

HOW MEN AND WOMEN DIFFER IN COMMUNICATION AT WORKPLACE: A STUDY PERTAINING TO IT CONSULTING AND APPLICATION SOFTWARE COMPANIES

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ABSTRACT

The topic of Gender Differences in Communication Styles has been of substantial interest to researchers within the field of psychology, management, and sociology, especially in recent years when women started taking leadership areas at supreme organizations. The correlation between gender and communication styles has been studied with main focus on differences between the communication styles of men and women from different perspective and different methodologies. The aim of this research is to investigate numerous approaches followed by men and women employees to communicate at the workplace. For doing this, it is inevitable to specialize in communication patterns of different genders. Quality research was conducted using a systematic questionnaire, which included 70 IT professionals including 35 men and 35 women aged 20 to 55 years. This project will be a testament to the many articles, journals and books published in the study to show how data flows to differentiate between men and women's communication channels.

Keywords: Gender Differences, Communication Patterns, Correspondence Styles, IT Professionals

INTRODUCTION

Communication assumes an extremely critical and urgent part in our day by day lives as it assists us with communicating our thoughts or perspectives before others subsequently building up our way of life as people. It is consistently significant at home and expertly its importance increments when we collaborate with our leaders, subordinates or partners at work place. The assumed natural and mental contrasts among people have for some time been liable to research and examination. The opportunity has arrived to understand the significance of men and women communication as seeing how the contrary gender orientation interfaces with one another can make the world a superior spot to live.

As an individual communication is quite possibly the main feature of public activity. Like never before in mankind's set of experiences individuals come into contact with individuals who are from different societies or of another gender orientation. Innovation makes it conceivable to travel quicker and further, the worldwide workforce is more versatile, and in numerous spots the labor force is getting more different as numerous individuals progressively end up working in global groups at home and abroad. Intercultural correspondence is in the core of hierarchical technique and is crucial to development and thriving.

Gender communication is the distinct part of communication domain which is focusing on how we as human beings having different gender communicate with one another. This research will be helpful in gaining understanding related to people of different gender and their insights in politics, media, sports or academia.

Men and women normally have various attributes. Information on these characteristics helps people, especially those of inverse gender, cooperate successfully in an association. It is expected of both men and women that the opposite ones behaves in the same order of ideas and behaviors. Measures that ensure equitable access to essential services and management are essential to achieving a responsive gender-responsive stability.

Gender sensitivity means the consideration of the individual for his or her gender. It includes more noteworthy attention to the necessities, goals, capacities, and expert worth of representatives as people, with no bias by their gender. The gender-sensitive work environment creates an ideal environment for the full utilization of staff in organizational planning. Therefore, it is important for people within the organization to know what a wide range of life options are for everyone.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Men and ladies contrasts psychologically within the manner they act, through the design in which they convey during the process of influencing others. Two elementary sides of research are there on differences in correspondence styles, scholastic investigation and popular writing of different gender. Conversation features and traits across gender has been brought about to make significant contrasts through academic research.

The main difference between the communication styles of men and women is that, as per them the purpose of communication is different. For women, communication is a tool to strengthen social connections and relationship and for men, it aids dominance manifest and to achieve concrete outcomes. Women are expressive, indefinite and humble and men are quite assertive and power-mad while communicating.

As per Maltz & Borker, 1982; Wood, 1996; Mason, 1994 research in the field of gender differences across styles of communication concludes that men are more of self-assertive. Alternatively women value cooperation. Women also are known to possess less clear specialize in ending of their boundaries and individual recognition. As per Gray, 1992 the major distinction in the style of correspondence of men are that they are career-focused, as for them to achieve results is the recognition of their own self. Contrarily if we see women, they are more of relationship-focused because as per them feelings and relationship are the results for self-recognition. The style of men to manage stress is by refraining themselves from the conversation itself. On the other hand women do this by talking about their matters of stress to friends, family or colleagues.

The focus of research regarding the way men and women interact with one another at workplace has governed on involvement and influence by the parties. As per research, men wish to keep the ground less frequently and for a shorter duration, use more interruptions, and make various kinds of endowment with the use of efficient language strategies required to maintain distinctions among status. Alternatively, women desire to keep the floor for a lesser duration and less frequently, they interrupt less, and employ language strategies which are of supportive nature and that lessen the distinctions of status.

Tannen 1994, in her analysis of men and women in the workplace, notes that women who have been seen

in management positions often give instructions to subordinates in ways that save their subordinates, and many men in similar positions often do not.

