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## **Gender Comparison for Conflict Experience and Consequences in Saudi Workplace**

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### **Abstract:**

*This study aimed to compare the two genders in Saudi workplace for differences in how they perceive conflict and what are the consequences such as their performance, satisfaction and commitment. Saudi Arabia follows a patriarchy where women have been recently permitted to leave homes and join some professional occupations. This study will show whether women experience more task-focused conflict or interpersonal conflict at work compared to men or they fail to do so as a result of being grateful to be out there. Hypothesis are developed in view of existing research literature that Saudi women will experience more interpersonal conflict but also more task conflict due to their enthusiasm. Additionally, women will have higher job satisfaction, and commitment compared to men. A field study was conducted to collect a survey-based data to test the hypotheses. Results showed that as hypothesized, women experienced more conflict but also reported positive job attitudes such as satisfaction and commitment. We also tested if job attitudes were related to conflict and job attitudes. This study showed that women can contribute to the workplace in Saudi Arabia and that organizations should not only hire them in confidence but use the positive attitudes of women to improve work environment as well as performance on the whole.*

**Keywords:** Gender, conflict, satisfaction, commitment, attitudes

### **1. Introduction**

One of the significant diversity characteristics in a workplace is gender diversity. It is also the most easily accessible diversity category (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Gender represents an important form of social differentiation that influence how employees perceive and behave in organizations (Nkomo & Cox, 1996). Although women make the 'better half' of the human population, it was not long ago that women were accepted as a valuable part of the workforce. Women have always been busy contributing to the household's economy but by entering the professional organizations, they got recognition for their contribution to the country's economy. Women also started getting recognized for their creative, cognitive, productive, and significantly valuable efforts. Whereas women entered to complement, some men saw them as a competition. There is plenty of research that discusses gender discrimination (Germain, Herzog, & Hamilton, 2012; Harcourt, Lam, Harcourt, & Flynn, 2008; King, Dawson, Kravitz, & Gulick, 2012; Shen et al., 2009) and gender barriers (Ely, Stone, & Ammerman, 2014) where women are treated lesser than men in organizations despite equal professional qualifications. Then there is much research that studies gender comparison whether women are equal to men and how they are being treated with reference to specific aspect of work. For example, how do women perform in cognitive, creative, analytical, or mathematical tasks compared to men (e.g., Feingold, 1988; Halpern, 2013; Lummis & Stevenson, 1990). Also, how women are treated with reference to hiring, wages, promotion, and the presence of glass ceiling. It should be noted that sex is different from gender. Sex is defined as biological and gender as socially performed and the two are clearly not the same thing (Cheng, 1996). Women may be different by sex but an organization is mistaken if it judges women on the basis of sex for the characteristics desirable to an organization. Men and women do not differ on personality development except for means of some personality characteristics (Caspi, Roberts, Shiner, 2005) and we believe even those are not biological but are more of a result of social development (Srivastava, John, Gosling, & Potter, 2003; see also Eliot, 2009).

Both men as well as women enter the workplace with certain attitudes towards the other gender. These attitudes determine the experiences of the two genders in their workplace. Deaux and Major (1987) proposed that genders become visible within the context of social interaction, that is, behavior will be guided by gender when men come across women. People act as perceivers (of others), targets (of others' perceptions), and perceivers (of themselves) at the same time. Such interaction, thus affects the behavior of the

perceiver and the target. The model of gender-related behavior was developed with the help of expectancy confirmation processes and self-verification and self-presentation strategies. Both the men and women attempt to behave according to their perceptions and abide by the situational expectations (Swann, 1984). If men and women interact under the influence of perceptions, are they capable of performing to their potentials or they abide by their gender stereotypes and perform just enough. We also wanted to see if it affects the job attitudes (job satisfaction and commitment of men and women).

