

Men are More Narcissistic than Women, Psychologists Say

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With 31 years of data from more than 475,000 participants, a new study published in the journal *Psychological Bulletin* supports the widely held belief that men are more narcissistic than women.

“Narcissism is associated with various interpersonal dysfunctions, including an inability to maintain healthy long-term relationships, unethical behavior and aggression,” said Dr Emily Grijalva of the University at Buffalo, the first author on the study. *“At the same time, narcissism is shown to boost self-esteem, emotional stability and the tendency to emerge as a leader. By examining gender differences in narcissism, we may be able to explain gender disparities in these important outcomes.”*

Dr Grijalva and her colleagues examined more than 355 journal articles, dissertations, manuscripts and technical manuals, and studied gender differences in the three aspects of narcissism: leadership/authority, grandiose/exhibitionism and entitlement. They found the widest gap in entitlement, suggesting that men are more likely than women to exploit others and feel entitled to certain privileges.

The second largest difference was in leadership/authority. *“Compared with women, men exhibit more assertiveness and desire for power,”* Dr Grijalva said. *“But there was no difference in the exhibitionism aspect, meaning both genders are equally likely to display vanity or self-absorption.”*

In addition, the study looked at data from college students between 1990 and 2013, and found no evidence that either gender has become more narcissistic over time.

The scientists have shown that personality differences, like narcissism, can arise from gender stereotypes and expectations that have been ingrained over time. They speculate that the persistent lack of women in senior leadership roles may partially stem from the disparity between stereotypes of femininity and leadership. *“Individuals tend to observe and learn gender roles from a young age, and may face backlash for deviating from society’s expectations,”* Dr Grijalva said. *“In particular, women often receive harsh criticism for being aggressive or authoritative, which creates pressure for women, more so than for men, to suppress displays of narcissistic behavior.”*