



## The Impact of Gender Differences on Negotiations in The Workplace: Or The Underlying Effectiveness of Women

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### ABSTRACT

*This literature review helps explain the impact gender has on negotiations. The discussion encompassed in this review will include the impact of gender stereotypes on negotiation, continuing to how these stereotypes and other gender-related issues impact salary negotiations. It will also analyze how men and women approach negotiation with the same and opposite sex and will include a discussion on gender expectations brought about by cultural differences. It will conclude with summarized findings, inconsistencies in research, shortcomings of methodology, and direction for future research. This review's findings are sourced from articles, academic journals, theses, and web pages.*

*The research concluded that stereotypes do play a role in determining how people negotiate with their opposition by leveraging their position and preconceived gender-based personality traits. It also concludes that the gender pay gap can, in part, be explained by the negotiation process of salary. This is due to males dominating executive-level positions. Furthermore, men and women interact differently and achieve different outcomes depending on the gender they're negotiating with, uniformly in favor of males. Lastly, culture also plays a role in creating gender-based stereotypes and negotiation results differ significantly from country to country due to different cultural norms and practices. It has been found, with little uncertainty, that gender does play a significant role in negotiation outcomes. A direction for future research would be to explore gender as a non-binary construct and determine negotiation outcomes across a spectrum, as well as cross-analyzing gender with other individual circumstances.*

**Keywords:** gender, negotiations, stereotypes, salary negotiations, bargaining table, cultural differences.



## 1.0 Introduction: Gender Differences in Workplace Negotiations: A Literature Review

How does gender affect business negotiations? Researchers have long studied the effects of different negotiation styles, personality traits, emotions, and body language in business discussions. In recent years, however, gender has become an increasingly relevant topic. Why do men outperform women in business negotiations (Kray et al., 2001)? By assessing gender stereotypes, salary negotiations, gender composition at the bargaining table, and the role of culture, this literature review explores the influence of gender in business negotiations.

Encompassed within this review will be a discussion of key findings, interpretations of research, and future avenues for analysis. While there are many factors beyond simply gender that can be considered, the focus of the research is to determine if gender differences have an impact on the results of negotiation. If so, which gender benefits? It will also be explored as to whether the research has any shortcomings, with an analysis of the methodology where applicable. We will begin this exploration with stereotypes and how they affect negotiations.

### *Gender Stereotypes and Their Role in Negotiations*

Communal Traits (Associated with Women)	Agentic Traits (Associated with Men)
Caring	Ambitious
Co-dependent	Independent
Supportive	Competitive
Empathetic	Driven
Friendly	Aggressive
Sensitive	Controlled
Compassionate	Self-Reliant

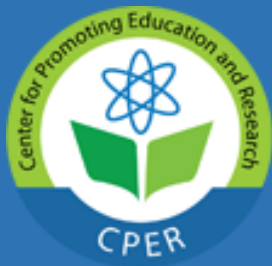
**Table 1.** Communal and Agentic Traits Summary (Appelbaum et al., 2019)

Research suggests that certain gender characteristic differences are proven to be true which can explain some of the roots of the stereotypes. For example, when women and men interact, males speak for longer periods, interrupt more often, and use more direct language, whereas women interact more cautiously and in a more courteous manner (Craver, 2020). These traits might explain why men seem more aggressive and powerful and women, more submissive. Women also tend to use language containing disclaimers such as “I think” and “you know” more than men do, which can be indicative of why women are seen as less aggressive and forceful in negotiations (Craver, 2020).

Gender stereotypes have existed since the beginning of time. Bringing these stereotypes into the workplace results in a variety of “mental models containing knowledge, beliefs, and expectancies about women and men [which] are a determining factor in what [society] accepts and values in terms of behavior, attitudes, and appearance” (Mitchell, 2014). Typically, people have a gender belief system and, oftentimes, these beliefs are consistent with gender stereotypes, not only in how men and women behave but also in how they are *expected* to behave (Kray & Thompson, 2004). These beliefs play a role in the negotiation process and can likely impact how the discussions will play out at the bargaining table. This is the focus of this article.

Gender stereotypes, however, can be myths or they can have some truth to them. In Western societies, women are stereotypically seen as being more communal, caring, and co-dependent than men, who are viewed as more agentic, ambitious and independent (Mitchell, 2014). Under the communal description of gender, women tend to be more supportive, empathetic, friendly, sensitive, whereas, under the agentic style, men are seen to be more competitive, driven, aggressive, controlled, and self-reliant (Appelbaum et al., 2019). See Table 1. for a summary of these traits.

Additionally, women are more sensitive to non-verbal cues in conversation than men are (Craver, 2020). This is advantageous when it comes to negotiations because women are better able to detect the subtle messages that their counterparts may be conveying and can give them a leg up in making concessions. To further emphasize this point, research demonstrates that women who have high cooperative interpersonal orientations are more “sensitive and reactive to the interpersonal aspects of the relationship” (Kray & Thompson, 2004). This means that there is more of a focus on the individuals rather than on the task. This reiterates why women, in negotiations, tend to seek win-win outcomes more



and focus on building and maintaining relationships while attempting to maximize the returns for all (Craver, 2020).

Conversely, since males have a lower interpersonal orientation, they tend to not align themselves to their counterparts, but rather to the more impersonal activity of maximizing their earnings (Kray & Thompson, 2004). According to the same source, males will alter their strategy depending on how they believe they can obtain their desired outcome. For example, “when earnings can best be maximized through the use of a competitive strategy, males will tend to compete; [but] when a cooperative strategy seems most likely to maximize own earnings, males cooperate” (Kray & Thompson, 2004).

