

Disguising self-esteem caused changes in academic achievements differently for boys and girls in Japanese junior high school.

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Abstract

Japanese youth (13-29 years old) showed lower self-esteem than other countries in the recent survey. The proportions of those who agreed to the statements I have my own unique strengths were 62.3% of Japanese, while 91.4% of Germany, 91.2% USA, and 90.6% France (Japanese Government Cabinet Office, 2019). We assumed that Japanese youth might have disguised their self-esteem. To examine the hypothesis, we assessed the self-esteem of 159 Japanese junior high school students implicitly and explicitly with a paper-based IAT and a questionnaire. As expected, we found 26.4% of the students having disguised self-esteem: They performed positively on the IAT while they answered negatively on the survey. We further examined the relationships of the disguises of self-esteem and the longitudinal changes in academic achievement. The results were different for boys and girls; disguising boys raised their academic performances six months later while disguising girls lowered their performances one year then.