

Pancultural Gender Stereotypes Revisited: The Five Factor Model

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Williams and Best's (1982, 1990a) cross-cultural gender stereotype data from 25 countries, previously analyzed in terms of affective meanings, ego states, and psychological needs, were re-analyzed in terms of the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality. In each country, participants were approximately 100 university students, equally divided by gender. With results averaged across all countries, it was found that the pancultural male stereotype was higher than the pancultural female stereotype on Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experience while the pancultural female stereotype was higher on Agreeableness. Re-analysis of the stereotype data from Japan and Pakistan, which had been found relatively atypical in previous analyses, revealed FFM profiles generally similar to the pancultural profiles. The evaluative nature of each factor is discussed and related to the stereotypes as socialization models.

Gender stereotypes are the psychological characteristics believed to be differentially associated with women and men in a particular cultural group. Pancultural gender stereotypes are the psychological characteristics differentially associated with women and men across many cultural groups. For example, women are often said to be more emotional and nurturant than men, while men are said to be more aggressive and

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independent than women. Gender stereotypes have been studied using a variety of theory-based scoring systems, as summarized below. The present paper reports a study in which the pancultural gender stereotypes, identified by Williams and Best (1982, 1990a), are examined, for the first time, in terms of the Five Factor Model (FFM) of personality: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability, and Openness to Experience.

Williams and Best (1982, 1990a) conducted a large-scale, cross-cultural study of gender stereotypes. In each of 25 countries, from Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and the Americas, women and men university students judged each of the 300 items of the Adjective Check List (ACL; Gough & Heilbrun, 1980), or its translated equivalent, as to whether, in their culture, the adjective was more frequently associated with men, or women, or not differentially associated by gender. Within each sample, the responses to each adjective were examined to determine the number of subjects considering the item to be more characteristic of men or more characteristic of women. An M% score was then calculated by dividing the male frequency by the sum of the male and female frequencies and multiplying by 100. Thus computed, high M% adjectives were those highly associated with men, low M% adjectives were those highly associated with women, and adjectives with scores in the mid-range (around 50) were those not differentially associated by gender. It should be noted that the M% index is designed to reflect the *relative* degree of association of a characteristic with the two gender groups and does not indicate whether the adjective is employed frequently.

In each country, the distribution of M% scores was examined to identify the adjectives composing the "focused" gender stereotypes: items with M% scores of 67 and up constituted the male stereotype while items with M% scores of 33 and down composed the female stereotype. Thus, in order to be classified as a stereotype item, an adjective had to be associated with one gender at least twice as often as with the other gender.

The focused stereotypes in each of the 25 countries were then analyzed by three different theoretically-based scoring systems: Affective Meanings (Best, Williams, & Briggs, 1980; Williams & Best, 1977); Transactional Analysis Ego States (Williams & Williams, 1980); and Psychological Needs (Gough & Heilbrun, 1980). While these analyses revealed some interesting variations attributable to cultural differences, the major finding was a high degree of pancultural similarity in the patterns of characteristics differentially associated with women and men in the 25 countries studied.

The Affective Meaning analyses indicated that in all countries the adjectives associated with men were stronger and more active than the adjectives associated with women. The relative favorability of the two

stereotypes varied from country to country with no general pancultural tendency noted.

The Ego State analyses revealed that in virtually all countries the male stereotype items were associated with the Critical Parent and Adult Ego States while the Nurturing Parent and Adapted Child Ego States were associated with the female stereotype. There was no pancultural tendency regarding the Free Child Ego State.²

The Psychological Needs analyses indicated that the male stereotypes were always higher on Dominance, Autonomy, Aggression, and Exhibition, and usually higher on Achievement and Endurance. The female stereotypes were always higher on Abasement, Deference, Succorance, and Nurture, and usually higher on Affiliation and Heterosexuality. No pancultural tendencies were observed for Change, Order, or Intraception.

The relationships just noted reflect the high degree of pancultural stereotype similarity observed in the study. To date, however, the pancultural gender stereotypes have not been examined in terms of the Five Factor Model (FFM). The present paper does so by examining pancultural gender stereotypes using a recently-developed ACL scoring system based on the FFM.

