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EMPOWERING TEAMWORK: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This paper comprehensively examines the current state of research on gender diversity and teamwork based on a systematic literature review. Taking a broader approach, it follows the premise of several researchers to explore the complex dynamics underlying this relationship. Thereby, the findings are outlined using a pillar model that encompasses decisive dimensions of teamwork, including psychological safety, satisfaction, collaboration, behavior, interaction, performance, leadership, and management. Drawing upon these findings, recommendations are derived for team composition and the creation of favorable conditions for gender-responsive teamwork in organizations. In team formation, it is key for companies to create a blend of gender specific qualities that complement each other to foster optimal team dynamics. Additionally, proactive action is needed to create an environment where both male and female employees can flourish. Thus, this paper contributes to deepening the understanding of the significance of gender diverse teams and offers a practical guide to organizations.

Keywords: teamwork, performance, satisfaction, management, gender

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INDEX

ABSTRACT	II
INDEX	III
LIST OF FIGURES.....	IV
LIST OF TABLES	V
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Relevance of the paper	1
1.2. Problem definition	1
1.3. Objective and course of the paper	2
2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND.....	3
2.1. Teamwork.....	3
2.2. Gender	5
2.3. Teamwork and Gender	7
3. METHODOLOGY	8
4. RESULTS	10
4.1. Sample description and evaluation	10
4.2. Psychological safety and satisfaction	13
4.3. Collaboration, interaction and behavior	15
4.4. Performance.....	18
4.5. Leadership and management	19
5. DISCUSSION.....	22
5.1. Theoretical implications	26
5.2. Practical implications	26
5.3. Limitations and further research.....	27
6. CONCLUSION.....	29
REFERENCES.....	VI

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Building blocks and key drivers of teamwork.....	3
Figure 2: Gender components as defined by society.....	6
Figure 3: Research area and journal overview.....	10
Figure 4: Pillar model to map gender and teamwork.....	11

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Results of literature search and processing	9
Table 2: Literature overview including keyword search results	12

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Relevance of the paper

The UN Sustainable Development Goals include in its agenda to reach gender equality through empowering all women and girls by 2030 (United Nations, 2023a). Despite progress, there are still persistent inequalities in various professional fields, as it is illustrated in political leadership of nations or female executives in Fortune 500 companies (Ammerman & Groysberg, 2021; United Nations, 2023a). This inequality already starts with team compositions in organizations that face gender challenges on a daily basis, which can significantly impact group processes and outcomes (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022).

In this context, companies often generate and reproduce gendered activities themselves in the form of corporate hierarchies, work groups, and recruitment or promotion practices (Martin, 1992; Williams et al., 2012). However, there is evidence, as shown by Yang, Tian, and Woodruff (2022), that teams composed of heterogeneous, individuals of different genders, perform better compared to homogeneous teams. A favorable correlation was also detected in relation to the company's reputation, innovativeness, and emphasis on corporate social responsibility (Brammer et al., 2009; Miller et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2013). Therefore, it is of great importance to understand the impact of gender on teamwork as a way to promote inclusion and gender equality in teams.

1.2. Problem definition

Recently, several studies have focused on the influence of gender on individual variables such as performance, collaboration, counterproductive behavior, and emotional intelligence (Edgar et al., 2021; Hassan & Ayub, 2019; Morgan et al., 2018). In addition, team composition has been assessed in terms of performance differences and conflict potential, comparing gender-homogeneous with gender-diverse teams (Chua & Jin, 2020; Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022). Other studies have also investigated the effects of gender bias and stereotyping, promotion opportunities, leadership qualities, and salary differentials (Ikävalko & Kohvakka, 2021; Jung & Takeuchi, 2016; Latu et al., 2015; Rovira-Asenjo et al., 2017). This was done by examining organizations from a variety of industries, including both small and large enterprises in diverse sectors such as health care, universities, and the public sector, resulting in specific findings from each environment.

Based on those, several authors called for further research on the relationship between teamwork and gender. In particular, they proposed to analyze the impact on teamwork by comparing different organizational environments to obtain more generalizable results (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022; Gomez-Ruiz & Sánchez-Expósito, 2020; Nedkovski & Guerci, 2021).

To answer this call, this study aims to take a broader approach to the relationship between teamwork and gender. For this, the following three research questions were formulated to examine this topic:

1. How can gender diversity affect teamwork?
2. What can organizations do to provide favorable conditions for efficient gender-diverse teamwork?
3. What recommendations can be made for gender-specific team composition?

Accordingly, this study addresses two sustainable development goals of the United Nations, namely goal number five on “Gender Equality” and goal number eight on “Decent Work and Economic Growth”, as promoting women's inclusion and equality in the workforce can have a positive impact on employment productivity and economic growth (Kabeer & Natali, 2013; United Nations, 2023a, 2023b).

1.3. Objective and course of the paper

This study uses a structured literature review to examine major research findings on the relationship between gender and teamwork. The analysis is based on a pillar model that includes the dimensions of “psychological safety and satisfaction”, “interaction, collaboration and behavior”, “performance, leadership and management”. By synthesizing the findings from the literature review, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how gender affects teamwork and provide recommendations on how organizations can promote gender-responsive teamwork. Chapter 2 begins by laying the theoretical foundation of teamwork and gender. In addition, an overview of the current state of research on gender and teamwork is provided. The methodological approach of the literature search that was used in this paper is presented in Chapter 3. It will be shown how the search string was created, which databases were used, and how the step-by-step reduction to the essential literature was done. Chapter 4 first describes the analysis of the final sample. Then, the results of the analysis of the selected literature are presented in detail. Based on this, Chapter 5 uses these results for further discussion and evaluation. Here, the theoretical and practical implications are also emphasized. Furthermore, the limitations of this thesis are outlined, which also lead to further research directions. The conclusion in Chapter 6 summarizes the main findings.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Teamwork

A team is formed by a group of at least two people who work together as members on a common task, where the focus is on achieving common goals. This typically requires the completion of tasks of different characteristics and complexity and therefore often require diverse competencies. Accordingly, teamwork can be conceived as the sum of interaction and cooperation between team members (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Mathieu et al., 2008). Ideally, these have different, complementary skills and key competencies in order to be able to work on the tasks alone or together depending on their requirements. At its core, teamwork relies on effective group communication and coordinated interactions (Salas et al., 2005). This involves not only physical opportunities for exchanging views in the form of personal meetings, but also all means and technologies of a modern nature that make place and time secondary. According to Neeley (2015), companies are increasingly relying on virtual teams that have members who are globally dispersed. Due to physical distance and cultural influence, these pose specific challenges ranging from deteriorated communication and misunderstandings to a lack of trust due to the absence of interpersonal relationships. Teamwork does not work without a framework. This means defined rules for cooperation, for reliability in work flows and for clarity in decision-making processes, which in turn presuppose corresponding roles and responsibilities (Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006; Salas et al., 2005).

Figure 1 graphically illustrates both the key building blocks that are important for teamwork as well as the basic requirements and expectations for team members.



Figure 1: Building blocks and key drivers of teamwork

Source: Own elaboration

Organizations today understand that managing complex tasks is better accomplished by interdisciplinary teams than by individuals. Lead time and decision making are accelerated

based on the interaction of different perspectives and competencies, resulting in better outcomes (Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). Then, effective teams are ideally formed based on individual backgrounds and skills, which can thus lead to maximum synergy. This means that the collaborative outcome of a team exceeds the sum of the individual performances of its members, i.e., it is progressively maximized. In the substructure of this cooperation, optimal team processes are the key to efficiency, and the training and know-how of the members are a guarantee for the quality of the work results (Kneisel, 2020; Marks et al., 2001).

Long-term collaboration at a high level requires motivation. This in turn can arise from positive experiences and successes of joint efforts within the team (Antoni & Hertel, 2009). The focus here is primarily on the effective exchange of information, which is a direct indicator of team performance (Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). A fundamental building block for teamwork is group dynamics: however, conflicts between team members can have a negative impact on them. Teams should, therefore, always have options and methods for conflict resolution at hand (Antoni & Hertel, 2009).

A team usually has a project manager or leader who heads the team, provides motivation, moderates it, and ensures the progress of the project (Benoliel & Somech, 2014). Among its primary responsibilities, the manager is in charge of assembling the team based on the selection and blending of individuals with the right competencies and interpersonal skills for the task at stake. The latter role also involves meeting the key needs of its team and evaluating each member on a regular basis. The success of teamwork is largely determined by satisfaction and consequently efficient task completion. Indeed, team satisfaction refers to the collective degree to which members are content with the results achieved (Van Der Vegt et al., 2001). Yet individual job satisfaction likewise plays a decisive role in the willingness to work in a team (Benrazavi & Silong, 2013). Therefore, all roles in the team and the respective responsibilities must be defined (Kneisel, 2020). Teamwork typically includes closeness and intimacy; hence, not only are solid social relationships important internally, but a team identity needs to be visible externally. This mutual trust forms the basis for team cohesion, for avoiding or resolving conflicts, and for team success (Aga et al., 2016). In accordance with this, psychological safety is a key factor, meaning that individuals feel safe to express their opinions or propose new ideas without fear of any negative consequences (Edmondson, 1999; Kahn, 1990). By increasing psychological safety in teams, intra-group learning is enhanced due to improved knowledge sharing and interaction, and a rise in meaningful contributions (Leroy et al., 2012; Siemsen et al., 2009).

