

Gender in Conflict: Gender, Conflict Resolution and Workplace Disputes: Conceptual and Theoretical Processes

Stream Organizer(s):

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Stream Outline:

The intention of the stream is to uncover and discover the narratives around gender and conflict resolution with a focus on workplace dispute resolution. The basic assumption is that gender differences in workplace dispute resolution are features of the social organization of work within firms that may contribute to other employment inequities between men and women. The literature is rich on workplace conflict and related dispute resolution issues (especially the laboratory-research based on gender in negotiation and organizations, i.e., Bowles, Babcock and Lai, 2007; Solnick, 2001), however gender differences in workplace dispute resolution and their consequences for other aspects of employment inequality remain largely unexamined. Very little is known about the intra-organizational processes that create, maintain or nullify gender inequality in the workplace. Workplace dispute resolution can affect such gender inequality, associated with earnings, promotions, turnover and job satisfaction. Workplace dispute resolution refers to the formal and informal rules individuals and groups use to resolve problems in employment. Within organizations and such rules function “as a system of private law, ... with its own interpretations, practices, and customs built over time” (Thomson, 1974:1). These rules are typically designed to protect employees against arbitrary authority and unjust actions and to provide for systematic review of complaints and grievances (Scott, 1965). Most of the research focuses on the formal aspects of the alternative dispute resolution systems.

However, this stream's focus will be more about the effects of rules as interorganizational-level phenomena on individuals' (or groups') objective experiences in the workplace and employment outcomes. The stream will also explore the effects on negotiation processes in intra-household and collective bargaining.

The objective of the stream is the attempt to develop a conceptual and theoretical model to theorize that gender differences exist in the origins, processes, and outcomes of workplace dispute; that these are related to gender roles, the sex composition of jobs, and institutionalized work structures (i.e., unions, firms, industries, and occupations) and that this nonpecuniary dimension of the workplace contributes to other observed patterns of gender inequality in employment.

Possible themes include:

In order to establish a multi-disciplinary conceptual model, possible contributions can include: qualitative research on gender inequality based on gender gap in wages, gender gap in management and leadership positions, sex segregation of occupations, mechanisms of ascriptive inequality, negotiation theories, conflict resolution theories, emotional intelligence, economics of conflict analysis. Contributions are welcome from a wide range of disciplines, from law to psychology and organizational behavior. The findings will be published as a contribution to the wealth of knowledge in the field of gender and negotiation.

Key Words:

Gender, Conflict Management, Psychology, Law, Power Relations, Social Systems, Culture, Communication, Leadership, Negotiation, Concept of Personhood

Publication Plan:

Part of a special issue on gender and conflict resolution in the journal, *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* (Emerald Press) and an edited book proposal for Edward Elgar Press.

References:

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