

Gender Differences, Risk-Taking and Self-
Monitoring in the Creative Process

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Abstract

Creativity is a key component in entrepreneurship and innovation, which in turn, contribute to social and economic growth. But while women and men have equal performance on standard creativity tests, women have fewer opportunities and more barriers on their way to fulfill creative and entrepreneurial accomplishments. This inequality is mostly due to sociological and cultural reasons, which, among other things, make women more sensitive than men to judgment and criticism and take fewer risks (Jin, Chua & Bledow, 2017). In addition, women are discriminated against due to gender biases in some organizations, which impair their chances of implementing creative ideas as expressed, for example, in entrepreneurship.

The work presented below describes the findings from three research sets constructed to examine three factors found to be related to gender differences in creativity and entrepreneurship. The first factor we examined was **judgment** and its impact on creative performance. In this study, participants took a test to measure creativity under conditions in which we emphasized that the creative products would be judged and given a score. The main finding in this study showed that women and men were affected differently from our manipulation so that women were not affected at all, and men were positively affected, and their performance was significantly higher. The second factor we examined was **risk-taking**. In this study, we encouraged women and men to take risks and then tested their performance on creativity tests. We found that risk-taking had a positive effect on women's performance and a negative one on men's performance, but the findings were partial and limited. Finally, the third factor we examined was **stereotypical thinking** and bias towards ventures led by women and men. In this study, we found that there is prevalent stereotypical thinking among both men and women, who see the ideal entrepreneur as a male figure. Surprisingly, this stereotypical thinking was not expressed in a bias towards women-led ventures as seen in explicit venture evaluations.

The aim of the research was to contribute to the body of knowledge about gender differences, barriers and biases related to creativity and entrepreneurship and to

examine the effects of judgment processes, risk taking and stereotypical thinking on the creative and entrepreneurial potential of women and men.

Our conclusions are that gender gaps appear in a complex and often unexpected way in the areas of creativity and entrepreneurship. It seems that in some cases gender differences in performance can be easily produced, by changing slightly the test instructions for example, and in other cases the gap can be somewhat "corrected" by encouraging risk-taking. However, different interventions can vary in their impact on men and women, and this should be taken into account when evaluating performances. In a similar way, stereotypical thinking towards women and men, as entrepreneurs, still exists and is expressed in all sorts of ways in the labor market, but it may not be manifested in empirical research. We discuss possible explanations for this gap.

As some of the processes in which gender differences are created and preserved are not entirely clear, we believe that these intersections between gender, creativity and entrepreneurship should be further explored. A better understanding of the relationship between gender, creativity and entrepreneurship could contribute to women being able to realize their creative potential more easily, and to a more egalitarian and just society.