

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN BOARDROOM COMMUNICATIONS & DECISION MAKING A CASE STUDY COMPARING MALE & FEMALE EXECUTIVES IN KUWAIT

**Randa Diab Bahman, Kuwait College of Science and Technology
Abrar Al-Enzi, Kuwait College of Science and Technology**

ABSTRACT

The research set out to investigate gender differences in the way decisions were made in the boardroom. Though there is a plethora of information available on gender differences in decision making in general, there is a dearth of knowledge available when it comes to making decisions inside closed meetings or in a business-to-business setting (B2B). Particularly, such research is rare in the Middle East, where cultural norms and values predominantly dictate the way communication is both sent and received both verbally and physically. In this paper, a survey was administered to 156 respondents of both genders in different sectors of Kuwait's workforce. Significant differences were found amongst men and women when it came to the way they perceived information in the boardroom and made final decisions accordingly. Also, differences were found between genders regarding the needs and objectives of boardroom meetings. These findings are important for decision making and sales training as they can highly impact final decisions. They are particularly important to the international practitioner as they give insight on how the local culture perceives information and translates it from a gender perspective, in a relatively conservative culture like Kuwait.

Keywords: Gender Differences, Decision Making, Boardroom Decisions, Diversity

INTRODUCTION

Throughout time, there have been notable debates about the differences of purchasing styles amongst genders. It is no surprise that differences in fact exist and that they ultimately impact the actual purchasing decision. These debates left companies wondering what they can do in order to enhance their product's chances of being favored over another in the context of the sexes. Therefore, many researchers embarked on their own initiatives to try and find answers to the complex issues of gender purchasing styles and decisions. Nowadays, it seems like common logic to direct a company's marketing efforts to suit the target market, especially when it is gender-dominant, in a business-to-customer (B2C) environment. But, is this same logic being applied when it comes to making boardroom sales pitches and anticipated outcomes?

In 2005, senior managers at Deloitte set out to answer this question. Wondering why they failed a recent sales pitch amongst a female-dominated boardroom, they decided to propose a question amongst their internal staff and found that 70% of senior managers perceived pitching to women was different from pitching to men when it came to sales (Benko & Palster, 2013). The results quickly explained why the male-dominant sales team giving the pitch at the time could not establish rapport with their intended customer as the majority of them were female. The differences are assumed to have major implications as to how decisions are made amongst the two groups. For example, with regards to purchasing differences, it has been widely acknowledged that women in

general do spend more than men due to reasons such as impulse buying habits, and therefore are better negotiators than men (Plabdaeng, 2010; Bahhouthet al., 2012).

With plenty of information and findings in a B2B setting, it is unfortunate that there is no significance research on the decision making process in a B2C setting, such as a boardroom. In this paper, the aim is to gain insight on the mentioned topic and explore the differences in perception & decision making process in a B2C setting – in this case the boardroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Consumer behavior and the decision-making process is an ongoing area of research interest. It is a phenomenon that existed in literature studies for many years such as those done by (Berry, Guillén, and Zhou, 2010; Tulungen, 2013, Mullen et al, 2016; Pirlympou, 2017; Dennis et al, 2018, Dwevedi; 2019; Khusaini, 2019;). In addition, it is essential to differentiate between consumers preferences when looking at their pattern of purchases, some of those are demographic characteristics such as sex, age, income, race, social class and area (Mostafa & Bahman, 2014). However, there is one demographic characteristics that has been the focus of many organizations, researchers and marketers, which is gender. Theoretical and empirical originations of gender orientation commonly start with people, thus making marketers and organizations wonder do men and women purchase differently.

Deloitte's Observations

Partners at the famous auditing firm, Deloitte, had a hunch that there were distinct differences between the way women and men made decisions in the boardroom. Armed with the knowledge and experience of their sales team, they came together to map out the similarities and differences which they had observed over the years. Benko & Palster (2013) reveal that their sales teams, with a high reputation of being well-informed and well-trained, had failed at winning a recent sales bid and they wanted to know why as they were sure to get it. As they investigated the matter, the predominately-male team of representatives gave forth a possible explanation – the boardroom had more women in it than they had anticipated, and they could not establish rapport or common grounds with them. It was evident that it was worth their while to investigate the subject at hand. Thus, the company then sent out a survey to all of its relevant internal subjects, asking them if they too had similar observations. The information gathered revealed that there was, indeed, a difference in selling to men and women and that the respective genders had differences in the way they made their decisions in the boardroom, similarly to B2C environment.

