

## Gender and Social Influence

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*This review article reveals that men are generally more influential than women, although the gender difference depends on several moderators. Relative to men, women are particularly less influential when using dominant forms of communication, whereas the male advantage in influence is reduced in domains that are traditionally associated with the female role and in group settings in which more than one woman or girl is present. Males in particular resist influence by women and girls more than females do, especially when influence agents employ highly competent styles of communication. Resistance to competent women can be reduced, however, when women temper their competence with displays of communality and warmth.*

Historically, most research on gender and social influence has focused on gender differences in influenceability, the extent to which men and women are influenced by others. In fact, the numerous studies on this topic have been reviewed several times (e.g., Becker, 1986; Eagly, 1978; Eagly & Carli, 1981). Less attention, however, has been devoted to the effect of a person's gender on his or her ability to influence others, an ability that can contribute to effective management in organizations and is associated with career advancement and increases in salary (Dreher, Dougherty, & Whitely, 1989; Kanter, 1977; Rao, Schmidt, & Murray, 1995). Consequently, examining the factors that contribute to gender differences in social influence has implications for understanding women's leadership. This article reviews research on gender differences in exerting influence, including the factors that moderate the gender differences.

In most settings, women possess lower levels of status and power than men do, particularly power based on expertise or legitimate authority (Carli, 1999; Ridgeway, this issue). Because men and women typically fill different roles, with women

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more often occupying caretaking, domestic, and lower status occupational roles and men more often occupying higher status occupational roles, people expect men to behave more agentically than women and women to behave more communally than men (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, this issue). Moreover, the prescriptive nature of stereotypes about men and women leads to greater scrutiny of women's than men's leadership behaviors and to penalties against women whose behavior is too status asserting or insufficiently communal (Heilman, this issue). Consequently, people assume that men are more competent and knowledgeable than women are, that women are warmer and more communal than men are, that men have more right to act as authorities than women do, and that women must communicate communal motivation more than men. As a result, not only would people generally be more open to the influence of men than that of women, but women's influence would be more conditional than men's, dependent on the use of an influence style that corresponds prescriptively to the stereotypical female role. Finally, given that the gender difference in influence depends on the relative power of interactants, conditions that favor female authority and expertise should reduce the difference, whereas conditions that highlight gender as a status characteristic should increase it.

### **Gender Differences in Exerting Influence**

Numerous studies have examined gender differences in exerting social influence, and most of these, with a few exceptions (Chaiken, 1979; Schneider, 1997/1998), have reported gender differences. A meta-analytic review of the results of 29 studies revealed that, in mixed-sex groups, men exert more influence than women (Lockheed, 1985). Other more recent research not included in the review has confirmed this finding (DiBerardinis, Ramage, & Levitt, 1984; Propp, 1995; Schneider & Cook, 1995; Wagner, Ford, & Ford, 1986; Ward, Seccombe, Bendel, & Carter, 1985). Research on children has likewise revealed that boys exert greater influence than girls (Dion & Stein, 1978; Lockheed, Harris, & Nemceff, 1983; Jacklin & Maccoby, 1978). In general, influence attempts by women and girls are more likely to be ignored than attempts by men and boys, and in group interactions, contributions by men receive more attention from other group members and have a greater effect on group members' decisions than the same contributions by women (Altemeyer & Jones, 1974; Jacklin & Maccoby, 1978; Propp, 1995).

Although evidence clearly demonstrates that women are less influential than men, the gender difference in influence depends on the context of the interaction and the behavior displayed by the influence agent. In particular, the gender composition of the individuals in an interaction; the influence agents' competence, dominance, and communality; and the gender-typing of the task all moderate gender differences in social influence.

## Factors Moderating Gender Differences in Influence

### *Gender Composition Effects*

*Gender of recipient of influence attempts.* According to expectation states theory (Ridgeway, this issue), gender effects on influence depend on the salience of gender as a status characteristic. Women's lower status relative to men is particularly highlighted in interactions between men and women. Consequently, women's relative disadvantage in influencing others would likely be greatest in their interactions with men. Moreover, male resistance to female influence is undoubtedly one way in which men can maintain their power advantage over women. A reasonable prediction, therefore, is that men may display more resistance to female influence than women would. Of course, depending upon the salience of gender as a status characteristic, the particular context of the interaction, the communication style used by the influence agents (which will be discussed below), and the power of the research design, not all studies would be expected to reveal gender differences in reactions to female influence agents. Indeed, some studies have shown no significant interactions between the gender of the participant and the gender of the influence agent on social influence (Atkinson & Schwartz, 1984; Burgoon, Dillard, & Doran, 1983; Burgoon, Jones, & Stewart, 1975; Williams, 1983/1984). Nevertheless, when gender-of-subject effects are found, with rare exceptions (Ward et al., 1985), they reveal that men resist female influence more than women do.