Originating in the works of Tupes and Christal (1961/1992) and Norman (1963), the FFM proposes that the major dimensions of human personality can be conceptualized in terms of five factors: Extraversion (EXT), Agreeableness (AGR), Conscientiousness (CON), Emotional Stability (STA), and Openness (OPN) (McCrae & Costa, 1990). Support for this view has been found in a variety of studies in the United States (see McCrae & Costa, 1990) and other countries (see Church & Lonner, 1998). McCrae and Costa (1997) factor analyzed personality data from Germany, Portugal, Israel, China, Korea, and Japan, and reported that the five factors were replicated in all six samples. McCrae, Costa, del Pilar, Rolland, and Parker (1998) report similar results in France and the Philippines. These findings of high factor similarity in such diverse language/culture groups led McCrae and Costa (1997) to propose that the FFM may represent a universal model of the way in which human personality characteristics are organized. This view suggests that the FFM might be particularly useful for summarizing cross-cultural research findings in personality/social psychology.

The increasing interest in the FFM, and the widespread research use

²The Critical Parent is the part of the personality that controls, criticizes, and reflects the rules of society. The Nurturing Parent protects, nurtures, and promotes growth. The Adult is concerned with instrumental, problem-solving activities. The Free Child represents the natural, spontaneous aspects of personality. The Adapted Child represents the conforming and compromising behaviors of the "overly socialized" child (see Berne, 1961, 1966; Williams and Best, 1990a, Chapter 5).

of the ACL item pool, led to the development of a system for scoring ACL item sets in terms of the five factors. FormyDuval (1993; FormyDuval, Williams, Patterson, & Fogle, 1995) had men and women university student judges use five-point scales to rate each of the 300 ACL items for EXT, AGR, CON, STA, and OPN, with a separate group of approximately 100 judges rating each factor. For each factor, the ratings made by the women and men raters yielded similar mean and standard deviations and correlated .97-.98 across the 300 items. The means of the men's and women's ratings constituted the five factor scoring system values for the ACL adjectives. These means provided a value (e.g., 2.75, 3.50, etc.) along the five-point scale for each of the five factors, for each of the 300 items. The mid-point of each scale was 3.00 with higher scores indicative of higher loadings on each of the five factors.³

FormyDuval (1993) examined convergence between the ACL(FF) scoring system and the ACL scoring system developed by John (1989). This was done by computing, for each factor, the mean ACL-FF scores for the sets of items which John's graduate student judges had classified as high or low on the factor. The mean scores for the high and low item sets were respectively: EXT, 4.23 vs. 1.53; AGR⁴, 4.47 vs. 1.58; CON⁴, 4.47 vs. 1.58; STA, 4.27 vs. 1.66; and OPN, 3.86 vs. 1.97. Thus, convergence between the two ACL scoring systems appeared substantial.

Another analysis involving the ACL items was conducted by McCrae and Costa (1992) who listed the ACL items found to be significantly correlated, either positively or negatively, with one or more facets of each of the five factors as measured by their NEO-PI-R instrument. Collapsing across facets within each factor, we computed the mean ACL-FF score for the sets of ACL items that were reported as being associated with this factor with the following results for positively and negatively correlated items, respectively: Extraversion, 4.31 and 1.65; Agreeableness 4.49 and 2.48; Conscientiousness, 4.55 and 2.11; Emotional Stability, 3.82 and 1.84; and Openness, 3.93 and 2.24. These findings suggest substantial convergent validity between the Big Five factors as assessed by the NEO-PI-R instrument and the new ACL-FF system.

FormyDuval (1993) also studied convergence in the context of the self descriptions of university students by comparing scores on corresponding factors from the ACL, scored by the ACL-FF system, and the NEO-FFI instrument of Costa and McCrae (1992). Correlations between same factor scores on the two instruments were: EXT, .52; AGR, .62; CON, .60; STA, .58; and OPN, .25. The findings for the first four factors were viewed as

³The five factor scoring system values for each adjective are reported in Williams et al. (1998), Appendix D.

⁴Identical means were found for the AGR and CON comparisons.

indicating substantial convergence in the assessment of the factors *via* the two different instruments. The relatively low convergence for OPN is viewed as a possible weakness in the ACL-FF system, perhaps due to the paucity of ACL items reflecting this factor.

The ACL-FF scoring system can be used to obtain the five factor "loadings" for any selected set of ACL adjectives. For example, Williams, Satterwhite, and Saiz (1998) used the ACL-FF to study intercultural similarities and differences in the importance ("centrality") assigned to different psychological characteristics in 20 countries.

The principal objective of the present study was to re-examine the pancultural gender stereotypes in order to observe how the stereotypic views of men and women appeared when expressed in terms of the FFM.