As women struggle to traverse or abridge the gender gap (Huffman, Cohen, & Pearlman, 2010; Mor Barak, 2015), professional and political organizations oblige by diversity and equality laws. While the diversity and equality requirements necessitate hiring of women, organizational research endeavors to explore the benefits of gender diversity. Is gender diversity functionally helpful? Does the addition of men and women increase the performance of an organization? We were interested to observe the gender comparison for conflict experience and how men and women employees were able to perform. We included two types of conflict- task conflict (work-oriented conflict) and relationship conflict (interpersonal-oriented conflict). Performance was studied as a general measure of how well they perceived they were able to perform in addition to their job satisfaction and commitment.

The objective of this study main is to compare genders in Saudi Arabia where women have recently started to enter the professional organizations. Not long ago, any profession where women were essential, non-Saudi women were hired. Now, Saudi women have started to work in a variety of professions and have been facilitated by the government of Saudi Arabia. At the same time, people who are more steadfast in their religious beliefs strongly oppose the idea of women workers. Even though most of the work setup in Saudi Arabia where women are included has segregated work area for the women. Men rarely interact directly with women and any required interaction is behind veils or over media like internet or phone. Do men still feel threatened by this competition or exasperated to see women in organizations? Women in Saudi Arabia thereby, face gender discrimination inside the workplace and then their work aspirations are rejected by the society at large. How do women fare when they enter certain professions and continue to work despite these opposing forces? What is their attitude towards their work and are they functionally effective and valuable to the organization? How do men act and react when they have to work alongside women? We compare the gender and some work related variables to see how they accept (or not) the other gender and how their work attitudes and performance is affected. The study will contribute to Organizational Behavior, Gender Diversity, and Conflict Management by investigating attitudes, perceptions, conflict and performance of the two genders in Saudi Arabian organizations. Although there is a plenty of research on gender comparison, there are negligible studies that describe perceptions and attitudes of the two genders with reference to gender beliefs.

### *1.1. Work and Gender Distribution in the Saudi Workplace*

The workforce in the Saudi Arabia has reached about 12.2 million of which about 11.48 million (94.4 percent) are employed and 680,200 (5.6 percent) are jobless. About 6.4 million of the employed people (53 percent) were in Makkah and Riyadh region with the Saudis constituting about 41 percent. There are 5.6 million Saudis in the workforce with about 88.5% employed (Saudi Gazette, February 16, 2016). Expatriates made up 32% of the population of Saudi Arabia, most of them coming from South Asia. They accounted for 56.5% of the employed population and 89% of the private sector workforce (Bel-Air, 2014).

According to the statistics of International labor organization (2016) women constitute 20% of Saudi labor force and this percentage is expected to cross 28% by 2020. Compared to public sector organizations, private sector has employed more women. The number of women working in the private sector increased from 215 thousand in 2012 to 496 thousand in 2016 and these numbers are considerably on the rise. According to a study based on figures provided by the Ministry of Labor and Social Development, women now represent 30 per cent of the total Saudi work force in the private sector, up from 12 per cent in 2011. Under the National Transformation Program 2020, the Saudi Ministry of Planning has launched several projects; including allowing women to work from home amid expectations that it would generate 141,000 jobs (Gulf News, 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2017). The project is proving popular among women, mainly for those living outside major cities in the kingdom as it provides them with flexible timings and the challenges of commuting to the workplace. Saudi Arabia labor force survey (2014) states that among different types of industries working in Saudi Arabia, four sectors have major women participation. These sectors include healthcare, education, public service, and retail. With over 600 thousand women, the education sector has most working women in Saudi Arabia.

### *1.2. Gender and Conflict*

Some kind of disagreement is inevitable when two people have to spend some time together due to individual difference. Gender is a very visible characteristic and that comes with a lot of stereotypical presumptions (Kanter, 1977; Tomaskovic-Devey & Skaggs, 1999; Kusterer, Lindholm, & Montgomery, 2013). These stereotypical images of gender lead to specific perceptions and attitudes towards the other gender, often with women being at a disadvantage (Fine, 2010). These attitudes are brought to the workplace and invariably influence the processes and performance in the organizations. There is a gender imbalance in organizations and gender differences are salient and a significant diversity dimension (Joshi & Roh, 2009). Being a female is found to have several disadvantages and negative consequences on career (Nkomo & Cox, 1996). We wanted to explore how the two genders differ in their experience of conflict at work.

