

# Gender, Competition and Performance: Evidence from Real Tournaments

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This paper studies gender differences in performance in a high-stakes and male dominated competitive environment, expert chess tournaments. We find that women underperform compared to men of the same skill and that the gender composition of games drives this effect. Using a unique measure of within-game quality of play, we show that this gender interaction is due to women making more mistakes against men, rather than to men making fewer mistakes against women. Our results suggest that the gender composition of competitions affects behavior in ways that are detrimental to the performance of women.