Men have big heads: Gender differences in IPT performance and confidence
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Interpersonal Perception Task
The IPT [4] assesses one’s ability to interpret the context of scenes based on minimal information. Scoring highly on the IPT might indicate that one is sensitive to social cues and thus, more successful at social interactions.

In this study, the IPT was used because it has objective answers to 30 scenes and contains contexts across a range of social situations (e.g., kinship, competition, deception, status, and intimacy).

Since the IPT requires viewers to decipher the context of scenes largely based on nonverbal behavior, there should be similar gender differences in performance (according to past research).

Hypotheses

[H1] Women would outperform men on the IPT.

[H2] Based on H1, we hypothesized that they would also be more confident in their performance than men.

Method

• Participants were 113 women and 68 men (total N = 181) who watched the IPT video clips on lab computers and circled their answers to each question on paper.

• In addition, they provided their prediction of how many questions they answered correctly (i.e. confidence in their performance).

Results & Conclusion

• [H1] As predicted, women performed better than men on the IPT (t(179) = -2.54, p < .05).

• [H2] However, contrary to the second hypothesis, men were more confident in their accuracy than women (t(176) = 2.24, p < .05)

• The above findings add to the evidence supporting the contention that women may not only be better at reading others but are also more attuned to this ability than are men.

References


