

The Stability of Perceived Gender Similarity from Middle Childhood to Early Adolescence



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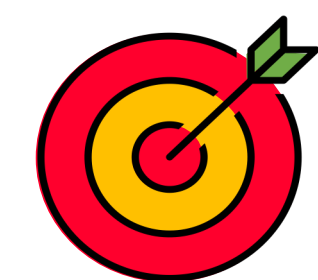


Background

- Dual Approach to gender identity (Martin et al., 2017):
 - Perceived Own-Gender Similarity
 - Perceived Other-Gender Similarity
- Developmental patterns of own-gender and other-gender similarity are sex-specific and evolve differently during childhood (Martin et al., 2017).
- Stability over development was mostly assessed cross-sectionally among school-aged children (Gülgöz et al., 2019; Hässler et al., 2022; Martin et al., 2017).
- Early adolescence: crucial period for the development of gender identity (Steensma et al., 2011, 2013).
- Gender similarity research should longitudinally examine whether developmental patterns change when transitioning into adolescence and if they remain sex-specific beyond childhood.

Aim

Longitudinally assess stability and change in perceived own-gender and other-gender similarity among boys and girls during the transition from childhood to adolescence.



Research Questions

- How do average levels of perceived own-gender and other-gender similarity evolve from 5th to 8th grade among boys and girls?
- Do boys and girls maintain their relative ranks on perceived own-gender and other-gender similarity from 5th to 8th grade?

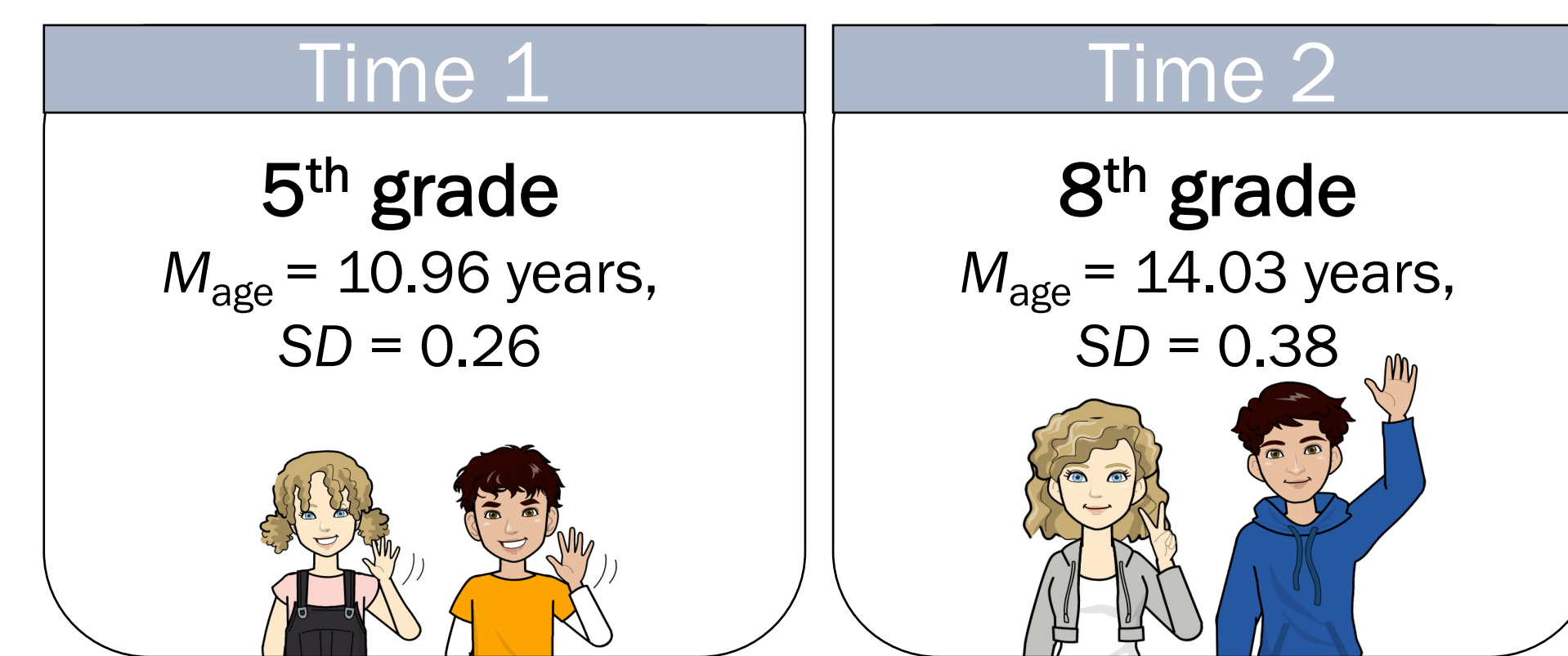
Methods

Participants

- 66 children (38 girls)
- Recruited from randomized birth lists
- 88.6% spoke French at home
- 84.1% were White

