

Equality, Inclusion, and Diversity Newsletter

School of Psychology TCD

Special Issue: Literature on Workplace Gender

Equality in Education.

The School is currently in the process of submitted an application for the Athena SWAN bronze award. There is a wealth of literature regarding the issues of gender biases and equality in the field and the assessment team wanted to share some of that research with you. We would welcome any further literature or information being completed on gender equality within the School.



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

Contact us:

Email: eqid-psych@tcd.ie

Twitter: @PsychologyTCD

Website: <https://psychology.tcd.ie>

Régner, I., Thinus-Blanc, C., Netter, A., Schmader, T., & Huguet, P. (2019). Committees with implicit biases promote fewer women when they do not believe gender bias exists. *Nature human behaviour*, 1-9.

(synopsis by Prof Clare Kelly)

The study by Régner and colleagues assessed whether decision-makers' implicit and explicit associations and beliefs predicted their evaluations of male and female candidates for promotions. Specifically, the study looked at real-world promotion decisions made by 40 committees in the French National Committee for Scientific Research over a two-year period.

Committee members (50% (414) of those available participated in the study) from across the scientific spectrum (particle physics to political science) completed a gender-science Implicit Associations Task (IAT), which measures the strength of participants' associations between the concepts "male" and "female" and the attributes "science" and "liberal arts."

Participants also completed a survey that measured explicit beliefs regarding the origins of women's under-representation in STEM fields (e.g., discrimination, ability, family constraints, or choice). These implicit and explicit measures were then used to predict the degree to which promotion decisions favoured men over women, taking into account the numbers of men and women in the applicant pool.

Although no *overall* bias in selection decisions was observed the study found that implicit and explicit beliefs interact to shape committees' decisions, such that committees whose members exhibited stronger implicit science=male associations promoted fewer females if they did not explicitly endorse a belief in external barriers to women in STEM.

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Importantly however, this effect was only during year 2 of the study (when committees were not reminded of the study) relative to year 1 (when the study was announced and initial implicit/explicit data collected), suggesting that committees can modify their behaviour when they believe they are under scrutiny for gender-based decisions.

The study is important for demonstrating the role of both implicit and explicit beliefs as well as the potentially bias-reducing effect of believing that decisions are under scrutiny for gender bias.

Charlesworth, T. E., & Banaji, M. R. (2019). Gender in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics: Issues, Causes, Solutions. *Journal of Neuroscience*, 39(37), 7228-7243.

(review by Prof Clare Kelly)

The paper by Charlesworth & Banaji is a very comprehensive and up-to-date review of gender gaps in STEM in the US, including representation, pay, grants, authorships, and awards. There is a really nice overview of potential causes, including differences in ability, preferences/choices, and explicit and implicit bias and a review of potential solutions. A long read but well worth it!

Additional Articles/Readings

BBC (2019). Gender not children 'holds women academics back'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/education-48531699>

El Layli, A., Hansen-Brown, A.A., Ceynar, M. (2018). Dancing backwards in high heels: Female professors experience more work demands and special favor requests, particularly from academically entitled students. *Sex Roles* 79, 136-150

Macfarlane, B. & Burg, D. (2019) Women professors and the academic housework trap. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 41 (3), 262-274

O'Witteaman, H., Hendricks, M., Straus, S., & Tannenbaum, C. (2019). *Are gender gaps due to evaluations of the applicant or the science? A natural experiment at a national fund agency.* *Lancet*, 393, 531-540