With individual differences, an inevitable group process is conflict. When two persons interact, they are likely to experience disagreements and incompatibilities due to their interpersonal dissimilarities. Conflict is defined as incompatible perceptions among at least two parties (Wall & Callister, 1995). Jehn (1995) distinguished three types of conflict. Task conflict is arguments about work-based issues, relationship conflict is interpersonal clashes, and process conflict is disagreement over logistics (time and resources distribution). For gender comparison, we select relationship conflict to see how the two genders experience interpersonal conflict and task conflict to see if they are able to focus on work-related issues despite the relationship conflict.

Gender diversity has been found to be related to negative affective outcomes such as emotional conflict (Acar, 2010; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999). Whereas gender diversity may increase emotional conflict, other research found positive effects (see Joshi & Roh, 2007) or no significant effect for relationship conflict (Mohammed & Angell, 2004). Diversity research realized that diversity is a complex phenomenon and the consequences are largely dependent on the type of diversity and its context. More research started explaining diversity by constitutional elements of diversity (e.g., Harrison & Klein, 2007; Pelled, Eisenhart, & Xin, 1999), amount of diversity (e.g., van Knippenberg & Scheepers), and asymmetric perception of diversity (Jehn, Rispens, & Thatcher, 2010). Other research explored moderators and mediators of diversity effects (Drach-Zahavy & Revital Trogan, 2013). Yet other research also observed differences in results for objective versus perceived or subjective diversity (Van Dick, Van Knippenberg, Hägele, Guillaume, & Brodbeck, 2008). The most accessible diversity characteristics, as noted above, include gender diversity. When men and women work together, the workgroups or teams have different experiences. Whether gender diversity will have positive or negative consequences depends on contextual factors as noticed above.

When individual employees perceive gender diversity, there will be increased conflict (Milliken & Martins, 1996) but who will perceive more conflict? In view of the research findings as well as the observed gender imbalance, gender stereotype and gender discrimination in the workplace, we hypothesize that women will experience more relationship conflict. At the same time, we hypothesize that women will also be more sensitive to other types of conflict such as task conflict. Women, due to their gender, have to be more competitive, alert, and functionally contributive in order to preserve their employment and work status. In that, women will be more likely to perceive more task conflict compared to men. We, therefore, hypothesize the following:

- Hypothesis 1: Women will experience more conflict than men.
- Hypothesis 1a: Women will experience more task conflict than men.
- Hypothesis 1b: Women will experience more relationship conflict than men.

### 1.3. Gender and Performance

When there is conflict, performance is expected to suffer (De Dreu & Wingart, 2003). While relationship conflict has almost always had a negative effect on performance, there is some hope for task conflict (De Wit, Greer, & Jehn, 2012). According to this meta-analysis, there are some studies where task conflict had a positive on performance.

Research in gender diversity has shown a general trend of low performance for gender diverse groups (Hare, 1976). With gender diversity, there will be low cohesion and increased turnover (Milliken & Martins, 1996). A research study showed that teams had better quality decisions when there were gender homogenous groups either all men or all women (Rogelberg & Rumery, 1996). However, there is research that also shows that an equal gender mix gives better performance than male-dominated and female-dominated teams. This indicates the presence of gender balance so neither women nor men feel threatened by the presence of dominating other gender. Moreover, there is research that found positive effect of gender where innovation, creativity, and productivity increased for groups that were diverse in gender (O'Reilly et al., 1998; Wood, 1987). These researchers, however, found high performance with no increase in conflict at the same time (O'Reilly et al., 1998). Meta-analytic research also showed that groups that have gender diversity perform more than gender homogenous groups (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998; Wood, 1987).

