

Analyze the Leadership Preferences of Different Genders: Based on Vocation and Daily Circumstances

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Abstract: Leadership preferences can be affected by several aspects, and this section will illustrate the structure of the paper first and then demonstrate the gist purpose of the paper. To begin with, this paper will be separated into five sections: the Abstract, Introduction, Body paragraphs, Conclusion, and References to explain the leadership preferences of different genders. Secondly, this paper explained the differences in leadership preferences in different genders and observed some elements which were separated into different columns in the body paragraph that can influence leadership preferences and then set them as a whole passage to give readers a much clearer idea about the differences in preferences in leadership concerning two genders. Through the whole paper, there are several aspects that can influence the preferences of leadership which are cultural complexities, the locus of control, curiosity and the reactions of followers, people's self-considerations, the power of leadership, gender stereotypes, and the level of willingness to take risks.

Keywords: Leadership Preferences, Gender, Group

1. Introduction

This Review will illustrate the nature of the differences between male and female leadership preferences. Specifically, this paper will focus on leadership concerning vocation and daily circumstances within groups. Throughout our paper, this literature review will mainly demonstrate or inform the different types of leadership and provide potential insight into coping strategies of confronting different leadership styles. Moreover, you can become a better leader or follower with such knowledge. Most research papers that will be used in this review provide statistical evidence indicating the leadership difference between the two genders. Furthermore, the review will be based on different perspectives in the fields of psychology (Evolutionary, Personality, and Social Psychology). Some research papers will only explain some aspects of the differences in leadership between the two genders. However, this paper will provide a more straightforward and complete overview of the differences in leadership preferences between the two genders. Nowadays, companies and colleges have strong preferences in leadership qualities; nonetheless, people from the admission departments might misconception or omit the innate differences in leadership preferences between the two genders, which might cause assessment errors. As a result, this paper will investigate unusual,

unique properties of preferences of leadership differentiated by gender. Hopefully, this literature review can help readers be aware of the differences in leadership preferences between the two genders professionally.

2. Review of Literature

2.1. Evolution, Sex, and Leadership

To answer the question of what differentiates males and females in leadership roles, we can consider many factors, such as culture, education, or biology. However, these factors cannot address the general aspect. Thus, [1, 2] Mark Van Vugt and Brian R. Spisak's research about leadership during group competition gave lots of insights and explanations towards what makes those differences from an evolutionary point of view. Specifically, they hypothesized that males have an advantage under intergroup competition and females have an advantage under intragroup competition, and this hypothesis can be explained by evolution theoretically. Originating from mating strategies, females tend to invest in maintaining a supportive social network to protect themselves and their offspring. On the other hand, males sometimes were attracted to invest their efforts in intergroup aggression, which will enhance their chances of mating success. Despite the theoretical explanation, they conducted an experiment that examined the effectiveness of inter- and intra-group leadership - consisting of 26 males and 23 females and an unknown gender as control. The leaders were selected randomly, and the members had to rate the leader's performance in maintaining the group's cohesiveness (intra) and success when competing against other groups(inter). The result did support their hypothesis that males were rated higher in intergroup leadership, while females were rated higher in intragroup leadership (Fig 1). Therefore, this research illustrates the fact that there is a difference in the type of leadership that each gender is good at and is built inside us throughout the process of evolution.

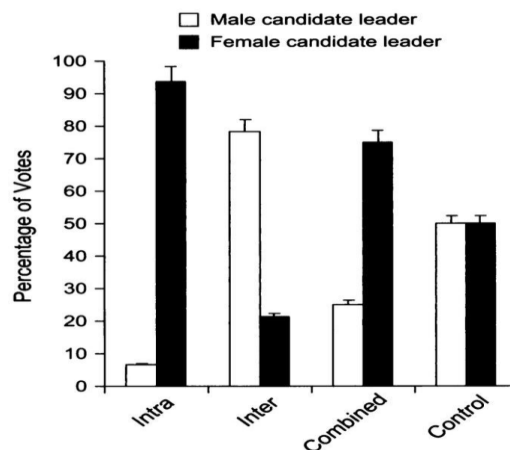


Figure 1: Percentage of votes as a function of sex of candidate and experimental condition. [1]

2.2. The complexity of Cultural, Locus of Control

If people want to talk about the mind and cognitions, it is more complex than using theories to support a hypothesis. For instance, evolution, we have to generalize the conclusion; however, it is nearly impossible. To make this review more accurate, people must consider cultural factors. Hence, the research investigating the effect of locus of control and culture on leader preferences gave a specific example of how culture can influence male and female leadership preferences under different contexts. The study hypothesized that males have an external locus of control, favoring autocratic leadership.

While females have an internal locus of control, favoring democratic leadership.[3] However, the study shows how cultural factors can sophisticated leadership preferences. The research gathered participants from Eastern culture (collectivism) and Western culture (individualism) - previously thought that would affect the result. The result supported the hypothesis and, most importantly, provided additional information: Even though Eastern countries are more internally motivated, the statistic shows no significant difference in their preferences. Moreover, there is a positive correlation between socioeconomic status and autocratic leadership style, a negative correlation between locus of control scores and leadership preference, and a positive correlation between leadership style preferences and hemispheric classification of the world. From this additional information, we can infer that gender difference is far more complex under cultural factors; the statistics did not significantly validate predictions. It cannot simply generalize all human beings, even nationally; it can go way down to the individual level.[3]

2.3. The Artificial Limitations Females have to Confront

In contemporary society, we cannot neglect women's society limitations in the workforce, a widespread topic debated by feminists. The article discusses the conceptual metaphor of "Man is up, Woman is Down" [4] and gives us an insight into how unfair it is nowadays for a female to become a leader. In context, women started to master previously masculine professions from the middle ages. Furthermore, a term called the "glass ceiling" is an artificial barrier limiting females from advancing to a higher status. The "glass ceiling" can be demonstrated by family (under a particular cultural context) since females have the nature to take care of the family, maintaining a cohesive group. We call it artificial because it can be avoided since culture is what depends on it, which culture was created by people. Nowadays, specifically, women in the East have a so-called "triple shift," which includes the household, baby care, and the status of kelin (cultural concept). "Mommy's Tracks" also explains the same thing in Western culture. By understanding these "naturally" occurring phenomena, we can speculate that women have less preference in being a leader because of evolution, combined with social pressure (the glass ceiling, triple shift, and mommy's track).

