

Leadership Excellence and Gender in Organizations

Gender in the workplace: The effects of social networks in cross-cutting project teams

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Organizations are increasingly utilizing self-managing project teams as a crucial operations strategy. The goal is to increase productivity via greater employee participation; however, little is known of the effect of this change in organization structure on employees, especially women and minorities. This research uses a social networks frame to examine the impact of cross-cutting, self-managing teams on women and men's work outcomes in organizations. I employ survey data from a Fortune Global 500 multinational, insurance company in the Midwestern United States to test hypotheses that cross-cutting team participation enhances women's pay and promotion opportunities, and reduces involuntary turnover by providing them access to more influential social networks. The results show that cross-cutting team participation and network centrality enhances the work outcomes of women who participate in these teams in comparison to those who do not, but significant gender differences persist, net of team participation and network centrality.