CHIVALRY AND PATERNALISM v. NURTURANCE AND MATERNALISM: ARE FEMALE MANAGERS PARTIAL TO FEMALE GRIEVANTS? THE MISSING LINK IN THE GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT

A controlled field experiment was conducted with 129 public sector managers participating as subjects. The managers responded to a complex and detailed grievance resolution case in which the performance of the grievant had to be assessed. Both the gender and the gender-role behavior of the grievant were manipulated in the written-case scenario. The results showed an interaction between the gender of the evaluating public sector managers and the gender role of the grievant. Male managers rated the performance of aggressive grievants higher than that of nonaggressive grievants, whereas the female managers showed just the opposite tendency. Female managers, however, were also significantly harsher in their performance evaluation of aggressive male grievants than of aggressive female grievants. No evidence was found for the paternalism/chivalry effect or the queen-bee syndrome. The discussion centers on the need to start focusing on the evaluative and decision-making behavior of both male and female managers in the grievance resolution literature. Other implications of the results are discussed.

The literature on the influence of gender on a variety of work-related outcomes such as performance evaluation, managerial and leadership effectiveness, career paths, power in organizations, and grievance outcomes is voluminous. Although the thesis that the gender of the person being evaluated biases the judgments of decision makers is almost universally accepted, the results of many studies reveal gender bias is a complex phenomenon. In particular, results of several studies on

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gender bias conducted in the grievance resolution context have been inconsistent. The present study adds to this stream of literature by investigating how both the gender and the gender-role behavior of grievants influences their perceived performance by actual managers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rosen and Jerdee used 101 bank managers (73 males and 28 females) at a management training seminar to conduct an experiment to determine the influence of gender on evaluation of a grievance [1]. Their finding was that women who used a polite/pleading approach received a less favorable evaluation on the grievance from managers than women who used a threatening approach. Men who used either approach fared better than women who used the polite/pleading approach. The authors concluded that men had more flexibility than women in choosing the way they wanted to pursue an appeal in response to some perceived inequity at the workplace [1].

In another experimental study by Larwood, Rand, and Hovanessian [2], additional support was found for unfavorable treatment of women in the context of workplace grievances. The subjects for this experiment were 104 personnel managers (52 men and 52 women) from federal and state agencies. The results of the study showed disciplinary action was more likely to be taken against women in traditionally female positions than men in traditionally male positions. The results also indicated women were more likely to be disciplined if they were in nontraditional positions than men who occupied nontraditional positions. The conclusion of the authors was that mistakes at the job made by career women are more likely to be costly to them than mistakes made by men.

In a field study by Dalton and Todor on workplace justice in which they studied 294 actual grievances at a unionized public utility company [3], the results were quite different than those found in the Rosen and Jerdee [1] and Larwood et al. [2] experiments. The researchers found women consistently received more favorable decisions than men. The Dalton and Todor study was seminal because the authors pointed out that the literature streams on gender bias in criminology and organizational studies appeared to give rise to contrasting hypotheses on the effects of gender on decision makers [3]. In other words, whereas the organizational literature seemed to suggest that males in positions of power would discriminate against women in the workplace, the criminology literature provided some evidence that male judges may act protectively and give lighter sentences to females than males.

In another field study on gender biases in grievance resolution, Dalton and Todor, again using archival records, analyzed two samples of grievances [4]. One sample involved 310 grievances filed by workers over one year in a western public utility. These employees belonged to a large union local. The second sample involved 222 grievances filed by unionized employees of a different company over a period of one year. Unlike the previous study by Dalton and Todor [3], this study showed the gender of the grievant did not have a significant effect on the outcome of the grievance. However, the results showed the gender composition of the dyad (union and company representatives) responsible for resolving the dispute was significantly correlated to the outcome of the grievance. For example, when a woman supervisor interacted with a male union representative in handling a workplace dispute, the grievant was significantly less likely to prevail [4].

In a third field study on the influence of gender on workplace grievances, Dalton, Todor, and Owen reached similar conclusions [5]. The sample consisted of 673 grievances filed by unionized employees of a public utility over a period of one year. As in earlier studies, archival records of the company were scanned to determine the sex of the grievant, as well as the sex composition of the dyad (company supervisor and the union representative) responsible for handling and processing the grievance. Results indicated that although the gender of the grievant was not significant in predicting the grievance outcome, the sex composition of the dyad responsible for resolving the grievance did significantly correlate with the final outcome. For example, dyads containing female supervisors and male union representatives were three times less likely to result in a favorable outcome for the grievant than dyads consisting of male supervisors and male union representatives [5].