2.4. The role of curiosity and the followers' reactions

Leadership preferences can be affected by curiosity, the leader's gender, and followers' reactions. Just as Phillip S. Thompson mentioned: "When leaders display curiosity, it can be discovered in followers that the environment is safe for taking risks associated with being curious at work." According to this perspective, he listed four relative hypotheses, which are

(1) "Leader displays of curiosity will positively relate to follower perceptions of psychological safety." (2) "Follower perceptions of psychological safety will mediate the positive relationship between leader displays of curiosity and follower voice." (3) "The relationship between curiosity and the followers' perceptions of psychological safety will be different from each other because of different genders, and male's relationship will be stronger than female's relationship." (4) "The indirect effect of curiosity on followers' voice via follower perceptions of psychological safety will be stronger for followers of male leaders than for followers of female leaders." "The tests Phillip did show that the curiosity displaced by the leader can positively be relevant to followers' psychological safety, which will influence the leadership preferences of the people in different genders." [4]

2.5. How People Consider Themselves and the Power of Leadership

The self-perceptions and power of leadership in workplaces can also cause the difference between genders in leadership preferences. In 2020, Hans-Joachim, Dorothee and Ursula stated that: "Female leaders display equally effective behaviors as male leaders, but female leaders are still

underrepresented in leadership positions, and it is more difficult for female leaders to receive positive outcomes than male leaders do.". Moreover, the role congruity theory suggests, "A mismatch between feminine gender role and masculine leadership role can create role conflicts that may prohibit women's progression to leadership positions and may not affect the estimation of women who have achieved leadership positions.".

2.6. Gender Stereotypes should be taken into account

Gender stereotypes can be one of the causes of the difference between leadership preferences in different genders. "Gender stereotypes help to regulate behaviors in the workplace and everyday life and may thus make human life more predictable. However, gender stereotypes may also cause discrimination of one gender group or the other. These perspectives can be true if we discuss more specifically, such as job hiring or educational recommendations, based not only on competence and motivation of an applicant but also on gender stereotypes.". Thirdly, the hiring and development opportunities can influence leadership preferences. Hannah L. Samuelson, Benjamin R. Levine, Sara E. Barth, Jennifer L. Wessel, and James A. Grand proved that: "Although the portion of male and female leadership was similar to each other, the external hiring and developmental opportunities will also hinder women's navigation of the leadership labyrinth into higher-level positions." [5]

2.7. The level of willingness to take risks

His paper found that the willingness to take can affect leadership preferences. Seda Ertac and Mehmet Y. Gurdal proved this statement in 2011: "Being a leader of a group should consider the risk this group should take that may affect the payoffs of all members, and the research found that females are more willing to take risks individually than males do [6, 7]. On the contrary, males are more willing to make decisions for a whole group and willing to take responsibility for the results, and this event indicates a cautious shift.". The conclusion of this aspect comes up to be: "Sometimes, taking on responsibility to make such decisions is partially voluntary, so people will have different willingness to take risks as well as make decisions."

3. Conclusion

The diverse nature of leadership preferences and differences between males and females in leadership roles cannot be attributed to a single factor, but rather a complex interplay of various influences. This literature review has explored several key factors contributing to these distinctions, shedding light on the intricate dynamics of leadership.

From an evolutionary perspective, the research by Mark Van Vugt and Brian R. Spisak emphasized how gender-based differences in leadership preferences can be traced back to ancestral mating strategies, shaping contemporary leadership tendencies. Moreover, more journals also emphasized the crucial role of cultural factors, demonstrating that gender-based leadership preferences are significantly influenced by the cultural context in which individuals are raised, emphasizing the complexity of this issue. Specifically in real life, societal limitations, such as the "glass ceiling" and the concept of the "triple shift," illuminate the artificial barriers that females often confront in their pursuit of leadership roles, further complicating the landscape of leadership preferences for females.

Curiosity, followers' reactions, self-perceptions, and power dynamics in the workplace were illustrated as additional effective factors. The review demonstrated how leaders' display of curiosity can affect the psychological safety of followers as well as followers' reactions and voices and how these perceptions can vary with respect to the gender of the leader. Self-perceptions and power dynamics should also be taken into account as an influence on the effectiveness of female leaders and emphasize the problems they may face when they want to make positive outcomes.

Lastly, the impact of gender stereotypes on leadership preferences can also be one of the aspects. These gender stereotypes can not only be managed but also distinguished in the workplace; they will affect hiring decisions and opportunities for development. The willingness to take risks also plays a role in leadership preferences, with gender differences emerging in individual versus group decision-making. Some people will be more willing to make decisions for an individual instead of for a whole group since they trade off the risks and the results before they make the decision, and if the risks are greater than the benefits after they become a leader, some people will not want to become a leader.

In essence, the differences between males and females in leadership roles are the result of a complex interplay of evolutionary, cultural, societal, and psychological factors. Recognizing this complexity is essential for promoting gender equality in leadership and understanding the diverse range of leadership styles and preferences that individuals can bring to the table. To foster more inclusive and effective leadership environments, it is crucial to consider and address these multifaceted influences.

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