In one study, participants listened to an audiotape of a male or female expert who presented a speech advocating nontraditional gender roles; results revealed that women were equally persuaded by male and female experts, but men were less persuaded by a woman than by a man (Rhoades, 1979/1981). Other experimental research on adults confirms that, with a male audience, women exert less influence than men do (Ridgeway, 1981).

Research on children has revealed similar findings. In a study of middle school children, boys and girls attempted to persuade their peers to eat bitter-tasting crackers (Dion & Stein, 1978). Although attractive children were more influential with the opposite sex than unattractive children, in general, boys were more inclined to eat the crackers after being persuaded by a male than female peer, whereas girls were equally influenced by both genders. Among 33-month-old toddlers, girls exerted less influence over their male playmates than boys did and less influence over male than female playmates, whereas boys exerted equal influence regardless of the gender of their peers (Jacklin & Maccoby, 1978). Serbin and her colleagues (Serbin, Sprafkin, Elman, & Doyle, 1982) observed 3- to 5-year-old preschoolers during play to determine whether the children's use of direct requests would be an effective form of influence. Results revealed that boys were equally successful in influencing male and female peers, but girls were less effective at influencing boys than girls. Finally, boys' resistance to female influence also extends to their own

mothers. Power and his colleagues (Power, McGrath, Hughes, & Manire, 1994) examined 2- to 6-year-old children's reactions to the influence attempts of their parents and found that whereas girls show equal compliance with the requests of both of their parents, boys comply more with the requests of their fathers than those of their mothers.

*Proportion of males and females in an interaction.* Men exert greater influence than women and resist women's influence more than women do because of the greater power that men possess in group interactions. Men's power advantage is reflected in research on the influence of solo men versus solo women over group decisions. Craig and Sherif (1986) reported research showing that solo men in groups of women exerted a disproportionately large amount of influence over their groups' decisions, whereas solo women did not. Taps and Martin (1990) likewise reported that being a solo woman in a group of men also put the woman at a disadvantage, reducing her influence over other members of her group. Instead, women exerted higher amounts of influence in gender-balanced groups than those with solo men or solo women (Craig & Sherif, 1986; Taps & Martin, 1990). These results parallel findings of studies examining gender differences in self-reported influence among union workers. In these studies, women reported exerting more influence over fellow workers in balanced groups than in groups in which women were in the minority, and men in the minority reported exerting more influence over fellow workers than minority women did (Izraeli, 1983, 1984).

Why does being in a minority create an apparent disadvantage for females, but an advantage for males? Minority status tends to highlight gender stereotypes and elicit greater gender-stereotypical behavior (Yoder, this issue). As a result, the amount of task contributions of individual male members increases as the proportion of men in a group goes down, whereas the amount of task contributions of female members increases as the proportion of women in a group goes up (Johnson & Schulman, 1989). Because task contributions typically facilitate influence (Mullen, Salas, & Driskell, 1989), especially for males (Butler & Geis, 1990; Ridgeway, 1982; Walker, Iardi, McMahon, & Fennell, 1996), the high amount of task contributions of males in the minority lead to considerable influence, whereas the relative silence of minority females interferes with theirs. The presence of other same-sex group members may empower women and girls and encourage their participation. It is also likely to change the nature of the interaction, including the behaviors shown by males, so that the group members display more mutual support and agreeableness. In fact, males show more communal behavior toward females than toward males and more when there are proportionally more females present (Johnson, Clay-Warner, & Funk, 1996; Killen & Naigles, 1995). In essence, then, when females are in the majority, the male advantage is somewhat undercut by the opportunity for women to serve as allies to one another and by the greater communality of the interaction.

