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Promotions and Women in Leadership Positions

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Key Findings

- This brief examines how Better Work impacts worker perceptions of the promotion process and of women in management.
- In Vietnam, Better Work employees at baseline are less likely to have been unfairly assigned to a job, and less likely to prefer female supervisors. Promotion opportunities for Better Work employees seem to increase almost twice as much over time as compared to non-Better Work employees.
- In Indonesia, we see that Better Work does not have a strong impact on baseline beliefs about the opportunities to be promoted.
- When it comes to obstacles for promotion and unfair placement in the workplace in Indonesia, Better Work employees are better off than they were at baseline, while non-Better Work employees are worse off.
- In Vietnam, preference for female supervisors decreased from the baseline to the endline, while in Indonesia, there was no effect of Better Work over time in relation to women in leadership positions.

Baseline analysis suggested that workers who believed that the promotion process in their factory was fair were more likely to believe their work was worthwhile and less likely to have turnover intention. Summary statistics for Vietnam at baseline are shown in Table 1. We see significant coefficients in mean differences for the variables *Promotion_Count*, *Obstacle_Promotion*, *Unfair*, and *Prefer_Female*. At baseline, workers in Better Work factories have a higher promotion count, are less likely to have faced an unfair obstacle to getting promoted, are less likely to have been unfairly assigned to a particular job – all indicative of a fairer promotion system. However, Better Work employees are less likely to prefer working with a female supervisor. The cause of this result is unclear.

In Indonesia, we see that Better Work does not have a strong impact on baseline beliefs about the opportunities to be promoted. As seen in Table 2, none of the measures of worker perception on the promotion process have significantly different means between groups. Regression analysis suggests that over time, non-Better Work workers in Indonesia are more likely to believe that they have unfair obstacles to promotion while Better Work mitigates that time trend and potentially improves worker beliefs in the promotion process. Additionally, there are baseline differences between prevalence of and preference for female supervisors. Better Work employees are less likely to have a female supervisor but more likely to prefer a one. However, these baseline differences become insignificant when including worker demographic controls.

Variable Definitions:

- *Promotion_Count*: How many times have you been promoted to a new position or grade in this factory? (1- Never to 5- 4 or more times)
- *Promotion_Performance*: Promotions in my work unit are based on performance (agreescale)
- *Promotion_Opportunity*: I have opportunities for advancement (promotions) (agreescale)
- *Obstacle_Promotion*: You faced an unfair obstacle getting promoted (commonscales)

- *Unfair*: You were unfairly assigned to a particular job (commonscale)
- *Female_Supervisor*: Is your direct supervisor female or male? (binary)
- *Prefer_Female*: Do you prefer to work with a female or male supervisor? (binary)

Table 1 Vietnam Baseline Promotion Opportunities for Women in Leadership Summary Statistics

VARIABLES	Better Work Factories					Non-Better Work Factories					Mean Difference
	N	mean	sd	min	max	N	mean	sd	min	max	
Promotion_Count	677	1.394	0.803	1	5	647	1.286	0.715	1	5	0.108***
Promotion_Performance	673	3.951	0.711	1	5	647	3.940	0.764	1	5	0.011
Promotion_Opportunity	646	3.455	1.015	1	5	641	3.513	1.014	1	5	-0.058
Obstacle_Promotion	662	1.242	0.706	1	5	638	1.317	0.789	1	5	-0.075*
Unfair	680	1.299	0.698	1	5	650	1.403	0.824	1	5	-0.104**
Female_Supervisor	682	0.761	0.427	0	1	652	0.747	0.435	0	1	0.014
Prefer_Female	671	0.350	0.477	0	1	639	0.435	0.496	0	1	-0.085***

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 2 Indonesia Baseline Promotion Opportunities for Women in Leadership Summary Statistics