The demonstration of five factor differences for the pancultural gender stereotypes would not imply that highly similar patterns of differences would be found in *each* of the 25 individual countries. Indeed, such a finding would seem most unlikely in view of the substantial between-country variations observed when the stereotypes were analyzed in terms of other scoring systems (Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a). It was reasoned that any departures from the five factor pancultural model would most likely be found in countries where the stereotypes had been identified as relatively atypical in previous analyses. Thus, a secondary objective was to take a first look at the question of between-country variation in FFM stereotypes by examining the Five Factor profiles in Pakistan and Japan where the stereotypes had been identified as relatively atypical in terms of previous analyses (Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a).

METHOD

The method consisted of further analyses of data from the Williams and Best (1982, 1990a) study of gender stereotypes in 25 countries: Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, England, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, India, Italy, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Scotland, South Africa, Trinidad, the United States, and Venezuela. The data from all 25 countries had been combined to obtain a mean M% score for each of the 300 ACL items (see Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a, Appendix A) with high mean scores indicating items highly associated with men, and low mean scores indicating items highly associated with women across all 25 countries. For these original studies, ACL items were translated into the appropriate languages for each country (e.g., into

French for French participants), and checked for accuracy by back-translation into English.⁵

The distribution of mean M% scores was examined to identify items with means of 67 and up to represent the pancultural male stereotype, and items of 33 and down to represent the pancultural female stereotype. This analysis yielded 79 male-associated items and 56 female-associated items. Table I presents the 25 most highly stereotypic items for each stereotype.

In Williams & Best's (1982, 1990a) study, the gender stereotype data had been analyzed to identify those countries in which the stereotypes were most atypical relative to the findings in all 25 countries. This was done in two ways. The researchers first computed a product-moment correlation coefficient between the distribution of 300 M% scores in each country and the distribution in each of the other 24 countries. Those data were then used to compute the mean common variance between each country and the other 24 countries as an index of the typicality of the stereotypes in each country. The country with the lowest mean common variance and, hence the most atypical, was Pakistan (Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a, p. 254).

The overall typicality of the stereotype in each country was examined in a second way using the pooled typicality data from the three theoretically-based scoring systems: affective meanings, ego states, and psychological needs. This analysis identified Japan as the country with the most atypical gender stereotypes (Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a, p. 254).

For the current study, the stereotype data for Pakistan and Japan were re-analyzed to obtain the five-factor profiles for the male and female stereotypes. In each country, items with M% scores of 67 and up represented the male stereotype and items with M% scores of 33 and down represented the female stereotype (see Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a, Appendix A).

⁵The data base for the current study contains responses to 300 items made in 14 languages other than English and one may wonder whether translation accuracy may have influenced the findings in one way or another. This concern is most acute when the translation involves individual words, as with the ACL, rather than phrases or sentences since word-to-word is generally recognized as much more difficult (Brislin, 1980). We offer the following observations.

First, we note the existence of substantial redundancy in the ACL item pool. While each of the 300 English adjectives has a discernibly different meaning, there are many near synonyms in the pool. Consider, for example, the following sets of adjectives: 1. steady, stable, unemotional, unexcitable; and 2. soft hearted, sentimental, sensitive. There is, obviously, a substantial common meaning factor among the adjectives in each set. If for some reason one of the items is not well translated, there is the hope that the others will be, and in this way the common meaning factor will be represented in the translated item pool.

Second, we note the findings of a recent cross-cultural study in which university students rated the favorability of 300 ACL items in seven languages other than English (Williams, et al, 1998). The correlation of these favorability ratings with English language favorability ratings made in the United States ranged from .81 to .89. We reason that if there were serious translation problems with these languages it would be unlikely that such high correlations could be observed.

Table I. Pancultural Gender Stereotypes: Samples of Highly Stereotypic Items^a

Male Stereotype			Female Stereotype		
Item No.	Adjective	M%	Item No.	Adjective	M%
2	Active	81	5	Affected	20
4	Adventurous	93	6	Affectionate	10
7	Aggressive	88	11	Anxious	23
10	Ambitious	82	18	Attractive	14
19	Autocratic	86	30	Charming	19
35	Coarse	91	38	Complaining	21
50	Courageous	86	53	Curious	24
52	Cruel	79	61	Dependent	19
53	Daring	86	71	Dreamy	17
70	Dominant	87	77	Emotional	12
78	Energetic	82	83	Fearful	17
79	Enterprising	81	86	Feminine	8
90	Forceful	93	98	Fussy	24
122	Independent	84	149	Meek	25
136	Inventive	81	151	Mild	22
143	Logical	79	220	Sensitive	14
147	Masculine	96	224	Sexy	14
186	Progressive	78	230	Shy	25
209	Robust	85	240	Soft-Hearted	19
210	Rude	83	253	Submissive	16
213	Self-Confident	79	256	Superstitious	13
248	Stern	84	261	Talkative	22
251	Strong	92	268	Timid	25
271	Tough	91	293	Weak	17
279	Unemotional	82	294	Whiny	23

^aM% = Mean M% scores (see text for explanation of Mean M% scores).