When will gender diversity have a positive effect? The value-in-diversity hypothesis is the popular explanation, which posits that any diversity can have a positive effect if the individuals involved in diversity believe in the positive potential of that diversity. Often, the value-in-diversity hypothesis discusses two potentials of a diversity type- social categorization (mainly for demographic or surface level diversity) and information perspective (mainly for deep level diversity). Social categorization occurs when interpersonal differences in certain characteristics preoccupy the persons involved and they establish distances among themselves based on categorizing people as in group or out group members. Correspondingly, men and women will be distanced as two different categories and treated as in group or out group members where the out group members are excluded and communication suffers. As for the information perspective, men and women come from a variety of academic as well as social learning and areas of wisdom and if they cooperate, there is a good chance that this complementary interaction will benefit the performance of both. What determines whether the two genders will be influenced by the social categorization aspect of gender diversity or the informational aspect? According to value-in-diversity, performance will be high if the individuals have pro-gender beliefs. With the general knowledge of the men's status versus women's, we assume that performance will be more influenced when men, compared to women, have pro-gender belief.

- Hypothesis 2: When the two genders, especially men, have pro-gender diversity belief, performance will be high.

### 1.4. Gender and Job Attitudes

Among the job attitudes, job satisfaction and commitment are more noticed and studied (cf al-Ajmi, 2006). Organizational commitment is defined as the emotional attachment of employees to their organization (Meyer & Allen, 1997). It is the extent to which an individual identifies and involves with his/her organization and includes the belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values, willingness to exert effort to achieve those goals, and a desire to maintain membership in that organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Meyer and Allen (1997) defined commitment and suggested a number of personal and organizational characteristics including gender. Other researchers elaborated on the effects of gender by offering two models for organizational commitment- There will be no differences in commitment for men and women according to the *Job model* but the *Gender model* that men will be more committed to their career while women will be more committed to their family roles according to their gender differences and gender expectations and gender roles (Aven, Parker, & McEvoy, 1993). Some studies did not find significant differences on these job attitudes for men and women (al-Ajmi, 2006; Ibrahim & Perez, 2014; Khalili & Asmawi, 2012; Suki & Suki, 2011). There will be no differences if men and

women are treated equally and the two genders perceive fair treatment (Aven et al., 1993). Nevertheless, other studies were found to have differences between the two genders with men being more committed than women as suggested by the gender model (Dodd-McCue & Wright, 1996). Interestingly, some studies even found women to be more committed (Wahn, 1998).

Gender model seems to fit more for the two genders in organizations in Saudi Arabia. Although the gender segregation at workplace, along with all the social restrictions, might appear to negatively affect women more and we should expect low commitment in women employees in Saudi Arabia. We are, however, inclined to wonder otherwise. Saudi Arabia has been a patriarchy for all the many years since the formation of this country. Women were restricted behind walls and there was absolutely no career oriented role for women. Saudi women were not even going for higher education until the recent couple of decades. The only role for women was the home-making role. With the vision of King Abdullah, women were not only introduced to the professional organizations, they were also encouraged to be entrepreneurs and business-makers. When someone gets an opportunity they have been long deprived of, will they be committed to prove their worth and that they deserved to be given a chance or will they aggrieve over what they do not have. We believe that women will be highly committed to come forth with their best and tackle the challenges more strongly and will have higher commitment. Contrary to the often hypothesized relationship, we hypothesize that women in Saudi Arabia will have higher commitment.