Teamwork usually serves a defined purpose, so it also should generally be observed and evaluated from different positions. The customer of the company for which the team was activated evaluates its qualitative or quantitative benefits. The management of the company in which the team works measures its results in terms of turnover and profit (Antoni & Hertel, 2009). In contrast to the production of goods, where productivity is comparatively easy to measure, complex knowledge work in teams cannot be easily quantified by parameters. Here, subjective self-assessed performance or productivity is often applied for the purpose of analysis, and subsequent attempt at objectification are made by means of multiple assessment. Such values cannot be used as absolute measures, but rather they provide subjective comparative data and trend indications (Kneisel, 2020; Van Der Voordt, 2004).

2.2. Gender

Gender is a multifaceted phenomenon that varies in definition depending on the discipline. Constantly, the term evolves to capture the numerous aspects of gender-related issues (Mazzuca et al., 2020).

Historically, a distinct separation between gender and sex was made (Mazzuca et al., 2020). The latter can be traced back to biological differences between male and female due to hormones, genitals, and genes. This concept, which dates back to 18th century psychological research, is known as gender binary. It states that all human beings are classified into these two categories upon birth, which persist over time and play an essential role in self-perception (Hyde et al., 2019).

In contrast, “[g]ender refers to the attitudes, feelings, and behaviors that a given culture associates with a person’s biological sex” (Hancock et al., 2012, p.11). Gender identity depicts the own intrinsic perception, which influences the feeling of similarity with peers of the same gender. Hence, this identity plays an important role in the formation of self-image and lays the foundation for interacting with others (Sherif, 1982; Steensma et al., 2013). In this context, the congruence of social expectations and behavior is defined as gender-normative, while incompatibility is termed as gender nonconformity (Hancock et al., 2012).

Over time, researchers have increasingly doubted and questioned the validity of a binary system: indeed, since historical and cross-cultural evidence has revealed the existence of gender nonconform individuals, such as genderqueer or transgender (Herdt, 1996). Thus, the growing knowledge challenges this simplistic approach and underscores the need for recognition and acceptance of all forms of gender diversity.

According to Unger and Crawford (1993), gender and sex are intertwined and not a rigid dichotomy. Rather, they emphasize the complex interplay between these concepts, whereby biological patterns can influence gender identity and roles on both a personal and societal level, and vice versa. Therefore, nowadays the umbrella term “gender/sex” has emerged to encompass both sex and gender, reflecting the social, cultural, and biological influence that also includes non-binary diverse individuals (van Anders, 2013, 2015; van Anders & Dunn, 2009).

In particular, the influential role of society in shaping and interpreting gender is emphasized in social constructivist research (Bosak et al., 2012; Carlson, 2011). In fact, this is reflected in the distinction between being gender and doing gender. The latter implies the subdivision of society based on the believe that gender is a characteristic that emerges from social settings (Hyde et al., 2019; West & Zimmerman, 1987). This can be observed in various facets. Evidence shows up in clothing choices, where social norms dictate what is appropriate for which gender. Likewise, it is visible in the assumption of gendered roles and professions, as for example in the widespread perception of computer science as a male-dominated major. Rather than being gendered, these roles and professions are both socially constructed and historically imposed. Interpersonal relationships also reflect the concept of doing gender. While women are often assumed to take on a passive role, men are projected to take on a proactive role (Hyde et al., 2019).

Figure 2 provides an overview of the different aspects used today to describe gender in society. These encompass the gender assigned at birth by physical characteristics, the individual's

current identity, which is the own true gender category, and the gender roles created by societal expectations. The socially mediated outward expression of gender identity, such as through clothing or names, as well as the evaluation by the social environment and comparison among each other also play an important role (Hyde et al., 2019).

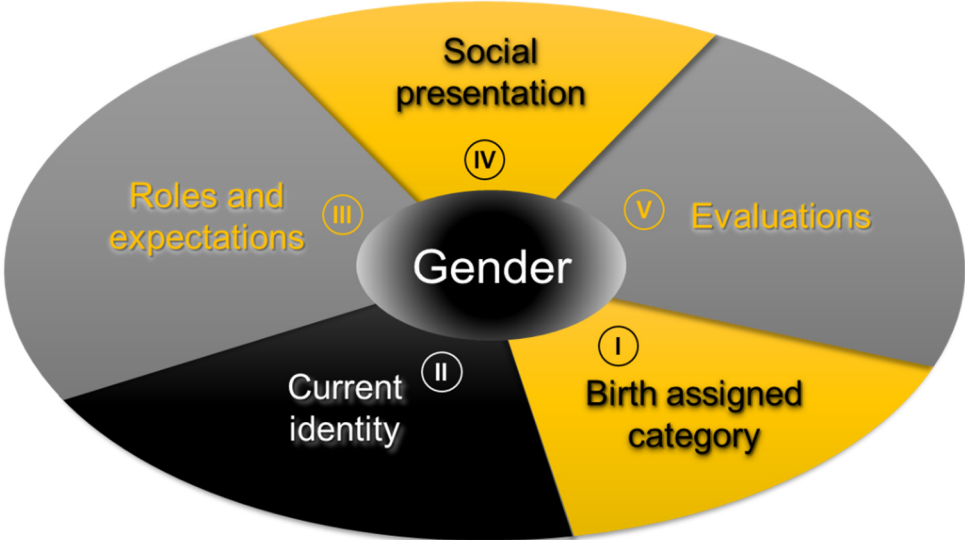


Figure 2: Gender components as defined by society
 Source: Own elaboration based on Hyde et al., 2019, p. 64

Despite growing corporate support and especially political efforts, such as gender quotas, to boost diversity, progress toward meeting benchmarks remains slow (Azmat & Boring, 2020). According to Grzelec (2022), females are particularly underrepresented in certain industries, including science, engineering, technology and mathematics, as well as on boards and executive committees. Reflecting this, companies often neglect a diverse workplace culture and do not take active steps to address it. As a result, internal inequalities such as discrimination in selection and evaluation processes are not tackled.

Especially, gender categorization is highly polarizing and tends to create and perpetuate gender stereotypes by strengthening the perception of disparities between males and females (Burgess & Borgida, 1999; Ellemers, 2018). Stereotypes comprise the general expectations held about members of a specific social group. Typical, for example, is the assumption that men are taller than women, although this is not accurate in all cases. Thus, while differences between groups are often overestimated, those that exist within one are understated. Equally, gendered expectations are reflected in beliefs about the particular needs, qualities, and priorities of males and females. Whereas men are assumed to be competent and work-oriented, women are perceived to be warm and focused on family (Ellemers, 2018). This results in individuals being judged and treated in a biased manner based on their gender (Bosak et al., 2012; Burgess & Borgida, 1999).

However, gender as such cannot be considered in isolation, but must be examined in the context of all factors that influence a person's experiences and potential. This is based on the concept of intersectionality, which states that individuals may experience discrimination due to the

intersection of various social identities, such as gender, class, race, and sexuality (Else-Quest & Hyde, 2016).

2.3. Teamwork and Gender

While gender is a social and cultural construct, it has been found to play an integral role in shaping individual behavior and sense of belonging, and therefore impacting teamwork. In this regard, social role theory states that especially the widespread perceptions about appropriate roles and capabilities of men and women within society have a substantial impact on the work setting (Eagly, 1987; Lee et al., 2018; Myaskovsky et al., 2005). Hence, to promote diversity in the workplace and build effective, inclusive teams, it is crucial to understand the interrelationship between gender and teamwork (Distefano & Maznevski, 2000).

Several studies have examined the effects of gender diversity on team performance. Specifically, research has been conducted to determine whether mixed-gender teams outperform or underperform single-gender teams (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022; Li et al., 2020; Ohland & Beigpourian, 2022). Consideration has also been given to factors moderating the relationship of gender diversity and team performance, including team size, sector, and the prevalence of family-friendly practices (Bae & Skaggs, 2019). Relatedly, the effects of gender diversity on creativity, problem solving, and decision making have been studied (Bullock, 2019; McGlone & Pfiester, 2015; Ohland & Beigpourian, 2022).

Further research has addressed the influence of gender roles on team dynamics with a focus on gender differences in communication patterns, decision-making processes, and management practices (Chua & Jin, 2020; Gomez-Ruiz & Sánchez-Expósito, 2020; Nedkovski & Guerci, 2021). This included examining the role of stereotypes and biases in shaping team interactions. In particular, attention was paid to how stereotypes influence perceptions of other team members' contributions and expertise, as well as their judgments of success or failure (Bosak et al., 2012; Latu et al., 2015; Motro et al., 2022; Thoroughgood et al., 2013). This is also linked to studies examining the impact of gender on individual outcomes such as psychological safety, job satisfaction and career planning (Ikävalko & Kohvakka, 2021; Jung & Takeuchi, 2016; Ohland & Beigpourian, 2022). Collectively, these papers contribute to a deeper understanding of how gender shapes individuals' experiences in the workplace.

In addition, the relevance of gender for leadership effectiveness has been investigated. Primarily, these studies focused on the perceived challenges and prejudices that women encounter when pursuing executive careers (Kulich et al., 2018; Larsson et al., 2023; Matos et al., 2018; Mendez & Busenbark, 2015). Others have also focused on the implications of the leader's gender for both group cohesiveness and accomplishment (Post, 2015).

Gender-specific personality traits have been analyzed as well. In this context, the gender tendency to agreeableness and calmness and their effects on counterproductive behavior and conflict resolution were evaluated (Gomez-Ruiz & Sánchez-Expósito, 2020; Gonzalez-Mulé et al., 2013; Morgan et al., 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

A systematic literature review is conducted to address the research questions on gender and teamwork defined in this paper. This is based on the structural approach recommended by vom Brocke et al. (2009) and Webster & Watson (2002), whereby a broad search is gradually narrowed down to relevant and specific results.

