Letter to Editor
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Spatial Navigation: The Role of Gender Stereotypes

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Letter to Editor

Many studies have explored the relationship between spatial navigation and variables like age, sex, hormones and stress [1,2]. It has been shown that women in either America or Hungary on the one hand experience more anxiety in route-finding and on the other hand declare less feeling safe despite men. The feeling of not adequate safety can increase women's anxiety about navigation and it can harm their self-confidence [3].

The findings of another research reported that women tend to use route-based strategies and have more spatial anxiety compared to men. In this study men showed greater use of novel ways and they reached the goal faster. It suggested that men act more efficient than women in navigation [4].

Results are controversial in the relationship between hormones and navigation. In a research testosterone was ineffective in navigation while, in other studies opposite outcomes were obtained [5].

Rocha et al., [6] have shown that communication and social interaction and also, achieving enough support from mother in young ages have positive effects on hippocampus and spatial navigation.

We think among these studies and their controversial results, not enough attention was paid to the effect of gender stereotypes on navigation. It has been demonstrated that women see themselves in a more stereotyping way [7]. Also, it has been reported that the stereotype which, children at young ages consider cleverness and acumen as male traits can affect their interests and future career choices [8]. Based on above mentioned points, we suggest that the effect of gender stereotypes should be considered as a variable in evaluating gender differences in spatial navigation.

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