Furthermore, according to a book called “The Confidence Code” by Katty Kay and Claire Shipman, women are less likely to self-promote by “[highlighting] accomplishments, skills and strengths, and [taking] credit for achievements, and this lessens their success in recruitment and promotion” (Mitchell, 2014). While there is evidence that suggests women are less inclined to negotiate assertively for their gains, some studies suggest that it may also be due to a lack of confidence in women. However, this is not entirely true. The lack of women’s self-promotion may also be attributed to gender stereotypes because they act as barriers for women who want to emphasize their achievements or be more assertive when it comes to negotiating (Mitchell, 2014).

Overall, in negotiations, men are perceived to be more rational and logical, and women are thought to be more intuitive and emotional; therefore, people expect men to focus on objective facts and be authoritative and dominant, whereas women are expected to pay more attention to relationships and be more passive (Craver, 2020).

This can also explain why certain jobs are stereotypically skewed toward men. Those roles usually include the use of heavy infrastructure and machinery, physical labor, commanding large teams, and handling large budgets. Conversely, women make better candidates in positions that require using soft skills, including customer service and communication. Women are also expected to adopt a supportive, mild, and relationship-oriented approach, seeking to understand and accommodate other people’s needs (Maran et al., 2014). This next section will take a look at how women are perceived if they do not fit into these previously discussed gender stereotypes and how they are impacted for having these gender-defying traits.

## 2.0 Gender Misfits: Traits and Stereotypes

### 2.1 Defying the Female Gender Norm

With these expectations being part of certain gender belief systems, what happens when a woman doesn’t negotiate “like a lady”? In a negotiation setting, men in power are characterized by demonstrating “rationality, pragmatism, hierarchy and a focus on short-term outcomes” (Champoux-Paille et al., 2020). It is also why men are perceived as being

more powerful than women. Some women do, however, demonstrate these more male/agentive traits but they are likely to get backlash for this.

Because men and women are classified according to having certain gender roles, the agentive or individualistic behavior credited to men is considered acceptable and within the norm of the gender; “but when women seek to make it theirs by displaying characteristics such as assertiveness, tenacity, and competitiveness, they no longer fit the stereotypical definition that has been [assigned] to them” (Champoux-Paille et al., 2020). Due to this counter-stereotypical behavior, women who portray traits of the opposite sex in negotiations often experience negative consequences in terms of social and economic penalties throughout their careers. Women, who are self-promoting and portray more male characteristics, are perceived as more dominant, arrogant, and some may even say, threatening (Mitchell, 2014). They are also questioned on their competence and are compared more often to their male equivalents since they are marked as different due to their social role incongruity and are seen as deviant as they “do gender differently” (Appelbaum et al., 2019). They are judged as being pushy and are less likable; however, when a man is self-promoting, it is considered normal (Mitchell, 2014). According to some findings, women can act assertively, without any backlash, only when negotiating on someone else’s behalf because this falls in line with the communal behavior of a woman being helpful and supportive of someone else (Mitchell, 2014).

By violating the expected behaviors in acting counter-stereotypically, women can be penalized for not being recruited, promoted, or closing a deal (Mitchell, 2014). Certainly, women are aware of the consequences of pushing the gender boundary norms and this might explain the lack of self-promotion in highlighting their accomplishments or pursuing promotions more assertively because they might want to avoid these penalties and backlash. On the flip side, women who are willing to use these stereotypical expectations to manipulate the situation may have a significant advantage at the bargaining table.

We now move on to the study of how these gender stereotypes came about and why they are so ingrained in societal norms.

### 2.2 Origins of Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes stem from a few different sources. For example, “childhood events (such as experiences that occur in sex-segregated playgroups) [can create] fundamental differences between males and females (Kray & Thompson, 2004). Typically, boys are more exposed to competition such as in competitive sports like Little League baseball, hockey, and soccer. “These activities introduce boys to the “thrill of victory and the agony of defeat” during their formative years” (Craver, 2020) and these characteristics stay with them to

adulthood. Girls' games, on the other hand, are less competitive and the focus is not on winning. Games such as skipping rope, hopscotch, dress-up, etc. where the emphasis is less on competition and more on playing together. The cultural process that boys and girls go through at an early age can be a reason for these gender stereotypes that emerge and are embedded in people's gender belief systems. "Specific gender stereotypes become ingrained in our societies and ultimately organizations because of children who, particularly during adolescence, conform to the cultural definition of male and female traits simply because it is easier to assimilate society's stereotypical norms" (Appelbaum et al., 2019).

### 2.3 Shift in Stereotypical Views

Recent research has demonstrated that stereotypes have changed compared to decades ago and men are now beginning to change their perspective on women in the workplace and what their roles should be. "It was shown that males and females are starting to refer to women as less passive and submissive, more confident, ambitious, analytical and assertive" (Appelbaum et al., 2019). Additionally, earlier research was primarily focused on individual gender differences and that these stereotypes would persist as foundational characteristics at the bargaining table; however more recently there are more contextual factors that should be examined in negotiations such as "Contrasting negotiator roles (agent vs. principal), styles (competitive vs. accommodating;

agentic vs. communal), and gender composition of the dyad" (Kolb, 2012). Now, women end up needing to decide between being efficient as negotiators or fitting into the stereotype that plagues them.

It is clear from the findings that masculine characteristics seem to be the ones valued in negotiations; so, there are certain implicit theories that some believe to be the key to success at the bargaining table which places females at a disadvantage (Kray & Thompson, 2004). Approaching the subject from the view of focal negotiator-based gender differences, there are clear distinctions in how men and women deal with conflict and negotiations. This view holds constant the situation in which the men and women are exposed while the different genders are analyzed. Certain perspectives that address these differences are reviewed through the lenses of socialization, self-construals (Interdependent and independent self-construals refer to different cognitive representations of the self that people may hold. Those with an independent self-construal view internal attributes, such as traits, abilities, values, and attitudes as central to their sense of self. and moral values) (Kray & Thompson, 2004). The findings can be seen in Table 2 Below-Focal Negotiator-Based Gender Differences. Following this important section will be how gender impacts salary negotiations which have been in the spotlight for a very long time due to inequities.