To further affirm the fair suspicions, scientific evidence in the form of biological differences can be reviewed. According to a study on brain matter, men's brains have about 6.5 times more gray matter than women, whereas women have 10 times more white matter in comparison to men (University of Irvine, 2005). Therefore, scientists concluded that the differences may explain why men are better at sheer processing tasks, while women “show relative strength in tasks that call for assimilating and integrating disparate pieces of information” (Benko & Palster, 2013).

Gender Differences (B2C)

There has been plenty of research regarding gender differences when it comes to business to consumer (B2C) settings such as purchasing consumer goods. Most follow the precise model of behavior and activity as defined by Sproles (1985) work which entails 50 main cognitive traits. The

study further highlights that a consumer decision-making style is “a patterned, mental, cognitive orientation towards shopping and purchasing, which constantly dominates the consumer’s choices” (Sproles, 1985, p. 79). In a study conducted in Malaysia on these elements, one of the key findings was the confirmation of gender differences in decision-making styles among adult consumers (Mokhlis, 2009). Moreover, in a similar study undergone in the UK, Bakewell and Mitchell (2006) found that only nine of the mentioned 50-element decision-making styles outlined by Sproles (1985) were common to both genders. Additionally, a study conducted in Iran by Hanzae and Aghasibeig (2008) reported more differences amongst the genders in different generations. They concluded that Generation Y male and female consumers differ in their decision-making styles.

Moreover, previous literatures expressed that a person’s gender strongly influences consumer decisions (Mustonen, 2016). For example, in Rėklaitis, K., & Pilelienė, L. (2019) study, they found that B2B communications depend heavily on personal communications in comparison to B2C. Furthermore, Lin et al’s (2019) empirical survey-based research study in the e-commerce context found that gender differences exist in online purchasing decisions. In terms of marketing, research finds that genders differ in the way they receive information pertaining to a certain product (Kim & Yim, 2018). Gender differences have also been noted to exist in the field of advertising. This phenomenon is described as the gender mechanical impression of advertising spokesperson. The gender differences impacted the marketing of target consumers and brand (Li et al, 2016). More recently, Boscolo et al (2020) noticed that there were gender differences in the way consumers perceived visual images. In conclusion, prior studies provide convicting evidence that consumers’ decision-making styles varies by genders.

Women Vs Men Entrepreneurship Opportunities

Accordin to Rudhumbu et al. (2020), there are various barriers hindering women’s abilities to endeavour certain accomplishments, especially during the decision making process in a boardroom. Brooks et al. (2014) also supports the above statement by leading a lab experiment where the same pitch was conveyed by men and women, which was afterward assessed by non-investor test participants. They have concluded that participants prefer pitches presented by men and they were more likely to ‘mock fund’ male entrepreneurs over female entrepreneurs, even though the pitch was exactly the same. The researchers did not mention reasons why participants preferred male pitchers. Previously, Huse (2006) revealed that attraction may exist in board meetings, hence people prefer attractive men or women even when men do not prepare well, as opposed to women. In addition, Huse (2006) also mentioned that when men and women interact, filtration may exist causing women to become uncomfortable. Such harassments may restrict women’s opportunities and mobility (ILO, 2018). Hence, understanding how decisions are made is crucial to understanding and acknowledging reasons behind boardroom decisions, as it is evident from the available research that there are indeed differences in the way both genders receive and send information.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The research topic, which is inspired by the mentioned works or Deloitte as presented by Benks & Palster (2013), aims to investigate the notion that men and women make decisions differently in the boardroom. The case study broke down and highlighted issues that can contribute

to this realization of which this research elaborates on and develops relevant questions, which include if the outcomes or differences in B2C settings would be similar in B2B settings.

Expected Outcomes

The outcomes of previous investigations, as highlighted in the literature review above, on gender decision-making matters in B2C settings can be used to extrapolate that the same gender differences will apply in B2B settings. Therefore, the researchers expect that there will be notable differences in the way men and women perceive information and therefore make decisions in the boardroom.

Research Question

The study will focus on how gender differences can impact decisions and will include an investigation of the subject in grand boardrooms across Kuwait. Therefore, the research question will be broken down accordingly. Based on the identified research gap, this paper will aim to answer the following questions:

- Are there gender differences in the decision making process in the boardroom?
- If so, what are some notable differences?
- Do these differences affect the overall decision making process of the genders?

Research Implications

If decision making differences can be found amongst the genders in the conventional consumer setting of B2C environments, one can extrapolate the relevancy and deduce that there will also be differences in boardroom decisions. Therefore, the outcome of this research will likely be conclusive in the same manner – that men and women have different decision-making processes when making decisions in B2B settings. In this case, the boardroom is the B2B setting. The significance of this research is rather large as it would shed the light on the importance of knowing one's customer before giving a boardroom pitch of any kind, whether for sales purposes or for general plans which require influence and decision making. The investigation could also provide a new dimension to the gender differences paradigm which has never significantly been investigated in boardrooms. As well, recognizing these differences may lead to multiple selling strategies developed for marketing purposes, where plenty of research has been previously done with multiple conclusions.