RESULTS

Pancultural Stereotypes

As noted above, the ACL-FF scoring system provides a value for each of the five factors for each of the 300 ACL adjectives. Using these values, mean five factor scores were computed for the set of 79 male stereotype items, and for the set of 56 female stereotype items. These mean scores are presented in Table II and are shown graphically in Fig. 1.

A two-dimensional Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was performed by treating the male vs. female item sets as a "between" factor and the five factor scores for each item as a "within" factor. The results of this analysis revealed a highly significant stereotype \times factor interaction ($F \{4, 130\} = 27.82, p < .001$). Multiple univariate tests (ANOVAs) revealed that the male stereotype was somewhat higher than the female stereotype on EXT ($F \{1, 130\} = 3.3, p = .07$), and significantly

Table II. Means and Mean Differences for Male and Female Pancultural Stereotype Adjectives on the Five Factors^a

Gender	The Five Factors				
	EXT	AGR	CON	STA	OPN
Male (M)	3.23	2.79	3.43	3.11	3.27
Female (F)	2.95	3.15	2.89	2.79	2.95
M-F Difference	+.30 ^b	-.36 ^c	+.54 ^c	+.32 ^d	+.32 ^c

^aEXT = Extraversion; AGR = Agreeableness; CON = Conscientiousness; STA = Emotional Stability; OPN = Openness to Experience.

^b $p < .10$.

^c $p < .05$.

^d $p < .01$.

^e $p < .001$.

higher on CON ($F \{1, 130\} = 17.8, p < .001$), STA ($F \{1, 130\} = 7.3, p < .01$), and OPN ($F \{1, 130\} = 5.9, p < .05$); the female stereotype was significantly higher than the male stereotype on AGR ($F \{1, 130\} = 5.3, p < .05$).

Additional analyses examined the relative strength of the five factors

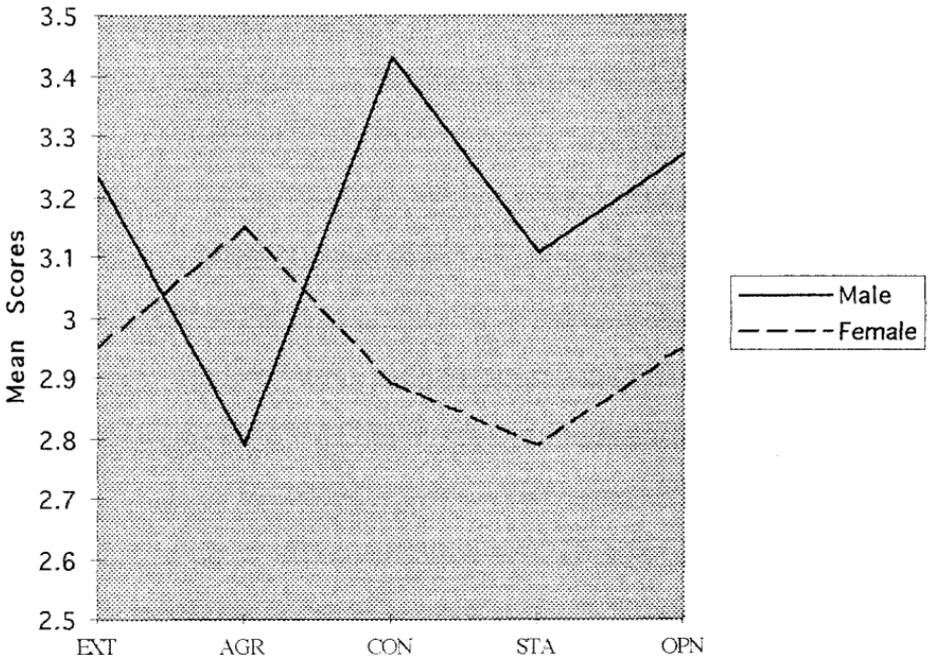


Fig. 1. Pancultural gender stereotypes scored for the five factor model. Note: EXT = Extraversion; AGR = Agreeableness; CON = Conscientiousness; STA = Emotional Stability; OPN = Openness to Experience; Scale Mid-point = 3.

