

GENDER STEREOTYPES AND IN-GROUP BIAS IN EARLY ADOLESCENCE

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Abstract

Adolescence is considered crucial for gender development due to major changes characterizing this period, and recent theoretical analyses and research examine the trajectory of gender role flexibility. The present study is focused on the gender stereotypes in early adolescence and on the in-group bias. One hundred and two boys and girls aged 10-14 years completed a set of measures based on Children's Occupations, Activities and Traits Scale (Liben & Bigler, 2002) designed to reveal the gender flexibility in occupations and respectively activities domains. A second sample of 138 adolescents aged 13-14 years undertook a task designed to assess the gender stereotypes in terms of personality trait and the in-group bias, the 30 traits included being selected from Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974). The results of our cross-sectional study indicated higher levels of gender flexibility of older participants compared to the younger ones, of girls compared to boys, and also highlighted the in-group favoritism and out-group derogation in the case of adolescents of both genders.

Keywords: gender stereotypes; gender flexibility; early adolescence; in-group bias

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