Eddleston, Veiga & Powell, 2003 proposed that the gender stereotypes of social nature are fitted from the very young age in our minds. Till reach four, children obtain understanding of relevant characteristics of the gender possess by them and they attempt to obey these roles. As per Welbourne 2005, stereotypes of this kind are revealed to an individual in the course of their childhood itself. Such gender roles having stereotypical nature function as regulation for conduct at workplace because they try to command subconsciously regarding in what way one should talk that supports the gender role. Such stereotypes could have exceptionally destructive results on leaders of women gender and it limits their chances to have advancing career in top-level positions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives of study

- To investigate if there is existence of any kind of differences in the way men and women communicate at the workplace
- To examine the various approaches adopted by different genders at workplace
- To examine the structure of behavior of employees at workplace based on their gender

Source of Data

- Primary source by the way of administering a structured questionnaire.
- Secondary source from the Journals, Websites and Portals.

Research Design

It is a descriptive research design. Convenience sampling method has been used for this study. Data has been collected using structured online questionnaire. The sample size is comprised of 70 IT professionals in 1:1 ratio of men and women.

Research Questions

1. Is there a difference in the approach adopted by different genders at workplace?
2. Is there a difference in the structure of behavior of employees at workplace based on their gender?
3. Is there a difference in the way men and women communicate at workplace?

Techniques of Analysis

Study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data is collected through structured questionnaire. Data collected is analyzed graphically and statistically with the use of various statistical tools.

ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Respondents

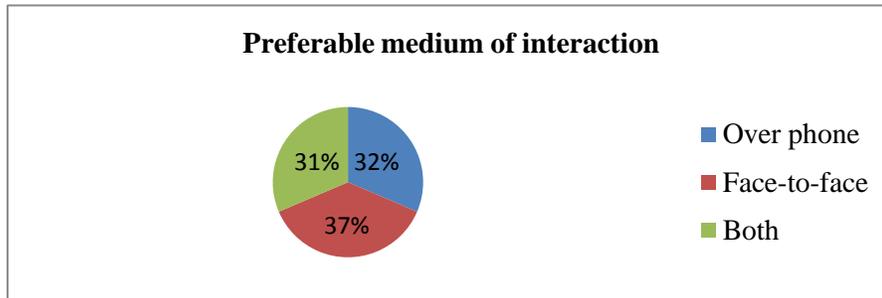
Demographic Variable	Percentage
Gender	
Men	50%
Women	50%
Age	
Under 20	0
20-30	62.9%
30-40	34.3%
40-50	2.8%
50 & above	0
Marital Status	
Never married/Single	44.3%
Married	51.4%
Divorced	4.3%
Widowed	0

The above table shows that maximum respondents are from age-group 20-30 and are married, followed by respondents from the age-group 30-40 and never married/single.

Graphical Analysis:

Figure 1. Classification of respondents based on preferable medium of interaction

Table 2.



Classification of respondents based on preferable medium of interaction

Preferable medium of interaction	Men	Women
Over Phone	4	18
Face-to-face	20	6
Both (Depends on requirement)	11	11

The above graph and table shows that men usually prefer face-to-face communication more while women go for over phone as women are more comfortable on phone conversations for a long period of time as women use phone to talk to their friends and relatives for longer periods.

Figure 2. Classification of respondents based on their primary purpose to communicate

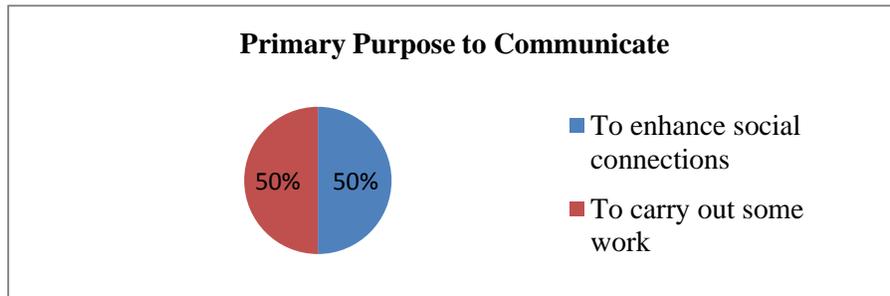


Table 3. Classification of respondents based on their primary purpose to communicate

Primary purpose to communicate	Men	Women
To enhance social connections	2	33
To carry out some work	33	2

The above graph and table shows that for men, primary purpose to communicate is to carry out some work while for women it is to enhance social connections. This might be because of the reason that men are goal-oriented while women are relationship-oriented.