The process is initiated, according to vom Brocke et al. (2009), by conceptualizing the research topic. Thus, an unstructured search in the areas of “teamwork” and “gender” serves to provide a theoretical basis for the subsequent analysis. The articles found in this comprehensive search are examined for key words. Throughout the process, the terms “collaboration” and “interaction” that are frequently used in the context of teamwork are identified. In addition, the keyword “performance” is introduced to address the effectiveness of teamwork. “Psychological safety”, “satisfaction”, and “behavior” are recurrently recognized in the context of gender and teamwork. By using an asterisk operator, the terms “team” and “work” are modified to cover all word endings for example with “s”, “work”, and “place” in order to capture various workplace related studies. A categorization of keywords based on related classifications is performed to obtain the following search string:

“gender” AND (“team*” OR “work*”) AND “performance”
AND (“psychological safety” OR “satisfaction” OR “behavior”)
AND (“collaboration” OR “interaction”) AND (“leadership” OR “management”)

Following the structural approach, appropriate databases are chosen for the search in a second step (vom Brocke et al., 2009). To ensure an acceptable quality index in this context, peer-reviewed articles from the Web of Science and Scopus databases are used. It should be noted that the search terms are to be applied formally differently in the individual databases. For example, in Scopus they must be enclosed in quotation marks for the search to be successful. The search is limited to the publication period from 2010 to 2023 to emphasize the topicality of the research. Moreover, only articles in English are included in the search. The initial query also yielded many non-targeted results, leading to primarily focus further searches on the fields of business administration, psychology, behavioral sciences, and social issues.

The search was performed on January 21, 2023. The filtering process and the final number of entries found in the databases are shown in Table 1. Ultimately, 120 articles were retrieved from Web of Science and 34 from Scopus. In an initial screening process, these articles are evaluated based on the title, abstract, and keywords. Articles that deal exclusively with teamwork or gender without establishing a link between both are removed. Beyond that, all duplicates present in those databases are detected and filtered out. A set of n=96 articles is identified for continued processing in this first step.

In the second phase, a thorough screening is conducted with a more in-depth review of the methodology and result chapter as well as the discussion and conclusion of each of the remaining articles. Excluded are those articles that are pure literature reviews or have an unclear methodology. This results in a total number of 33 articles. To identify additional relevant literature, a so-called snowball search is performed by conducting complementary forward and

backward searches based on the recommendations of Webster & Watson (2002). These articles were again processed according to the predefined criteria. Ultimately, all 39 articles are read in full in all parts, and no additional exclusions are made.

Table 1: Results of literature search and processing

Resulting number of papers		Database	Web of Science	Scopus
		Search string used	gender AND (team* OR work*) AND performance AND (psychological safety OR satisfaction OR behavior) AND (collaboration OR interaction) AND (leadership OR management)	"gender" AND ("team*" OR "work*") AND "performance" AND ("psychological safety" OR "satisfaction" OR "behavior") AND ("collaboration" OR "interaction") AND ("leadership" OR "management")
		Keyword search performed in	Full text	Title, abstract, keywords
Step		Criteria		
Search	1	Initial search	220	73
Filtering	2.1	English Language	212	67
	2.2	Publication period 2010-2023	186	56
	2.3	Type of document Article or Proceeding Paper, Review Article	183	53
	2.4	Research fields: Management, Business and Economics, Psychology, Environmental sciences, Communication, Women Studies, Educational Scientific Disciplines, Industrial Relations Labor, Social Sciences Interdisciplinary	120	34
	2.5	Peer-reviewed articles	120	34
	2.6	Elimination of duplicates	144	
Screening	3.1	Title, abstract, keywords	96	
	3.2	Methodology, results, discussion, conclusion	33	
Search	4	Snowball search	6	
Full text	5	Full text screening	39	
Final	6	Final sample of papers	39	

Source: Own elaboration

4. RESULTS

4.1. Sample description and evaluation

In total, 39 articles drawn from 35 different journals are selected for this literature review grounded on their relevance for the research topic. By means of the pie chart in Figure 4, the distribution of the subject domains along with the corresponding journals in the final sample is shown. This is to be understood as follows: the outer ring represents the different journals, accompanied by the number of articles that derive from each of them. To give an indication of the impact and relevance of the journals, the H-index values obtained from Web of Science¹ and Scimago Journal² are also indicated.

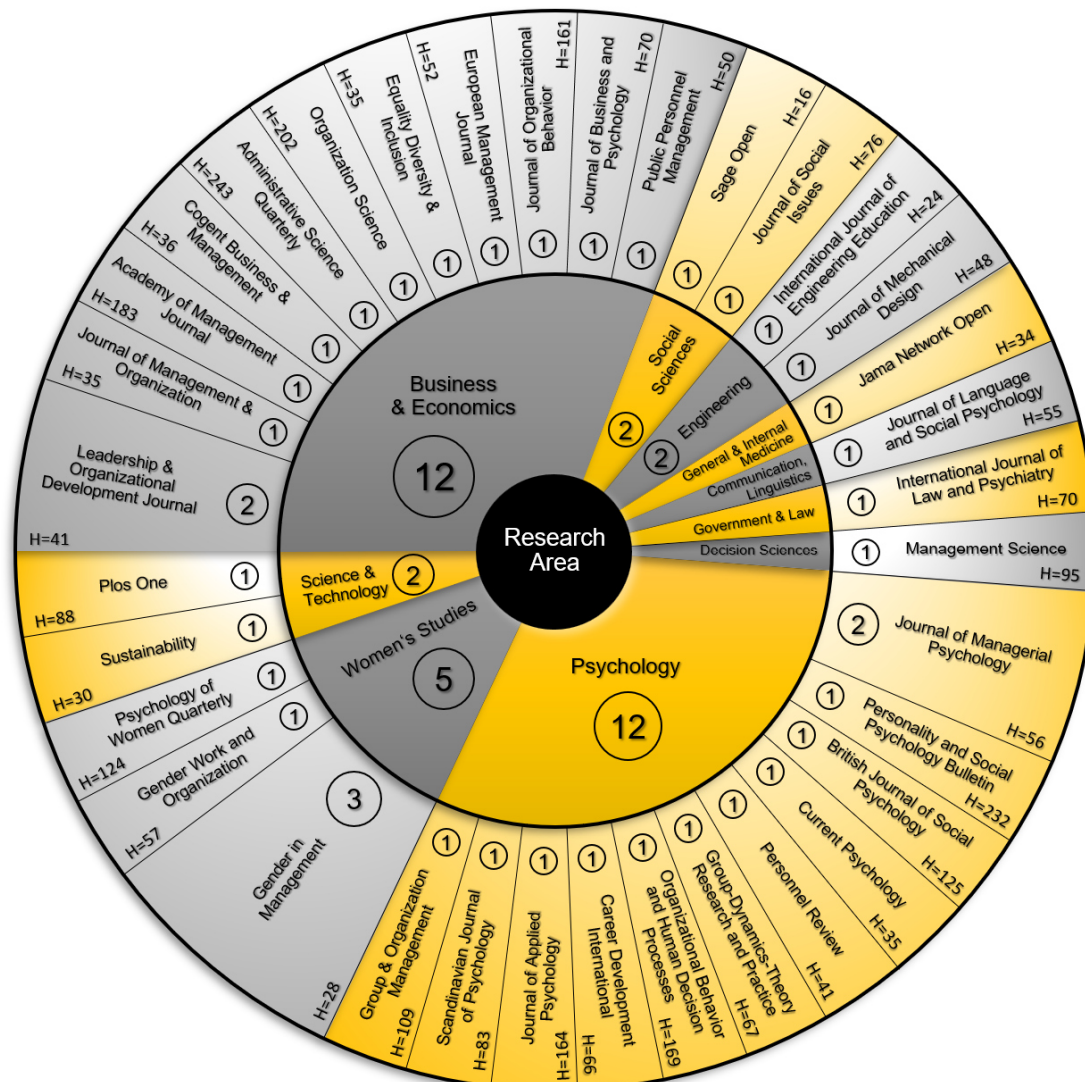


Figure 3: Research area and journal overview

Source: Own elaboration

¹ <https://www-webofscience-com.sire.ub.edu/wos/woscc/citation-report/fb465507-a3ba-4239-8200-386a22876a86-893d0bb3>

² <https://www.scimagojr.com/journalsearch.php?q=22326&tip=sid>

The inner ring indicates the subject area. Most of the articles included in this literature selection, 12 each, appeared under the more general heading of “Business and Economics” and under “Psychology”. In addition, 5 articles from the research area of “Women's Studies”, 2 from “Science and Technology”, 2 from “Engineering” and 2 of “Social Sciences” are included. As for the remaining articles, a wide range of topics are covered, with one each from general and “General and Internal Medicine”, “Communication Linguistics”, “Government and Law”, and “Decision Sciences”.

Concerning the methodologies employed in the sample, a quantitative approach is used in 22 studies to collect numeric data and perform statistical analyses in order to reveal any patterns or correlations. Most commonly used methods for data collection included closed-ended questionnaires or experiments. A quantitative analysis is performed in 6 studies. For these, semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and observations are taken as primary approaches. In 11 papers, a mixed methods approach is adopted, whereby questionnaires are predominantly combined with qualitative interviews or focus groups. In this instance, another assessment is the combination of laboratory and field studies.