Perspective/ Framework	Characteristics	Application in Negotiation
<b>Socialization</b>	Key differences between boys and girls 1) Men are more aggressive than women 2) Women are more verbal than men 3) Men are more quantitative than women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men should be better at claiming value in negotiations due to their aggressive nature and their quantitative skills.</li> <li>Women's higher verbal skills can help in understanding the interests of one's negotiating partner and to create value in negotiations.</li> </ul>
<b>Self-Construal (how people see themselves)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>People interpret the world through the lens of ideals developed at a young age that speak to what it means to be a man versus a woman.</li> <li>Self-construal's dictate people's understandings of appropriate behavior. Women see themselves compared to others whereas men see themselves as independent from others.</li> <li>Men seek independence through their conversations whereas women seek intimacy and agreement.</li> <li>Men are likely to adopt a confrontational stance and try to "one-up". Women perceive conversation as a negotiation for closeness and connection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men are expected to adopt more of an adversarial style during negotiation that tries to maximize their own outcomes.</li> <li>Men are more adept at claiming economic resources than women.</li> <li>Female negotiators are expected to create a more positive impression than males.</li> </ul>
<b>Moral Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Men and women differ in their values.</li> <li>Women show more of a preference for resolving moral conflicts.</li> <li>Two moral orientations: justice-based and care-based.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Women are more likely to express an ethic of care in understanding moral issues.</li> <li>Men demonstrate a larger tendency to understand moral issues from a justice perspective.</li> <li>Men place an importance on logic and fostering a comfortable life. Women value honesty more, being loving, and maintaining self-respect.</li> </ul>

**Table 2.** Focal Negotiator-Based Gender Differences (Kray & Thompson, 2004)



### 3.0 Gender Differences in Salary Negotiations

In recent decades, positive progress has been made to achieve gender pay equality. The gender pay gap has significantly shrunk from 60% in the 1960s to 20% in 2020 in the United States (Roussille, 2021). Much of this progress can be explained by gender equality policies (e.g., Equal Pay Act of 1963), women's educational advancement, women's professional growth, and the insertion of women in the workforce in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields. This next section will illuminate psychological factors, gender differences in salary expectations, career factors, equity beliefs, and finally, initiating salary negotiations.

Despite this, there remains a gender pay gap. Working women continue to earn less than working men. On average, women earn 15.5% less compared to men across all OECD countries (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development-OECD 2014). Some factors may have contributed to the persistent gender pay gap, such as gender discrimination and career interruption because of childcare obligations (i.e., motherhood).

However, substantial research has revealed the nature of gender disparities manifested in the salary negotiations process, and its contribution to the persistent gender pay gap seen today. Specifically, research suggests that women generally achieve "less impressive outcomes from workplace negotiations" (Johnson, 2014).

Firstly, it has been found that women generally have lower salary expectations compared to men (Mazei et al., 2015). Secondly, women have a lower likelihood to initiate salary negotiations than men (Bowles et al., 2007; Small et al., 2007) and less competitive (Walters et al., 1998). Thirdly, further research also suggests that women are not as effective as men in self-advocating in salary negotiation (Schweitzer et al., 2014).

### 4.0 Gender Differences in Salary Expectations

According to Johnson (2014), "women often undervalue the economic worth of their set of skills". As such, women generally feel less entitled to salary compensation than men do. Therefore, this is translated into lower salary expectations relative to men (Bowles et al., 2007). Previous research suggests several factors may contribute to the differences in salary expectations in the negotiation setting. These factors are grouped into the following categories: psychological factors, career factors, and equity beliefs (Schweitzer et al., 2014)

#### 4.1 Psychological Factors

Researchers have found that the gender gap in salary expectations may be driven by psychological factors. Specifically, studies examined the relationship between pay expectations and "achievement motivation" and the Big Five personality traits - with men typically having "[a] stronger hope for success, lower fear of failure and lower agreeableness

[contributing] to [higher salary expectations]" compared to women (Risse et al., 2018). Building upon these findings, men are generally more confident than women and tend to overestimate their abilities, which increases men's credibility in influencing salary requests (Johnson, 2014). Furthermore, this male confidence is heightened in a competitive context, which includes salary negotiations (Johnson, 2014).

Other studies also suggest that gender pay inequalities may result from women's generally lower self-efficacy (Zimmerman & Martinez-Pons, 1990). For example, one study found that women tend to place less value on their work than men by attributing their performance to external causes (i.e., external locus of control), while men attributed their performance to personal factors, indicating an internal locus of control (Major & Konar, 1984).

#### 4.2 Career Factors

Some research suggests gender differences in career factors may also explain the salary and negotiation gap. A common conclusion from past research is that women generally self-select into traditionally female occupations and industry, traditionally tied with lower wages (Hogue et al., 2007; Hollenbeck & Klein, 1987). More recently, studies have taken a sharper look and found that women tend to value work-life balance over their professional advancement more than men (Hogue et al., 2007). Women are found to perceive money to be a less important reward for the work that they do, relative to men (Callahan-Levy & Messé, 1979; Hollenbeck & Klein, 1987; Jackson et al., 1992). As such, women are also more likely to sacrifice their careers for those of their spouses and take on childcare and household responsibilities (Mazei et al., 2015). Some studies suggest that the gender gap in pay expectations may also be because "women tend to compare their salary expectations only to other women in their immediate peer group" (Johnson, 2014). In other words, men and women tend to base information provided by individuals from their gender (Schweitzer et al., 2014). As a result, this may exacerbate the persistent and existing gender wage gap (Major, 1989).