Marketing & Sales

It can also be a guide to a more general understanding of the differences which can help identify the actual differences when observed. This can impact sales pitches considerably as they will be able to read the room and adjust their strategy accordingly. Furthermore, after reviewing the available literature, it was evident that though many studies related to consumer purchasing behavior, researchers failed to focus on what happens in a business-to-business setting like a boardroom, where gender diversity is ever present.

Gender Diversity

There is limited research which focuses on the hidden dynamics of certain elements of the boardroom and how the systemic structure might be influenced by gender preferences (Bilimoria,

2000; Burke and Mattis, 2000b; Van der Walt and Ingley, 2003), including the investigation of what occurs in boardrooms when women pitch their ideas to the board of directors (Burke and Mattis, 2000b).

Cultural Implications

In precise, there is hardly any research papers regarding the matter conducted in the Middle East, especially a small country like Kuwait.

Personal Strategies

Furthermore, this research can be used a means to assess one's own behavior in making decisions in the boardroom. Much of our cognitive behavior is enclosed in staged clues. In order to be understood and taken advantage of, they must first be observed and noticed both in one's self and amongst their boardroom companions. It is then the work of adaptation and awareness which can be exercised and enhanced based on the findings. Gender awareness can serve in a multitude of ways and benefit the overall strategy of both the seller and the buyer. Also, internal equality and pro-forma measures of human resource departments can also use the findings of this research and can build their training frameworks accordingly. Lastly, as Benko (2013) stated, perhaps the most effective way to build respect for diversity inside your organization is to focus on your customers. Therefore, it is important to keep a holistic view of the gender topic and incorporate it in all elements of the value creation process in a company.

METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

This study employs a primary quantitative approach as it is descriptive in nature and uses a closed-answer survey. Data collection was conducted using a structured method of gathering feedback from participants via questionnaire. This data-oriented approach is best described as cross-sectional in that it aims to find trends in a selected group of individuals. The research design followed a quantitative approach of random sampling amongst executives of different companies in Kuwait. The chosen tool for data collection is a structured questionnaire which was developed based on mentioned elements of how decisions are made. It employs a cross-sectional strategy as it intends to collect data from a sample of the population. The questions are close-ended in order to reach the objective of this paper. Also, the questions was partly inspired by the Deloitte study previously conducted. The results from such methods are expected to be logical and unbiased.

Sampling

In this research, any stakeholder that is in a position to make or impact the decision-making process for a company was invited to take part. Participants were selected using purposeful sampling, which is a recommended approach in research aiming to report quantitative data. Patton (2002) asserts that the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. In this study, we focus on individuals who are in a management position to make final decisions in various forms. This non-probability sampling method is most suitable given the current lockdown effects of the pandemic. In order to ensure balance, we monitored the results in an attempt to keep the quotas of job sector and gender in balance. Tracking the respondents and non-respondents proved essential to provide a fair representation. Also, a snowball technique was

used in that we asked our contacts to forward the survey to their colleagues and family members who qualify to take the survey. Our aim was to get at least 50 respondents from each of the sectors mentioned below. In order to have a fair representation, we sent out the survey to an equal ration of men and women in three different sectors – Banking & Finance, IT & Communication, and Oil & Gas. The results obtained were as follows:

Sector	Total Participants	Male	Female
Banking & Finance	55	26	29
IT & Communication	49	30	19
Oil & Gas	52	29	23
Total	156	85	71

Questionnaire

As reported in the Deloitte study, the major elements which were observed as being different between the genders are highlighted below. Based on the observations, corresponding questions were generated and derived from the logic used to analyze them. The questionnaire was available in both English and Arabic to increase the number of local participants as well as reduce language barriers (see table 2 and 3).

