A two-factor structure consisting of a social behaviour and numbers and patterns factor was consistent for both males and females.

Subtle differences were observed on two social behaviour item thresholds of the AQ short form, with women reporting scores more in line with the scores expected in autism than men.

There was no evidence for a gender bias on the numbers and patterns factor once age was accounted for.

A subtle increased sensitivity towards autism in women was identified. This may be representative of an increased self-awareness in autistic females.

The relationship between the individual items and autistic traits did not differ for males and females on the spectrum.

This study showed that the AQ short form detects autistic traits equivalently in males and females, and is not biased towards the males.

This has implications for future research evaluating gender differences in the autism phenotype.

References


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