- Hypothesis 3: Women will be more committed to their organization compared to men

Similar to organizational commitment, we propose that women will be generally more satisfied with their work, specifically in Saudi work context. Job satisfaction is defined as a general positive attitude towards the job or an aspect of job (Spector, 1997). There have been mixed results for job satisfaction as well (Oshagbemi, 2000). Some studies show that men have more job satisfaction than women (Mora & Carbonell, 2009) while other studies show that women have more job satisfaction than men (Kim, 2005). A whole set of other studies failed to find any significant relationship between gender and job satisfaction (al-Ajmi, 2006; Linz, 2003). The reasons may be various and similar to those offered above for organizational commitment. In addition, research adds more explanations such as in the form of expectancies (Vroom, 1964). Men and women, in the backdrop of their social learning and expectations, have different expectations for their work as well (Campbell, Converse, & Rogers, 1976). With different expectations, job satisfaction comes through different aspects of jobs and will therefore, differ for men and women. Some researchers distinguish men and women by suggesting that the social factors of a job are more valuable to women and the opportunity for self-expression in their work are more valued by men (Centres & Bugental, 1966; Schuler, 1975.)

Garcia-Bernal et al. (2005) define four factors that may be determining the employees' job satisfaction: economic aspects, interpersonal relations, working conditions, and personal fulfillment. Another factor that distinguishes men from women is the needs fulfilment through a job. If women are more into social aspects, they are probably more interested into jobs that offer more social opportunities. In this, it looks like the individual him/herself is more of the source of job satisfaction and not the job. Correspondingly, some studies did not find any relationship between gender and job satisfaction (al-Ajmi, 2006; Linz, 2003)

Research that finds women have high job satisfaction (e.g., Kim, 2005) found that the relationship between gender and job satisfaction remained despite several factors. It is interesting how women can be satisfied despite their disadvantageous position in the workforce or professional organizations. Perhaps, it is this very recognition of disadvantage that women expect less (expectancy theory mentioned above) and are satisfied with whatever job and position they are able to accomplish in an organization. Also, few women get the opportunity to social activities and perhaps a job is not only offering them a chance to put their skills to work but also to enter a social environment. With the segregated work environment, where women are often patronized and advised by men, there is little competition and more of opportunities for women. Women may be more satisfied because they have lower expectations (Clark, 1997). Women in Saudi Arabia are, therefore, hypothesized to have more job satisfaction than men. Therefore, we hypothesize:

- Hypothesis 4: Women will have higher job satisfaction than men.

## 2. The Hypothesized Research Model

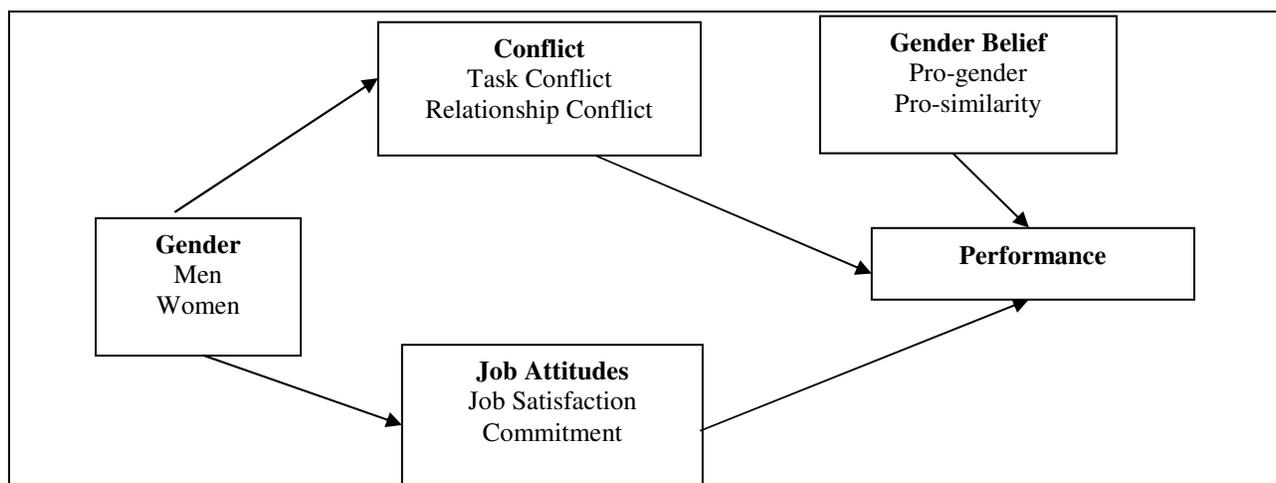


Figure 1

### 3. Method

This study was developed to study gender and work experience in Saudi Arabia. We developed a survey questionnaire with a number of measures to collect data for the selected study variables. This was a self-report printed version of survey which was distributed to the employees in the private sector. Various statistical tests were considered for hypotheses testing. Details for the sample and procedure and then the results with the help of statistical tests are given below.