	Presented By	Related Questions
Deciding Factors	Buyer's ethics & point of view	Q2, Q9
Knowledge Perspective	Buyer's reception of information	Q5, Q3, Q4
Acknowledgement of Buyer's Power	Seller's representatives	Q6, Q8
Body Language	Buyer's Staged clues & body movement	Q7, Q10

Q1	What is your gender?	A) Male B) Female
Q2	What is most important to you when deciding to do business with another person/company?	A) Trust B) Reputation C) Similar Business Strategies D) Record of Success E) Cultural/Religious Beliefs
Q3	In a business sales meeting, do you have a preference	A) Male Representative B) Female Representative

	as to who is presenting the sales pitch?	C) No Preference
Q4	Considering yourself in a business meeting setting, which one of these statements describes you more?	A) Mission-oriented, primarily interested in getting the deal done B) Knowledge-oriented, primarily seeking more information from the other side
Q5	Considering yourself in a business meeting setting, which of these statements regarding your perception of information is most accurate?	A) Looking for weaknesses in the information being presented B) Looking for more creative ways to collaborate C) Waiting for someone else to ask the questions D) Always asking the first question
Q6	When making a business deal, who do you prefer to meet first?	A) Actual decision maker (CEO/Top Management) B) People who are directly involved in your project (Team-Members) C) Both (Top Management & Team Members)
Q7	During a business meeting, you find yourself nodding your head to primarily signal which of the following?	A) Agreement B) Wanting the discussion to move on C) To show interest & engagement D) All of the above
Q8	During a business meeting with a seller, do you have a preference as to where the other team is seated?	A) Next to B) Across from C) No preference
Q9	When it comes to formalities, which one of these statements describes you more accurately?	A) I feel it is important to get to know the person/team in front of you first by some initial small talk B) I prefer a quick intro which leads straight to the purpose of the meeting
Q10	Do you often find yourself using anecdotes or sarcasm in your business meetings?	A) Yes B) No C) Sometimes

Construct Validity & Reliability

Having developed research instrument, it was imperative to establish whether the research constructs used were valid and reliable (Hancock & Mueller, 2013; Loehlin & Beaujean, 2017). For this study, four major constructs were established and these were Meeting Objectives (MO), Motivation and Interest (MI), Information Sharing/Receiving (ISR), and Informalities (INF). To determine whether the constructs were valid and reliable, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was carried out as prescribed by Brown (2015). Construct validity was tested using both convergent validity and discriminant validity (Kline, 2016). While convergent validity tested whether the items converged to a construct or not, discriminant validity tested whether there were key differences between the constructs or not (Thompson, 2018) and the resultant measurement model is presented in Figure 1.

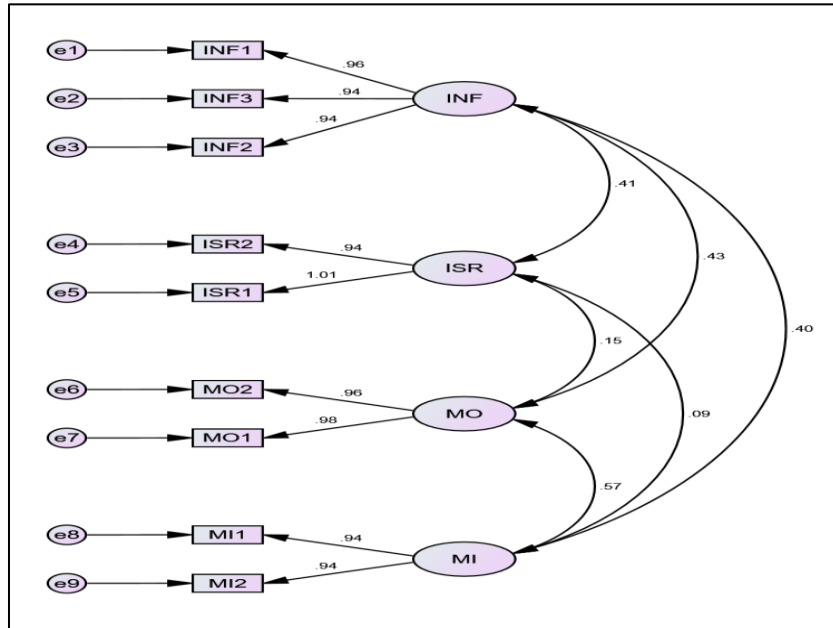


FIGURE 1
MEASUREMENT MODEL

Convergent validity was tested in IBM SPSS (v27) using two methods, the path coefficients and the Average Variance Explained (AVE). Hoyle *et al.* (2012), Kline (2016) and Gana and Broc (2019) recommend that for convergent validity to be attained, the path coefficients that are between the constructs and the items ought to be greater than 0.60 and so should be the AVE statistic. From the outcome in Figure 1, the minimum path coefficient was 0.94 and being greater than 0.60, this meant that the convergent validity was not violated. Further, regarding the AVE in Table 4, the minimum observed was 0.900 and because this was greater than 0.60, it followed that the convergent validity was not violated.