#### 4.3 Equity Beliefs

Schweitzer et al. (2014) hypothesized that another possible explanation for the gendered expectations gap is "women's conscious recognition of inequities in both the family and work environment". In other words, the traditional "glass ceiling", affecting women's advancement opportunities, inequities in household and childcare responsibilities, is not the only obstacle preventing women from climbing the career ladder. Accordingly, "inequities in salary expectations are a reflection of both an awareness of the salary inequity in the workplace and prior experiences in which women earned less than men" (Desmarais & Curtis, 1997).

#### 4.4 Initiating to Salary Negotiations

Generally, women are less likely to initiate salary negotiations compared to men. Women who do not articulate

their salary expectations have lower lifetime earnings than women who do (Johnson, 2014). To this effect, men may be more willing and eager than women to initiate negotiations for higher salaries (Eriksson & Sandberg, 2012). Previous studies found that men have a higher propensity to initiate compensation negotiations (Eriksson & Sandberg, 2012). Further to this, it is suggested that “Structural ambiguity [...] may also affect women’s willingness to negotiate their salaries, as well as the effectiveness of any negotiations ultimately undertaken.”(Johnson, 2014). Therefore, women in negotiation may feel a higher level of ambiguity (i.e., a higher level of uncertainty) than men. This suggests that women tend to be less effective and ambitious negotiators than men in situations where expectations and roles are uncertain (Johnson, 2014). Women are often reluctant to negotiate because initiating negotiations is perceived as a stereotypically male behavior (Bowles et al., 2007). Consequently, women might not actively seek opportunities to negotiate and only respond to negotiation challenges when necessary (Mazei et al., 2015).

#### 4.5 Self-Advocating in Salary Negotiations

Women generally fear negative repercussions by self-advocating or self-promoting in the setting of salary negotiations (Riley & Babcock, 2002). Kray and Thompson (2005) note that “ineffective negotiation to economic outcomes is linked to stereotypic female qualities such as behaving submissively or accommodatingly”. Because of stereotypical gender norms, women in negotiation who deviate from the female gender role and adopt an assertive behavior risk being perceived as selfish and less likable and thus, incurring *social backlash* (Rudman and Phelan, 2008). Therefore, women negotiating for their salaries may feel more social pressure than men and thus, they are expected to adjust their behavior accordingly (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Bowles et al., 2007).

However, previous research revealed that women tend to be more effective when negotiating on the behalf of others than for themselves (Johnson, 2014; Craver, 2020). It is argued that “assertive behavior faces little backlash when it is seen as protecting colleagues or advocating on behalf of teammates” (Schneider, 2010). Women negotiating on behalf of others are more likely to adopt an assertive behavior. This can be interpreted as being concerned with the welfare of others, which is congruent with women’s communal gender role (Mazei et al., 2015). By default, research suggests that women advocating for others anticipate less backlash and therefore negotiate more effectively (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010). To take these findings even further, the next section describes research conclusions regarding gender composition at the bargaining table.

#### 5.0 Gender Composition at The Bargaining Table

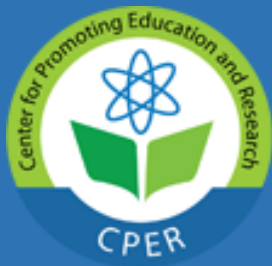
In analyzing the impact gender has on performance and outcomes in the workplace, a natural inclusion is measuring success at the bargaining table. One component that

determines success in negotiation is deception. In Olekalns’ study on deception in negotiation, the findings highlighted that “women rate the use of deception as less appropriate and less ethical than men, and women elicit more deception from their negotiation counterparts”(2013). This research helps to articulate the disadvantages women are faced with in negotiation. On the aggregate, when men negotiate with other men, they do not tailor their strategy to their counterparts, but rather act consistently with their personality. This corroborates theories brought forth by Charles B. Craver, a professor of law at George Washington University, whose research includes the notion that “when men and women negotiate with members of the opposite gender, stereotypical beliefs affect their interactions. This is true even when negotiating with people of the same gender. Many men and women assume that males are highly competitive, manipulative, win-lose negotiators. People often see men as wanting to attain solid deals from the other negotiator” (2020). Where Craver’s and Olekalns’ research diverge, however, is that despite stereotypes persisting in negotiation, Craver has found “absolutely no statistically significant differences between the results attained by men and by women.” (2020).

While the summarized findings of Olekalns and Craver help to highlight the ‘what’, understanding the ‘why’ helps illustrate why these tactics are used. Olekalns’ research found that the use of deception in negotiation with an untrustworthy opponent is clear, as “it serves to protect negotiators from exploitation”, noting that women are “opportunistic” and “withhold information from an opponent when that person is untrustworthy” (2013). From Craver’s article, it is implied that men are “fearful of ‘losing’ to female colleagues” (2020). This fear drives tactics and leads males to take a more aggressive negotiation approach. While Craver mentions the stereotype that “women are more accommodating than men”, this creates the assumption that “women are more likely to seek a win-win outcome” (2020), conversely, it implies men are seeking a win-lose outcome.

#### 6.0 Gender Combinations in Negotiations

To further develop the discussion on Gender Composition at the bargaining table, looking at Gender Combinations in Negotiation helps paint the picture from the male perspective that men negotiating with other men will take the nuanced approach of negotiating based on their personality. Comparing this to when men are negotiating with women, they are more likely to take an insecurity-driven aggressive approach that has a win-lose outcome, in the male’s favor. From the perspective of women, women and men negotiate with a “mix of pragmatism and opportunism”, and when women negotiate with other women, there is a win-win outcome being sought, per Craver (2020), and a “sin of omission” from withheld information due to “an opportunistic streak in all-female negotiations”, from Olekalns (2013).



