

# Experiment: the dumb jock



There were two groups in their experiment. The experimental group was exposed to hints of negative stereotypes through a questionnaire before the examination while the control was exposed to the negative stereotypes after the test. The questionnaire brought to their attention the possibility that they may have been given special treatment and considerations due to the fact that they are athletes. Somehow, the experiment proved that there is a negative correlation between the exposure of the athletes to negative stereotypes and their performance in taking tests.

More exposure to negative stereotypes brought lower scores while less exposure to these stereotypes brought higher scores. For the experimental group, it is possible that answering the questionnaire that exposed them to the dumb jock stereotype lowered their self-regard that led them to getting low test results. The questionnaire gave them the idea that they are only accepted in the university because of their athletic skills and not because of their academic skills.

With this kind of thinking, they might have exerted less effort in answering the questions of the test because they do not believe that they will get a high grade. He might probably think that the society's expectations regarding his test scores won't be high and that he, himself, is led to believe that he is accepted in the university as an athlete rather than a student. Similar to the placebo effect, the subject immerses himself to the popular belief and concept of a dumb jock that might have led him to flunk the test unconsciously when he was given the idea through the questionnaire.

The dumb Jock stereotype probably started when the people performing well in athletics happened to be less educated because they spend most of their time honing their athletic abilities rather than their mental abilities. Because of this, people expected less from these athletes and these athletes tend to cling unto mediocrity and expect special considerations because of their situation. I think the athletes, themselves, try to fit their description to the society's norms. This observation came from years of experience in an NCAA school where a large portion of the population is comprised of athletes.

Although I've seen some who perform well in academics and athletics, it cannot be denied that there are lots of student-athletes who refuse to exert more effort into their academics simply because they think it is not expected of them to do so. In my past school, they have tried to explain to us now there are several kinds of smarts and that each and every one of us simply has our own fortes. I think that what's important is that they are reminded that they are good students who happen to play for the school and not athletes who are required to study while they play.

Not only does this straighten their focus, but they are also given the idea that they are accepted as a student not as an athlete. There were instances wherein prestigious schools rejected great athletes not because they weren't good enough in their field of sports but because they weren't able to pass the entrance examination. It is important for them to know that they are in their position not entirely because of their athletic prowess but because they are students first and that representing the school comes second.