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	INF	ISR	MO	MI
INF	0.964	0.900	0.188	0.965	0.948			
ISR	0.978	0.957	0.168	1.032	0.409***	0.978		
MO	0.969	0.939	0.321	0.971	0.434***	0.155†	0.969	
MI	0.940	0.887	0.321	0.940	0.404***	0.088	0.566***	0.942

† p < 0.100; * p < 0.050; ** p < 0.010; *** p < 0.001

On the other hand, Hoyle (2012) and Byrne (2016) argue that the discriminant validity can be established from the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations between the study constructs in Figure 1 or in Table 4, and prescribe 0.85 as the maximum tolerable coefficient. The highest observed HTMT ratio was 0.566 and since this was less than 0.85, this meant that discriminant validity had not been violated. Since both the convergent validity and discriminant validity were not violated, the overall construct validity was confirmed. Lastly, construct reliability was tested and according to Technik and Fidela (2017) as well as Wang and Wang (2019), the optimal test was the composite reliability analysis. Field (2016) and Hair *et al.* (2017) recommend the

minimum acceptable coefficient to be 0.70. Since none of the composite reliability statistics was less than 0.70, it could be confirmed that the constructs used in the study were reliable.

Data Analysis

The first step in a statistical analysis is the descriptive part (See Appendix). Descriptive statistics helps describe the raw data in a clearer way and shows some patters in data and relations between the variables.

- *Q1* - Related to the respondent gender; 54.5% of the respondents are male and 45.5% are female. The first gender item is balanced and shows the significance of the sample used in this survey.
- *Q2* - The majority of respondents state that the most important for them when they decide to do business is the trust and reputation. The relation between the gender variable and what is the most important when deciding to do business with another person/company is not significant, in other terms, there is so significant difference between men and women on what component for this question regarding the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is superior to the significance level 5%. From the cross tables, we can see that the majority of the men are looking for trust as a must when doing business with another person/company, whereas the women are more interested in reputation.
- *Q3* - The majority of the respondents' state the gender of who will conduct the meeting does not matter to them. The percent of respondents that have chosen one gender is equal between male and female. The relation between the gender variable and what is the preference of the respondent in relation to gender for giving a presentation is not significant. In other terms, there is so significant difference between men and women on gender preference of who should give a sales presentation in boardroom, as per the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is superior to the significance level 5%. In fact, from the cross tables, we can see that the majority of the men and women have no special gender preference regarding a presentation in boardroom.
- *Q4* -The relation between the gender variable and what statement describe each gender the most considering a business meeting setting is significant at 10%, in other terms, there is a significant difference between men and women on how they describe themselves considering a business meeting setting regarding the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is inferior to the significance level 10%. In fact, from the cross tables, we can see that the majority of the men describe themselves as a Mission Oriented, primarily interested in getting the deal, while women are more knowledge-oriented, primarily seeking more information from the other side.
- *Q5* - As reported, 28.8% of respondent stated that they are more likely looking for weaknesses in the presentation while in a business meeting. In the second position, "looking for more creative solutions" is answered by 25% of the respondent. The relation between the gender variable and what the statement describes as per each gender is very significant at 5%. In other terms, there is a significant difference between men and women on how they describe themselves considering a business meeting setting regarding the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is inferior to the significance level 5%. In fact, from the cross tables, we can see that the majority of the men describe themselves as a looking for weakness in the information being presented while women are more looking for more creative ways to collaborate.
- *Q6* - The relation between the gender variable and who they prefer to meet first when making a business deal is very significant at 5%. In other terms, there is a significant difference between men and women on who they prefer to meet first while making a business deal regarding the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is inferior to the significance level 5%. In fact, from the cross tables, we can see that the majority of the men prefer to meet the actual decision maker (CEO Top Management) first while women are more looking to meet both (Actual Decision maker and People who are directly involved in the project).
- *Q7* - The majority of the male respondents stated that they are more likely nodding their heads as a sign of wanting the discussion to move on or end, while the majority of females reported nodding as a way of showing interest. The relation between the gender variable and the head signal of each one during a business meeting is not significant at 5%. In other terms, there is not a significant difference between men and women on what they found themselves nodding at during a business meeting regarding the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is superior to the significance level 5%. The majority (31%) of females use head-nodding as a signal to mainly show interest, secondly to show agreement. While, the male are more head nodding to move one and wanting the discussion to end with a percent of 32%.

