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Labor
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Gender

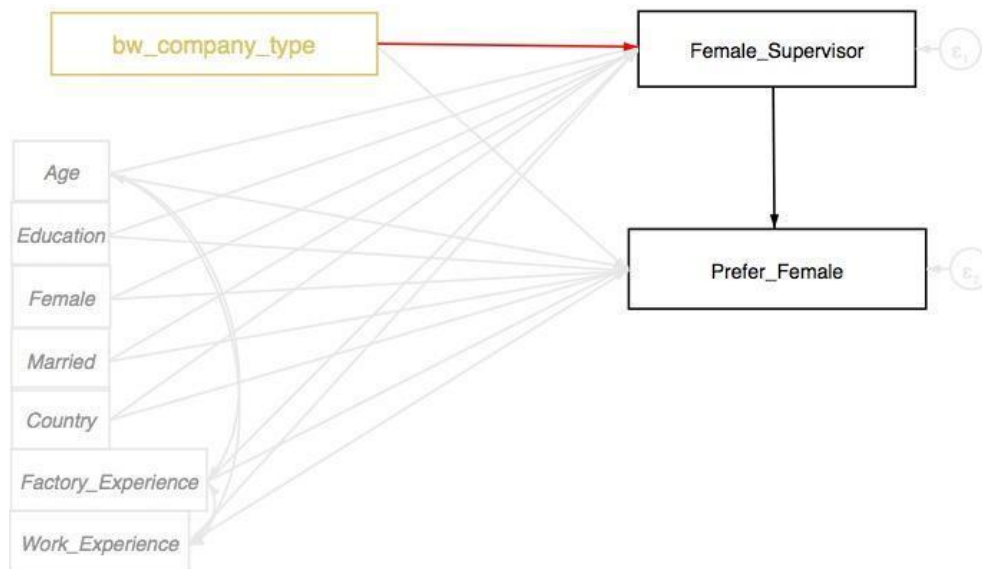
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Key Findings

- This brief examines the impact of training on supervisor gender preference to gain a better understanding of whether there exists a relationship between training and preference for female supervisors.
- Based on the differential impacts of supervisor gender on both worker and firm-level outcomes, we are interested in learning whether there exists a relationship between training and preference for female supervisors.
- Our analysis shows that workers in Better Work factories are less likely to have female supervisors than workers in non-Better Work factories. Furthermore, those who have female supervisors are more likely to prefer female supervisors than those who have male supervisors.
- The finding that workers with female supervisors are more likely to prefer female supervisors suggests that female supervisors may indeed have positive effects on worker outcomes.

Supervisor Gender and Gender Preference



Variables of interest:

bw_company_type: Is the worker a member of a Better Work factory? (binary)

Female_Supervisor: Is your direct supervisor female or male? (binary)

Prefer_Female: Do you prefer to work with a female or male supervisor? (binary)

Building upon earlier research demonstrating the impacts of supervisor gender on individual worker and firm outcomes, this model examines the impact of training on supervisor gender preference. The model maps the relationship between *bw_company_type*, *Female_Supervisor*, and *Prefer_Female*, where *bw_company_type* is the treatment variable, *Female_Supervisor* is the mediating variable, and *Prefer_Female* is the short-term outcome variable.

A supervisor's gender can have substantial impacts on worker comfort and productivity, particularly when the majority of employees are female. Ranganathan and Shivaram (2016) explore this phenomenon in the context of the Indian garment industry, suggesting that female supervisory presence and direct participation in the production line may play a role in increased productivity. Their study describes a form of workplace empowerment by supervisors, "leading by example." Previous research has also evaluated the impact of supervisor gender on working conditions, showing that the presence of female supervisors improves flexibility of work scheduling and decreases gender inequality in wages for low-ranking employees (Abraham 2013). Based on these differential impacts of supervisor gender on both worker and firm-level outcomes, we are interested in understanding whether there exists a relationship between training and preference for female supervisors.

According to our analysis, there is a strong significant negative relationship between *bw_company_type* and *Female_Supervisor*, indicating that workers in Better Work factories are less likely to have female supervisors than workers in non-Better Work factories. In addition, there is a strong significant positive relationship between *Female_Supervisor* and *Prefer_Female*, indicating that those who have female supervisors are more likely to prefer female supervisors than those who have male supervisors.

bw_company_type → *Female_Supervisor* → *Prefer_Female*

The finding that workers with female supervisors are more likely to prefer female supervisors suggests that female supervisors may indeed have positive effects on worker outcomes. However, Better Work employees are less likely to have female supervisors, and future trainings and interventions can perhaps focus on increasing the number of female supervisors in order to achieve positive worker outcomes.

All significant relationships are highlighted below, with *bw_company_type* → *Female_Supervisor* having a p-value less than .05 and *Female_Supervisor* → *Prefer_Female* having a p-value less than .01.

	1	2
VARIABLES	Female_Supervisor	Prefer_Female
bw_company_type	-0.0243** (0.0111)	-2.70e-05 (0.0118)
Female_Supervisor		0.337*** (0.0137)
Age	-0.00295*** (0.00106)	-0.00445*** (0.00111)
Country	-0.0195* (0.0115)	0.0481*** (0.0122)
Factory_Experience	-0.00269* (0.00155)	0.00547*** (0.00163)
Education	-0.0161*** (0.00612)	-0.0281*** (0.00648)
Female	0.323*** (0.0144)	0.0908*** (0.0159)
Married	0.0286** (0.0144)	0.0251* (0.0152)
Work_Experience	0.000978 (0.00147)	-0.00589*** (0.00154)
Constant	0.611*** (0.0441)	0.177*** (0.0475)
Observations	6,521	6,521
Standard errors in parentheses		
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1		

Works Cited

Abraham, Mabel Lana Botelho. "Does having women in positions of power reduce gender inequality in organizations? A direct test." (2013) Ph.D. thesis, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management.

Ranganathan, Aruna. "Leading by Example: The Impact of Female Supervisors on Worker Productivity." *Academy of Management Proceedings* (2016): 1-29.
doi:10.5465/ambpp.2016.11724abstract.