A related stream of literature in industrial relations, building to a large extent on the Dalton and Todor study [3], has addressed the question of gender biases in arbitrator decision making. Bemmels suggested that the processes of industrial justice are in many ways similar to those of criminal justice [6, 7, 8]. He has argued that since arbitrators are charged with duties and responsibilities very much like those of judges, they must conduct themselves in a like manner. According to Bemmels, the two models found in the criminology literature (the chivalry/paternalism thesis and the evil woman thesis) to explain a gender bias in case disposition by judges should be equally applicable to arbitrators. Bemmels found male arbitrators are more lenient with female than with male grievants [6-10], thus offering support for the chivalry/paternalism model. Caudil and Oswald, using a somewhat different methodology, reached essentially the same conclusion [11] (see also [12]).

However, Dalton, Mesch, Owen, and Todor, using rather large samples of archival data, did not find any support for the chivalry/paternalism thesis [13]. Steen, Perrewe, and Hochwarter, analyzing 603 arbitrator decisions in the United States for the five-year period ending June 30, 1992 also did not find any evidence of gender bias on the part of arbitrators [14]. Thornicroft, in an analysis of 350 arbitration decisions in Newfoundland from 1980-1992, determined no gender effects were present in that sample [15].

Complicating the interpretation of this stream of literature is the fact that most of the previous studies have used archival data (see [9, 12] for exceptions) and were conducted in a unionized context. Methodologies involving studies of archival records such as arbitrator decisions, while certainly useful, cannot allow any conclusion about whether the gender of the grievant actually causes the arbitrators to be biased in their decisions.

It also should be pointed out that the results of the above-mentioned studies may not be relevant to grievance resolution in a nonunion environment where there is no third party, such as the union steward, to process the grievance. In a nonunion context, it is not the arbitrator but the manager who makes the final decision. However, there is no evidence managers and arbitrators share similar characteristics and would perceive the grievant in the same manner and therefore make similar decisions.

Further, most of the studies in the grievance resolution literature focus only on the gender of the grievant and how it may influence the grievance outcome. According to social psychological research on sex stereotypes and gender bias, however, the gender-role behavior along with the gender may have an influence on how a person is perceived in the workplace [16]. The present study, therefore, includes both the gender of the grievant and the grievant's gender-role behavior as explanatory factors for the grievant's perceived performance. Since Dalton and Todor found the sex of the decision maker may also have an influence on the grievance outcome [4, 5], the present study incorporated the sex of the subjects as an independent variable in the design.

SAMPLE AND METHODOLOGY

Eagly et al. pointed out that if the objective of a study is to draw causal links between the gender of the manager and the evaluations that manager receives, it cannot be done in a natural setting [16]. This is because in real organizations, the behavior of male and female managers cannot be made equivalent to isolate the effect of their gender on subsequent evaluation decisions. The same line of reasoning applies equally well to investigations focusing on the role gender plays in evaluations of lower-level workers grieving a decision. The type of control needed to draw causal inferences can typically be achieved only by using the experimental methodology in a laboratory setting. The present study attempted to combine the best of both worlds. The research subjects for this study were actual managers who make performance evaluations as well as disciplinary decisions as part of their jobs. However, the study was conducted as a true on-site field experiment, and tight controls were maintained in a fashion similar to a laboratory setting.

The subjects of this study were 129 public sector managers and directors working for the state government in the southeastern region of the United States. All 129 managers participated in the experiment by reading and analyzing a required case and subsequently answering a questionnaire on an opscan form. Eighty (62%) of the managers were male and forty-nine (38%) were female. Thirty-eight percent of the subjects reported having a bachelor's degree, 56.4 percent reported having master's degree, and 6.4 percent reported having a

doctorate. Approximately 21 percent of the subjects ranged in age from twenty-six to forty. Sixty-six percent of the subjects were between the ages of forty-one and fifty-five. Thirteen percent of the subjects were over fifty-five.

