

Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to determine if the weapon focus is present in the written word, and to determine if there is a gender bias in scenarios involving weapons. The researcher's hypothesis was that participants would recall more correct characteristics and less false characteristics when there was no weapon present, and would recall less correct characteristics and more false characteristics when there was a weapon present. The current study also predicted to find that participants would recall gender in the two weapon scenarios as gender stereotypical traits and weapons were present. Ninety-one undergraduate students from a university in the Midwest United States completed a demographic survey consisting of three multiple-choice questions and two short answer questions. Participants were presented with three written scenarios, one containing no weapon and two containing a weapon, and were asked six follow-up questions after each individual scenario. There were no statistically significant differences across scenarios for correct or false recalled characteristics, but the interaction of the three scenarios was statistically significant. The data yielded the same results in terms of gender recall.

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