Finally, to provide a framework for structuring the results, the model shown in Figure 5 has been created. Gender as an independent variable forms the basement of the model. Grounded upon it are the four pillars that comprise “Psychological Safety & Satisfaction”, “Interaction, Collaboration & Behavior”, “Performance”, and “Leadership & Management”. The latter are grouped in accordance with the criteria and requirements found in the literature and theory, thus providing the setting for the analysis of the results. Teamwork represents the overarching element, while simultaneously serving as the independent variable. This will contribute to a deeper understanding of the impact of gender on teamwork.

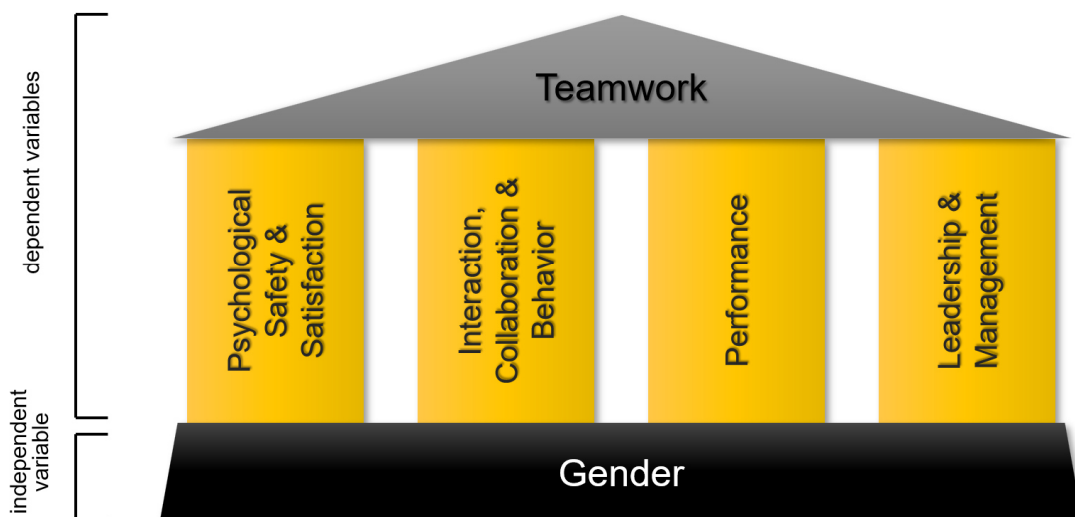


Figure 4: Pillar model to map gender and teamwork

Source: Own elaboration

To cross-check the validity of the column structure with the identified literature, a keyword search using the literature management program Mendeley was performed in all 39 articles.

Table 2: Literature overview including keyword search results

#	Authors	Year	Theory		Teamwork Pillars			
			Team	Gender	Psychological Safety & Satisfaction	Interaction, Collaboration & Behavior	Performance	Leadership & Management
1	Apestequia, Jose; Azmat, Ghazala; Iriberry, Nagore	2012	267	134	0	8	64	36
2	Bae, Kwang Bin; Skaggs, Sheryl	2019	7	137	7	25	119	119
3	Beigpourian, Behzad; Ohland, Matthew W.	2022	366	119	89	14	24	32
4	Bosak, Janine; Sczesny, Sabine; Eagly, Alice H.	2012	0	47	0	55	0	0
5	Bruckmüller, S.; Branscombe, N.R.	2010	5	178	1	16	73	230
6	Bullock, Christina L.	2019	5	59	0	20	2	40
7	Chua, Roy; Jin, Mengzi	2020	44	247	2	299	19	124
8	Cole, Courtney; Jablolkow, Kathryn; Mohammed, Susan; Miller, Scarlett R.	2023	336	218	220	45	11	22
9	Daraba, Dahyar; Wirawan, Hillman; Salam, Rudi; Faisal, Muhammad	2021	3	74	7	24	88	185
10	Davcheva, Marija; Gonzalez-Roma, Vicente	2022	483	44	1	101	109	25
11	Dossett, L.A.; Vitous, C.A.; Lindquist, K.; Jagsi, R.; Telem, D.A.	2020	19	25	4	22	15	15
12	Edgar, F.; Blaker, N.M.; Everett, A.M.	2021	4	104	3	25	101	54
13	Fenech, Angel Ellul; Kanji, Shireen; Vargha, Zsuzsanna	2021	17	143	2	64	91	33
14	Gomez-Ruiz, Laura; Sanchez-Exposito, Maria J.	2020	288	71	0	80	13	8
15	Gonzalez-Mule, Erik; DeGeest, David S.; Kiersch, Christa E.; Mount, Michael K.	2013	0	92	1	128	16	20
16	Hong, Woonki; Lee, Eun Kyung; Son, Jooyeon	2020	145	124	0	90	7	19
17	Ikavalko, Heini; Kohvakka, Roosa	2021	0	88	121	34	51	32
18	Joshi, Aparna	2014	270	420	0	33	21	24
19	Jung, Yuhee; Takeuchi, Norihiko	2016	0	51	65	52	6	27
20	Larsson, Gerry; Molnar, Malin Mattson; Ljungberg, Helena Tinnerholm; Bjorklund, Christina	2022	3	50	2	76	4	257
21	Latu, Ioana M.; Mast, Marianne Schmid; Stewart, Tracie L.	2015	1	124	0	100	108	12
22	Lee, Hun Whee; Choi, Jin Nam; Kim, Seongsu	2017	330	206	96	114	24	30
23	Lee, Kihyun; Chae, Yeon Joo	2017	17	31	6	58	106	57
24	Li, W.; Wang, X.; Haque, Md J.; Shafique, M. N.; Nawaz, M. Z.	2020	14	11	95	20	105	188
25	Lippel, Katherine; Vezina, Michel; Bourbonnais, Renee; Funes, Amelie	2016	1	29	110	13	1	24
26	Matos, Kenneth; O'Neill, Olivia; Lei, Xue	2018	0	17	6	81	7	171
27	McGlone, Matthew S; Pfister, R. Abigail	2015	3	65	0	59	68	49
28	Mendez, Maria J; Busenbark, John R	2015	35	66	4	87	17	300
29	Merluzzi, Jennifer	2017	6	211	6	42	10	28
30	Morgan, Whitney Botsford; Nelson, Johnathan; King, Eden B.; Mancini, Victor S.	2018	1	131	1	130	39	19
31	Motro, Daphna; Evans, Jonathan B.; Ellis, Aleksander P. J.; Benson, Lehman	2022	5	43	4	38	50	67
32	Nedkovski, Vojkan; Guerci, Marco	2021	6	71	1	170	20	48
33	Post, Corinne	2015	449	105	1	71	32	150
34	Rovira-Asenjo, N.; Pietraszkiewicz, A.; Sczesny, S.; Gumí, T.; Guimerà, R.; Sales-Pardo, M.	2017	227	97	0	27	26	59
35	Salin, Denise	2015	3	48	3	16	29	42
36	Sturges, Jane; Conway, Neil; Liefoghe, Andreas	2010	1	43	1	285	8	205
37	Thoroughgood, Christian N.; Sawyer, Katina B.; Hunter, Samuel T.	2013	5	89	1	93	31	100
38	Ul Hassan, Masood; Ayub, Arslan	2019	0	43	29	23	40	19
39	Yang, Seung-Bum; Guy, Mary E.	2015	1	35	87	13	12	33

Source: Own elaboration

Thus, every single keyword of the pillar terms such as “Psychological Safety” or “Satisfaction” is applied in the search. For columns containing a grouping of keywords, the individual results were then summed. Subsequently, the query results are recorded in Table 2, providing an overview of the number of hits per article and column. For a better understanding of the data displayed, a color-coding system is used to determine the focus areas of the individual articles. Thereby yellow indicates that at least 20 matches are found for a pillar.

In the following section, the findings obtained from the literature research are presented as structured by the pillar model. To improve clarity within the individual categories, a suitable sub-heading structure is used.

4.2. Psychological safety and satisfaction

Gender composition

Research has examined the interrelation of teamwork, diversity, and psychological safety. In doing so, Lee's et al. (2018) study revealed the value of psychological safety in fostering team creativity. In fact, the emergence of status conflicts, creating a mentally unsafe environment, is mitigated by gender diversity. Those conflicts are handled more constructively in mixed-gender as compared to dominant-gender teams. Owing to gender diversity, competition for social status is less aggressive and more intermediate, as gender-specific expectations already associate certain characteristics and behaviors with higher status. When task or interpersonal conflict is prevalent, gender diversity has less impact on psychological safety.

Multiple authors discovered no correlation between gender composition of teams and psychological safety, as both male-only and mixed-gender teams scored equally (Cole et al., 2023; Ohland & Beigpourian, 2022). However, Cole et al. (2023) observed in this context a higher perceived psychological safety for women with same-sex peers than with men. In contrast, men did not show greater psychological safety when working with sameness team members. Whereas women frequently cited a sense of discomfort when working with men, this was not reflected vice versa. However, the study also showed that psychological safety peaked at the end of the project, unaffected upon gender composition, and therefore could evolve positively over time.

Ohland and Beigpourian (2022) further found that team formation has an impact on female students' satisfaction. Specifically, they discovered that they are more pleased when fellow male teammates share the same nationality as themselves. Given that cultural and language differences exacerbate gender differences, thereby diminishing the team experience's satisfying nature.

Psychological harassment

Studies have shown that the prevalence of workplace bullying varies between genders. In terms of numbers, Lippel's et al. (2016) study, based on data from the Quebec Ministry of Labour, shows that 18.9% of female workers and 13.8% of male workers from a sample of 5071 respondents were affected by workplace mobbing within one year. Despite this difference, both genders showed similar negative health effects. Job position also showed an impact: Unskilled workers of both genders are most probably to be affected. While male managers and

professionals are considered to be at low risk, female professionals, senior and mid-level executives as well as supervisors are more likely to be targeted. Thus, gender differences are evident in this regard, as women experience equal risk of psychological harassment regardless of job category.