Measures

A comprehensive case study and an accompanying questionnaire were carefully constructed over a period of eleven months using accepted psychometric methods (see [17, 18]). The case and the accompanying measures were extensively pretested. A pilot study confirmed the case was easy to read and understand and clearly operationalized the gender and gender-role behavior of the grievant. It was further confirmed that the performance measure of interest had high reliability and was face valid. The pilot study results, the case, and the proposed study design were thoroughly scrutinized by the senior managers in the state system. Eventually top management gave approval for the use of the case instruments in the proposed field experiment.

The case study operationalized the relevant constructs of interest having to do with gender as well as the gender-role behavior of the grievant. The case scenario involved an average performer in a lower-level position who had been fired by the manager due to a mistake made at the workplace. The worker then grieved the decision of the department manager. The gender of the grievant and his (her) gender-role behavior are manipulated in the scenario. In half of the scenarios the grievant is a female (Jane), whereas in the other half the grievant is a male (Joe). In half of the cases the grievant adopts an assertive and aggressive stance in interacting with the supervisor who accuses him (her) of poor performance. In the other half of the cases the grievant adopts a nonaggressive and polite approach in his (her) interaction with the supervisor in similar situations.

Because of the two manipulations, four different versions of the case were produced. The design was thus a 2*2*2 experiment in which the ratersex (gender of the subjects—the public sector manager participating in the experiment), targetsex (gender of the grievant), and gender-role behavior (gender-role behavior of the grievant) were the independent variables. It should be noted that detailed background and information about the performance of the worker as well as his (her) interaction with the supervisor was given in the case study to minimize the role sex stereotypes would play in evaluation of performance (see [19]). The complete case with the grievant as the target person was a little over three single-spaced typewritten pages.

The four different versions of the cases were randomly assigned to male and female managers. The managers were asked to read the case carefully and then answer the questionnaire that followed. Two versions of the questionnaires were used to test for any effects due to ordering of items. It took approximately twenty-five minutes on the average to read the case scenario and answer all the items on a 9-point Likert scale. The 9-point Likert scale was displayed visually to facilitate the accurate completion of the questionnaire accompanying the cases. The managers used opscan forms to record their responses to the items. The opscan forms were directly read into a SAS^1 data file to avoid errors associated with data entry by hand.

RESULTS

A factor analysis with varimax rotation revealed four distinct factors embedded in the fifty-item scale. The factor structure in this data set was broadly similar to the data set generated in an earlier pilot study with students. Using the .40 loading as the cut-off point, four different scales based on the factors were constructed. This study focuses on the factor-based scale measuring perceived performance of the grievant. The Cronbach alpha for the scale was .90, indicating a highly reliable measure of the assessment of the grievant's performance. The specific items included in the scale are given next. Note that high scores on the scale indicate more favorable evaluation of the grievant (Jane or Joe) and disagreement with the decision of the manager (Stanley) to fire him (her).

- 1. Stanley's decision regarding Joe (Jane) lacks basic fairness.
- 2. Joe (Jane) does not come up to the standards of the department (reverse scale).
- 3. Joe (Jane) has good work habits.
- 4. Stanley's decision to fire Joe (Jane) is an overreaction.
- 5. Joe's (Jane's) future performance is likely to be good.
- 6. Joe's (Jane's) mistake reveals something about Joe that is unlikely to change in the future (reverse scale).
- 7. Joe (Jane) is careless at work (reverse scale).
- 8. Stanley is a fair manager.
- 9. Joe (Jane) successfully accomplishes the tasks assigned to him (her).
- 10. Joe (Jane) is competent in what he (she) does.
- 11. Joe (Jane) does not have an aptitude for detail work (reverse scale).
- 12. Joe (Jane) is easily distracted from his (her) work (reverse scale).
- 13. Joe (Jane) is likely to make serious mistakes at the workplace in the future (reverse scale).
- 14. What happened to Joe (Jane) could have happened to anybody.
- 15. Joe (Jane) is a conscientious worker.
- 16. Stanley made a well-thought-out decision when he fired Joe (Jane) (reverse scale).
- 17. Joe (Jane) has no one to blame but himself (herself) for his (her) predicament (reverse scale).

¹ SAS is the name of a statistical software package produced by SAS Institute, Inc. (Cary, No. Carolina).