*Communication Style Used by Influence Agent*

*Competence.* Research has often focused on the importance of task competence in affecting social influence. Competence can be conveyed through objective success at a task or through status cues, such as rapid speech with few verbal hesitations and stumbles (Ridgeway, 1987), communicating directly and avoiding indirect or mitigated forms of speech (Carli, 1990), and making task contributions. Because competent influence agents are typically more credible than those who are less competent, competence should be associated with increased influence for both men and women. Still, task competence may be of particular importance to the effectiveness of women influence agents, because research on descriptive gender stereotypes indicates that people perceive women to be less expert and knowledgeable except in situations that favor female expertise (Carli, 1999; Ridgeway, this issue; Wood & Karten, 1986) and less qualified as managers (Heilman, this issue; Schein, this issue) than men are. Moreover, research indicates that a different standard exists in the evaluation of the performance of men and women. Because less is expected of women than of men, the minimum standard for performance is set lower for women, and the standard for high competence is set higher than it is for men (Biernat & Fuegen, this issue). In order to be considered as able as a man, a woman must show clear evidence that her performance is superior to his, just as with girls in interactions with boys (Lockheed, Harris, & Nemceff, 1983). Unfortunately, this places extra demands on women and girls to show exceptional competence in order to be taken seriously as leaders and influence agents.

Although the existence of a double standard for performance suggests that displaying competence would facilitate women's influence more than men's, there is limited evidence that women benefit more than men from exhibiting competence. Bradley (1981) found that women who supported their opinions with evidence and were therefore seen as more competent were more influential over the opinions of other members of their group than women who did not; men's influence and perceived intelligence were relatively high regardless of whether they used evidence to support their claims. On the other hand, other studies reveal that both men and women are equally likely to benefit from speaking in a clear, fluent, and competent manner (Driskell, Olmstead, & Salas, 1993) or from communicating that they have unusual expertise on the topic of persuasion (Bradley, 1980), with both genders exerting more influence with highly competent than with less competent displays. Although the studies just reviewed are somewhat limited in that they did not include manipulations of both the gender of the speaker and the gender of the participant in the same experiment, other research including these manipulations indicates that competence enhances influence for men and women speakers, with no particular advantage for women (Erickson, Lind, Johnson, & Barr, 1978; Holtgraves & Lasky, 1999; Son & Schmitt, 1983; Wagner et al., 1986).

Although displays of competence generally facilitate influence, this is not universally true for women. For example, Propp (1995) reported that possessing important and unique information related to a group task did enhance a man's ability to influence his group but did not affect a woman's ability to influence hers. In Propp's study, participants were more likely to pay attention to and use information contributed by a man but to ignore the identical information contributed by a woman. Likewise, the extent to which group participants make important contributions to a group task is associated with influence in the group for men, but not for women (Walker et al., 1996). Instead, women's task contributions to a group are more likely to be ignored or to evoke hostility than men's are (Butler & Geis, 1990; Ridgeway, 1982).

More insidiously, competent direct displays can sometimes actually interfere with a woman's ability to influence others. For example, a study examining the effect of men's and women's use of persuasive messages that varied in directness revealed that men were equally persuasive, regardless of their communication style, whereas women exerted greater influence when communicating in a more indirect manner (Burgoon et al., 1975). Because women possess less diffuse status and legitimate authority than men, regardless of a woman's competence, she is more likely to be perceived as lacking the right to influence or lead others than a man would be perceived to be (Ridgeway, this issue). Consequently, a man's success in influencing others may depend much less on the way he communicates than a woman's does. The effects of communication style on influence may also depend on the gender of the recipient of influence attempts. As already noted, men resist female influence more than women do. Men may feel more threatened than women by competent and assertive speech in women and may therefore be more resistant to competent women than women are.

In fact, there is evidence that women can be disadvantaged by competent displays, especially with a male audience. Using a simulated job interview, Buttner and McEnally (1996) examined the effect of male and female job applicants' communication style when they were seeking employment on their likelihood of being hired by actual corporate executives, about 90% of whom were male. Results revealed that the executives were most persuaded by and preferred to hire men who communicated in a highly competent manner, showing directness and initiative, rather than men using a less competent style. In contrast, the executives reported being least persuaded by and likely to hire a woman using a highly competent style compared with women using other less competent styles. In another study, Carli (1990) reported that men who spoke in a competent manner influenced both men and women to a greater degree than men speaking in a more indirect and mitigated manner (e.g., disclaiming expertise, using tag questions and hedges), a style perceived by participants to convey less competence. Women using a competent style of speech likewise influenced their female peers more than women using an incompetent style, but women communicating in a mitigated and less competent style