Gender proportions likewise are relevant in this context. In particular, working in jobs dominated by and also associated with the opposite gender poses a higher risk of bullying, especially for men. The risk of bullying for women is generally higher, but not necessarily influenced by gender composition, i.e., not higher in male-dominated workplaces. However, poor leadership leads to a higher harassment risk for women (Salin, 2015).

Emotional expression

According to Hassan and Ayub (2019), women possess higher levels of emotional intelligence than men, implying that they are better equipped to deal with workplace challenges and uncertainties by regulating their emotions and adjusting. This can be attributed to various societal and biological determinants. By contrast, low emotional intelligence is associated with trouble in coping with uncertainty, which causes poor work outcomes and, consequently, decreased job satisfaction and greater turnover intentions.

In addition, Yang and Guy (2015) showed the impact of pretending and expressing feelings on work satisfaction as well as turnover intention among public sector employees in Korea. For women, faking emotions as well as overt expression resulted in greater job satisfaction, yet simultaneously pretending increased turnover intention. In contrast, faking the emotional outburst had no effect among men.

Salary satisfaction

Gender gaps in labor orientation and wage differentials are fundamental for understanding job satisfaction. In this context, Ikävalko and Kohvakka (2021) have revealed that women who are strongly work-oriented, i.e., who place a high value on their job, typically show a lower satisfaction regarding their compensation levels relative to men with similar degree of work orientation. This is based on the mismatch between the self-perception of work performed and remuneration received for it which is considered unfair. On the other hand, women with lower work orientation show stronger satisfaction with their salary than men.

Bullock (2019) also calls unequal pay between men and women a problem of sexism. In her study, conducted in automotive companies, women share their experiences with unequal pay, which is common in the industry, where men earn 30,000 dollar more despite having the same experience and professional title.

Job match

Li et al. (2020) found a positive effect of diversity management on job satisfaction by matching employees and tasks closely. Workers capable of expressing their preferences and functional variety within their designated roles are both more satisfied and able to perform better on the job. Inadequate matches, on the other hand, can cause psychological pressure and anxiety among colleagues. Therefore, the aim of diversity management is to develop effective strategies

to improve workplace conformity and thereby combat negative attitudes in the workplace and discrimination.

4.3. Collaboration, interaction and behavior

Team identity

Typically, powerful team identification mitigates the relevance of gender categorization, as a feeling of group cohesion is more pronounced than the focus on gender distinctions (Hong et al., 2020). In this context, the study of Hong et al. (2020) highlights the role of individual identification with the team in influencing the likelihood of helping others, taking into account the gender composition of the group. Notably, for males, this behavior was dependent on the gender of the team partner, while for females there was no significant difference in this regard. In addition, female colleagues who are perceived as knowledgeable and skilled are more likely to be called upon for help with a task than male co-workers.

Gomez-Ruiz and Sánchez-Expósito (2020) found that team identification had different effects on free-riding behavior, i.e., avoidance of taking responsibility or measures in challenging situations, for both genders. When team identity was low, a similar tendency to free-ride was exhibited by each gender. However, higher team identification among men led to lower free-riding behavior and thus more cooperation, while women were nevertheless more tempted to not contribute their fair share of work.

Feeling of otherness

Particularly in male-dominated industries like automotive, gender plays a role in how individuals see themselves in the workplace. In this context, women in Bullock's study (2019) report their experience of being different. They describe their feeling of belonging to a minority, trapped in an isolated in-between position opposite of the male-dominated unit. However, this feeling is ambivalent, as women are nonetheless proud and inwardly self-conscious of their knowledge on vehicular technologies.

Counterproductive behavior

Research examined the influence of gender on counterproductive behavior. Accordingly, Merluzzi (2017) emphasized, that both men and women experience negative workplace bonds. Remarkably, however, females are more likely to have negative connections with other womankind than with males. A female's support network can also play a critical factor in mitigating the potential for conflict among same-gender peers. In particular, workplaces with women engaging in affective relationships rather than professional ties tend to have a greater probability of causing conflict.

Gonzalez-Mulé et al. (2013) investigated gender differences that contribute significantly to this behavior. There, men tended to be more aggressive in interpersonal behavior, while women scored better on both calmer and more pleasant traits. In addition, high emotional stability in women resulted in a lower risk of negative behavior towards fellow employees. A similar pattern is seen in men who score high in agreeableness.

Botsford Morgan et al. (2018) explored the relationship between counterproductive work

behavior and its punishment severity as a function of stereotype conformity. With respect to women, their results show that gender-conforming counterproductive behavior, i.e., behavior viewed as stereotypically feminine, such as gossiping, is punished more severely than gender-inconsistent, i.e., typically masculine, behavior. In contrast, men who exhibited a stereotypically feminine form of counterproductive behavior were penalized more harshly than men who exhibited a male-perceived form. Thus, reactions to counterproductive behavior in the workplace vary and depend primarily on two factors: the gender exhibiting the behavior and the stereotypical perception that classifies it as male or female.

Creativity & Innovation

The way conflicts are managed in teams can enhance or diminish creativity. Female dyads show a more intense exchange of ideas during task conflicts and thus a higher creative output. This is mainly due to their inclusive and less assertive approach compared to male and mixed dyads. Relationship conflicts, on the other hand, have a worse effect on creative collaboration in female and mixed dyads than in male dyads (Chua & Jin, 2020).

Indeed, understanding workplace relationships and information flow is key for finding the appropriate networking position that enables employees to enhance their creativity (Nedkovski & Guerci, 2021). Nedkovski and Guerci (2021) discovered in their research conducted in an Italian consulting firm that brokers possessing a higher number of homophilic connections in their social network, with regard to similar professional record and gender, are more innovative. The main reflection of this is a more efficient network-wide knowledge transfer, higher credibility, and a shared vision resulting in greater engagement.

Team dynamics

Lee et al. (2018) emphasize that gender diversity in a team sets the framework for thriving interpersonal interaction and collaborative growth, rather than directly affecting intrapersonal dynamics.

Concerning team dynamics, mixed-gender teams tend to outperform male-only teams, especially in terms of task interdependence in the early stages of teamwork. This is due to mutual reliance on the unique knowledge of team members, which leads to better collaboration between them. Yet, this depends on the ability to recognize and integrate the different skills. In later stages of teamwork, pure male and mixed teams perform in a similar pattern with respect to team dynamics (Ohland & Beigpourian, 2022).

Female employees often described feelings of social isolation and discomfort, whether intentional or not, in relation to work-related social venues or even business travel, particularly in male-dominated settings. Peeking up to the point, as one study participant described to involve her supervisor for permission to abstain from obligatory social drinking events at work where she feels excluded as the only female among male colleagues. Notably, however, there are also positive incidents in which women experienced strong ties and connections with male co-workers, managers, or mentors, primarily through sharing common life experiences, such as family involvement. Bonding in the social environment, such as jointly playing golf or field hockey, fosters this as well (Bullock, 2019).

Stereotypes & gender bias

Gender biases and stereotypes are common in today's work culture. In this context, Bosak et al. (2012) showed that superficial perceptions of stereotypes are grounded more upon social roles and less on gender. This study was conducted in a randomized survey setting in Chicago and thus shows a general picture of opinions on the topic.

Whereas Bullock (2019) noted that women are subject to gender bias and male-favored communication from both clients and colleagues. This is particularly evident in condescending tones and skepticism that question women's competence and expertise. Particularly the preference of customers to speak to male employees makes it difficult for women to build up positive professional relations and gain credibility.

Gender bias is also evident in performance appraisals, which are deemed to be neutral. Female employees are often rated lower in performance evaluations, precisely in behavioral grades reflecting informal criteria such as family obligations. Even though women attend after-work events just as often as men, they are not recognized by male evaluators. Stereotypically, women are seen as different to men, who are considered to be high performing “breadwinner father[s]” (Fenech et al., 2022, p. 435). Females, conversely, are often stamped with the labels of motherhood and homemaking, which are ascribed a lower status. In particular, women who do not strategically hide their mothership, are sidelined in the workplace (Fenech et al., 2022). Evidence of this can likewise be found in the mutual evaluation within a team. Women evaluate the skills of their colleagues more positively and make no distinction according to gender. Men, on the other hand, who strongly self-identify with their gender, show prejudice against highly qualified female colleagues by evaluating them less favorably than comparatively lower-educated teammates (Joshi, 2014).

According to Latu et al. (2015), implicit gender stereotypes also occur in job interviews. Both interviewers and the applicants themselves are influenced by implicit gender biases, which is also reflected in the assessment of the performance delivered by female candidates. Indeed, if interviewers are biased, this may affect their engagement with and perceptions of female applicants. This can create a feedback loop in which the stereotypical expectations are communicated within the application process, thus also having a negative impact on the candidates' real performance. Specifically, when interviewers showed strong hidden bias while asserting their neutral judgmental ability, this resulted in the poorest performance scores for female applicants. In addition, female applicants' intrinsic implicit stereotypes also affect the way appraisers perceive them.

The phenomenon of stereotype threat has implications for communication performance. In McGlone and Pfister's (2015) study, employees were found to have higher levels of anxiety and pressure in performance measures that are based on gender stereotyped skills. Being a leader is stereotypically associated with men, while women are seen as caretakers of interpersonal relationships. As a result, when women are tested on their leadership abilities, they often exhibit nearly 50% more verbal errors and hesitancy. Similar results were found for men tested on their relational skills. Thus, both men and women perform worse when they feel they are being benchmarked against stereotypical skills of the opposite sex.