Inigo Hernandez-Arenaz and Nagore Iriberry-Aeon, in their practitioner 2019 article “The gender factor in salary negotiations that you probably didn’t think about” extrapolate the discussion of *Gender Composition at the Bargaining Table* as a means to help explain the wage gap. Their findings conclude that “women negotiating their salaries ask for lower compensation when the firm’s representative is a man than when that representative is a woman”, while remarking that “most of the time, a firm’s bosses are men” (2019). The methodology conducted by Hernandez-Arenaz and Iriberry-Aeon was not the most scientific; their approach was to analyze TV show results. That being considered, their findings are consistent on a macro level with Craver and Olekalns. What was inferred from their research, however, was that the likeliness of a deal being struck “was the same, independent of gender combination” (Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry-Aeon,

2019). Where the disparity was found was with “male responders negotiating against female contestants”, in which the males captured “around 2% more than any other matching”, and “female responders to male contestants got around 16% less than responders in any other matching” (Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry-Aeon, 2019). The conclusion was “gender differences arise in negotiations between a man and a woman where the woman is in the weak position, but not when the woman is the empowered party” (Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry-Aeon, 2019). Essentially, in a landscape in which males dominate executive-level positions, they exert their influence over females in negotiation in a significant way, whereas all other negotiation compositions result in more equitable outcomes. Table 3 below summarizes the aggregate negotiation outcomes.

	Male	Female
Male in position of power negotiating with	Equitable	Male + 16%
Female in position of power negotiating with	Male + 2%	Equitable

**Table 3.** Negotiation Composition Outcomes (Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry-Aeon, 2019)

### 6.1 Impact of Gender on Stages of Negotiation

To bolster Hernandez-Arenaz and Iriberry-Aeon’s conclusions, a critical review performed by Claudia-Neptina Manea, Vincent Yzerbyt, and Stéphanie Demoulin in the *Journal of the Belgian Association for Psychological Science* confirmed that “research findings have shown that women’s performance in mixed-gender negotiations often falls below those of men, especially in negotiation on monetary stakes” (2020). Where this research elaborates is in the stages of negotiation. The authors state that “before the negotiation, women are less likely to perceive a given situation as being negotiable than men are”, leading “[women] to avoid the bargaining table altogether, particularly when the likelihood of negative consequences is high” (Manea, Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2020). This is illuminated in Table 4.

Progressing to the negotiation itself, the authors continue that “female negotiators commonly speak less and

show more self-doubt than male ones”, adding that “they also react more emotionally and tend to consider what happens as part of a long-term relationship” (2020). Women also “show more interest in interpersonal relationships” and “are more willing to share personal information” (Manea, Yzerbyt & Demoulin 2020). All told, the authors conclude this makes women more “cooperative” than their male counterparts in real-time negotiations.

In post-negotiation, women generally reported, “less satisfaction with their overall performance than men do”, while “[acknowledging] feeling less powerful during the bargaining process and [reporting] the greater dislike of the whole process as well as lower self-efficacy” (Manea, Yzerbyt & Demoulin 2020). The negotiation situation conveys the message that from start to finish, males control the process of negotiation and leverage their position to create favorable outcomes.

Stages of Negotiation	
Before	Women are less likely to “perceive a given situation as negotiable”
During	Female Negotiators commonly speak less and show more self-doubt than males. Women also Show more interest in interpersonal relationships and are cooperative.
After	Women report “less satisfaction” with their overall performance

**Table 4.** Stages of Negotiation-The Female Perspective





The research of Manea, Yzerbyt, and Demoulin continues by describing two models on “gender differences in mixed-gender interactions” (2020). The first model implies that “one can either acknowledge or ignore gender in mixed interactions”, and the second continues by “[distinguishing] between positive and negative ways to acknowledge or ignore gender differences” (Manea, Yzerbyt & Demoulin 2020). This branch of analysis is useful in determining the level of cooperation the negotiating parties have with one another and circling back to Olekalns’ work, an open conversation can minimize the level of deception being used (2013). Returning to the work of Manea, Yzerbyt & Demoulin, “the best way to handle gender is to ignore the category altogether and to value individuals” (2020). The perspective taken here is that underlining an individual’s gender as a means of deciding negotiating strategy brings to light the issue of treating humans fundamentally differently. The suggestion of their research is to “celebrate gender differences” by acknowledging the “different but equally useful ways [they have] of accomplishing tasks” (Manea, Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2020). The concept of “segregationism” is also broached upon, with the authors underscoring that treating genders differently “at least at an implicit level [places] women in a lower status and less desirable positions than men” (2020).

In mixed-gender negotiations, the authors posit that involved individuals in negotiations should practice ‘sexblindness’, a view that “gender [is] to be ignored and all decisions are made solely on peoples’ abilities” (2020). Under this concept, ‘sexblindness’ should be used to ensure that in “high stakes negotiations, women (just like men) should overall be even more careful not to deviate from prescribed behavior. As such, gender downplaying should represent the overall baseline in situations of negotiation, particularly within professional contexts” (Manea, Yzerbyt & Demoulin, 2020). The authors share the opinion that gender should play no role in determining the outcomes of negotiations. Comparing this approach to Craver (2020), whose research showed that females seek win-win situations and males seek win-lose situations, from the male perspective, it presents an opportunity to leverage one’s gender for personal gain. This contrasts with Olekalns’ previously mentioned work in which it is acknowledged that women seek to use deception when negotiating with women, thereby implying that in bargaining, individuals pre-determine their strategy based on their counterpart (2013).

While many of the authors mentioned in this section tethered their research to gender, there is a litany of factors outside of gender that can determine outcomes in negotiation. Individual personality traits, work experience, ethnicity, age, etc. can all be analyzed in conjunction with one’s gender to explain negotiation outcomes. Further, the focus of the research thus far has been on ‘male’ and ‘female’, without specifics being considered. Deborah Kolb and Kathleen L.