#### 3.1. Sample and Procedure

Data was collected in one of the largest industrial city of Saudi Arabia. A total of 250 employees in the private sector were approached in person for survey-based data collection. We selected private sector for getting data from both men and women. The participation was voluntary and anonymous. The employees were approached after permission was granted by the management. The participants were given printed surveys to be returned in 3 days. Additional reminders were given to those who did not return. After 2 reminders, all the surveys were collected whether completed or not. There were some empty surveys and some incomplete or incorrect (one entry throughout) responses. We retained 170 completed surveys for data analyses.

There were 107 men (63%) and 63 women (37%). This is not an unusual proportion of genders considering the workforce in Saudi Arabia. The participants age ranged from 21 to 67 years with the mean age of 33.7 years (SD= 8.143). They were all graduates or postgraduates in their areas of academic expertise. Most of the participants worked in various administrative and management departments including accounting, finance, and marketing, while some were engineers. The participants were employed in the present job for time ranging from 3 months to 30 years with an average of 5.20 years. The data came from individuals working in groups that were diverse in various characteristics including gender diversity.

#### 3.2. Measures

We translated all the study scales into Arabic with the back translation method (Brislin, 1970). The scales were first translated from English to Arabic by two expert bilingual individuals. The scales were then translated back into English by another bilingual. The two versions were then given to two other bilinguals to compare and finalize the Arabic-version of the scales.

##### 3.2.1. Perceived Gender Diversity

We included 2 items that asked if the respondents could perceive the presence of men and women in their workplace. We selected the gender diversity items from diversity measure (Van Dick et al., 2008). The items were anchored with 7-point Likert-type scale with options ranging from 'very similar' to 'very diverse'. The scale gave alpha coefficient of .70.

##### 3.2.2. Diversity Beliefs

We used 2 items to measure gender diversity beliefs (selected from Van Dick et al.2008). The items were anchored with a standard Likert scale of 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' with 7 response options. An example item is "My workgroup would perform better if it contained only men or only women". Higher score indicated pro-gender belief whereas low score reflected pro-similarity belief. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the items scale was .64.

##### 3.2.3. Conflict

We used the Jehn's (1997) conflict type scales to measure individuals' perceived Task and Relationship conflicts. The items were formatted as questions with 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (A Lot). There were 4 items for both types of conflict (e.g., Task conflict: "How much conflict of ideas is there in this workgroup?" Relationship conflict: "How much fighting is about personal issues in this workgroup?"). The Cronbach alpha coefficient was .87 for Task conflict and .85 for Relationship conflict.

##### 3.2.4. Job Attitudes: Job Satisfaction and Commitment

We included 2 items each to measure job satisfaction and commitment. Similar to other scales, these items were also anchored 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (A Lot). Example item for job satisfaction is "I am satisfied with the recognition I get in my workgroup" and example item for commitment is "I feel emotionally attached to my workgroup". The scale reliability was checked with Cronbach alpha coefficient that came out to be .75 for job satisfaction and .81 for commitment.

##### 3.2.5. Performance

We included a measure of general individual performance as an outcome variable. Two items were included with  $\alpha = .92$  and an example item, "I work effectively within my workgroup". The items were anchored with a 7 point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

### 4. Results

The descriptive values of means, standard deviations, and the correlation coefficients for all the study variables are shown in Table 1. Gender was correlated with perceived gender diversity and relationship conflict where women were more likely to perceive diversity and relationship conflict. Gender did not significantly correlate with task conflict. Perceived gender diversity was positively correlated with performance and job satisfaction showing that more gender diversity was helpful in increasing performance and job satisfaction. Job satisfaction itself was also related to performance and commitment whereas it was negatively related to relationship conflict.