Intersectionality

Other sociodemographic characteristics, such as social class or race, also influence individual self-perceptions of stereotypes and discrimination. Research shows that women of color, for example, face even more obstacles in the workplace than middle-class whites, and especially compared to men (Bullock, 2019). This is also evident in responses to outward anger expression. While black males experience similar feedback as white males in this regard, women of color receive significantly more negative reactions than white women. This shows that although similar characteristics in terms of gender are evident, race can also lead to stereotyping such as the “angry black woman” (Motro et al., 2022, p. 142) cliché. Causing women of color to be discriminated against and thus rated less favorably in terms of their accomplishments and management skills (Motro et al., 2022).

Sexual harassment

Women report a rather retrogressive gender culture that leads to extremes such as subtle and overt sexism. In particular, the company's failure to take seriously and support frequent complaints from women to the HR department about sexual remarks made by their male colleagues was criticized. Only after a case of sexual harassment was reported the company took action such as providing training. This leads to a frustrating and frightening feeling in the workplace for female employees (Bullock, 2019).

4.4. Performance

Proportion of gender diversity

Li et al. (2020) discovered a direct positive link existing between team diversity and work performance. Whereas, Bae and Skaggs (2019) found a u-shaped dependency in service oriented organizations. This implies that productivity is highest at the gender diversity extremes, i.e., either with completely homogeneous or totally heterogeneous teams, and not in an intermediate setting.

Davcheva and González-Romá (2022) revealed a beneficial indirect impact of female share in work teams on performance via social cohesion. This is supported by Joshi's (2014) study, which shows that a higher proportion of highly qualified women in gender-balanced teams leads to increased productive output, especially when women are also represented in leadership positions.

Gender differences

The key predictors of workers' job performance vary by gender. Men are more likely to attribute their performance to their own personal abilities. Women, on the other hand, tend to credit their achievements more to the availability of corporate given opportunities and external setup (Edgar et al., 2021).

In addition, family-friendly corporate policies positively affect productivity of women both at the team and overall organizational level, as greater work flexibility has a profound influence on the hiring rate of high-skilled women, as well as on female employees satisfaction and motivation (Bae & Skaggs, 2019).

Leader - team interaction

In highly diversified teams, different treatment of individual members by the leader causes adverse behaviors, resulting in poorer team performance. Therefore, understanding and building up similar professional relations is the key here (Lee & Chae, 2017). Furthermore, more frequent interaction between leaders and members of their team facilitates the formation of social bonds for female participants, which in turn reinforces community behavior and thus boosts team performance (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022).

In addition, leaders' authentic behavior in terms of transparency, impartiality, and morality had a positive effect on psychological state and thus on performance, especially among female team members (Daraba et al., 2021).

4.5. Leadership and management

Male vs. female leadership

Men are seen as having greater leadership influence compared to women. This gender gap is also apparent in shared leadership among individuals. Even if women are involved in collective management, their contribution is not regarded as meaningful, regardless of whether their behavior corresponds with gender roles (Mendez & Busenbark, 2015).

Moreover, stereotypes influence team members' preference for male or female leaders, depending on the state of the organization. During successful periods, men are preferred based on their underlying stereotypical traits. Conversely, in challenging times, male candidates are seen as less eligible due to their inferior interpersonal qualities. This leads to women being considered more suitable to lead a company in critical times (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010).

Yet, Post's (2015) analysis based on 82 innovative teams underlines key benefits of female leadership. It shows that teams with growing functional variety that are managed by women demonstrate greater team cohesion than those headed by men. This is also evident with increasing team size or geographic distribution, where collaborative and participative learning is also more pronounced under female direction.

Glass ceiling

However, women often feel disadvantaged, especially when it comes to promotion opportunities. Bullock's (2019) study highlights the frustrating experiences of women who are deprived of career opportunities by male colleagues who pass off their ideas as their own. Particularly in leadership positions, women themselves suggest to “just be prepared for ups and downs, being overlooked because you’re a female” (Bullock, 2019, p. 207).

Female adaptive behavior

Studies indicated that female executives, especially in a male-dominated work context, display so-called “anti-girl” (Bullock, 2019, p. 208) attitudes, i.e., a less feminine personality, in order to be perceived as respectable. This is reflected in a constant feeling of pressure to appear tough and to discard any traits that are considered stereotypically feminine, as they might be seen as weaknesses. Simultaneously, women feel the need to work harder to receive the same

recognition as their male counterparts. Also in meetings, a high level of preparation and a bulletproof attitude are crucial to represent a high level of expertise and competence. Accordingly, women in managerial roles also frequently use tone-setting as communicative tactic, such as dropping their voice, for sounding more self-assured and less questionable (Bullock, 2019).

Leader/team relationship

Visibility of career development opportunities affects team members' interactions with their boss differently by gender. Men with well-defined career paths relate a good relationship with their supervisor more strongly to their subjective professional performance. In contrast, females with lower clarity of their career development derive greater career success from a positive relation to their boss (Jung & Takeuchi, 2016).

Evaluation of leaders

The study by Larsson et al. (2023) shows that women are rated better than men by their subordinates in terms of their leadership style. In particular, female leaders score higher on the development-oriented and the conventionally positive leadership orientations. Essentially, they display a high level of responsibility, support individual consideration and participation, and try to reach consensus but also take control. Concurrently, female managers also received a lower score for destructive, i.e., ego-oriented and unfair, behavior from their teammates. In this context, Rovira-Asenjo et al. (2017) also examined self-assessment and team assessment as a function of gender and project status. While no significant gender-specific differences in self-assessment are discernible at the start of the project, a positive increase in self-confidence is evident among women as the project progresses, even surpassing the self-assessment of men at the end. This is due to the fact that successful team leadership strengthens the self-esteem of female leaders. With regard to the team's evaluation of the leaders, at the beginning of the project there is a tendency for the female leaders to be rated better. However, the evaluation evens out over the course of the project, and at the end the leaders of both genders score equally well.

Masculinity context culture

Leadership manifests itself in varying degrees in the environment of different cultures. Matos et al. (2018) found that those characterized by male competitiveness set the stage for the development of toxic leadership qualities. The latter leads to more stress and conflict, which also increases the turnover rate in the workplace. At the same time, there is a positive effect on importance and engagement at work for male but not for female employees. However, while some men might be able to derive identity affirmation from this over-competitive and abrasive work environments, few women are able to do likewise. Indeed, this is exemplified in the “#metoo” phenomenon, where women share their experiences of abusive and sexually violent behavior in predominantly male-dominated sectors.

Further, male leaders who commit mistakes in a masculinized work setting are assessed in a more negative manner relative to their female peers, due to expectations suggesting that the latter are more likely to fail in a male-dominated work place (Thoroughgood et al., 2013).

Organizational support

While there are no gender differences observed in professional self-management, a moderating influence is shown by perceived organizational support. Indeed, when organizational support is poorly noticed, women tend to engage more in internally oriented networking and presence seeking behaviors than men. However, when organizational support is high, both genders exhibit comparable visibility behaviors, but men lean toward networking more strongly compared to women (Sturges et al., 2010).

5. DISCUSSION

Through a systematic literature review this study has answered the research questions proposed. At first, the question of how gender diversity affects teamwork has been examined in more detail. Results indicated that gender diversity can have a profound impact on various dimensions of teamwork, both positively and negatively. For the sake of completeness, it should be noted that the effects are influenced by contextual factors. This means that statements about teamwork must take into account that teams can be formed in a variety of industries, fields, and hierarchical levels with very different activities or tasks, from a cleaning team to a high-level management team (Bae & Skaggs, 2019; Bullock, 2019).

Notably, mixed-gender teams show the potential to work together more effectively than same-gender groups. This is primarily due to the diversity of expertise and skills that can be leveraged. For example, using gender diversity can create more holistic and effective strategies for tasks such as the constructive design of a new product, as it allows for a variety of perspectives that can better reflect the needs and preferences of the target consumer group (Ohland & Beigpourian, 2022).

Lee et al (2018), point out another key finding is that gender-mixed teams can foster a psychologically safer environment. In an inclusive and respectful environment where conflicts are resolved constructively, team members are more motivated to contribute and share their ideas openly. This promotes creativity and overall team performance. However, it is important to avoid confrontations over tasks or interpersonal conflicts, as these can create a tense atmosphere that makes it difficult to take full advantage of gender diversity.

In addition, gender diversity in teams can have a compensatory effect by counterbalancing gender-specific characteristics, resulting in a more positive team climate. According to Gonzalez-Mulé et al. (2013), men are more prone for aggressive intrapersonal interactions that can yield counterproductive team experiences. For example, overly competitive male colleagues who seek to outperform their peers at all costs can lead to a hostile work environment. Women, on the other hand, typically possess high emotional intelligence and calmer character traits enabling them to identify, empathize with, and regulate emotions, and thus remain adaptable in difficult times. Hence, having both genders in the team can help defuse tense situations and offset more aggressive behavior, contributing to a more harmonic collaborative setting (Hassan & Ayub, 2019).

Nevertheless, gender differences may also express in the form of unequal treatment and bullying within teams. Lippel et al. (2016) have shown in this context that women are more frequently affected by psychological harassment than their male colleagues, regardless of their occupational professional or in managerial level. This discrepancy can be attributed to both stereotypes and a gender-dominated work culture that fosters such mistreatment (Bullock, 2019; Salin, 2015). Distorted perceptions and regarding women's expertise and competence not only affect their self-confidence, but also limit their opportunities for advancement (Fenech et al., 2022; Joshi, 2014). Externally imposed biases can impact women in a variety of ways, such as raising doubts about their own abilities or assertiveness, which in turn can influence their willingness to engage in team discussions, propose new creative ideas, and take on leading roles. Stereotypes also lead to female colleagues being overlooked or rejected in team

interactions or decision-making. This side-lining can, again, undermine the integrative team culture and reduce motivation, satisfaction, and engagement (Bullock, 2019; McGlone & Pfister, 2015).