- Q8 - There is a balanced percentage of respondents regarding business meeting interludes attitude. About half of them stated that they are more likely to go straight to the purpose while the other half thinks that's important to know the participants first before getting to the purpose of the meeting. The relation between the gender variable and what it describes is not significant at 5%. In other terms, there is not a significant difference between men and women on their attitude regarding the prelude of a business meeting as per the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is superior to the significance level 5%.
- Q9 - The relation between the gender variable and the where they want to sit during a business meeting is not significant at 5%. In other terms, there is no significant difference between men and women on choosing sitting next, across or no preferences to the visitor during a business meeting as per the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is superior to the significance level 5%. In fact, from the cross table, we can assert that the male and female have more preference to sit across the visitors during a business meeting.
- Q10 - The relation between the gender variable using sarcasm or anecdotes business meeting is highly significant at 5%. In other terms, there is a great significant difference between men and women on using sarcasm and anecdotes during a business meeting as per the p-value of the of Chi-square test that is inferior to the significance level 5%. In fact, men reported using sarcasm and anecdotes during a business meeting much more than women. More than 85% of men reported always or sometime using sarcasm while more than 50% of women reported never using it.

Variable Associations

From the analysis of the relationship between the variables (See Appendix), we can assert that:

- There is a significant association between Q1 (what is your gender) and Q4 (mission-oriented or knowledge-oriented). The males have confirmed more preference to being Mission-oriented. The relation is significant at 5% significance level.
- There is a significant association between Q4 (mission-oriented or knowledge-oriented) and the majority of results in Q5 (looking for more creative solutions). Therefore, it can be deduced that mission-oriented individuals, who were predominantly male, are usually looking for more creative solutions than weaknesses when making decisions in the boardroom.
- There is a significant relation between the Q2 (important factors when deciding to do business with another company) and Q6 (who do you prefer to meet first). In fact, what the respondents values most in companies they want to do business with and their preference for meeting the involved individuals are quite associated. Those who rely more on trust and reputation confirmed a desire to meet the top management/decision maker first to establish a trustful relationship.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS

Naturally, there are some limitations to this research which may stem from its various components.

Practical Limitations

- The number of respondents was limited and only represented relevant clusters from sectors investigated.
- When discussing styles of a subjective nature, it must be noted that the conclusions are tendencies, not absolutes.
- The questions were forced-answer and could have limited the sentiments of the respondents.

Social Limitations

- The respondents come from a conservative society and may have not given fully personalized answers but rather gave expected answers.

- There participants were all higher management who could have filled the survey quickly just to get back to work faster.
- The word “management” is vague and perhaps the lack of consistency impacted the results.

Scientific Limitations

- The subject of gender differences is vast with many and multiple conclusions. Though this research confirms the expected outcomes described previously, more research is required on the subject in order to have more accurate results.
- More validity and reliability testing of the questionnaire could also prove to be purposeful.
- This research used a macro-level approach to provide an initial investigation on the matter and showed compelling evidence that gender differences exist in B2B settings, perhaps future research can be precise in terms of managerial level/experience, time spent in the role, etc which may impact the outcomes.

Although this is a preliminary study, any clue as to who your audience may be is a relevant clue regardless of how salient it may be.

CONTINUING RESEARCH

As boardrooms around the world continue to fill the female quota, there is a continued need to study their individual needs. It is apparent that women have different ways of assessing and gathering information than men in some business related elements. Therefore, it is essential that scientists continue to investigate the matter and address the differences. Furthermore, in a relatively closed and conservative society like Kuwait, gender issues are of particular interest as they are considered highly sensitive matters. Differences related to gender in any given scenario, especially in terms of perceptions, are highly likely to have impact on the interaction on multiple levels. As Kuwait continues to push for more gender equality in the workplace as part of its ‘New Kuwait 2035’ vision, it is important to note the differences in perceptions on a magnitude of levels. For the local and international practitioner, researcher, and salesperson alike, these differences are crucial to note and address in order to achieve success. The local culture is heavily exposed to international franchises in various fields thus exploring gender topics in perceptions could be highly advantageous.

CONCLUSION

From the information collected during this study, it was clear that there are significant distinctions regarding gender differences in decision making in the boardroom. These new discoveries are a major contribution to the field of management science in the age of congested channels of communication. The findings will surely pave the way for more elaborate studies as it was proven that men and women seek different needs when presented with sales information. In fact, the research showed that some of the private cognitive matters of the individuals involved in receiving information may show in subtle ways through body language. The findings are summarized below:

- The majority of the men are looking for trust as a must when doing business with another person/company, whereas the women are more interested in reputation.
- The majority of the men and women have no special gender preference regarding a presentation in boardroom.
- The majority of the men describe themselves as a Mission Oriented, primarily interested in getting the deal, while women are more knowledge-oriented, primarily seeking more information from the other side.
- The majority of the men describe themselves as a looking for weakness in the information being presented while women are more looking for more creative ways to collaborate.
- The majority of the men prefer to meet the actual decision maker (CEO Top Management) first while women are more looking to meet both (Actual Decision maker and People who are directly involved in the project)
- There is not a significant difference between men and women on their attitude regarding the prelude of small talk of a business meeting.
- Both males and females have more preference to sit across the visitors during a business meeting.
- The majority of men (more than 80%) use sarcasm and anecdotes during a business meeting while more than half of women respondents stated they never used either.