After computing correlations for whole sample, we computed the correlation coefficients for men and women separately as shown in Table 2. The right side shows the coefficients for women and the left side shows the scores for men.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. age	35.17	9.23								
2. gender	1.31	0.46	<b>-.227**</b>							
3. percGD	3.88	1.58	-0.063	<b>.267**</b>						
4. GDB	4.77	1.41	-0.088	-0.096	0.036					
5. TC	3.94	1.20	0.048	0.071	-0.041	-0.130				
6. RC	3.09	1.34	0.021	<b>.164*</b>	-0.081	-0.148	<b>.477**</b>			
7. performance	5.69	1.24	-0.015	0.027	<b>.225**</b>	0.109	0.099	-0.085		
8. JS	4.87	1.39	-0.052	0.108	<b>.192**</b>	0.072	-0.131	<b>-.187**</b>	<b>.465**</b>	
9. commitment	4.62	1.53	0.080	0.024	0.035	0.049	0.025	-0.107	<b>.325**</b>	<b>.477**</b>

\*\*p< 0.01; \*p< 0.05; percGD= perceived Gender Diversity; GDB= Gender Diversity Belief;  
TC= Task Conflict; RC= Relationship Conflict; JS= Job Satisfaction

Table 1: Descriptives and interscale correlation coefficients for the study variables

The mean values in Table 2 show that women are more pro-gender diversity, experience more task conflict, and believe they perform well with slightly higher job satisfaction than men. The correlation coefficients show that men are not very pro-gender especially when they perceive gender diversity but interestingly when they accept gender diversity as represented through pro-gender belief, then they may have more task conflict. Women on the other hand, showed a positive relationship between gender diversity and relationship conflict which means they are likely to experience more relationship conflict when they have more men in their work environment. Next, we ran *t*-tests to compare the two genders and the results are shown in Table 3. Although women generally tended to have higher scores for men, a few results were non-significant. Of those significant, women perceived gender diversity more than men, experienced more relationship conflict (H1), and had more job satisfaction (H4) compared to men. These results provided support to our hypotheses 1 and 4.

	Men										Women	
	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	SD	M
1. age	36.70	10.07	1	-.003	-.034	-.142	-.093	-.050	-.165	-.067	5.69	32.21
2. gender	3.61	1.58	-.033	1	-.019	.024	-.110	.098	-.021	.040	1.39	4.51
3. percGD	4.86	1.27	-.154	.159	1	.033	-.029	<b>.308*</b>	.263	<b>.373**</b>	1.59	4.66
4. GDB	3.87	1.16	.123	-.121	<b>-.258*</b>	1	<b>.515**</b>	.199	.007	.067	1.30	4.11
5. TC	2.96	1.21	.109	-.152	<b>-.244*</b>	<b>.445**</b>	1	-.148	<b>-.345**</b>	-.215	1.57	3.36
6. RC	5.68	1.23	-.020	<b>.260**</b>	.017	.035	-.066	1	<b>.629**</b>	<b>.414**</b>	1.19	5.78
7. performance	4.77	1.38	-.019	<b>.220**</b>	-.075	<b>-.225**</b>	-.141	<b>.401**</b>	1	<b>.625**</b>	1.35	5.18
8. JS	4.57	1.63	.133	.001	-.174	-.022	-.053	<b>.265*</b>	<b>.403**</b>	1	1.39	4.73

Table 2: Descriptives and inter scale correlation coefficients for the study variables

Our hypothesis 2 stated that pro-gender diversity belief will be related to performance. We ran regression analyses for men and women separately to see if that was true. The results were opposed to the hypothesis as women gave a significant effect of diversity belief on performance (F= 5.47, t= 2.34, Sig= .023) whereas men did not give a significant result (F= .02, t= .155, Sig= .877).