The gender composition of a team has a significant impact on the willingness to provide help within the team, with distinct differences evident between men and women. Men show a greater readiness to help their male colleagues, reinforcing a strong team identity that may not extend to female co-workers in the same way (Hong et al., 2020). Thus, a pronounced team identity mitigates men's free-riding behavior to a greater extent than women's (Gomez-Ruiz & Sánchez-Expósito, 2020). Instead, women often feel left out and not part of the team. This discomfort causes females to be less willing to participate in social and work-related gatherings, which further reinforces their feelings of exclusion (Bullock, 2019).

Moreover, a noticeable gender pay gap in teams or organizations in general can create a sense of inequality and injustice among team members. Often, men tend to earn substantially more than their female counterparts, even though they share similar career backgrounds and job title (Bullock, 2019). This is of particular importance for women who place a high priority on their job. Instilled feelings of frustration can reduce satisfaction among female colleagues, leading to lower engagement and less collaborative efforts (Ikävalko & Kohvakka, 2021). For example, if a female executive in the automotive sector finds that her male peer in a similar position earns 20 percent more, her willingness to put the same level of effort and commitment into her work may decrease (Bullock, 2019).

Gender-specific allocation of roles in leading positions has a beneficial bearing on management and development of teams. Particularly in teams with a broad array of tasks or geographical distribution, along with increasing size, female leads show a positive contribution to team cohesion and learning (Post, 2015).

Yet women often feel compelled to conform in order to gain the respect of their colleagues. In fact, they strategically use tactics such as intonation to diminish feminine attributes and emphasize their authority and expertise. Thus, they counteract potential stereotypes or biases linked to gender clichés, and display their professional prowess (Bullock, 2019).

In the following section, the second research question is then discussed, i.e., how organizations can create suitable favorable conditions. This means how they can proactively and strategically create a work environment and workplaces that are inclusive and equitable in promoting gender-diverse teamwork.

Diversity management must be given top priority in companies in order to create the best possible setting for efficient teamwork. This includes concrete planning and coordination of employees and tasks in order to achieve the optimal fit between assigned role and preference of the respective. Thereby, the employees' job satisfaction and work performance can be significantly improved while reducing psychological pressure (Li et al., 2020). In particular, the direct involvement of employees via surveys to determine their preferences, as well as project assignments that enable validation, might prove beneficially in this regard.

In addition, organizations should establish clear guidelines for recruitment, professional development and appraisal processes aimed at equal opportunities, and anti-discrimination.

Specifically, this would counter biased assessments that undervalue the skills and commitment of female professionals compared to their male counterparts, such as the stereotype that men are superior leaders while women are generally viewed as homemakers (Fenech et al., 2022; Joshi, 2014). Instead, it could promote respect and inclusion of all genders in the workplace.

This goes hand in hand with the need to regularly audit and revise performance appraisal systems to keep them both objective and fairly applied. Particular attention must be paid here to ensure that candidates are not assessed on gender-stereotypical competencies, such as relationship skills, vis-à-vis the opposite sex (Latu et al., 2015; McGlone & Pfiester, 2015). As the study by McGlone and Pfiester (2015) has shown, this leads to internal pressure, which in turn has an externally visible detrimental effect on performance.

Beyond, priority should be given to creating a safe working place by proactively tackling and combating gender discrimination. This includes taking complaints of sexism and harassment severely and investigating them carefully, with clear corporate rules, procedures and disciplinary actions in place to guarantee the wellbeing of every employee. If not seriously addressed, it can otherwise have profound consequences and jeopardize the entire corporate culture. Not only does it undermine employee morale, but it also drives up turnover rates, ultimately damaging the company's reputation and overall performance (Bullock, 2019).

Likewise, companies should seek to actively encourage gender diversity in executive positions. Indeed, research shows that a greater proportion of high-skilled professional females in these positions contribute to a business environment that is more integrative and productive (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022). It is essential in this context that companies overcome the glass ceiling with the removal of any barriers that prevent the professional growth of women, such as promotion opportunity bias. Doing so can be achieved in fostering a corporate culture which values various leadership styles, proactively hires and trains female executives, and enhances transparent advancement procedures (Bullock, 2019). Here, well-defined career tracks and advancement prospects for both men and women serve also as a key driver for motivation and ambition (Jung & Takeuchi, 2016).

Furthermore, it is crucial that enterprises identify and understand the key features contributing to an outstanding performance for each gender and create a tailor-made setup that specifically addresses those needs. As Edgar et al. (2021) point out, females trace their success largely to the possibilities provided within an organization, and the supportive conditions offered to them. This underscores the importance of creating an enabling environment to empower females by providing them with the resources and support needed to succeed in their respective roles. These include also more flexible work arrangements with options ranging from home office to flexible working hours that allow for a proper work-life balance for all employees. As Bae and Skaggs (2019) showed, this increases the hiring quota of high-qualified female workers and their job satisfaction.

Moreover, fostering effective leadership in teams, especially among female members, is critical. The interaction between leader and team has a key impact on building a sense of community and ultimately increasing overall performance (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022). Caution is required here, as Lee and Chae (2017) noted that disparate treatment of single members by the leader in a diversified team leads to lower performance. Implementing leadership programs to train positive role models and hosting team-building events could be

one way the company can forge positive bonds and foster a supportive work culture (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022).

In addition to team-specific characteristics, it is also essential for organizations to consider both the country and its culture as a whole in which it operates. For example, cultures that are marked by a strong masculine competitive mentality place particular challenges on teamwork. Tackling cultural realities along with taking suitable measures is therefore key for reducing occupational stress and conflict, and creating a more productive corporate culture from which all employees can benefit (Matos et al., 2018).

Ultimately, recommendations for the gender-specific composition of teams can be derived from this. Research suggests that several considerations should be taken into account when determining the optimal gender balance in teams in order to promote both diversity and inclusion while leveraging team output.

To achieve optimal team performance, companies should emphasize the formation of mixed-gender teams with a high percentage of highly skilled women. Comprehensive research repeatedly shows that mixed-gender teams perform better and have stronger social cohesion than single-gender teams (Davcheva & González-Romá, 2022; Joshi, 2014; Ohland & Beigpourian, 2022).

In order to obtain gender balance, the characteristics of each gender should be taken into account. Female team members have calming skills to dampen the aggressive tendencies of male colleagues and allow for an intense exchange of ideas (Chua & Jin, 2020; Gonzalez-Mulé et al., 2013). However, women's propensity for conflict in same-sex professional relationships should be considered, especially when emotional connections exist (Merluzzi, 2017). Also, with a lack of organizational support, women display a higher ability to form internal networks in comparison to men (Sturges et al., 2010). Thus, proper gender balance capitalizes on the strengths of both male and female team members and takes advantage of their different skills and perspectives.

An optimal blend between diversity and homogeneity within team networks is pivotal for enabling effective knowledge transfer. Whereas diversity adds valuable depth of perspective and insights, it is equally important to avoid over-diversity, which could constrain knowledge exchange as well as advocacy. Drawing on the research of Nedkovski and Guerci (2021), brokers' network linkages show that homophilic ties based on a common gender and professional background tend to exhibit a stronger innovation capability.

In team building, it is also vital to detect and address intersectionality, which goes beyond gender alone. This refers to the intertwining of multiple social identities, like gender and race. Meaning, a woman of color may face profoundly different experiences and challenges than a white colleague within a team. Therefore, when forming teams, it is important to pick members who do not tolerate any discrimination or prejudice. Only in this way can an inclusive and open-minded team be created in which everyone is respected and can express themselves openly (Bullock, 2019; Motro et al., 2022).

Finally, the most qualified and capable candidate should be selected when choosing a team leader, regardless of gender. Stereotypically, men are often favored as leaders during successful times. However, women add valuable skills such as individual support and a high sense of

responsibility, which are seen as particularly helpful in challenging times. Therefore, the selection process must be unbiased and consider skills and qualities that fit with the team (Bruckmüller & Branscombe, 2010; Larsson et al., 2023; Rovira-Asenjo et al., 2017).

5.1. Theoretical implications

This paper extends previous research that has focused primarily on the effects of gender diversity on isolated teamwork dimensions such as productivity, bullying, or communication. Instead, a holistic approach was used here based on the literature review conducted to deepen the understanding and advancing the current state of the research field regarding the complex interrelationships between gender diversity and teamwork.

Thereby, the pillar model presented provides a comprehensive framework that encompasses multiple dimensions. It focuses on well-being, which is reflected in psychological safety and satisfaction that can have a direct impact on team member engagement. Further, the model examines the impact of gender diversity on team dynamics and synergy by comparing behaviors, collaboration, and interaction across different constructed studies. As an additional evaluable and tangible dimension, the performance pillar was introduced to assess how gender diversity can be beneficial to capability and efficiency compared to single-gender teams. Finally, leadership and management were introduced as essential components to highlight the role of gender and the challenges they face in the team.

