

Title: Gender, Culture and Organizational Attainment: A Comparative Study of the U.S. and Arab Region

Status: In Progress

Abstract

Research on relationships at work and social networks has provided growing empirical evidence for the role of these constructs in affecting a wide array of important outcomes in organizations. From the earliest work on diffusion in networks, to the more recent research on social capital and mobility, the pivotal role of social network and relationships in affecting behavioral and affective phenomena in organizations is becoming better recognized. At the same time, cross-cultural and social exchange researchers have studied the role of culture in affecting the nature and extent of interpersonal interactions. For example, in his formulation of social exchange theory, Blau argued that the social context in which exchange takes place defines the rules and guidelines governing exchange and determines the value of what is exchanged. Hofstede, in his large study of work-related values, has also found significant differences across cultures in the way people interact and maintain relationships with others. Consequently, there is a greater interest in the study of relationships across different cultural settings. Most research as focused on the important cultural dimension of individualism-collectivism as one of the most important attribute of cultures.

Furthermore, whether one is talking about individualist Western cultures or Collectivist Middle Eastern culture, it is understood that there are important gender differences in the way people go about building and maintaining ties with other, and the way these ties are leveraged for tangible or intangible resources (Ibara, 1997). Despite these recognized differences, little significant conceptual or empirical studies are available to shed more light on the effects of culture and gender on tie strength in and success in organizations. This research aims to address this apparent shortcoming. As such, in this study, we investigate the role of culture and gender in shaping relationships and in determining the value of these relationships for job satisfaction and performance.