		M	SD	t	Sig
percGD	men	3.61	1.58		
	women	4.51	1.39	-4.292	.000
GD Belief	men	4.86	1.27		
	women	4.66	1.59	.844	.400
Task Conflict	men	3.87	1.16		
	women	4.11	1.30	-1.366	.173
Relationship Conflict	men	2.96	1.21		
	women	3.36	1.57	-1.896	.038
Performance	men	5.68	1.23		
	women	5.78	1.19	-.547	.585
Job Satisfaction	men	4.77	1.38		
	women	5.18	1.35	-2.000	.045
Commitment	men	4.58	1.63		
	women	4.73	1.39	-.600	.550

Table 3: Independent sample t-test for gender comparison

## 5. Discussion

We explored the role of gender in how conflict and job attitudes (job satisfaction and commitment) were influenced by gender as well as how these job experiences and attitudes affected performance. While considering gender, we were also interested in exploring the influence of gender belief on performance. We hypothesized that women will be more satisfied despite experiencing more conflict. We assumed that women will experience conflict due to gender based biased and discriminations but will also have positive job attitudes due to job opportunities and privileged despite the gender based disadvantages. Results confirmed our assumptions and hypotheses. According to the correlation scores, women reported more relationship conflict, commitment, and performance. When men and women data was considered separately, women again showed more pro-gender diversity attitude with more task conflict, performance, and job satisfaction. Hypotheses testing confirmed that women experienced more relationship conflict (H1) and were more committed than men (H4).

Women score higher on being pro-gender diversity and then gave higher performance than men as well. This was not exactly what we hypothesized in H4 but we believe this would be true only if men did show significant pro-gender diversity belief. Those who make the sensitive part of diversity are the ones who are likely going to be pro-gender too. Women are looked down upon in most cultures and obviously women will be more pro-diversity and want to be treated equal.

This study offers managerial implications. The organizations must be careful in the gender composition and management. If there is gender diversity, the employees should be well orientated and expected to accept all workers regardless of differences if there is no gender diversity, the organizations should recruit women and maintain a gender balance (Traavik & Richardsen, 2010). Women should not be recruited only to claim gender equality. There is research that shows that if there is a gender imbalance or more women than men, the performance suffers (Wegge, Roth, Neubach, Schmidt, & Kanfer, 2008). Other research also showed that women also had prejudices, although not explicit, but where women had prejudices they were more systematically implicit (Ekehammar, Akrami, & Araya, 2003). This shows that women are no better than men when it comes to chances of misusing authority or position. Perhaps, women are too skeptic and when privileged, they may be distracted due to pessimism or disbelief. The focus of work composition and gender balance, therefore, should be work and work skills instead of non-work aspects such as gender.

The above findings point at another interesting side of gender composition that research does not commonly cover. Normally, research look at gender differences and not gender similarities. The perspective could make a significant difference. The gender similarity perspective observes that women are similar to men on most, if not all, psychological variables (Hyde, 2005). Accordingly, gender differences at workplaces are often context specific and mostly exaggerated. Future studies may look at details of gender differences and/or similarities. We looked at job satisfaction and commitment in general but a look at details could bring better understanding. Aspects of job satisfaction (Carland & College, 2010) and types or dimensions of commitment (Khalili & Asmawi, 2012) will help outline the gender differences or similarities more clearly.

In sum, we studied the job attitudes and experiences of the two genders at workplace and whether one gender performed better than the other in view of the perceived presence of other gender and gender belief. We proposed a model of relationship between gender and gender belief, job attitudes (job satisfaction and commitment), conflict (task and relationship), and performance. The model adds to diversity and conflict research with reference to gender and how they are an important source of conflict and consequences in a workgroup. It also offers an understanding of several aspects of group processes to the management. It suggests that groups may be composed with the right mix of the two genders for the right gender balance and positive diversity belief.

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