Analysis

The General Linear Models (GLM) procedure using SAS was employed. The model for the factor-based scale used to assess performance of the grievant (PERFORMANCE) was analyzed using the gender of the public sector manager (R-SEX---short for ratersex), the gender of the grievant who is the target person in the case (T-SEX), the gender-role behavior of the grievant (GEN-ROLE), and item-ordering on the questionnaire (Q-ORDER) as the independent variables. Because of unequal cell sizes, TYPE III sums of squares were used to derive results [20]. The results of the analysis are given in Table 1.

The model indicates none of the independent variables enter into the model significantly. It is to be noted that item ordering (Q-ORDER) had no effect on the responses of managers. Therefore, no further reference will be made to this variable.

Interestingly, however, there is a strong interaction between the sex of the evaluating manager (R-SEX) and the gender-role behavior of the grievant

Source	DF	Type III SS	MS	F Value	Pr > <i>F</i>
MODEL	15	28.5395	1.9	1.26	.2373
ERROR	113	170.195	1.51		
TOTAL	128	198.734			
<i>R</i> -square = .143		C.V = 20.46	Root MSE = 1.227		
Source	DF	Type III SS	MS	F Value	Pr > <i>F</i>
R-SEX (R)	1	.50	.50	.33	.5645
GEN-ROLE (G)	1	1.43	1.43	.95	.3321
T-SEX (T)	1	3.77	3.77	2.51	.1162
Q-ORDER (S)	1	.31	.31	.20	.6526
R*G	1	13.02	13.02	8.64	.0040
R*T	1	3.41	3.41	2.26	.1353
R*S	1	.03	.03	.02	.8812
G*T	1	2.55	2.55	1.69	.1962
S*G	1	2.84	2.84	1.89	.1724
S*T	1	.04	.04	.03	.8636
R*G*T	1	1.05	1.05	.70	.4055
R*S*G	1	2.85	2.85	1.89	.1718
R*S*T	1	.16	.16	.11	.7448
S*G*T	1	.70	.70	.46	.4971
R*S*G*T	1	.001	.001	.00	.9757

Table 1. Dependent Variable: PERFORMANCE (SS and MS have been rounded off)

(GEN-ROLE) (p < .004). Clearly, the gender-role manipulation worked, but its effect was more subtle and unexpected. Next, the table of means for PERFOR-MANCE was examined in light of the interaction between R-SEX and GEN-ROLE (Table 2). Note again that higher numbers indicate more favorable evaluations. Measurement was on a 9-point scale. Means, standard deviations, and the number (n) are given in each cell. Least square means are given at the bottom and are used to do the *t*-tests (see [21, 22]). The least square means are very close in value to the unweighted means. This indicates having an unbalanced design (unequal cell sizes) did not affect the final results.

Significant Findings

The examination of the means reveals that the gender-role manipulation had a differential impact on male and female subjects. The evaluating female managers were apparently much more sensitive than the male managers to the aggressive behavior of the male grievants.

Female managers ranked nonaggressive grievants higher than aggressive grievants (regardless of the gender of the grievant) when compared to male managers, who showed just the opposite tendency. In particular, the female managers evaluated aggressive male grievants lower than aggressive female grievants (p < .026). Female managers also evaluated aggressive male grievants lower than did the male unit directors (p < .005).

The results, therefore, do not indicate any support for the chivalry/paternalism effect on the part of male managers when the grievant was a female staying within her traditional gender role. In contrast, the results suggest a somewhat different conclusion. Female managers appeared to be quite biased in their evaluations of male grievants. Indeed, what this study found can be described as the

Reliability of the Scale: .90							
	Male (Grievant	Female Grievant				
Evaluating	Aggressive	Nonaggressive	Aggressive	Nonaggressive			
Male Managers (<i>N</i> = 80)	Mean = 6.16 SD = 1.52 N = 25 Lmean = 6.16	Mean = 5.82 SD = 1.06 N = 18 Lmean = 5.82	Mean = 6.33 SD = 1.01 N = 18 Lmean = 6.29	Mean = 5.79 SD = 1.27 N =1 9 Lmean = 5.7			
Female Managers (<i>N</i> = 49)	Mean = 4.86 <i>SD</i> = .51 <i>N</i> = 10 Lmean = 4.83	Mean = 6.20 SD = .924 N = 13 Lmean = 6.20	Mean = 6.02 SD = 1.43 N = 13 Lmean = 6.02	Mean = 6.43 SD = 1.29 N = 13 Lmean = 6.4			

Table 2. Dependent Variable—Performance Reliability of the Scale: .90

"nurturance/maternalism" effect (to coin a new term) on the part of female managers for the female grievants.

