



Project No: 2022-1-DK01-KA220-HED-000088016

WP2

Digital Tool for Identifying Stereotypes in Career Decisions

Document for Counselors



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1. Introduction.

This document is intended to serve as a guide for counselors and to clarify some aspects on the use of the digital tool, designed to help to explore and understand gender biases that could potentially impact career decisions. This tool is part of "GUIDE - Upgrading the skills of professionals for gender sensitive career guidance" project, that aims to upgrade the skills of professionals for gender-sensitive career guidance, in order to empower young adults and teenagers to make informed choices based on their interests and abilities rather than societal expectations.

1.1. Key concepts.

Stereotype.

In social psychology, a stereotype is a fixed, overgeneralized belief about a particular group or class of people or things. By stereotyping we infer that a person or object has a whole range of characteristics and abilities that we assume all members of that group have.

Stereotypes lead to social categorization, which is one of the reasons for prejudiced attitudes (i.e. "them" and "us" mentality) which leads to in-groups and out-groups. Most of the time, stereotypes are often unfair and untrue.

Gender Stereotype.

Gender stereotyping is the practice of ascribing to an individual specific attributes, characteristics, or roles by reason only of her, his or their membership in the social group.

Gender stereotypes can be both positive and negative but usually, a stereotype is harmful when it limits a person's capacity to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives and life plans.

Occupation Stereotype.

An occupational stereotype can be defined as a preconceived attitude about a particular occupation, about people who are employed in that occupation, or about one's own suitability for that occupation (Shinar, 1975).

Stereotype Threat.

Stereotype threat arises when one is in a situation where one is afraid to do something that would unintentionally confirm a negative stereotype. It is triggered by the mere realization that a negative group stereotype might apply to you in a particular situation.

According to Steele (Steele & Aronson, 1995), stereotype threat generates "spotlight anxiety", which causes emotional distress and "vigilant worry" that may undermine performance.

Gender Inequality.

Gender inequality is discrimination based on sex that results in one sex being routinely privileged or preferred over another. Gender equality is a fundamental human right and that right is violated by gender-based discrimination.

Around the world, while contexts and gender roles vary from place to place, we can see that gender inequalities occur everywhere; and at every stage of life, beginning with childhood or even before birth. This gender prejudice results in gender discrimination.

Gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap is a measure of how we value the relative contribution of different genders to the workforce.

It is based on salaries paid directly to employees before income tax and social security contributions are deducted, expressed as a percentage or a dollar figure. It shows the difference between the average earnings of people in their jobs.

1.2. Explicit and implicit biases.

Bias, in simple terms, refers to our unconscious or conscious preferences or prejudices towards certain groups of people. Within the context of this tool, we will be focusing on the two dimensions of biases: explicit and implicit associations.

Explicit biases are our conscious beliefs and attitudes, which can influence our perceptions and actions. The self-assessment will provide insights into the explicit biases related to gender stereotypes in career choices.

Implicit biases, on the other hand, are unconscious associations or stereotypes that we may unknowingly hold based on societal influences. We understand that these implicit biases can also significantly affect career decisions. Hence, we provide additional material here: <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html> to help you assess and reflect upon implicit biases.

This Digital Tool (for Identifying Stereotypes in Career Decisions) is only the first step in exploring the surface of gender bias. That is why the questions are phrased in a stereotypical way. From here, you will be able to better understand explicit biases that may affect career decisions.

Once the assessment is completed, a customized report will be generated with the results. This report will be a valuable resource to provide guidance based on any gender stereotypes or biases affecting choices.

We hope that this tool and the resources provided will help challenge and overcome preconceived notions about appropriate careers based solely on gender. Let's create a future where opportunities are open to all genders based on individual interests and abilities.

Thank you for joining us on this journey to end gender bias in career decision making.

2. Recommendations for the use of the tool.

This **gender stereotype assessment test** is a tool designed to measure and analyze stereotypical beliefs and perceptions about the roles and characteristics associated with different genders, such as male and female. Such tests are used to understand how people perceive and internalise the roles, behaviours and characteristics typically ascribed to men and women in a particular society or culture.