within each of the pancultural stereotypes. A Repeated Measures MANOVA comparing the five factors within the male stereotype was significant ($F \{4, 75\} = 34.0, p < .001$); pairwise comparisons (Scheffe t-tests) revealed that the CON mean of 3.43 was higher than the OPN mean of 3.27 ($p = .06$), the EXT mean of 3.25 ($p < .05$), and the STA mean of 3.11 ($p < .001$), with nonsignificant differences among the latter three traits. The AGR mean of 2.79 was significantly lower than each of the other four factors ($p < .001$).

A second Repeated Measures MANOVA comparing the five factors within the female stereotype was also significant ($F \{4, 52\} = 8.3, p < .001$); pairwise comparisons (Scheffe t-tests) revealed that the mean of 3.15 for AGR was significantly higher than the mean of 2.95 for EXT ($p < .05$), the mean of 2.94 for OPN ($p < .05$), the mean of 2.89 for CON ($p < .01$), and the mean of 2.79 for STA ($p < .001$). Differences among the latter four factors were not statistically different. Thus, within the female stereotype, AGR was higher than the other four factors while within the male stereotype, CON was higher, and AGR lower, than the other three factors.

An examination of the stereotype profiles seen in Fig. 1 suggests that the male stereotype may be somewhat more differentiated in terms of the five factors than is the female stereotype. This observation is supported by the finding that the mean difference among all possible pairs of the male stereotype means was .29 while the comparable figure among the female stereotype means was .16. Similarly, the mean departure from the scale midpoint (3.0) was .25 points for the male stereotype factors and only .12 points for the female stereotype factors. Thus, the use of the five factor scoring system results in a male profile which seems more highly articulated than the female profile.

Stereotype Profiles in Atypical Countries

In Pakistan, there were 102 items with M% values of 67 and up, representing the focused male stereotypes, and 76 items with M% values of 33 and down, representing the focused female stereotypes. In Japan, the comparable numbers of items were 98 and 72, respectively. Each of the four item sets was scored using the ACL-FF system to obtain the Five Factor means shown in Table III. An inspection of these data revealed many similarities, and some differences, between the Pakistani and Japanese stereotypes and the pancultural stereotypes shown earlier in Table II and Fig. 1. Regarding differences in the male and female stereotypes, the pancultural stereotypes had shown the male stereotype to be higher on EXT, CON, STA, and OPN with the female stereotype higher on AGR. In

Table III. Means and Mean Differences for Male and Female Stereotype Adjectives on the Five Factors in Pakistan and Japan^a

Gender	The Five Factors				
	Pakistan				
	EXT	AGR	CON	STA	OPN
Male (M)	3.24	2.89	3.29	3.08	3.22
Female (F)	2.82	2.86	2.84	2.83	2.79
M-F Difference	+42	+03	+45	+25	+43
Gender	Japan				
	EXT	AGR	CON	STA	OPN
	Male (M)	3.48	3.30	3.67	3.26
Female (F)	2.78	2.81	2.80	2.65	2.82
M-F Difference	+70	+49	+87	+61	+60

^aEXT = Extraversion; AGR = Agreeableness; CON = Conscientiousness; STA = Emotional Stability; OPN = Openness to Experience.

Pakistan, the profile of the male stereotype appeared higher on EXT, CON, STA, and OPN, with little difference on AGR. In Japan, the profile for the male stereotype was higher than the female on all five factors. Thus, the pancultural pattern of the male stereotype being higher on EXT, CON, STA, and OPN was observed in both Japan and Pakistan while the AGR factor showed the greatest departures from the pancultural model.

The tendency, noted earlier, for the pancultural male stereotype to be more differentiated in terms of the five factors was also observed in the two atypical countries. In Japan, the mean difference among all possible pairs of male stereotype means was .20 while the mean difference among the female stereotype means was .07. In Pakistan, the comparable figures were .19 and .03. Thus, in both countries, the five factor profile for the female stereotypes appeared "flatter" than the more variable profile for the male stereotypes.