Male grievants, however, had no such luck. Female managers were, in fact, particularly critical in their evaluations of male grievants who were aggressive in the workplace context. This can be interpreted in a parallel manner to the so-called "evil-woman thesis" and be dubbed "the bad-boy effect" (again coining a new term). Whereas the evil-woman thesis predicts males in positions of power will give harsher evaluations and judgments to lower-level females who act out of their gender role, the bad-boy effect suggests females in positions of power will more harshly evaluate lower-level males who continue to stay within the traditional male roles. These roles would include aggressive and assertive behavior in the workplace.

It is plausible to suggest, based on the interaction found in this study, that male and female managers have different thresholds at which the behavior of a target person becomes either favorably viewed or offensive. This study demonstrates it is possible for the behavior of a target person, in this case an aggressive male subordinate, to be offensive to a female manager but not to a male manager. Certainly, just the opposite scenario can be visualized, at least conceptually, where the behavior of a target person may be less favorably viewed by a male manager than a female manager. Indeed, there is some evidence from the R-SEX*GEN-ROLE interaction that this can occur. For male managers, however, it was not the gender but the nonaggressive behavior of the target person that was less favorably evaluated.

The finding in the present study, that the degree of assertiveness and aggressive behavior in the workplace on the part of a grievant may have a differential impact on male and female managers, leads to a complex interpretation of the results. This is particularly true since the variance in responses of the female managers due to grievant gender does not fit neatly into some highly developed conceptual framework. The fact that the so-called chivalry/paternalism and the evil-woman theses speak only to the behavior of male decision makers points to a serious lack of symmetry in the grievance resolution literature. In light of the results in the present study, the necessity of inventing new terms as indicators for concepts, which may explain biased evaluations by female subjects, such as the "nurturance/ maternalism effect" and the "bad-boy effect," becomes obvious.

DISCUSSION

The results from the present study were not expected, but at least one precedent exists in the grievance resolution literature, in which the subjects were not female managers but female arbitrators. Oswald and VanMatre, based on the responses of twenty-nine female arbitrators, concluded that gender bias was present in the decisions of female arbitrators [23]. In particular, the results of that study provided strong evidence that in discharge cases female arbitrators may treat female grievants more favorably than male grievants.

Unfortunately, not many studies directly compare male and female managers or male and female arbitrators in how they would be differentially influenced by the gender and gender-role behavior of the grievant in rendering their evaluations. The only two known experimental studies in the psychology literature that used managers as subjects to investigate biases in the grievance resolution context took place in the 1970s [1, 2]. Both of the studies, although widely cited in the literature pertaining to gender bias, were methodologically flawed.

Rosen and Jerdee used a two-item scale to form a dependent variable measuring the favorability of the evaluation of the grievance (and indirectly of the target person) by the research subjects [1]. The authors did not indicate the reliability of their measure, and it is likely the two-item scale had a low reliability. Furthermore, out of the 101 research subjects, only twenty-three were female managers. A low ratio of females to males in the sample makes it more difficult to make meaningful inferences with regard to differences based on the sex of the subjects.

The field experiment by Larwood et al. was conducted by mail and had a response rate of 53 percent [2]. Additional deletions were made in the sample due to incomplete responses and statistical considerations. For correlational analysis this effectively reduced the sample size to only seventy-six subjects (see [2, p. 542]). The Larwood et al. study, in addition to suffering from nonresponses of subjects, which can substantially bias the findings of an experiment, used eight dependent variables for analysis, each of which was based on one item [2]. Using single items for analysis cannot, from a methodological perspective, be considered a sound practice and may lead to unstable results.

The more recent experimental studies of the 1990s in the gender bias literature using arbitrators as subjects instead of managers differ in results from the Rosen and Jerdee [1] and the Larwood et al. [2] studies of the 1970s in that they found evidence of a profemale bias on the part of male arbitrators. Unfortunately, they do not differ in terms of serious weaknesses in methodology. Bemmels' field experiment conducted through the mail, for example, suffered from a low response rate (the percentage of usable cases returned was 40.8%) and included nineteen (14.5%) female arbitrators out of a total of 131 [24, 25]. Oswald's study comparing the decisions of arbitrators and students included 146 arbitrators (the response rate of arbitrators was about 30%) in her sample, of which twenty-nine were females [12]. Such high nonresponse on part of subjects, along with skewed male and female ratios, seriously undermines the internal validity of these studies and does not facilitate making meaningful inferences with regard to how, and under what conditions, the gender of the research subject (manager or arbitrator) and the gender of the grievant interact and explain variances in evaluations, judgments, and decisions. (See [17, 20] for discussions on internal validity.)

One wonders if the popularization of the so-called chivalry/paternalism effect in the arbitration literature is simply a function of the fact that the opportunity for the

nurturance/maternalism effect is absent due to the low number of female arbitrators in the profession. However, without having the evaluations and decisions of the female arbitrators, which can be compared to the evaluations and decisions of the male arbitrators, it is questionable whether the chivalry/paternalism effect can be meaningfully defined and interpreted.

Even if it is accepted that male arbitrators do indeed show partiality to female grievants as opposed to male grievants, without knowing something about whether female arbitrators show the same type of partiality, one cannot come to conclusions about the nature of the effect and whether it has anything to do with the arbitrator being a male. Calling it the chivalry/paternalism effect becomes then a lame way to communicate that a sufficient number of female subjects (arbitrators) are simply not available for analysis. This is the current state of the literature and is reflected in the fact that many of the field studies that have found support for the "chivalry/paternalism" effect included no cases decided by female arbitrators [6, 8]. The studies that do include some female arbitrators contain very few cases decided by female arbitrators in which the worker grieving was also a female [7, 10].

In the present conceptualization of chivalry/paternalism, it is theoretically plausible and perfectly consistent for male arbitrators to render more favorable judgments to female grievants than male grievants and at the same time for these judgments to be *overall much more or much less favorable* when compared to the judgments of female arbitrators. The irony, of course, from a research perspective, is that by defining the chivalry/paternalism effect in terms of the gender of the grievant, the gender of the research subject (arbitrator or manager) becomes automatically fixed as a male. Then, for all practical purposes, the female research subject (arbitrator or manager) becomes irrelevant to the analysis.

Bemmels' field experiment conducted by mail with a response rate of 52 percent is a good example of this phenomenon [10]. In this study, the responses of seventeen female arbitrators were eliminated completely from the sample because the number was too small for meaningful analysis, and the focus of the study then shifted exclusively to the male arbitrators who had responded to written cases. What theoretical meaning can the finding of a chivalry/paternalism effect have in this case? Aside from the limitations imposed by the nonresponse of the subjects and the use of poor measures having uncertain reliability, the following question nags: How can we be certain that given a sufficient number of female arbitrators, if they could be included in the experiment, the results due to grievant gender would not be identical to the ones based on an analysis of the responses of male arbitrators only? Would we still call the effect a chivalry/paternalism effect?

In the early 1990s, an old notion known as the "queen bee syndrome," introduced first by Staines, Tavris, and Jayratne [26], was revived and injected into the grievance resolution literature by Oswald and VanMatre [22] to provide some type of conceptual framework to include female arbitrators. This reflects the impoverished state of the theoretical literature in arbitration, as the queen-bee syndrome had failed to garner any empirical support since it was first introduced in the management literature in the early 1970s. It certainly did not find any support in the present study.

The fact that mixed evidence with regard to findings of the chivalry/paternalism effect in male arbitrators has led to some acceptance in the literature that such an effect actually exists is troubling. While future studies may (or may not) find evidence to support the chivalry/paternalism thesis, the assumption in the literature that such an effect actually exists (see for example [27]) does not have overwhelming empirical support. At best, such a conclusion is premature, given the rather serious methodological and measurement problems in the experimental studies using arbitrators as subjects as well as the inconsistent findings in the field studies.

Grievance Resolution Differences between Managers and Arbitrators?

It is important to be reminded of the important and crucial role managers play in resolving grievances in the workplace. It is well-known that the large majority of the grievances in unionized companies are evaluated and decided by managers and are never appealed to arbitrators [28]. In a nonunion environment, managers must play an even more prominent role in evaluation of and settling of grievances. Managers have to take many other factors into consideration in deciding grievances other than the contract or company policy, although these are certainly relevant and play an important role.

Sometimes it may simply be expedient to settle a large number of union grievances at once [29], and other times the morale of workers may be taken into account when deciding whether a demand should be acceded to or not [30]. Managers, like arbitrators, may be influenced by the work histories of the grievants and are likely to render more favorable decisions to grievants with good performance records [31]. Although managers must consider many more work-related factors in the evaluation of grievances than arbitrators, it is still reasonable to argue that they, like the arbitrators, will be influenced by conscious or unconscious biases having to do with personal characteristics of the grievant such as gender.

Managers and arbitrators can be considered similar in many respects having to do with education and socioeconomic status. Both groups consist of educated professionals who should not be expected to differ on how they perceive the male and female roles in the workplace. It can be argued that the type of work arbitrators and managers do is different enough that they develop differing evaluation and decision-making schemas with respect to workplace situations. While perfectly plausible, this line of reasoning does not explain why the evaluation schema of male arbitrators would contain a profemale bias while that of male managers would not. There are some differences that do need to be addressed. First, arbitrators, on the average, are older than managers. Henneman and Sandaver [32], for example, reported the average age of an arbitrator as being close to sixty. It is possible that age is a significant explanatory variable in the grievance resolution context. In other words, perhaps manifestation of chivalry/paternalism by males in authority is a function of their age as well as their gender. In this line of reasoning, older males would be more prone to showing a profemale bias than younger males. Since male arbitrators are on the average older than male managers, it could be argued that whereas the chivalry/paternalism effect may be present among male arbitrators, it would not necessarily show up in a sample of male managers.

Second, the number of midlevel female managers has been increasing rapidly over the last decade and their numbers at these ranks virtually equal that of men. However, according to the American Arbitration Association statistics, over 90 percent of the arbitrators registered with them are men. Since the research in a managerial setting is more likely to have a larger female sample than research in an arbitration setting, the results may also be different because of that element. However, it needs to be noted that the female managers in this study responded in a biased way against male grievants, which is consistent with the responses of female arbitrators as reported by Oswald and VanMatre [22]. This supports the notion that if certain characteristics of the arbitrators and managers can be controlled (such as age and sex), their decisions in the grievance resolution context may be similar.

CONCLUSION

This study is unique for several reasons, and it is important to understand these reasons to put the results in their proper perspective. The following points should be considered in interpreting the results.

1. This is one of those rare field experiments in the gender bias literature where the subjects were actual managers. Typically, the overwhelming number of experimental studies in social psychology use college students as subjects. Similarly, in the grievance resolution literature, true experiments with practitioners are rare.

2. Unlike other field experiments in the literature, particularly those conducted by mail, nonresponse of the subjects in this study was zero. The questionnaire was completed thoroughly, and the number of missing values was extremely low. This allows for stronger causal inferences that are not biased by methodological infirmities.

3. The factor-based scale measuring the evaluation of the grievant's performance that was used in the study had a high reliability. Therefore, measurement error may be thought of as being minimal. With respect to using reliable measures, the present study with practitioners diverges from previous field experiments in the grievance resolution context, which have generally used one-item measures or measures whose reliability is uncertain.

The findings of this experiment, like any well-done experiment, have a straightforward interpretation. Female managers evaluated aggressive male grievants lower than aggressive female grievants on performance. These differentials in evaluation of the grievants were due to the manipulations involving gender and the gender-role behavior of the grievant. Furthermore, the evaluations of the aggressive male grievants by male managers relative to female managers were considerably more favorable. This suggests that gender and gender-role behavior of the grievant had a differential impact on how favorably male and female managers viewed the grievant. Aggressive male grievants were clearly not evaluated positively by female managers but were evaluated positively by male managers.

Unfortunately, most of the literature on gender bias has focused on the behavior of male decision makers and not on female decision makers. With the increasing number of female managers in the workplace, researchers need to pay equal attention to conceptual frameworks that would explain the possibility of biased evaluations by female decision makers in the workplace. The results of the present study suggest that in the grievance resolution context, bias may be a two-way street. Because of the emphasis on workplace fairness, regardless of gender, the present results merit further investigation by researchers.

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ENDNOTES

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