

Study: Looking inside the black box of gender differences in creativity

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Are men really more creative than women? A prior study on gender difference in creativity—the generation of ideas that are both novel and useful—found that men are rated as more creative than are women—especially when people rated their own creativity. But is it possible that men's and women's creative contributions might take different forms? And could men and women's creative contributions be judged differently?

These questions are what led Kris Byron, professor of management at Georgia State University's J. Mack Robinson College of Business, and co-authors to conduct the study titled "Looking Inside the Black Box of Gender Differences in Creativity: A Dual-Process Model and Meta-Analysis," [published](#) in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*.

Their research looked at the behavioral tendencies of men and women that lead to creativity. By examining behaviors that men and women may typically engage in, they teased out what men and women might do differently to explain [gender differences](#) in creativity.

Statistically combining 700 studies that looked at more than 265,000 individuals across different countries, Byron and her co-authors discovered that men and women tend to approach creativity differently: Men are more creative because of their tendency to take greater risks, which seems likely to increase the novelty of the creative ideas they generate.

By contrast, women are more creative because of their tendency to consider others' perspectives, which seems likely to increase the extent to which their creative ideas are of practical use. Unfortunately, people often overvalue the novelty of creative ideas and undervalue the usefulness of creative ideas. Despite that, creative ideas need to be both novel and of practical significance.

The findings of Byron and her co-authors suggest that women and men offer unique contributions to workplace [creativity](#), but that women's contributions are often overlooked when people fail to fully consider the usefulness of [creative ideas](#).

These findings also show that women may not be less creative than men, but instead each have their own ways of being creative.

More information: Joohyung (Jenny) Kim et al, Looking inside the black box of gender differences in creativity: A dual-process model and meta-analysis., *Journal of Applied Psychology* (2024). [DOI: 10.1037/apl0001205](#)

Provided by Georgia State University

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