Figure 3. Classification of respondents based on reaction when colleague is in problem

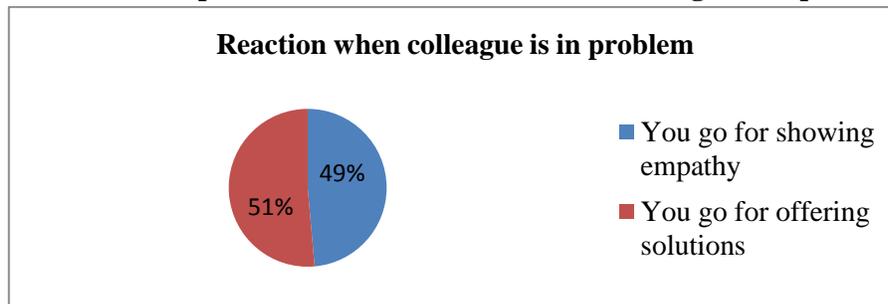


Table 4. Classification of respondents based on reaction when colleague is in problem

What you usually do when your colleague is in problem	Men	Women
You go for showing empathy & understanding their problems	1	33
You go for offering probable solutions for their issues	34	2

The above graph and table shows that men are more of direct and hence they go for offering solutions when any of his colleague is in problem. But, women are indirect in nature and they go for showing empathy to her colleague for the same situation. Because of the reason that men use instrumental style to communicate while women, uses expressive style.

Classification of respondents based on agreeableness regarding statements relating to approaches of genders

Figure 4.1 - Men

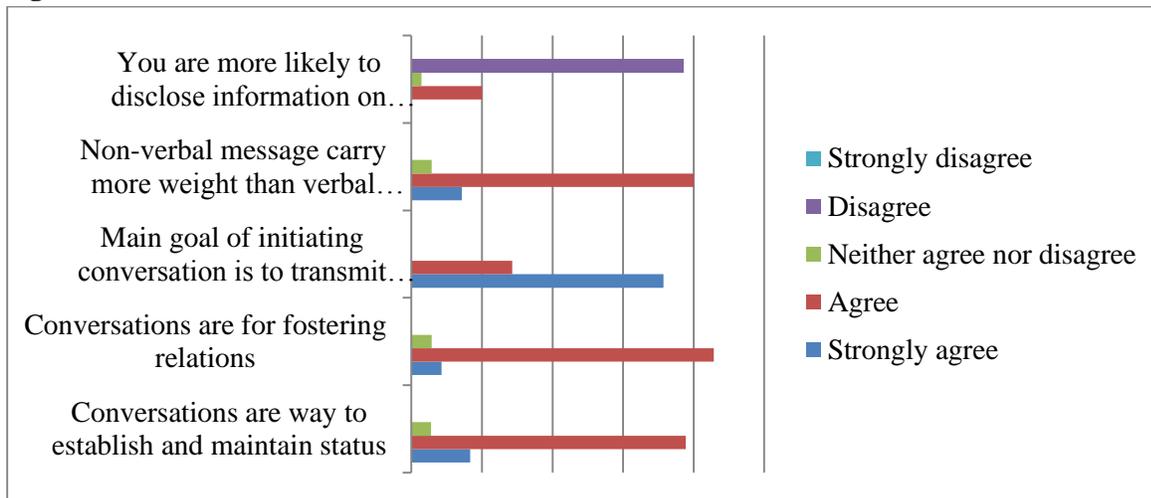
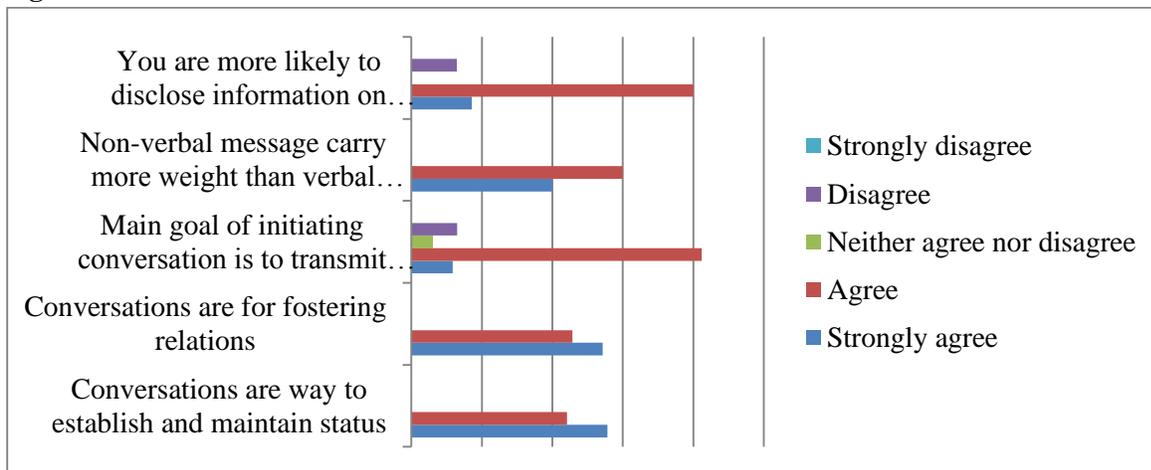