McGinn in their work titled “Beyond Gender and Negotiation to Gendered Negotiations” makes mention of how “different groups of women, for example, lesbians, women of color, older women, and pregnant women are likely to be affected differently” (2008) in negotiations. This notion broadens the scope of research and opens avenues for future study with the emergence of gender-spectrum and non-binary individuals. As a topic of future research, the collection of authors’ works that have been touched upon in this section can be used as the foundation for understanding, explaining, and predicting outcomes of negotiations between all points of the gender spectrum. While gender composition at the bargaining table provides a foundation for understanding negotiating outcomes, including one’s culture helps round out the discussion as will be the highlight of the next section of this article.

## 7.0 Gender Inequality in Negotiations Due to Cultural Differences

Culture influences gender inequality in business negotiations. Recent studies have shown that stereotypes are not universal and instead reflect practices and values that are dominant in each society (Cuddy et al., 2015; Shan et al., 2016). These findings question the widely accepted belief that men are better than women at negotiation by adding that it depends on several factors. Men are better negotiators in certain cultures, while women are superior in others (Shan et al., 2019; Shan et al., 2016). Many studies have dived deeper into identifying the specific differences that frame gender inequality in negotiations across different cultures. This section’s analysis will include studies on “feminine vs. masculine” values across cultures, Hofstede’s cultural dimensions, and the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) cultural practices to provide an overview of the interrelationship of gender and culture in negotiations.

As mentioned previously, stereotypes are mental models that have existed from the beginning of time. In 2016, a study that surveyed 279 Chinese and 311 American participants revealed that Chinese participants were more likely to categorize competitive behaviors as feminine and cooperative behaviors as masculine, whereas American participants were more likely to associate competitive behaviors as masculine and cooperative behaviors as feminine (Shan et al., 2016). These results reflect that feminine and masculine attributes have different meanings in different cultures. Chinese participants, for example, confirmed that “competitive behavior among women is not only tolerated but expected in some contexts” (Shan et al., 2016). The key takeaway from this study is that gender stereotypes vary across cultures, and with that, the behaviors expected from a man and a woman in negotiations differ as well.

A widely accepted cross-cultural communication framework was developed by Geert Hofstede in 1980. This has been the classic barometer for 35 years. After surveying



117,000 IBM employees in 50 countries and 3 regions, Hofstede identified four cultural dimensions that shape organizations: individualism-collectivism (degree of group integration), power distance (extent of power inequality acceptance by the less powerful), uncertainty avoidance (tolerance for ambiguity), and masculinity-femininity (preference for heroism, assertiveness and material rewards over cooperation, caring for the weak and quality of life) (Hofstede, 1980). Although the masculinity-femininity category suggests a gender attribute, in 2019, a meta-analysis that examined 185 studies found that the strongest correlation between gender and measurable negotiation performance is flagged by the individualism-collectivism dimension (Shan et al., 2019). The

meta-analysis found that men are more likely to outperform women in individualistic societies.

Hofstede's individualism refers to the society's mentality of putting oneself's goals and needs above the needs of the group (see Table 5 for additional managerial implications of individualism-collectivism) (1980). On a scale of 1 to 100, the US (91), Australia (90), Great Britain (89), and Canada (80) score high on individualism, whereas countries on the other spectrum like Russia (39), Portugal (27), China (20) and Guatemala (6) are considered collectivists (Hofstede 1980). Women in collectivistic societies have better measurable negotiation outcomes than men (Shan et al., 2019).

MANAGEMENT PROCESSES	COLLECTIVISM	INDIVIDUALISM
Management selection	Group membership; school or university	Universalistic based on individual traits
Training	Focus on company-based skills	General skills for individual achievement
Evaluation / Promotion	Slow with group; seniority	Based on individual performance
Remuneration	Based on group membership; organizational paternalism	Extrinsic rewards (money, promotion) based on market value
Leadership styles	Appeals to duty and commitment	Individual rewards and punishments based on performance
Motivational assumptions	Moral involvement	Calculative; individual cost/benefit
Decision making / Organizational design	Group; slow; preference for larger organizations	Individual responsibility; preference for smaller organizations

**Table 5.** Additional Managerial Implications of Individualism-Collectivism (Hofstede, 1980)

Another widely recognized study that explains cultural implications in organizations around the world was conducted by the GLOBE in 2004. The study identified nine dimensions of societal culture after surveying over 17,000 middle managers in 62 cultures: performance orientation (need to encourage and reward), assertiveness (need to be assertive, confrontational and aggressive), future orientation (immediate gratification deferral), humane orientation (altruistic inclination), institutional collectivism (preference for communal distribution of resources and actions), in-group collectivism (pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in organizations or families), gender egalitarianism (gender equality support), power distance (acceptance of power separation and privileges), and uncertainty avoidance (need for structure and consistency) (House et al., 2004). The GLOBE's study extends Hofstede's four original dimensions by adding future, human,

and performance orientation and by dividing individualism-collectivism into in-group collectivism and institutional collectivism. The same meta-analysis previously referenced found that women lead more successful measurable negotiations than men in societies with low assertiveness (Shan et al., 2019).

Societies with low assertiveness, as defined by the GLOBE in 2004, value cooperation over competition, people over success, and harmony over control, among others (see Table 6 for additional characteristics of societies with low and high assertiveness). On a scale from 1 to 7, Sweden (3.38), New Zealand (3.42), French Switzerland (3.47), Japan (3.59), and Kuwait (3.63) are societies that practice low assertiveness (House et al., 2004) where women outperform men in negotiation due to the cultural norm of indirect and implicit communication (Shan et al., 2019).

HIGH ASSERTIVENESS societies...	LOW ASSERTIVENESS societies...
Value competition, success, and progress.	Value cooperation and warm relationships.
Communicate directly and unambiguously.	Communicate indirectly; try to "save face."