Previous research has shown mixed results on the impact of gender diversity, particularly on team performance, behavior, and psychological safety. In general, various studies showed that gender-mixed teams are able to collaborate better and create a psychologically safer environment. Yet, it is evident that team composition and organizational structure play a key role. Affirmative team climate can be created by properly balancing the gender characteristics of the members. Organizational support especially matters for women in realizing their full potential in mixed teams. However, the paper also identifies several challenges that mixed-gender teams face, from inequalities in incorporation, pay gap, and assessment, to bullying and sexual harassment. In doing so, the study adds to the ongoing discussion regarding how to overcome such barriers and unleash the full potential of mixed teams.

5.2. Practical implications

Leveraging this in-depth understanding of research, this paper yields actionable insights for companies striving towards creating a favorable setting for gender-mixed teams. Acknowledging that there is no one-size-fits-all solution is essential, as the context of the team, e.g., hierarchical structure and industry, must be carefully considered. However, by comparing and interpreting various quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies carried out in different environments, this paper proposes more generalized recommendations.

A first step is for companies to prioritize diversity management and promote an inclusive culture. This includes several key actions at the team, leadership and organizational levels. Establishing clear guiding principles and policies reflecting the company's commitment to establishing a diverse and inclusive work environment, and instructions for their

implementation, is important. This needs to commence with the recruitment, evaluation and promotion processes in order to provide greater transparency and fairness in these processes. Additionally, leaders need to be trained on inclusive leadership practices that equip them with the knowledge and skills to both leverage the strengths of diversity within the team and to recognize and address challenges such as bias. Since the latter, in particular, can act as good role models for the rest of the team and inspire the team to embrace diverse perspectives. Team training sessions dealing with the identification of prejudices should also be offered so that employees can learn to recognize their own prejudices and to challenge them in a next step. Particularly sensitivity programs can alert employees to implicit prejudices and overcome them. In this context, it is crucial to establish clear policies and procedures against discrimination and harassment of any kind. Above all, anonymous channels through which affected employees can report a concern confidentially are of key importance. Accordingly, every report must be taken seriously and followed up to ensure a safe environment for all.

Companies should clearly position themselves in addressing and eliminating gender inequalities. Particularly with regard to pay gaps, regular pay equity audits can be instrumental in identifying them. Building upon this, companies should take corrective measures aimed at ensuring fair pay to avoid injustice and lower engagement within teams.

Determining for team performance is also the composition of the team. A structural approach to team formation that takes into account not only gender diversity but also the balance of gender-specific competencies and individual skills can bring significant benefits. In particular, involving employees, for example via a platform where their interests are queried, can be helpful in optimally aligning employees, team and project. Following successful team building, communication and conflict resolution mechanisms should also be trained to create a team dynamic that leverages the unique strengths of each member.

Organizational support is particularly important for women to prevent glass ceiling and to encourage diversity in leadership positions. To this end, leadership development programs or mentorships could be introduced that particularly promote the skills and advancements of female employees. Further, providing opportunities for females to excel, e.g., through speaking engagements or attending industry events, could be beneficial.

It is an ongoing process for a company to create an inclusive work environment, which can only be achieved by tracking and improving progress. Regular feedback should be obtained for this purpose from teams at all levels of the company through surveys, interviews or even focus groups, in which they can share their perceptions and experiences regarding gender diversity. Feedback gathered should be compared to the company's previously set targets in order to adjust and improve further measures.

5.3. Limitations and further research

The limitations of this work provide opportunities for further research. Given the vast dimensions and diverse characteristics of gender, this paper focuses primarily on male-female collaboration in terms of teamwork and gender, which is expected to be the largest part of today's workplace. Future studies should thus include all genders, as non-binary or other less represented identities, in their investigations. This will allow researchers to build a more

comprehensive understanding of how diversity affects teamwork, how stereotypes can be broken down, and how a more inclusive work environment can be contributed to.

In addition, the confluence of a variety of identities such as race, social status, and gender adds to the individual's perception and experience within a team. This is known as the concept of intersectionality, which has been touched here but not explored in detail. To gain a deeper insight into the implications for individual team members, prospective studies should also consider intersectionality, as this can also affect the overall team dynamic. Identifying and addressing these exceptional challenges and opportunities that individuals face in teams is key. Furthermore, no specific focus was placed on culture. The included studies were conducted in different countries, from Ireland to the U.S. to South Korea, which have different characteristics in terms of collaboration and gender perceptions. Therefore, their results are influenced by this environment, which must be taken into account. Since cultural dimensions can affect a range of aspects including communication, perception, and conflict resolution, further research should incorporate these to guide organizations in deriving culturally specific strategies and actions that promote gender diverse teamwork in the face of culturally diverse backgrounds.

It should be noted that the primary focus in this paper centered on face-to-face team work, as the majority of the included studies were conducted in this setting. It should be noted that virtual mixed-gender teams face even more specific challenges due to physical distance. Therefore, it would also be of interest if future research concentrates on the dynamics and obstacles in such virtual settings.

Proactively designing gender diverse work seems to be a major key to providing advantages to companies that engage in it intensively. Accordingly, more studies on gender diversity and teamwork are needed in the future, as this is a constantly evolving process and therefore the timeliness of the study is important to develop both the research field and the organizations. More research is needed, particularly in the area of psychological safety and gender diversity in teams, as this is fundamental to effective collaboration and team dynamics and fills the current knowledge gap.

6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper was to conduct an in-depth and extensive analysis of the current state of research on gender diversity and teamwork by means of a systematic literature review. In taking a broader approach, the present research responded to the premise of multiple authors to investigate the complex underlying dynamics surrounding this relation. Thus, the results presented highlight the multi-layered influence that gender diversity has in teams and reveal a range of positive as well as negative effects across various teamwork dimensions organized under the pillar model.

Affirmative evidence from research indicates that mixed-gender teams tend to perform in a more effective manner than single-gender teams. Indeed, this is credited to the diversity of knowledge and skills among team members, which enables a more powerful approach to the tasks at hand. In addition, the constructive management of conflicts adds to the establishment of an environment that is perceived to be psychologically safer within these teams. Subsequently, team members get empowered to share their ideas, thereby increasing creativity. With a properly balanced team composition, gender-specific characteristics can be evened out, for example, by offsetting aggressive characteristics with calm ones, thus promoting a more positive team climate and mitigating strained situations.

Yet, it is paramount to recognize the inherent challenges that may emerge in this setup. Having gender differences can cause unequal treatment or even harassment within teams. Especially females experience frequent inequitable treatment, irrespective of their professional position. Indeed, this can be traced back to deeply embedded stereotypes and gender-dominated environments. Such prejudices can raise counterproductive behavior and negatively impact on a number of levels. First, at the individual level, they erode the self-confidence as well as the performance of female employees. On the career track, they restrict women's opportunities for advancement, which is also known as the glass ceiling phenomena. On the team side, the gender role assignment can negatively impact helpfulness, as men tend to be more supportive to fellow colleagues with the same gender than female co-workers. At worst, this can result in female team members actually being or being perceived to be isolated in both social and work-related gatherings, disrupting the team dynamic.

As each team is different and shaped by circumstances, including hierarchical level and industry, there is no one-size-fits-all formula. Nevertheless, it is essential for companies to invest in an inclusive and supportive work environment that promotes gender diverse teams. The prioritization of diversity management along with the realization of proactive and strategic actions are essential. This involves setting clear policies for inclusion, transparency and equal opportunity at all organizational levels, ranging from recruitment through career development and performance appraisals. In this way, prejudices in these processes can be reduced and the tendency to underestimate the commitment and skills of female professionals can be tempered. Furthermore, it must be explicitly expressed that discrimination and harassment of any kind have no place and that complaints are taken seriously in order to create a safe environment for all employees. Companies should implement clear rules and disciplinary measures to deal with complaints appropriately. Likewise, creating safe and trusted channels where team members can share openly their experiences without fear of negative consequences is integral.

To combat the root, companies should also conduct employee awareness and training programs around issues related to gender stereotyping or unconscious bias. Such interventions can make visible the unique gender challenges faced by individuals and highlight the value of each team member's distinctive skills and expertise when working in mixed-gender teams. It also stimulates reflection and rethinking of one's own attitudes, which encourages a more inclusive mindset.

Beyond this, carefully mapping out and sequencing the formation of teams is key. Focus is on achieving an optimal equilibrium of gender diversity by taking into account not only gender-specific qualities, but also individual skills. The strategic alignment of individual team members, including their preferences and competencies, can lead to an ideal match with the given task and team that maximizes collective potential and effectiveness.

To create an environment where both male and female team members can perform at their best, it is important that companies understand the dynamics and nuances that contribute in order to subsequently create the optimal supportive framework. Particularly for females, the level of organizational back-up they receive is a determining factor that significantly shapes their potential to flourish and succeed. The quality of interactions experienced between females and their team leaders also proves to be a game changer for their commitment and subsequent performance.

Ultimately, companies need to cultivate the involvement as well as the influence of female employees in decision-making processes and executive roles. Doing so can be achieved via targeted promotional programs, mentoring opportunities, and creating occasions where women can showcase proficiency and expertise. By taking an assertive role in organizing and running teams, women can serve as role models and be instrumental in overcoming gender stereotypes and biases as they gain recognition and respect within teams. Gender awareness is not a one-time event, but a long-term process that needs to be carefully and specifically tailored to the needs of each company and sustained over time.

Conclusively, this paper makes a significant contribution to further research on the potential of gender-mixed teams and the framing of strategies to foster a more inclusive and empowering work environment. These findings allow companies to leverage the full potential of their employees by drawing on all team members' unique assets and potentials. A greater emphasis on gender plurality in teams drives positive change and lays the seeds for a work culture that is diverse, innovative, and prosperous. This is in accordance with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to promote gender equality (Goal 5) and to create economic growth through an inclusive work environment (Goal 8).

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