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GENDER DIFFERENCES IN WORKING MEMORY AMONG KUWAITI CHILDREN

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Introduction: The ability to maintain relevant information mentally while performing complex cognitive tasks, e.g. decision making, reading comprehension, and problem solving, memorizing a poem or even driving a car is conceptualized as Working Memory (WM), which became a workspace to general mental functioning. Nevertheless, as to yet, this topic is relatively ignored in literature in the Arab World.
Objectives: The aim of the current investigation was to explore gender related differences in WM performance among Kuwaiti children.
Methods: The participants were 200 Kuwaiti pupils living in Farwaniyah governorate. The participants aged 128.76 ±6.75 months (100 girls aged 128.76 ±6.75 months and 100 boys aged 128.76 ±6.75 months. Moreover, the participants were identical in age, economic level and school grade. All participants in the two groups were compared on how they performed in the Automated Working Memory Assessment (AWMA), a computerized instrument developed by Alloway (2007). Independent Sample *t* Test was used to examine gender differences in WM performance.
Results: The mean score for visuospatial WM boys and girls samples (13.95±4.43) and (9.23 ±4.07) respectively. It was significantly lower in girls (t=7.85, p< .001). Also, the mean score for verbal WM boys and girls samples (15.75±4.01) and (10.94 ±5.12) respectively. It was significantly lower in girls (t=7.40, p< .001).
Conclusion: Gender differences in working memory capacity exist. Results showed that gender contributed to the variations in WM resources, which were efficient among the Kuwaiti children. This warrants further investigation.

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