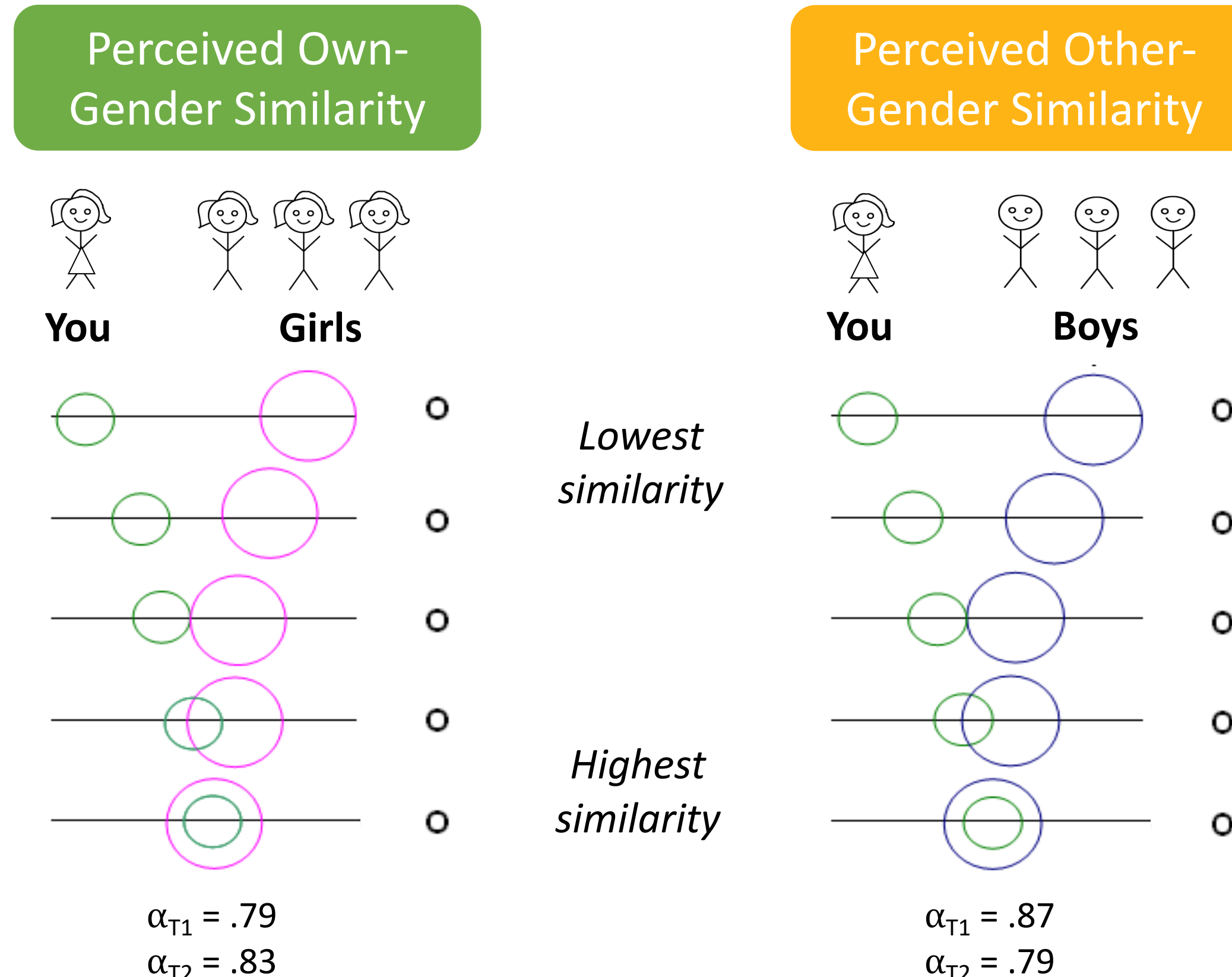
Procedure

- 3-year longitudinal study
- Gender similarity assessed at T1 and T2



Measures

- Perceived Similarity to Gender Groups (PSGG; Martin et al., 2017)
- Children rated their similarity to the two major gender groups (girls and boys).

