may see it as a feminine characteristic which may cause physical and verbal abuse. Another example would be a young girl dressing herself with big t-shirts and baggy pants or not combing her hair. This shows an inverse appearance of how a female is expected to present

herself.