Value what you do more than who you are.	Value who you are more than what you do.
Try to have control over the environment	Try to be in harmony with the environment.
Expect subordinates to take initiative.	Expect subordinates to be loyal.
Build trust on the basis of calculation.	Build trust on the basis of predictability.
Stress equity, competition, and performance.	Stress equality, solidarity, and quality of life.

**Table 6.** Additional characteristics of societies with low and high assertiveness (House et al., 2004)

The performance of women in negotiations is influenced by the cultural values and practices of society. Studies show that feminine and masculine stereotypes can vary depending on culture (Shan et al., 2016) and that in collectivist and low assertive societies, women perform better than men in measurable business negotiations (Shan et al., 2019). The final section of this review will be presented as a mini-case to illuminate the actual effect gender has on mergers and acquisitions. It may be helpful to wrap up this review of the literature with an actual mini-case study demonstrating the differences that occur in these often-enigmatic processes of acquisitions and mergers that in many cases fail. This one has more positive results due to the influence of gender and how it impacts this negotiation process to arrive at a successful outcome.

## 8.0 Negotiating Mergers and Acquisitions: A Mini Gender-Case Study

Are women better decision-makers when it comes to negotiating mergers and acquisitions? When it comes to large corporations, suggests they are more frugal. The research showed that women board members can help save significant cash on acquisitions, in part because women board members approach decisions with less overconfidence than men. “When they are looking at unknowns, or when feedback is delayed or uncertain instead of specific and immediate, women demonstrate less overconfidence than men,” (Levi, Li & Zhang, 2014). Circumspection and risk-aversion are mindsets often attributed to women, as is the idea that we see nearly every negotiation through a lens of relationship. Focusing on values and relationships over solely financial goals can be highly effective if the goal is to be collaborative. Focusing on values and relationships over solely financial goals can be highly effective if the goal is to be collaborative.

Such was the case for Heather Whaling, founder and president of Geben Communication, as she went into talks with Morra Aarons-Mele to acquire her company, Women Online. While many negotiations around mergers and acquisitions tend to be competitive and positional, Whaling and Aarons-Mele had a completely different experience. Not only did that lead to a rapid acquisition deal, but it also shows us a different way of doing business. (Tarr, 2021).

Transparency can be vital to a stable long-term agreement, but that was not the advice Aarons-Mele was

getting from people she trusted. “I was told from the seller’s perspective, I had to keep the momentum moving. I would get contradictory advice, too, mostly from men. They would urge me to not tell her some information yet, or don’t be so honest,” said Aarons-Mele. Whaling got the same advice, urging a competitive mindset. “Other people viewed this deal as a game. They would say, keep your cards close, make this move and then see how the other person responds,” Whaling said.

This ran at odds with what Whaling wanted to build the negotiation on the clear alignment of business goals. “Here’s what I want. Here is what Morra wants, does this make sense for both of us? How do we come together? We were more open, I think than how people typically are in these situations,” said Whaling. “I didn’t want to start our relationship passing notes back and forth through lawyers,” she said. (Tarr, 2021). So, what is your emotional BATNA?

BATNA is a term coined by Roger Fisher and William Ury in the 1980s, and it stands for Best Alternative to A Negotiated Agreement. (Fisher & Ury, 2011). Usually, BATNA is associated with prices or positions, not emotions. But Whaling and Aarons-Mele felt they both needed the numbers and things beyond spreadsheets to work if they were going to feel satisfied with the deal. “When I initially was getting advice, it felt like people were just entering the numbers. That didn’t work for me,” said Whaling. “Yes, I need the math to work, but I also need the relationships to work. I had to feel good about being in business with this person. I am buying their book of business and a great team of people.” Aarons-Mele felt the same way. “It had to satisfy my emotional BATNA,” she said. “I had a kitchen cabinet of four people, all men who had sold service businesses. They were the ones who were giving me that ‘lawyer up’ advice. When you start a business, it’s like your baby. You’re not going to let it go to just anybody. I had to feel good about the deal going through,” Aarons-Mele said. (Tarr, 2021).

Is feeling good about the direction of the negotiation enough? I asked both women to elaborate on what “feeling good” really means in a high stake’s negotiation. Whaling attributed it to instincts. “Instincts are based on experience. You have to validate and trust your own experiences. I felt there were validating alignments that mattered to me, matching my values, company values, and the goal I had set at the beginning of the year of wanting to expand. That alignment is

what felt good.” Aarons-Mele also cautioned that feeling good in a business negotiation isn’t a reckless emotion. “Experience matters and preparation matters. There’s a difference between trusting your gut and being open to the process versus being casual or careless,” she said.

How was friction overcome during the negotiation? Negotiating the deal was not without a few snags. “There are moments that got sticky or difficult, but I think the reason we were able to close the acquisition deal so quickly is that we didn’t let those difficult moments completely derail us,” said Whaling. Aarons-Mele thought of it as sitting at a picnic table together. “Sometimes we’d be on the same side of the table, sometimes we’d be at opposite sides,” she said. Being able to admit when decisions had to be backtracked helped dissolve friction, too. (Tarr, 2021).