Figure 4.2 - Women



Above two charts draws different conclusions, women strongly agrees to the statement that conversations are for fostering relations, non-verbal message carry more weight than verbal message and you are more likely to disclose information on personal concerns compared to men. While, men strongly agrees to the statement that main goal of initiating conversation is to transmit information and conversations are way to establish and maintain status. This shows that men are more power-hungry compared to women. While, women pays more attention to non-verbal cues unlike men.

Cross-Tabulation:

Table 5: Cross Tabulation of age and preferable medium of interaction

Age/Preferable medium	Over Phone	Face-to-face	Both (Depends on situation)
Under 20	0	0	0
20-30	16	12	16
30-40	6	13	5
40-50	0	1	1
50 & Above	0	0	0

From the cross tabulation of age and preferable medium of interaction, it is observed that respondents from age group 20-30 prefer more of over phone as preferable medium of interaction, while respondents from the age-group 30-40 prefer more face-to-face interaction. Here, it can be inferred that young people nowadays find phone as the easy and preferable way over any other medium.

Table 6: Cross Tabulation of age and primary purpose to communicate

Age/Primary purpose to communicate	To carry out work	To enhance social connections
Under 20	0	0
20-30	20	24
30-40	13	11
40-50	2	0
50 & Above	0	0

From the cross tabulation of age and primary purpose to communicate, it is observed that respondents from the age group 20-30 considers enhancing social connections as the primary purpose to communicate while, respondents from the age group 30-40 says they prefer that primary purpose of communication is to carry out a particular task. Here, it can be inferred that younger generation started taking enhancing social connections as the best base to carry out work.

Test of Normality:**Hypothesis**

H_0 : The Distribution is normally distributed.

H_1 : The Distribution is not normally distributed.

Figure 5.1: Test of Normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Approach	.369	70	.000	.632	70	.000
Behaviour	.347	70	.000	.636	70	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Figure 5.2: Test of Normality

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Maintain_Status	.375	70	.000	.694	70	.000
Fostering_Relations	.396	70	.000	.679	70	.000
Transit_Information	.305	70	.000	.722	70	.000
People_Interaction	.286	70	.000	.759	70	.000
Nonverbal_Message	.417	70	.000	.656	70	.000
Openness	.409	70	.000	.670	70	.000
Personal_concerns	.334	70	.000	.744	70	.000
Personal_space	.238	70	.000	.860	70	.000
Answer_Questions_ Addressed to you	.216	70	.000	.866	70	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Both the tests are having significance two-tailed value less than 0.05. Hence, Ho can be rejected at 5 percent level of significance. All the factors are not found normally distributed at 5 per cent level of significance. Hence, it would be appropriate to perform non-parametric test on these factors.

Non-Parametric Tests:

- 1) Approach:** To assess the difference in the approach adopted by men and women at workplace, Mann-Whitney U Test is performed depending on the number of independent groups.

H0: There is no significance difference in the approach adopted by men and women at workplace

Figure 6.1: Ranks

Ranks			
Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Approach Men	35	20.00	700.00
Women	35	51.00	1785.00
Total	70		

Figure 6.2: Test Statistics

Test Statistics ^a	
	Behaviour
Mann-Whitney U	52.500
Wilcoxon W	682.500
Z	-7.598
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Figure 6.1 above shows the mean rank and sum of ranks of Approach adopted by men and women. In the second figure, the calculated Mann-Whitney U, degree of freedom, and significance value is given. It can be observed that the significance two-tailed p value is less than 0.05. Hence, H₀ can be rejected at 5 percent level of significance. Hence, it can be concluded that, there is a significance difference in the approach adopted by men and women at workplace.