The questions in the questionnaire are designed to assess attitudes, beliefs, preferences, or even mental associations. We do not intend to judge or "rate" your character. We only aim to help you choose your career path among opportunities based on interest and ability rather than gender.

It is critical that gender stereotypes assessment tests are administered in an ethical and sensitive manner, respecting gender diversity and avoiding perpetuating bias or stereotypes. In addition, it is important to keep in mind that such tests can evolve and adapt as understanding of gender identity and social dynamics change over time.

2.1 Interpretation of results.

The results indicate the general tendency that the individual shows towards the situations presented through the questionnaire.

We should not interpret these results as absolute, and it is even a good practice to perform the test more than once (for example after the 1st session with the young adults and teenagers) with the intention of contrasting possible contradictions).

Once the results have been obtained, it is advisable to analyze the answers to the items one by one, so that the interviewee can give arguments and explanations for his answers. In this way, we can inquire into the real motivations that led the person to choose his or her answer. That is, each of the items, and the answer given, should serve as a starting point for a more detailed analysis of the beliefs, values and biased associations that the respondent may show.

2.2 Rating.

30 - 45 points = **VERY LOW** level of gender stereotyping

46 - 75 points = **LOW** level of gender stereotyping

76 - 105 points= **INTERMEDIATE** level of gender stereotyping

106 - 135 points= **HIGH** level of gender stereotyping

136 - 150 points= **VERY HIGH** level of gender stereotyping

30 – 45: Very low level - The individual does not have any gender stereotypes that can affect their career decisions.

Based on the individual responses, it appears that the individual does not possess any discernible obstacles that could impact their decision-making process in relation to their professional career.

Furthermore, the person shows that there are no gender stereotypes that could influence their choice of profession. They possess the ability to recognize, scrutinise, and appreciate the existence of discrimination, inequality, and exclusion across all genders within professional spheres. Overall, their career decisions exhibit a commendable absence of gender biases.

46 – 75: Low level – The individual has some gender stereotypes but not to an extent that can affect their career decisions.

According to the individual's responses, there are some barriers and stereotypes regarding careers, but they can easily be overcome. Gender biases and stereotypes are unlikely to exert any significant influence on their decision-making process when it comes to their career choices.

76 – 105: Intermediate level - The individual has gender stereotypes that might affect their career decisions.

Based on the individual's responses, there is a likelihood that they could be influenced by gender stereotypes when making career decisions. It is evident that the individual holds certain gender stereotypes that could potentially impact their career path choices. It is advisable to closely examine their responses, particularly those rated above 3, and engage in discussions to gain a deeper understanding of the extent to which their decisions may be affected. This will enable you, as a CGP*, to assess the range of influence these stereotypes have on their decision-making process.

106 – 135: High level - The individual has gender stereotypes that affect their career decisions.

According to the individual's responses, it is apparent that their career decisions are influenced by gender stereotypes. As the individual is contemplating their professional path, it is evident that they harbor gender stereotypes that exert an impact on their decision-making process. It is crucial to acknowledge that these stereotypes have a tangible effect on their professional trajectory. In this case, it is advisable for you, as CGP*, to engage in a discussion with the individual to ascertain whether their career decision is based on genuine interest and ability rather than being solely dictated by gender biases. This will help foster a deeper understanding of their motivations and ensure a more informed approach to their career path.

136 – 150: Very high level – The individual's career path and decisions are affected by gender stereotypes.

Based on the individual's responses it is undeniable that their career decisions are indeed influenced by gender stereotypes. The individual will make his career decision based on gender and not based on interest or ability. You, as CGP*, should help the individual be aware of their biases and help all genders to acquire the knowledge, information, skills, and experience necessary to identify career options and narrow them down to make a career decision, without using gender stereotypes.



3. Conclusion.

In conclusion, the present gender stereotype assessment test provides an overview of the perceptions and beliefs ingrained in the individual regarding the roles and attributes associated with the different genders. The results may reveal the presence of certain ingrained stereotypes in our society, underscoring the need to promote greater awareness and education about gender diversity and the importance of challenging and overcoming these biases. This questionnaire study represents a crucial starting point for initiating conversations and actions towards gender equality and fostering a more inclusive and respectful environment for all people, regardless of their gender identity.



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Thank you!