VARIABLES	Better Work Factories					Non-Better Work Factories					Mean Difference
	N	mean	sd	min	max	N	mean	sd	min	max	
Promotion_Count	202	1.317	0.765	1	5	198	1.429	1.096	1	5	-0.112
Promotion_Performance	192	3.818	0.900	1	5	184	3.821	0.751	1	5	-0.003
Promotion_Opportunity	196	3.429	0.900	1	5	181	3.464	0.975	1	5	-0.035
Obstacle_Promotion	195	1.523	0.893	1	5	177	1.548	0.859	1	4	-0.025
Unfair	199	1.563	0.907	1	5	183	1.656	0.953	1	5	-0.093
Female_Supervisor	204	0.662	0.474	0	1	204	0.755	0.431	0	1	-0.093**
Prefer_Female	204	0.373	0.485	0	1	196	0.204	0.404	0	1	0.169***

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Regression Results

Tables 3 and 4 show significant regression results for Vietnam relating to promotions and women in leadership positions. Although we saw significant coefficients for *Promotion_Count* and *Obstacle_Promotion* at baseline, these variables lose significance once we control for demographic differences across factories. Even with demographic differences, we still observe that Better Work employees at baseline are less likely to have been unfairly assigned to a job, and less likely to prefer female supervisors.

There are numerous time effects on promotion opportunities over time. As shown in columns 1 and 2 of Table 3, non-Better Work employees have higher promotion counts at endline than at baseline, but Better Work employees are able to maintain an advantage over time. Columns 3 and 4 show that over time, non-Better Work workers are less likely to believe that promotions in their factory are based on performance, while Better Work workers are able to mitigate these negative time effects. Finally, columns 5 and 6 show that both Better Work and non-Better Work employees indicate that they have more opportunities for advancement over time. However,

promotion opportunities for Better Work employees seem to increase almost twice as much over time as compared to non-Better Work employees.

Time also seems to affect the prevalence of and preference for female supervisors. Over time, employees across factory types are less likely to have a female supervisor and less likely to prefer having a female supervisor. This is an unfortunate result that indicates that women in power may be perceived more negatively in Vietnam over the course of the study.

Table 3 Vietnam Promotion Opportunities for Women in Leadership Regression Results (1)

VARIABLES	(1) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Count</i>	(2) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Count</i>	(3) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Performance</i>	(4) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Performance</i>	(5) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Opportunity</i>	(6) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Opportunity</i>	(7) <i>Unfair</i>	(8) <i>Unfair</i>
<i>bw_factory</i>	0.0776 (0.0599)	-	0.0114 (0.0555)	-	-0.0634 (0.0873)	-	-0.115* (0.0630)	-
<i>endline</i>	0.280*** (0.0551)	0.219*** (0.0594)	-0.111** (0.0464)	-0.134*** (0.0428)	0.150*** (0.0542)	0.162*** (0.0604)	-0.00299 (0.0637)	-0.0127 (0.0679)
<i>bw_endline</i>	0.219* (0.114)	0.237** (0.111)	0.106* (0.0641)	0.116* (0.0632)	0.166** (0.0799)	0.137* (0.0806)	0.0656 (0.0809)	0.0614 (0.0777)
Constant	0.632*** (0.193)	-0.426 (0.824)	3.767*** (0.152)	3.291*** (0.404)	3.065*** (0.445)	2.132*** (0.661)	2.220*** (0.376)	1.632** (0.785)
Worker Time Effects	RE	FE	RE	FE	RE	FE	RE	FE
Observations	2,548	2,548	2,526	2,526	2,484	2,484	2,550	2,550
R-squared		0.147		0.028		0.064		0.018
Number of uniqueID	1,335	1,335	1,331	1,331	1,324	1,324	1,334	1,334

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 4 Vietnam Promotion Opportunities for Women in Leadership Regression Results (2)

VARIABLES	(1) <i>Female_Supervisor</i>	(2) <i>Female_Supervisor</i>	(3) <i>Prefer_Female</i>	(4) <i>Prefer_Female</i>
<i>bw_factory</i>	0.00807 (0.0343)	-	-0.0937** (0.0463)	-
<i>endline</i>	-0.0429** (0.0211)	-0.0334 (0.0256)	-0.0689** (0.0282)	-0.0975*** (0.0340)
<i>bw_endline</i>	0.0324 (0.0279)	0.0221 (0.0276)	0.0245 (0.0476)	0.0316 (0.0474)
Constant	0.536** (0.215)	0.565 (0.408)	0.484** (0.195)	-0.0136 (0.504)
Worker Time Effects	RE	FE	RE	FE
Observations	2,555	2,555	2,517	2,517
R-squared		0.021		0.032
Number of uniqueID	1,334	1,334	1,330	1,330