In conclusion, this research highlighted the notion that men and women are influenced by different factors when making a decision in B2B settings just as well as in B2C settings. It is obvious that there are indeed differences between genders which should be considered. Thus, it is important for companies to observe and cater to these differences accordingly in order to maximize their influence.

REFERENCES

- Acker, J. (1992), Gendering organizational theory, in A.J. Mills & P. Tancred (Eds.) *Gendering organizational analysis*, Sage, Newbury Park.
- Bahhouth, V., Ziemnowicz, C., & Zgheib, Y. (2012). Effect of culture and traditions on consumer behavior in kuwait. *International Journal of Business, Marketing, and Decision Sciences*, 5(2), 1-11.
- Benko & Palster, K.B. (2013). How women decide. Retrieved 22 June, 2020, from <https://hbr.org/2013/09/how-women-decide>
- Berry, H., Guillén, M. & Zhou, N. (2010). An institutional approach to cross-national distance. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 21, 1460–1480.
- Bilimoria, D. (2000), “Building the case for women corporate directors”, in Burke, R.J. & Mattis, M. (Eds.). *Women on corporate boards: International challenges and opportunities*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 25-40.
- Boscolo, J.C., Oliveira, J.H.C., Maheshwari, V., & Giraldo, J.D.M.E. (2020). Gender differences: visual attention and attitude toward advertisements. *Marketing Intelligence & Planning*.
- Brooks, A., Huang, L., Kearney, S., & Murray, F. (2014). Investors prefer entrepreneurial ventures pitched by attractive men. *PNAS*, 111(12), 4427–4431.
- Brown T. (2015) *Confirmatory factor analysis for applied research, paperback, second edition*, Guilford Press. New York
- Burke, R.J. & Mattis, M. (2000). “Women on corporate boards of directors: Where do we go from here?” in *Women on corporate boards: International challenges and opportunities*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, 3-10.
- Byrne, B. M. (2016). *Structural equation modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Daily, C.M., Certo, S.T. & Dalton, D.R. (2000), The future of corporate women: Progress towards the executive suit and the boardroom, in Burke, R.J. & Mattis, M. (Eds.). *Women on corporate boards: International challenges and opportunities*, Kluwer, Dordrecht, pp. 11-23.
- Dennis, C., Brakus, J.J., Ferrer, G.G., McIntyre, C., Alamanos, E., & King, T. (2018). A cross-national study of evolutionary origins of gender shopping styles: she gatherer, he hunter?. *Journal of International Marketing*, 26(4), 38-53.

