

The impact of the gender on Stereotype Vulnerability and on individual's performance

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Whether they are negative or positive, stereotypes can orient individuals' thoughts and performances. The intensity with which people are influenced by such stereotypes is referred to as stereotype vulnerability. Until now, stereotype vulnerability has only been considered as an individual characteristic. We assumed that working as social status, gender could also influence stereotype vulnerability. We therefore hypothesized that as a low-status group, females are more influenced by stereotype-based expectations than males. This question was investigated by using an original protocol designed to induce same stereotype pressure on males and females achieving a gender-neutral fine motor skill task. Three hundred children accomplished this task, which was alternately stereotyped so as to favor each sex in turn. Our results indicated that girls, unlike boys, showed an important fluctuation in their performance whether facing a positive or a negative stereotype-based expectation. This highlights the importance of discussing gender considering stereotypes' influence.

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