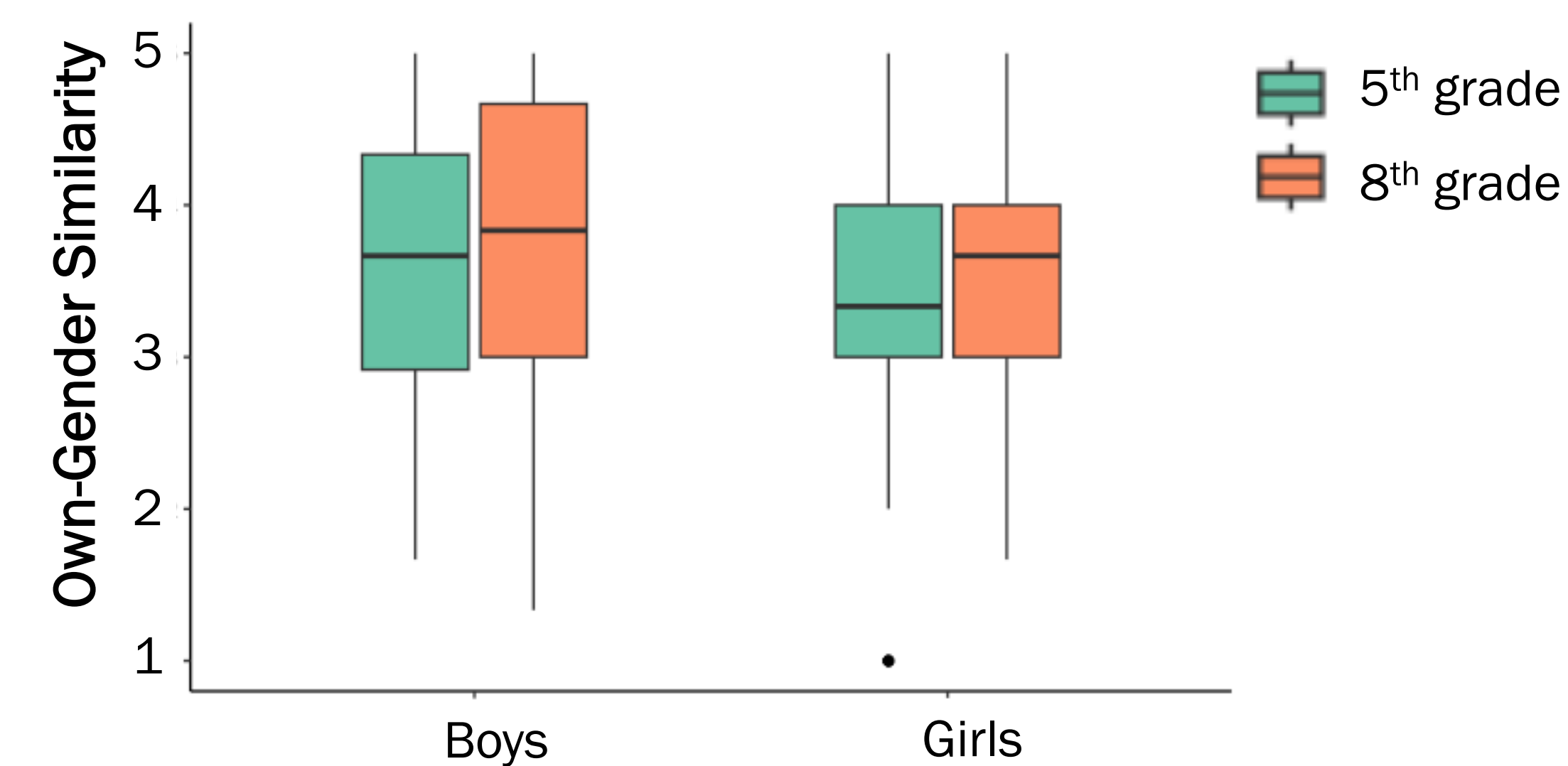


Results

Perceived Own-Gender Similarity

- Rank-order stability was moderate among both boys and girls.
 - boys: $r(26) = .50, p = .007$
 - girls: $r(36) = .36, p = .028$
- No significant changes in mean-level between T1 and T2 for either sex group.