- Dwivedi, R. (2019). Role of Gender Identity of Women Shopping Styles of Food and Grocery. *International Journal of Innovative Knowledge Concepts*, 7, 4.
- Ely, R. & Padavic, I. (2007). A feminist analysis of micro research on gender in organizations: Suggestions for advancing the field. *Academy of Management Review*, (32), 1121-1180.
- Field, A. P. (2018). *Discovering statistics using SPSS*. London, England: SAGE.
- Gana, K., Broc, G., (2019) *Structural Equation Modeling with lavaan*. London: Wiley
- Hair, J.F., Hult, G.T.M., Ringle, C.M., & Sarstedt, M. (2017). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)* (2nd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage
- Hancock, G.R., & Mueller, R.O. (Eds.). (2013). *Structural equation modeling: A second course (2nd ed.)*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc
- Hanzaee, K.H. & Aghasibeig, S. (2008). Generation Y female and male decision-making styles in Iran: Are they different? *International Review of Retail, Distribution and Consumer Research*, 18(5), 521-537.
- Hébert, L., Very, P., & Beamish, P.W. (2005). Expatriation as a bridge over troubled water: A knowledge-based perspective applied to cross-border acquisitions. *Organization Studies*, 26, 1455-1476.
- Hoch, S.J., Kunreuther, H.C., & Gunther, R.E. (2001). *Wharton on making decisions*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Howard, J. & Hollander, J. (1997). *Gendered Situations, Gendered Selves: A Gender Lens on Social Psychology*, Lanham, MD: Rowman Altamira.
- Hoyle, R.H. (Ed.). (2012). *Handbook of structural equation modeling*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Huse, M. (2006). Gender related boardroom dynamics: How women make and can make contributions on corporate boards. *Women in Management Review*, 21, 113- 130.
- ILO, (2018). *Constraints and good practice in women's entrepreneurship in MENA. Case study: New evidence on gender attitudes towards women in business*. Impact Report Series, Issue 10. Geneva: 2018. ISBN: 978-92-2-131653-4
- Khusaini, K., Ramdani, H. C., & Ambarumanti, R. (2019). The Influence of Shopping and Gender Differences on Online Shopping. *Jurnal Pendidikan Ekonomi Dan Bisnis (JPEB)*, 7(1), 22-30.
- Kim, Y.K., & Yim, M.Y.C. (2018). When nostalgia marketing backfires: Gender differences in the impact of nostalgia on youthfulness for older consumers. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 32(6), 815-822.
- Kline, R.B., (2016) *Principles and Practice of Structural Equation Modeling (4th edition)*. New York/London: Guilford.
- Li, Y., Ma, L., Liu, Y., Li, L., & Sun, S. (2016). Gender Differences of Advertising Spokespersons in Marketing. In *2016 International Conference on Economy, Management and Education Technology*. Atlantis Press.
- Lin, X., Featherman, M., Brooks, S.L., & Hajli, N. (2019). Exploring gender differences in online consumer purchase decision making: An online product presentation perspective. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 21(5), 1187-1201.
- Loehlin, J.C., & Beaujean, A.A. (2017). *Latent Variable Models: An Introduction to Factor, Path, and Structural Equation Analysis*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.
- Lorber, J. (1994). *The Paradoxes of Gender*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Mitchell, V., & Walsh, G. (2004). Gender differences in German consumer decision making styles. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 3(4), 331-346. doi:10.1002/cb.146
- Mokhlis, S. (2009). An Investigation of Consumer Decision-Making Styles of Young-Adults in Malaysia. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(4). doi:10.5539/ijbm.v4n4p140
- Mostafa, A.A., & Bahman, R.D. (2014). The effect of provocative visual advertisement on the consumer. *International Journal of Teaching and Case Studies*, 5(3-4), 339-348.
- Mullen, E.W., Cory, S.N., & Martinez, G. (2016). Ethical issues and selling: perceptions of men and women. *International Journal of Sales, Retailing & Marketing*, 5(2).
- Mustonen, T.M. (2016). *Better Understanding and Selling to Women: A Recommendation for Marketers and Advertisers* (Doctoral dissertation)
- Nelson, T. & Kolb, D. (2009). Women entrepreneurs and venture capital: Managing the shadow negotiation. *International Journal of Gender and Entrepreneurship*.
- Patton, M.Q. (2001). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Pirlympou, Z. (2017). A Critical Study: How Gender Determines Consumer Preferences. *Journal of Economics and Business*, (2), 29-37.
- Plabdaeng, C. (2010). Gender Influence On Purchase Intention The Case Study Of Thailand. Research Report.
- Réklaitis, K., & Pileliène, L. (2019). Principle differences between B2B and B2C marketing communication processes. *Management of Organizations: Systematic Research*, 81(1), 73-86.

- Rudhumbu, N., Du Plessis, E. & Maphosa, Cosmas. (2020). Challenges and opportunities for women entrepreneurs in Botswana: revisiting the role of entrepreneurship education. *Journal of International Education in Business*. DOI: 10.1108/JIEB-12-2019-0058.
- Shenkar, O. (2001). Cultural distance revisited: Towards a more rigorous conceptualization and measurement of cultural differences. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 32, 519–535.
- Sproles, G.B. (1985). From perfectionism to fadism: Measuring consumers' decision-making styles. Proceedings, American Council on Consumer Interests, 79-85.
- Stahl, G. (2008). Cultural dynamics and impact of cultural distance within mergers and acquisitions. In P. B. Smith, M. F. Peterson, & D. C. Thomas (Eds.), *The handbook of cross-cultural management research* (431–448). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tannen, D. (1994). *Talking from 9-5: Men and Women in the Workplace*, New York: Avon Books.
- Technik, B.G., & Fidela, L.S. (2017). *Using multivariate statistics*. (6th ed.) New York: Pearson.
- Thompson, B. (2018). *Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis: Understanding concepts and applications*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association
- Tulungen, C. (2013). Comparative Analysis Of Impulse Buying Based On Gender Differences. *Journal EMBA*, 1(4), 1349-1357.
- University Of California, Irvine. (2005, January 22). Intelligence In Men And Women Is A Gray And White Matter. Science Daily.
- Vander Walt, N. & Ingley, C. (2003). Board dynamics and the influence of professional background, gender and ethnic diversity of directors. *Corporate Governance*, 11, 218-234.
- Wang, J. & Wang, X. (2019) *Structural Equation Modeling: Applications Using Mplus*. Chichester, West Sussex. John Wiley.