But the greatest tactic to overcome disagreement? Strong communication. “We’d pick up the phone and have a conversation. We focused on having an open conversation by staying committed to truly listening to each other. It’s important to understand the intent and what the person needs to feel heard,” Whaling said. (Tarr, 2021). This is a crucial real-time case study to demonstrate how gender was able to salvage and even optimize the often failures of mergers and acquisitions. The conclusions and methodological issues relevant to this article follow.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

### **9.1 Summary of Findings**

Gender affects negotiation performance and outcomes in the workplace. Although gender stereotypes are evolving, masculine attributes are valued over feminine attributes at the bargaining table, thus placing males at an advantage in business negotiations (Kray, Thompson & Galinsky, 2001). Stereotypes, however, are not the only influence at play when different genders sit at the bargaining table. Studies in salary negotiations, for example, have shown that the gender pay gap can be explained in part by women having lower salary expectations (Mazei et al., 2015), lower likelihood to initiate salary negotiations (Bowles et al., 2007; Small et al., 2007), and less competitive behavior (Walters et al., 1998) compared to men. Further studies have shown that when males dominate executive-level positions, they exert significant influence on women in weaker positions (Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberrí-Aeon, 2019). This is supported by Claudia-Neptina Manea, Vincent Yzerbyt, and Stéphanie Demoulin’s findings that women are less satisfied than men with their performance in business negotiations and feel less powerful during the process (2020). Studies show that culture also influences gender inequality at the bargaining table. According to Wen Shan, Josh Keller, and Lynn Imai, feminine and masculine stereotypes are different depending on the culture (2016), and according to Wen Shan, Josh Keller, and Damien Joseph, women perform better than men in collectivist and low assertive societies (2019).

### **9.2 Inconsistencies in Research**

Across the literature analyzed, there was a general theme that women are at a disadvantage in negotiations. There was little inconsistency among the authors on this front. Where there has been a change, however, is in gender expectations and stereotypes in modern times. With the increase of women in the workplace, societal expectations of women have changed as well as the proportion of women in the workforce has grown significantly.

In gender stereotypes, as well as composition in negotiations, there was a disagreement in the work of Olekalns (2013), who implied that women are “deceptive” in negotiation, particularly with other women. Craver (2020), as well as Maran et al. (2014), implied that women are generally more accommodating negotiators. Appelbaum, D’Antico & Daoussis (2019) continued this discussion by ascribing women supportive, empathetic, friendly, sensitive, and compassionate traits. While it is possible, though unlikely, to be accommodating and deceptive; being supportive, empathetic, and friendly, as well as deceptive are contrasting traits.

The previously mentioned meta-analysis conducted by Shan, Keller, and Joseph in 2019, also concluded that men are more likely to outperform women in the GLOBE’s low in-group collectivist societies. According to the GLOBE, in-group collectivism is a predictor of two of the most widely admired characteristics of successful leaders: charismatic/value-based leadership (ability to inspire, motivate, and expect high-performance outcomes from others based on firmly held core values) and team-oriented leadership (emphasizes team building and implementation of common purpose or goal among team members) (House et al., 2014). The contradiction, however, resides in the fact that societies that score low on in-group collectivism, where men outperform women, are Denmark, Sweden, New Zealand, Netherlands, and French Switzerland. Some of these countries are the same that score low on assertiveness and where women are more likely to outperform men.

### **9.3 Flaws in Methodology**

In general, the methodology of analysis was focused on monetary outcomes. While this is the primary area of concern, it is not the only area. It is more difficult to quantify negotiation outcomes of non-monetary bargaining, which can include performance recognition or other advancement opportunities.

In looking at the financial analyses, some flaws and exactitudes can be considered. Among the flaws, a specific example would be the calculation of negotiation outcomes. The methodology used was to observe and derive results from game show analysis in mixed-gender bargaining. Most negotiations are confidential and therefore difficult to perform specific research on in real-life examples and it is also difficult to know going into the negotiation what each party’s exact specific goal is with each negotiation being unique. The use of



game show negotiations as a proxy is imperfect but can be useful to explain differences.

In terms of exactitudes, an example of this is the calculation of the OECD wage gap. The calculation is based on women's salaries as a percentage of men's median salaries. This is useful for illustration purposes as well, however, there are many factors not accounted for. These factors can include education level, years of service, the danger of the job, part-time workers, and others. Some of these measures are descriptive and therefore subjective, so for this literature review, the parameters are sufficient.

Cultural studies were conducted at a national level, disregarding the complexities of individual interactions and the practices of specific regions. Research that generalizes the values and behaviors of individuals within a country is only the first step into understanding the interrelationship of culture and gender differences in business negotiations.

#### 9.4 Areas for Further Study

Further research on the influence of stereotypes associated with gender non-binary individuals and LGBTQ+ orientations in business negotiations is suggested. This research, combined with an analysis of the complexities of gender identities in different positions of power can help modernize this area of study. As has been discussed, there is a multitude of different factors that can be used to forecast negotiation outcomes. Combining previous research with the concept of the gender spectrum and varying sexual orientation can help negotiators be prepared for all possible opposition and uncertainties.

Another avenue of future research is organizational behavioral research in general like barriers to entry, performance, synergy with teammates, acceptance into teams among other topics.

Continuing this theme, gender and the intersection of demographics could play a significant role in workplace outcomes. Young women and young men entering a company in their first negotiation likely achieve different outcomes than tenured workers. Experience in negotiation and service time in a company are likely strongly correlated to positive results in bargaining, though research could show differences between male and female outcomes. This can be extrapolated into racial differences as well. There are limitless specific permutations that can be considered in gender, age, and race.

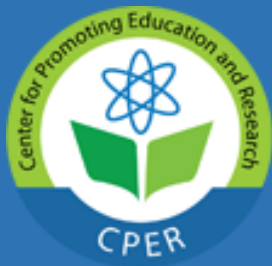
In an increasingly globalized world, additional studies could supplement existing research on cross-cultural negotiation. With constant improvements in technology, long-distance communication has been facilitated to the point that business partners across the world can have real-time face-to-face communiques. While this method of communication is less personal than actually being in the same room, future research can be conducted into how technological advancements impact negotiations. Men and women from different cultural backgrounds, as discussed, can have vastly different expectations, interpretations, and personal traits associated with negotiation, and with recent technology, this can create misaligned negotiation parameters.

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