DISCUSSION

The pancultural gender stereotypes, found in earlier studies to be differentiated in terms of affective meanings, ego states, and psychological needs, were also found to differ when examined in terms of the Five Factor Model (FFM). Viewed separately, the male stereotype was found to be relatively high on CON and relatively low on AGR, while the female stereotype was relatively high on AGR. When considered relative to one another, the pancultural male stereotype was higher than the female stereo-

type on EXT, CON, STA, and OPN while the pancultural female stereotype was higher on AGR. Strictly speaking, these patterns apply only to the group of 25 countries studied. While it seems appropriate to call these patterns “pancultural,” we do not call them “universal.” On the other hand, the cultural and geographic diversity of the sample of 25 countries suggests that the pancultural stereotypes identified here may be a useful “first approximation” to future findings in a study of stereotypes in a larger number of human societies.

It should be noted that each of the five factors is not merely descriptive in nature, but is also evaluative. Impressionistically, most persons would probably prefer to be described as extraverted, agreeable, conscientious, stable, and open to experience than to be described as introverted, disagreeable, irresponsible, unstable, and closed-minded. This impression is supported by the finding of FormyDuval et al. (1995) that, for each factor, there was a significant positive correlation, across the 300 items, between the factor scores and the favorability scores reported by Williams and Best (1977). Further evidence of the evaluative nature of the factors is found in two studies reported by Goodman and Williams (1996) and summarized by Williams et al. (1998). These studies employed Costa and McCrae’s (1992) NEO-Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI) for the assessment of the five factors. In the first study, it was demonstrated that, for each factor, items phrased in an “indicative” manner (e.g., extraverted, agreeable, etc.) were rated more favorably than items phrased in a “counter-indicative” manner (e.g., introverted, disagreeable, etc.). In a second study, one group of participants was instructed to “fake good” on their NEO-FFI self-descriptions while a second group was instructed to “fake bad.” The result was that, for each factor, the mean “fake good” scores were higher than the “fake bad” scores. Both studies were considered to support the idea that, for each factor, higher scores are more favorable than lower scores.

Returning to the finding that the pancultural male stereotype was higher than the pancultural stereotype on four of the five factors, one concludes that the model provided by the male stereotype appears generally more positive than the model provided by the female stereotype. To theorists who propose that one important function of gender stereotypes is to serve as socialization models for young children (e.g., Eagly, 1987; Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a), it appears that the model for young boys is generally more positive than that for young girls.

The general similarity between the relatively atypical Pakistan and Japanese stereotypes and the pancultural stereotypes suggests, but does not prove, that the pancultural pattern is likely to be found in many, if not all, of the 25 countries in the Williams & Best (1982, 1990a) project. This

question is currently being addressed by a re-analysis of the stereotype data in all countries via the ACL-FF scoring system.

It is known that gender stereotypes do not always “copy” directly onto the self concepts of young women and young men; often times, one finds only a “weak echo” of the stereotypes in the self concepts. Thus, while the pancultural gender stereotypes noted earlier (Williams & Best, 1982, 1990a) indicated that in all countries the male stereotype was stronger and more active than the female stereotype, Williams & Best (1990b) found that the self concepts of young men and women showed a parallel effect in only 11 of the 14 countries studied, and in most of the 11 countries the effects were quite small. It would be interesting to examine the self concepts of men and women in different countries to determine whether the five factor gender stereotypes are evident in their self descriptions.

One set of findings bearing on this question were reported by Formy-Duval et al. (1995) who conducted two studies in which the ACL self descriptions of American men and women university students were scored using the ACL-FF system. In the first study, the women’s self descriptions were significantly higher than the men’s on AGR with no other significant differences found. In the second study, there were no significant differences between the men’s and women’s self descriptions on any of the five factors. In this instance, it appeared that the five factor gender stereotypes were *not* a major influence on the self concepts of these young American men and women.

The foregoing question is worthy of study in other cultural settings. Previous research has shown that the differences in the self concepts of young women and men tend to be greater in more collectivistic, less-developed countries (Williams & Best, 1990b, p. 116). It is possible that self perceptions in such societies may show more evidence of the Five Factor stereotypes.

While the ACL-FF scoring system deals with personality factors at the level of five, general, behavioral domains, Costa and McCrae (1992) have developed the NEO-PI-R instrument which, in addition to the five domain scores, also subdivides each factor into a series of “facets” or smaller components. It would be interesting to study gender stereotypes at the facet level. For example, regarding Extraversion, one might expect that the Assertiveness facet might be associated with the male stereotype while the Warmth facet might be associated with the female stereotype.

The results of this study provide a new perspective on pancultural beliefs about differences in the psychological makeup of women and men. The expression of the pancultural gender stereotypes in terms of the five factors should prove useful to scholars who wish to relate the study of gender stereotypes to the growing literature on other applications of the FFM.

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