- 2) **Structure of Behaviour:** To assess the difference in the structure of behaviour between men and women at workplace, Mann-Whitney U Test is performed depending on the number of independent groups.

H₀: There is no significance difference in the structure of behaviour between men and women at workplace

Figure 7.1: Ranks

Ranks			
Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Behaviour Men	35	51.50	1802.50
Women	35	19.50	682.50
Total	70		

Figure 7.2: Test Statistics

Test Statistics ^a	
	Approach
Mann-Whitney U	70.000
Wilcoxon W	700.000
Z	-7.406
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Figure 7.1 above shows the mean rank and sum of ranks of structure of behaviour between men and women. In the second figure, the calculated Mann-Whitney U, degree of freedom, and significance value is given. It can be observed that the significance two-tailed p value is less than 0.05. Hence, H₀ can be rejected at 5 percent level of significance. Hence, it can be concluded that, there is a significance difference in the structure of behaviour between men and women at workplace.

- 3) **Communication:** To assess the difference in the way men and women communicate at workplace, Mann-Whitney U Test is performed depending on the number of independent groups.

H₀: There is no significance difference in the way men and women communicate at workplace

Figure 8.1: Ranks

Ranks				
	Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Attention_To_Speaker	Male	35	35.00	1225.00
	Female	35	36.00	1260.00
	Total	70		
Maintain_Status	Male	35	28.54	999.00
	Female	35	42.46	1486.00
	Total	70		
Fostering_Relations	Male	35	27.04	946.50
	Female	35	43.96	1538.50
	Total	70		
Transit_Information	Male	35	46.43	1625.00
	Female	35	24.57	860.00
	Total	70		
People_Interaction	Male	35	24.23	848.00
	Female	35	46.77	1637.00
	Total	70		
Nonverbal_Message	Male	35	30.40	1064.00
	Female	35	40.60	1421.00
	Total	70		
Openness	Male	35	34.09	1193.00
	Female	35	36.91	1292.00
	Total	70		
Personal_concerns	Male	35	21.41	749.50
	Female	35	49.59	1735.50
	Total	70		
Personal_space	Male	35	27.39	958.50
	Female	35	43.61	1526.50
	Total	70		
Answer_Questions_Addressed_to_you	Male	35	31.57	1105.00
	Female	35	39.43	1380.00
	Total	70		

Figure 8.2: Test Statistics

Test Statistics ^a										
	Attention_To_Speaker	Maintain_Status	Fostering_Relations	Transit_Information	People_Interaction	Nonverbal_Message	Openness	Personal_concerns	Personal_space	Answer_Questions_Addressed_to_you
Mann-Whitney U	595.000	369.000	316.500	230.000	218.000	434.000	563.000	119.500	328.500	475.000
Wilcoxon W	1225.000	999.000	946.500	860.000	848.000	1064.000	1193.000	749.500	958.500	1105.000
Z	-.277	-3.364	-4.200	-5.123	-5.155	-2.627	-.749	-6.432	-3.582	-1.695
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.782	.001	.000	.000	.000	.009	.454	.000	.000	.090

a. Grouping Variable: Gender

Figure 8.1 above shows the mean rank and sum of ranks of communication factors between men and women. In the second figure, the calculated Mann-Whitney U, degree of freedom, and significance value is given. It can be observed that the significance two-tailed p value is less than 0.05 for all the factors except three factors namely “Attention to Speaker”, “Openness” and “Answering Questions Addressed to you”. Hence, H_0 can be rejected at 5 percent level of significance for other factors except those three factors. Hence, it can be concluded that, there is a significance difference in the structure of behaviour between men and women at workplace.

CONCLUSION

Through the analysis above, we get idea about the gender and communication patterns. Gender communication and differences in the workplace abound. Gender differences in communication is not about right or wrong, it is just about adopting the styles of each other in a way that increases the productivity of organization and that avoids any kind of inadequate communication. Psychological differences between genders often depicts women’s administration abilities and capacities in a negative light, thus find it hard making achievement in top level positions. At last, powerful relational abilities provide innovative ideas, optimistic feedback, motivation thereby improves association between managerial staff and employees.

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