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Educational Engagement, Explicit Gender-Related Attitudes, and Implicit Gender–Career Associations Among Student and Non-Student Employees

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Abstract

This study examined differences in explicit gender-related attitudes and implicit gender–career associations between student employees and non-student employees. Using a retrospective correlational design, the study included employees working in private organizations in Tehran who were also enrolled at Shahid Beheshti University and employees working in private organizations in Tehran who were not participating in university or other educational programs. Data were collected from 157 participants (78 student employees and 79 non-student employees) using the Gender Role Stereotypes Scale and the Implicit Association Test. Independent-samples t-tests and correlation analyses were used to examine group differences and associations between work–study status and the explicit and implicit measures. Student employees showed significantly lower endorsement of gender-based role assignments than non-student employees, indicating a significant difference in explicit gender-related attitudes ($d = 1.01$, $p < .001$). In contrast, the difference in implicit gender-related associations between the groups was not statistically significant ($d = 0.28$, $p = .121$). These findings suggest that ongoing educational engagement may be associated with differences in explicitly expressed beliefs about gender roles and career development, whereas implicit gender–career associations may show less variation across work–study pathways. The findings underscore the value of examining explicit and implicit dimensions of gender-related cognition together when investigating career evaluations and organizational inequality.

Keywords: Gender-related attitudes, Implicit associations, Non-student employees, Student employees