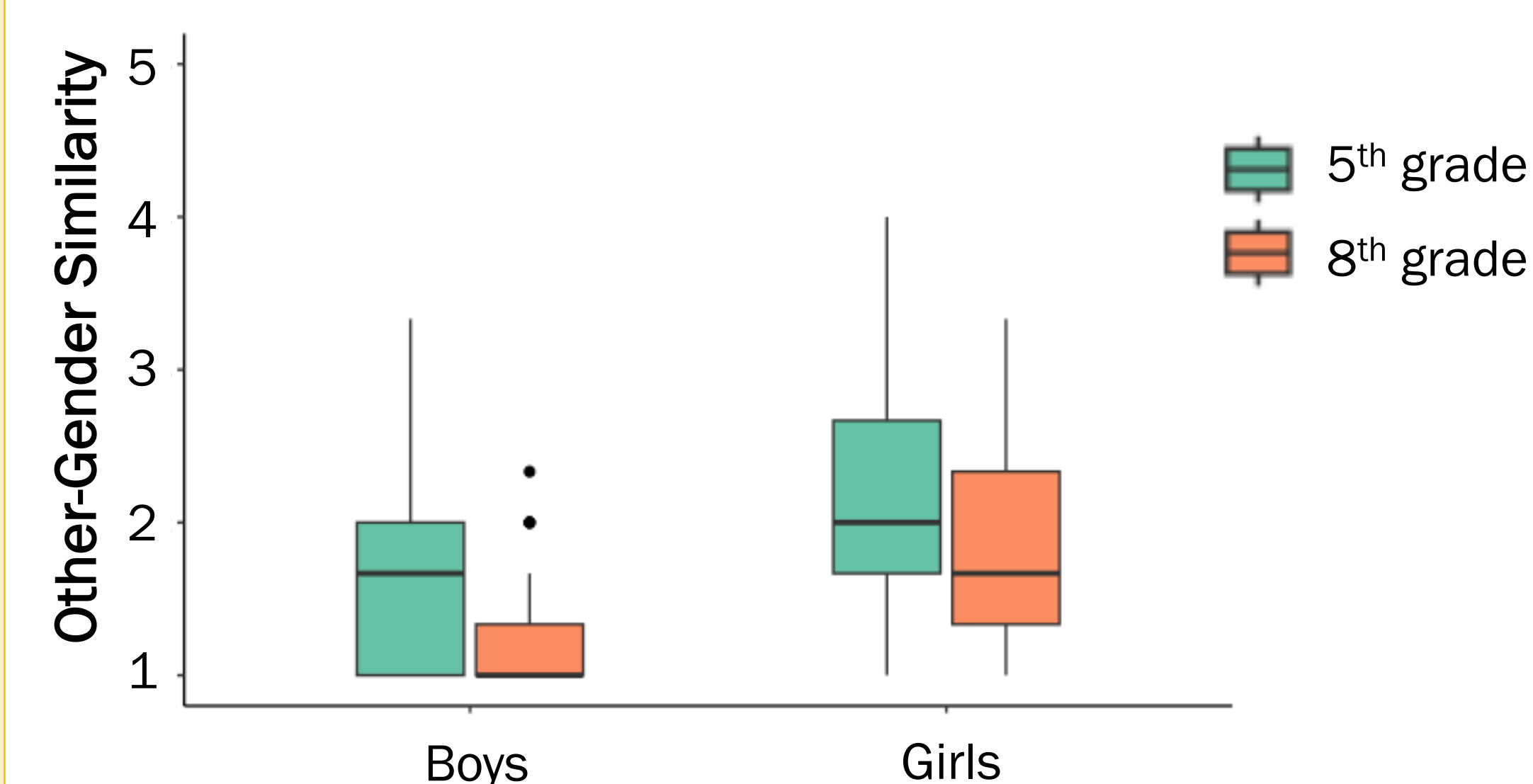
Own-Gender Similarity Scores by Sex across Time



Perceived Other-Gender Similarity

- Only girls maintained their relative ranks over 3 years.
 - boys: $r(26) = -.01, p = .984$
 - girls: $r(36) = .46, p = .004$
- Significant decreases in mean-level for both sex groups between T1 and T2.

Other-Gender Similarity Scores by Sex across Time



Conclusions

- Perceived own-gender and other-gender similarity follow sex-specific developmental patterns from 5th to 8th grade.
- Own-gender similarity mean-levels remain stable among boys and girls over time.
- Boys and Girls identify less with the other-gender group as they grow older.
- Boys show greater developmental variability than girls in perceived other-gender similarity from 5th to 8th grade.
- Need for distinction between own-gender and other-gender similarity, as well as between boys and girls, as developmental tendencies may vary.

References

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