

Self-Stereotyping in Educational Environments: The Effects of Academic Labeling and Group Entitativity on Student Achievement

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I. ABSTRACT

Under NCLB, states are required to report and publish data on low-performing schools. The accessibility of this data is crucial to reform efforts. But do students stereotype themselves according to their schools' academic standing and overall reputation?

II. INTRODUCTION

- Self-Categorization
 - Individuals will come to think of themselves in terms of a salient social category,
- Self-Stereotyping
 - Individuals will reframe their sense of self in order to align with prototypical traits of their in-group.
- High Group Identification
 - High-identifying individuals will be more susceptible to the effects of self-stereotyping because they are chronically invested in their new collective identity.

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"I'm just trying to keep pace with the plummeting test scores of my fellow students."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding for this project was provided by the Nancy Kershaw Tomlinson Memorial Fund and the Department of Psychology

III. METHODS

- 67 Research Participants, 12 Laboratory Sessions
- Online Pretest – Anagrams & Cube-Rotation Questions
- False Feedback about Academic Performance (IV #1)
 - Verbal, Spatial, Control
- Laboratory Experiment
- Manipulations for Group Task (IV #2)
 - High/Low Identification
- Final Assessment
- 10 Open-Ended Descriptive Statements
- Prize Selection

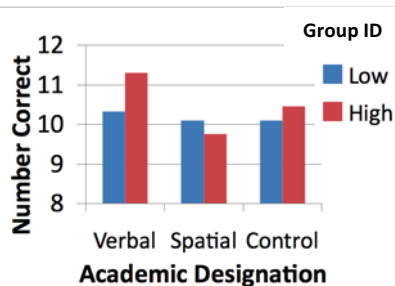
V. DISCUSSION

- These findings support our hypothesis that academic labeling can have significant consequences on one's self-concept and manifested behavior.
- Not just Stereotype Threat
 - By eliciting similarities, the high group identification condition reinforced the collective identity prompted by the initial feedback and magnified the perceived level of entitativity.
- Not just Expectancy Confirmation
 - Subjects actually internalized the feedback into their self-concept and began to exhibit behavior that was consistent with their group induction.

IV. RESULTS

Figure 1

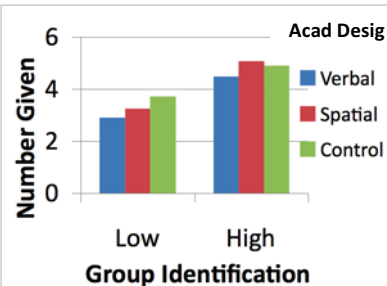
Anagram Questions Correct



Significant Interaction Effect between Academic Designation and Group Identification

Figure 2

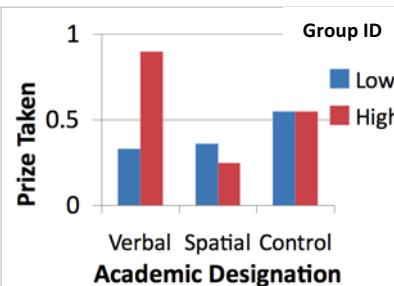
Group-Descriptive Statements



Significant Main Effect for Group Identification

Figure 3

Verbal Prize Selection



Significant Interaction Effect between Academic Designation and Group Identification

VI. CONCLUSION

While identifying under-performing schools is arguably the first step towards reform, this study indicates that students integrate these low-performing traits into their self-concept. As a result, these students may begin to behave in ways that are prototypical of their underperforming social category. The same could also be applied to schools that are consistently rated the best in the nation. Aware of their school's high status, students who attend top schools may, at least in part, be motivated to perform well on statewide assessments because they have come to think of themselves in terms of their school's high-achieving reputation.