Recent research has shown that negative stereotypes have detrimental effects on the performance of members of the stereotyped group (Steele, 1997), as well as on their motivation (Davies et al., 2005). The present study aims to investigate how an inclusion vs. exclusion of stereotype-inconsistent information about a particular person into a mental representation of a target stimulus (i.e., women in general) can alter Stereotype Threat effects. Therefore, the approach of Stereotype Threat theory will be combined with the inclusion-exclusion model (Bless & Schwarz, 1998).

Stereotype Threat theory:
- Negative stereotypic expectancies (e.g., ‘Men have better leadership abilities than women’) can impair test performance and cause a disidentification from the domain (e.g.: low leadership interests; Davies et al., 2005) for members of the stereotyped group (e.g., women).
- Stereotype Threat can enhance the identification with the stereotyped group by its members. Therefore, a social comparison with an individual of the stereotyped group can lead to assimilation effects. In turn, positive social comparisons (e.g., role models) can eliminate the Stereotype Threat effect (see Marx et al., 2005).

Inclusion-exclusion model:
- In order to evaluate some target stimulus a mental representation of the stimulus as well as of a comparison standard is needed (Bless & Schwarz, 1998).
- Context Information, that is included into the mental representation of the target stimulus will result in a judgement shift in the direction of the valence of the included information (assimilation; Wänke et al., 2005).
- Context Information, that is excluded from the mental representation of the target stimulus will often be used for the contraction of the comparison standard and can therefore result in a judgement shift in the opposite direction of the valence of the excluded information (contrast; Wänke et al., 2005).

Integrating Stereotype Threat theory and the Inclusion-Exclusion model:
A stereotype-consistent person (i.e., career woman), that is included into the mental representation of the target stimulus (i.e., women in general) should result in a less stereotypic evaluation of the target stimulus. The exclusion of the same stereotype-consistent person from the mental representation of the target stimulus should result in a more stereotypic evaluation of the target stimulus. Stereotype Threat will enhance identification with the stereotyped group (i.e., women in general) by its members. If stereotype-inconsistent information about a person (i.e., Angela Merkel) is included into the representation of the stereotyped group (i.e., women in general) the person should serve as a role model and negative effects of Stereotype Threat should be eliminated. An exclusion of the same information should enhance Stereotype Threat effects.

Hypotheses:
- An inclusion of Angela Merkel into the female stereotype results in a less stereotypic perception of women in general and a more stereotypic perception of Angela Merkel. In contrast, an exclusion of Angela Merkel from the female stereotype will result in a more stereotypic perception of women in general and a less stereotypic perception of Angela Merkel.
- An inclusion of Angela Merkel into the female stereotype eliminates the Stereotype Threat effect on leadership motivation and thus results in enhanced leadership motivation. In contrast, an exclusion of Angela Merkel will enhance the Stereotype Threat effect on leadership motivation and thus results in decreased leadership motivation.

Method

- N = 135 female participants
- IV 1: Stereotype Threat: Threat vs. no-Threat; Announcement of a role play: "Men have shown better leadership abilities in the role play than women." vs. "Women have shown equal or better leadership abilities in the role play as compared to men."
- IV 2: Inclusion vs. Exclusion; Participants read an on-line newspaper article on an interview with Angela Merkel and answered multiple choice questions about the article either regarding her behavior associated with the female gender role (e.g., family-oriented; inclusion) or with a leader role (e.g., dominant; exclusion).
- Moderator: gender identity (5 items, example: "Being a woman is an important part of my self-image")
- DVS:
  - Motivation to take a leadership role in an anticipated role play (scale: 1-7)
  - Stereotype of ‘women in general’ (items from the Bem Sex-Role-Inventory, German version; Schneider-Düker & Kohler, 1988).•
- Manipulation check: Inclusion / Exclusion: Ratings on feminine and masculine traits of Angela Merkel (items from the Bem Sex-Role-Inventory, German version; Schneider-Düker & Kohler, 1988).

References:


Introduction

Discussion

Leadership Motivation

Participants with a high gender identity show less interest in the leadership role under Stereotype Threat compared to ‘no threat’. For participants with a low gender identity this effect is reversed, F(1, 111)=3.585; p=.06. No effects for the inclusion/exclusion conditions emerged.

Stereotype of women in general

Participants in the inclusion conditions rated ‘women in general’ as more feminine than participants in the exclusion conditions, F(1, 115)=3.178; p=.08.

Manipulation check Inclusion/Exclusion

Difference scores of feminine minus masculine traits were computed. Angela Merkel is rated as less feminine/more masculine in the inclusion compared to the exclusion conditions, F(1, 115)= 4.465, p<.05. Further a significant inclusion/exclusion x threat interaction emerged. The difference between the inclusion and exclusion conditions only appear under Stereotype Threat, F(1, 115)= 4.092, p<.05.

A post-hoc ANOVA of ratings on feminine minus masculine traits with Stereotype Threat and inclusion/exclusion as between-subject factors and Angela Merkel vs. ‘women in general’ as a within-subject factor was computed. Although Angela Merkel is perceived as more feminine in the inclusion as opposed to the exclusion conditions she was rated as significantly more feminine/less masculine than ‘women in general’ in all conditions, F(1, 115)=477.087, p<.001. These results indicate that her representation was not sufficiently included into the representation of ‘women in general’. Consequently, she could not serve as a role model.

References: