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# Study of the Leadership Styles Considering Gender Differences

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The new technologies have promoted deep changes in the business world. Despite many achievements, humanity is still experiencing economic and social contrasts. Technological advances have accounted for new job opportunities, higher performance, higher profitability, better results, but also generated unemployment and adversely affect the quality of life according to Chiavenato and Matos (2002).

The great dilemma of contemporary society is to understand that there will be no social and economic development with justice if there are not equal opportunities for men and women. No vision of progress may waive this condition of freedom, according to Beauvoir (1997).

Women, by their transformative style, find out the potential of people, establishing partnerships align the differences, and can obtain the commitment of the team. This type of leadership is essential for new millennium organizations. In order to ensure business continuity, companies need professionals with ability and skill to dare and to anticipate market demands, according to Drucker (2001).

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As consequence of technical world, people have become hostages of the deep structures and habits over which they have not true consciousness. It is necessary to review the existing leadership styles and the prevailing powers that disconnect the emotions, the "how" of the intellect (rational form).

In this context the inequality of opportunities in the most senior levels of companies, focused in particular on gender, has been studied in several countries. Subject matter experts have contributed to the enrichment of the topic within organizations and identified the impact on business results. It is suggested that the leadership turned to the genre brings some important considerations.

Thus, authors such as Delgado and Cappellin (2000), argue that the role of women in society should be discussed not only in terms of the labor market, but within a broader perspective of democracy and a strategic vision to minimize social exclusion. The share of women, especially in the last century, it was important for the social democracy, which has the gender equality as principle, Beauvoir (1997). For this author, after the process of emancipation of women, the society and especially the organizations have gained a more human dimension, and both recognize the differences between genders. It was created new ways for a innovate complementarity of gender.

In this perspective, this study aimed to identify whether gender differences are related to the different leadership styles of managers in managerial level. So, we conducted a field survey of interpretative and quantitative character, with a sample of 102 executives, men and women in positions of leadership in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte (Brazil).

## II. THEORETICAL REVIEW

This work presents a historical overview of the several leadership approaches, starting with the characteristics and traits, behavior, style, contingency (situational) approach, Neo-charismatic approach, with greater focus on Blake and Mouton model (Managerial Grid).

### a) Historical Overview of the Several Leadership Approaches

Of interest to scholars throughout the 20th century, the trait approach was one of the first systematic attempts to study leadership. Trait is

considered a quality or characteristic of distinct personality. In this conception, leaders are the ones who have some specific personality traits that distinguish them from other people.

It is also known as leadership approach of "Great Man", advocated by Carlyle (1795-1881) (Carlyle, 2001) to explain the progress of the world was the product of personal achievements of some people who dominate the history of humanity. Each author specifies some personality traits that define a leader: to Tead, cited by Lewin et al. (1951), the leader must have physical and nervous energy, a sense of direction and enthusiasm, integrity, control, decision, intelligence, an ability to teach and faith; while for Barnard (1948), the leader needs to have perception, knowledge, good memory, creativity, persistence, patience and courage. Since Walt and Doty (1954) also cited by Lewin et al. (1951), believe that the main features of the leaders are flexibility, need for achievement, positivism and reliable ethical standards.

Although some common attributes were discovered, much of this research is contradictory (Stogdill, 1979). For many researchers, it was proved, for example, that there is no relationship between the five personal characteristics attributed to the leader, such as intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, high levels of energy and activity, and the real facts of the exercise of leadership. A feature of this approach is the failure to consider the relationship with subordinates, or the situation in which the events occur. In it, only the figure of the leader is considered.

Tannenbaum, Weschier and Massarik (1972) cite the work of Gouldner (1950), who analyzed a series of investigations based on this theoretical model of leadership, supporting arguments for a conclusion that there is no reliable evidence as to the existence of universal features of leadership.

To Reddin (1981), it is not the opinion of traits that is wrong, but the absence of an approach that shows which traits are important in specific managerial situations.

According to Serpa (1990), after the failed attempt of the leadership explanation from the identification of the leader's traits, researchers began to direct their attention to the behavior, which set a second approach, the approach behavioral.

According to Chelladurai and Riemer (1997), Behavioral Approach led many researchers to focus on what a leader does to contribute to group performance and satisfaction. The focus has shifted from individual attributes of leaders for their behavior, to the effectiveness in the direction of their followers.

Second Reddin (1981), the main leadership studies were conducted in Ohio Universities, Michigan and Harvard. In the late 40's and early 50's, several surveys were conducted at Ohio University and culminated with the publication of a series of works by

the "Bureau of Business Research" of the university itself. The basic finding of this study was the identification of leadership through two independent factors, called "initial structure" basically which focus on the routines, obligations and methods and to the establishment of standards. The other was called "consideration" that reinforces the leader's behavior for friendship, emphasizing interaction and individual growth. The study of leadership advancement, these behaviors have been given a new configuration, with other terminologies: Task-oriented and Relationship-oriented leadership. Both involve different behaviors that can be effective or ineffective depending on the situation, according Maximiano (2000).

The studies of Blake and Mouton (1972), (1976), and (2000), pioneers of organizational development, using knowledge of behavioral and based on 45 years of research science, have developed an integrated system that represents a breakthrough in organizational development. This is the Managerial Grid, which provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the process of leadership and organizational behavior, allowing the analysis of the various styles of leadership and it is able to personal growth or personal development through self-development.

These researchers developed a model of leadership approach, based on a two-dimensional view, which promotes the effectiveness of leaders. This study, called Managerial Grid, includes five different types of leadership, and as a backdrop on one hand the concern for results (task) and the other concern for people (relationship). The managerial grid is formed by two axes: vertical - concern for people; and horizontal - concern for production. The shafts are divided into a scale of 9 points, resulting in 81 types of subordinates. The goal is to achieve the style (9,9), considered as level of excellence Blake and Mouton (2000). Fig. 1 illustrates the Managerial Grid.

It is observed in the Fig. 1 the five types of leadership that show significant differences in managerial performance. In coordinate (1,1) – Impoverished Style, there is the combination of minimum concern for people with low emphasis on production. Have coordinate (1,9), in the upper left corner of the figure, that shows the management Country Club Style, which demonstrates the utmost concern for people and low emphasis on production. This style requires careful attention to the needs of

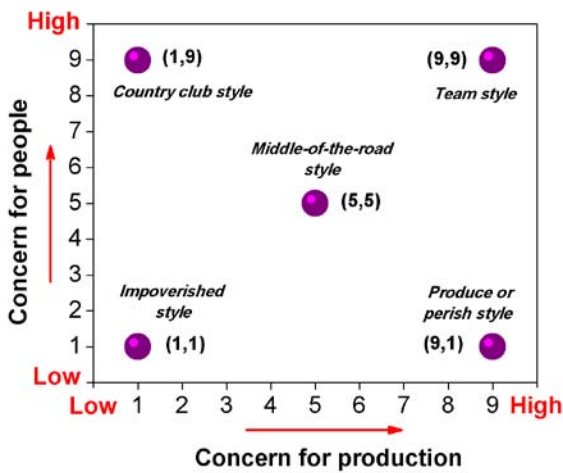


Figure 1 : The Managerial Grid from Blake and Mouton (2000)

relationships, producing a friendly ball and comfortable work pace. The style (9.1), also known as task management emphasizes authority and obedience. Concern for people is minimal, whereas with the production is maximal. The fourth managerial style known as management team is located in coordinate (9.9). This style is considered by the authors of the managerial grid as a model of excellence, considering that it produces an environment of trust and respect between people, without losing sight of organizational goals, increasing levels of involvement and commitment. The central position of the grid (5.5) depicts the approach of middle ground, which requires reaching an adequate performance of the organization through the balance between the need of work and maintaining morale of people at a satisfactory level manager. Thus, the model of Blake and Mouton (2000), provides a reference for analyzing the management style emphasizing that the effectiveness of management lies in the ideal combination of both personal factors as those dedicated to production. In order to encompass both the quantity and the quality, concern for production may be disclosed in scope and in the wisdom of the decisions, or the quality and effectiveness of services provided by the staff.

It is worth mention another leadership approach named The Situational or Contingencial approach (Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. H., 2011). The model of Hersey and Blanchard (2000) considers the interaction of three main factors: the guidance and direction offered by the leader; the level of socio-emotional support provided by the leader; and the degree of clearance of whom is being mentored (the follower) to fulfill a specific task. These three factors are present in any leadership situation, and can be understood by people of any culture. According to those authors, the worker maturity is related with the knowledge and capacity technical to do something, while the psychological maturity refers to

the willingness or motivation for achievement. However, these dimensions of maturity should be considered only in relation to a specific task to be performed (Hersey, P. & Blanchard, K. H., 2011). The leadership style that the leader should adopt with individuals or groups depends on the maturity level of the person to be influenced, as shown in Fig. 2.

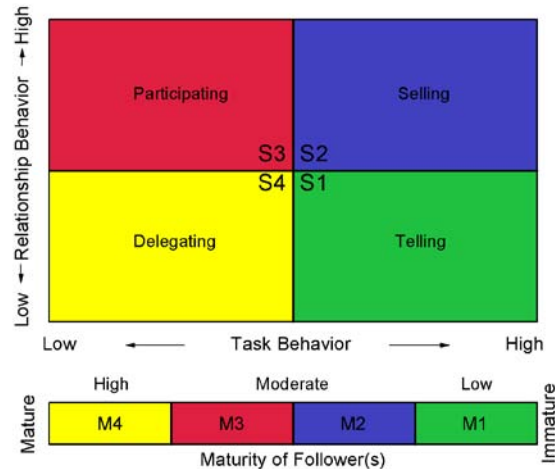


Figure 2 : Situational leadership Model from Hersey and Blanchard (2011)

The model of Hersey and Blanchard (2011) recommends the maturity of the followers as the main feature of the situation. This main idea is divided into four forms of leadership, as shown in Fig. 2, such as, sale or telling, selling, participating and delegating. Note the presence of four maturity levels of followers: low (M1), low to moderate (M2), moderate to high (M3) and high (M4).

Those authors also claim that a more mature follower requires less intense use of the authority imposed by the leader and a greater orientation relationship. Hersey and Blanchard (2011) believe that the maturity of a follower is the main feature of the situation faced by a leader. It is also important to highlight the studies of Hersey and Blanchard (2011) which show that there is no ideal leadership style. The more leaders can adapt their behavior to the circumstances with which they are dealing, the greater their power to influence. In Situational Leadership, the readiness of the follower is defined as the intensity with which he is demonstrating his willingness to perform a specific task Hersey & Blanchard (2011).

The Neo-charismatic approaches to leadership according to the thinking of contemporary authors, emphasizing new approaches that consider transactional aspects and transformational. The leader of the century, according to Covey (2002), is a professional able to develop a culture based on principles or a system, showing courage and humility to learn and grow continuously. The effectiveness of leadership follows the line between personal and

professional life. Leaders with vision, courage and humility learn how to learn, and grow continually, and will be an instrument of transformation.

Transactional leadership is as an exchange process, where it works for specific rewards, which can be either economic, political or psychological (Burns, 1978). This is one of the most common forms of leadership in organizations Avolio et al. (1991). They established how should be done and the reward that employees will receive if achieving success Avolio et al. (1991).

Several studies show the effectiveness of transactional leaders in maintaining performance levels of organizations. It is not expected that this style will lead the subordinates to exceed expectations with respect to its performance, but to maintain performance within the expected Sarros and Santora (2001).

Opposed to the transactional approach, transformational leadership provides an environment favorable to the development of the potential of the followers, encouraging performance improvement and promoting excellent organizational climate. This type of leadership seeks to increase awareness of the group or organization, ensuring individual growth of people, aligning individual and organizational expectations Bass and Avolio (1994). In their perception, transformational leaders are visionary, inspirational, and imbued with ideals and targets. They are capable of causing intense emotions in their followers.

The current emphasis on transformational leadership intensifies attention to the issue. It is seen as the leader's ability to establish a vision and communicate it enthusiastically and lead the way, inspiring the group to find new opportunities and overcome challenges.

This paper used the theoretical framework model of Blake and Mouton (1976), for although his studies have commenced with the behavioral theory, he develops his research for Situational approach when considering that the styles may vary according to the context.

#### *b) Origins of Studies on Female Leadership*

In studying the female leadership style, it is necessary to talk about gender issues, because to build a socially responsible company, we must ensure equity and diversity. These are some of the main challenges of contemporary organizations. It is understood by all that gender roles are assigned to men and women, in respect to constraints that society devotes to them. The senses are socially attributed to being male or female in a certain society and at a particular historical moment, according to Pandjarian (2006).

To Reszecki (2001), it is important to work the diversity and understand the profile of the people in the organization to achieve better management. Thus, one can enjoy the many features of these groups to gain a

competitive advantage in the organization. The diversity, based on gender, has been research component in many countries. Among the major social transformations, the tendency of organizations is in this scenario include the flexible journey, distance working and the availability of child care, since most women need today is to reconcile work with family (Sina, 2005).

According to Rocha-Coutinho (1994), the women's movement, which had its origin in western world in the 19th century, had its breakthrough in the 30s and has intensified since the 60s, when women began to claim rights and roles in public and private spheres. There were achievements and challenges in this scenario. The 20th century was marked by the growth of women's leadership in various social areas. Thousands of local and regional processes that lead to this result brought to light the need to revise the forms of human society and social organization, in order to ensure women and men equal relationships, and social organizations, with less authoritarian and hierarchical forms to exist.

In the Europe and North America the two world wars caused the entry of women into the labor market in the first half of the 20th century. In the Brazil, women's entry into the world of work was slower until the 70s, when it began to grow rapidly. In the 90s the participation of women in labor market has almost doubled from 21% to 42.7% of the economically active population (PEA). This is equivalent to 33 million workers according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2004). In the 2000s, the percentage of working women represents approximately 60% of the active population. According to studies conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO), this rate is similar to that of countries like England, Germany, Russia and Austria. In the United States and Switzerland, the proportion of workers is higher. In these countries the percentage of female labor reaches 63%, below the Norwegian and Swedes that point to a stake of more than 64% indicators. In the case of countries like China and South-Central Africa region, the number of working women is high, though, the hand-to-female work force is found concentrated in the agricultural sector, data from the Ethos Institute (2003). In a recent study, according to the Ethos Institute, women's participation in the labor market increased from 6% to 10.6% in 2005 (Instituto Ethos, 2005).

In the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte, where the data of this study were collected, female participation in the labor market is 50,5%, according to the Departamento Intersindical de Estatística e Estudos Sócioeconômicos - (DIEESE, 2013).

Second Peters (1998), the female achievements in the labor market may seem apparently insufficient, but from a historical standpoint, the advances are significant considering female leaders have achieved by means of their competence, dedication and commitment, making

every effort to face new challenges. It is noticed that the woman has contributed to the talented fashion business world, achieving positive results, and gaining success and recognition.

In view of Lipovetsky (2000), women face the harsh reality of combining three functions: professional, a wife and mother. Managing this "triple shift" work with the social requirement to be successful in the three assignments is no easy task. To undertake this mission without stress, physical and emotional exhaustion, the support of everyone involved, which does not always happen in practice, is needed.

Studies of Sina (2005) show that women are proving more competent in certain attitudes such as, ability to harmonize opposites, ability to add differences, determination, persistence, charisma and tenacity to add value to drive processes, people and projects. Therefore, organizations want women not only for their emotional side, but, principally, by their personalities and abilities to adapt to changes (Lipovetsky, 2000).

In the analysis of new opportunities and experiences of integrating women into the world of work, it is important to emphasize the concept, increasingly present in the literature, that human resources are or should be an integral and fundamental part of the strategies for organizational productivity and competitiveness according Delgado et al. (2000).

### c) *Female Style of Leadership*

According to Canha (1998), the female style of leadership, is comprised of: teamwork, listening to subordinate, seeking consensus, people orientation, tolerance and ability to resolve conflicts, and involves skills valued in today's organizations. Along the same lines, Machado (1999) signaled the female vocation for leadership style oriented people, as described in Managerial Grid of Blake and Mouton (2000). In this context Goleman (1999), emphasizes that women's leadership promotes some relevant considerations and concludes that women are causing the difference of the workforce organizations.

The feminine vision seeks to encourage the participation of employees and the division of responsibilities. Companies can benefit from this style of leadership primarily in long-term projects, in which the quality of the relationship on the team is crucial for the result of the work, Arango (1991).

Leite (1994), emphasizes that the essential characteristics of the female way of managing are currently the most valued by companies, i.e. greater attention to detail, perseverance and teamwork. Still, according to the author, the corporate world is transforming and discovering that certain executive skills are indispensable to the new management model. The characteristics referred to the author are: cooperative style, willingness to work and share decisions, and the use of intuition in analysis and troubleshooting. This requires a combination of typical women's and men's

attributes. The most suitable for organizations is therefore to combine the traditional model, developed by men to women, as both can contribute to the organization's success (Loden, 1996). According to the author the work teams that mix men and women achieve better results. This same premise is confirmed in studies by Baron-Conhen (2004), which shows that men like to contribute ideas, while women care about tasks, a partnership that improves the management of conflicts and maintain harmony among the members group.

We believe that the challenge of women in 21st century is to change the organizational values, considering gender differences. It is noteworthy that there is a pressing need to build a new style of leadership that integrates and values and male and female characteristics, since the feminine attributes in isolation, detached from knowledge and other skills do not ensure the quality of leadership style and can even compromise organizational outcomes. Other authors such as Todaro et al (2002) argue that the proposal to be a leader is not equally applicable to both genders and the scarcity of women in senior management is due to their lack of motivation for management positions.

## III. METHODOLOGY

This study aimed to identify whether gender differences are related to the different leadership styles of managers in managerial level. So, we conducted a field survey of interpretative and quantitative character, cross-sectional, with sample quotas and per convenience of 102 executives, men and women in positions of leadership in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte. The survey instrument used, adapted by Moraes (1995), was a self-completion questionnaire, divided into two parts: the first covers the demographic and occupational data for identification of participants; the second consisted of twelve questions, ordered, each with four alternatives, analyzing the data on Managerial Style, informed in writing and without the presence of the interviewer.

The sample was selected from eighty (80) companies, among the one hundred (100) larger companies of SESI – Serviço Social da Indústria, entity FIEMG System – Federação das Indústrias do Estado de Minas Gerais located in the metropolitan region of Belo Horizonte. To obtain a 95% assurance margin, 51 women and 51 men have been interviewed, according to the orientation Malhotra (2006). The data was analyzed using a simple statistical approach and Z test for proportions, making use tools of the Excel software. The results were obtained by the number of times that the phenomenon occurred, using as parameter of Blake and Mouton model, adapted by Moraes (2005). The responses of the investigation were obtained numerically and accurately, generating tables that illustrate the search result.

IV. RESULTS

The profile analysis shows that women and men have similar levels of education. The majority of respondents, 51% of women and 55% of men have undergraduate, with 25% of women and 20% of men have some graduate course. However, in relation to Masters level men are the majority, 25%, against 14% of women. As to age, (53%) women and (41%) of men are concentrated in the range between 41 to 50 years. Largely men (35%) have more than 50 years. The presence of women in this same range is significantly smaller.

Data analysis has shown that there is a great discrepancy between the numbers of direct subordinates of female to male leadership. Working time at company revealed that the highest concentration of male leadership, around 53%, has time home between 5 and 8 years. This same data regarding women is 63% with service time below 4 years. It is emphasized that the male leadership has been in office for more than eight years (31%), whereas among women are only 10% in the same period in office.

Analyzing leadership styles, according to the management style of Blake and Mouton, it was found that most of the female sample can be characterized as Country Club Style (1,9), also known as Club Campestre. Another predominant style also among the female population studied was the Team Style (9,9). It was found also that the orientation Country Club (1,9) is also predominant in men (43%), as shown in table 1.

Table 01 : Predominant Style

Style	Predominance		Percentage (%)	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Country Club (C)	34	22	67	43
Team (B)	09	09	17	18
Impoverished (D)	08	20	16	39
Total	51	51	100	100

This type of leadership is characterized by care leading to the needs of subordinates, with a style marked by strong emphasis on people. The attention focuses on areas where people feel good or express satisfaction.

As regards the establishment of objectives, analysis of Table 2 shows that (39%) of women and (52%) of men interact in Country Club Style (1,9). In this orientation, the leader aims to help each subordinate to establish the goals, through open discussions and not directed.

Table 02 : Creating goals with employees

Quadrant	Sample		% of sample	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Country Club (1.9)	20	27	39	52
Others styles	31	24	61	48
Total	51	51	100	100

Regarding the decision-making power (47%) of women interact in Country Club Style. This type of leader considers the decision making as an opportunity to participate. On the other hand, (57%) of men interact in the Impoverished Style. In this situation leader postpones, instead of deciding. Table 03 illustrates the situation.

Table 03 : How to give decision-making power to employees

Quadrant	Sample		% of sample	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Country Club (1.9)	24	12	47	23
Impoverished	12	29	24	57
Others styles	15	10	29	20
Total	51	51	100	100

Another interesting aspect found in the research that guided this work concerns the recognition of subordinate performance. In this sense both women (45%) as men (86%) interact in Country Club Style, as shown in table 04. The leader in this approach enhances the performance of subordinates, creating a harmonious atmosphere, and encourages people to be nice, cordial and mutually caring.

Table 04 : Performance of Subordinates

Quadrant	Sample		% of sample	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Country Club (1.9)	23	44	45	86
Impoverished (1.1)	19	07	37	14
Others styles	09	00	18	00
Total	51	51	100	100

Finally, as regards the management of conflicts, both genders interacts with subordinates on female Impoverished Style (90%) and male (98%), indicating a low level of intervention in these situations. Thus, the unpleasant events are noted, but ignored.

It is important to note that the leader who interacts under these conditions always responds to complaints, but never forwards to top management. This behavior generates low creativity and productivity, and consequent negative impacts on the careers of leaders and organizations. In the other words, the solution of the problem is postponed, avoiding confrontation. Table 05 illustrates the situation.

Table 05 : Guidance to staff

Quadrant	Sample		% of sample	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Impoverished (1.1)	33	27	65	53
Others styles	18	24	35	47
Total	51	51	100	100

V. CONCLUSION

The analysis of management styles performed in this study aimed to investigate the dominant style of leadership in women in Greater Metropolitan Belo

Horizonte (Brazil) revealed that men and women have similarities in leadership style, with only a few minor differences, especially regarding the frequency with which interact with their followers. The predominant style in both is the Country Club - women 67% and men 43%, which suggests that gender does not discriminate on the style.

The Country Club Style, present both in women as in men, has an orientation to people, although it is not recommended by the authors Blake and Mouton (2000) as an ideal style. These professionals, so attuned to the current discourse, seek to humanize organizations. Leaders are able to build a relationship based on respect, ethics and values.

Regarding the subdominant style it is observed that women behave differently from men. In this orientation it is positioned in the model considered ideal - "Team Style" praised as a dynamic style of leadership in which people have to remain competitive to survive the challenges of the modern world, equaling the team commitment to the goals of production. Most men are presented as the subdominant style "depleted", characterized by low concern for production as well as with people, which uses minimal effort to make it work is conducted, without which it is not possible to keep in the organization. This behavior can be explained in part by accelerating change, the need to reduce costs and the instability arising from the globalized economy. All this creates in people a sense of shyness, a fear of making decisions, and taking risks, limiting them to stay in "their zone" and perform basic tasks to ensure their survival.

Thus, the leadership style depends on the some variables such as, team profile, type and maturity of organization. Also, it varies according to the area of operations of the company, the type of role that person plays, his professional experience, technical expertise, the market in which the company operates, and its external environment. This could help to build an effective relationship, considering different people and cultures, since that human labor will increasingly depend on knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Finally, when one understands the complexity of leadership, one realizes that there is still a long way to go and much to learn about the various limitations imposed on people in leadership roles. The literature on this subject, especially in regard to gender, still requires more research and empirical support. Given these findings, further studies are recommended, especially on the impact of cultural values in the style of women's leadership and gender comparison among other important variables of organizational behavior, such as: the impact of gender on organizational effectiveness; motivation; conflicts; quality of life at work and commitment. Because of the relevance of the topic, it requires further scientific investigation. We believe that diversity policies, especially the genre, generate positive

differences by ensuring a stimulating and productive environment.

## VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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