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Tables 43 and 44 show statistically significant results for Indonesia. In terms of promotion opportunities, Table 43 shows that time effects are minimal. There is some evidence of detrimental effects for *Promotion_Performance*, *Promotion_Opportunity*, and *Obstacle_Promotion* over time as shown in columns 1, 3, and 5. All workers at endline appear to be less likely to believe that promotions are based on performance, less likely to have promotion opportunities, and more likely to face obstacles to being promoted. In addition, columns 7 and 8 show that workers over time are more likely to feel that they were unfairly assigned to a particular job. Fortunately, Better Work not only mitigates detrimental effects on *Obstacle_Promotion* and *Unfair*, but also appears to have favorable effects over time. Thus we find that when it comes to obstacles for promotion and unfair placement in the workplace, Better Work employees are better off than they were at baseline, while non-Better Work employees are worse off.

We also see time effects for women in leadership positions, as shown in table 44. Firstly, the significances seen for *Female_Supervisor* and *Prefer_Female* in the summary statistics are largely explained by demographic differences. Over time we find that the prevalence of female supervisors seems to decrease for all workers, while the preference for female supervisors increases. However, both of these significances disappear under the more rigorous fixed effects testing in columns 2 and 4. There appears to be no effect of Better Work over time in relation to women in leadership positions.

Table 5 Indonesia Promotion Opportunities for Women in Leadership Regression Results (1)

VARIABLES	(1) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Performance</i>	(2) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Performance</i>	(3) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Opportunity</i>	(4) <i>Promotion_</i> <i>Opportunity</i>	(5) <i>Obstacle_</i> <i>Promotion</i>	(6) <i>Obstacle_</i> <i>Promotion</i>	(7) <i>Unfair</i>	(8) <i>Unfair</i>
<i>bw_factory</i>	0.0570 (0.0917)	-	-0.0630 (0.205)	-	-0.0364 (0.157)	-	-0.0787 (0.161)	-
<i>endline</i>	-0.182*	-0.158 (0.106)	-0.261*	-0.132 (0.151)	0.361**	0.287 (0.174)	0.350**	0.292*
<i>bw_endline</i>	0.0437 (0.132)	0.0185 (0.122)	0.0838 (0.220)	0.103 (0.218)	-0.569***	-0.439**	-0.383*	-0.272 (0.214)
Constant	4.332*** (0.468)	3.229*** (0.475)	3.162*** (0.484)	3.038*** (0.503)	2.503** (1.135)	6.094*** (0.674)	2.934*** (0.345)	2.648*** (0.601)
Worker Time Effects	RE	FE	RE	FE	RE	FE	RE	FE
Observations	740	740	742	742	737	737	746	746
R-squared		0.111		0.061		0.132		0.134
Number of uniqueID	408	408	405	405	406	406	406	406

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table 6 Indonesia Promotion Opportunities for Women in Leadership Regression Results (2)

VARIABLES	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	<i>Female_Supervisor</i>	<i>Female_Supervisor</i>	<i>Prefer_Female</i>	<i>Prefer_Female</i>
<i>bw_factory</i>	-0.0965 (0.0856)	-	0.149 (0.116)	-
<i>endline</i>	-0.0870*	-0.0711 (0.0478)	0.107**	0.0570 (0.0522)
<i>bw_endline</i>	0.105 (0.0688)	0.110 (0.0686)	-0.0967 (0.0663)	-0.0697 (0.0639)
Constant	0.555** (0.261)	1.052*** (0.241)	0.436*** (0.130)	0.540 (0.338)
Worker Time Effects	RE	FE	RE	FE
Observations	769	769	762	762
R-squared		0.097		0.067
Number of uniqueID	408	408	407	407

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1