were better able to influence men than women using a more competent style. In this study, men, but not women, reported that highly competent women were more threatening and less likeable than less competent women, and these negative perceptions reduced influence. Results of a follow-up study revealed that men were less influenced by a competent woman than a competent man, whereas women were equally influenced by competent men and women (Carli, LaFleur, & Loeber, 1995). Men reported feeling more threatened by and were less inclined to like a competent woman than her male counterpart, and these negative feelings predicted their resistance to her influence.

Similar findings have been reported in a study by Matschiner and Murnen (1999) in which a female confederate presented a persuasive message after endorsing a highly traditional and subordinate gender role for women or a role that was less traditional. Although the traditional female speaker was judged by both male and female participants to be less competent than her less traditional counterpart, the traditional speaker exerted more influence over men than over women and more influence over men than the more competent speaker. Again, men found the competent woman to be less likeable than women found her. Finally, similar findings have been reported in Israel, where men responded more favorably to a woman who communicated in a relatively incompetent style. In that study, persuasive appeals conveying weakness and need were not particularly effective when used by men or by women communicating with other women but were effective when used by women attempting to influence men (Weimann, 1985). These studies reveal that when women exhibit the exact same competent behavior as men do, even though that behavior is, in fact, perceived to convey competence in women as well as men, women still remain at a disadvantage.

Although men often resist a competent woman, they are less resistant when they have the opportunity to gain money or other benefits by making a well-informed decision. Under such conditions, men are influenced to a greater degree by competent women than by either women or men who are less competent (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983; Shackelford, Wood, & Worchel, 1996). Apparently, when men feel that they have something to gain by deferring to a competent woman, their need for competence outweighs concerns over threats to male authority.

*Dominance.* Dominant behavior, which has been characterized as controlling, threatening, forceful, and agonistic, involves negative forms of influence. These include direct disagreement and verbal or nonverbal cues for aggression or threat, such as interruptions, speaking in a loud voice, pointing at others, and having a stern expression (Carli, 1989; Carli et al., 1995; Copeland, Driskell, & Salas, 1995; Ridgeway & Diekema, 1989). Although dominance has not typically been considered an effective method of inducing influence, researchers have argued that people are more tolerant of dominant behaviors in high-status than low-status individuals and in men than in women. According to descriptive gender stereotypes,

women are expected to show greater warmth and nurturance than men do, whereas men are expected to show higher levels of competitiveness and aggressiveness (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, this issue). Moreover, given the social roles to which men and women are assigned in society, dominant behavior, such as aggression and competitiveness, is prescriptively more congruent with the male than the female role. In general, then, neither men nor women should be particularly influential when exhibiting dominant behavior, but women may be particularly disliked and ineffective as influence agents when they engage in such behavior.

Generally, research confirms that dominance is relatively ineffective in inducing persuasion, regardless of the gender of the influence agent. For example, the more men and women directly disagree with their discussion partner, the less they are able to persuade him or her (Carli, 1989). The use of dominant nonverbal behavior by men or women reduces their ability to influence others and is no more effective than use of submissive displays (Carli et al., 1995). Moreover, in group interactions, both dominant men and women evoke hostile and dominant reactions from fellow group members, are liked less than nondominant members, and show no particular gains in influence from their dominance (Ridgeway & Diekema, 1989). Still, low-status individuals are particularly disadvantaged by exhibiting dominance (Ridgeway, Diekema, & Johnson, 1995), and consequently, women do receive more penalties for dominance than men do.

Both men and women dislike a woman who disagrees with them more than a man who does so and, as a consequence, are less persuaded by her (Carli, 1998). In face-to-face discussions of gender-neutral topics, direct disagreement by a woman is actually more likely to evoke overt expressions of hostility or tension than the same behavior by a man (Carli, 1998), and compared with male speakers, women speakers who communicate in the same threatening or aversive manner exert less influence over their audience (Burgoon, Birk, & Hall, 1991; Burgoon et al., 1983; Perse, Nathanson, & McLeod, 1996). Nonverbal dominance is likewise considered more acceptable in men than in women. Maintaining a high degree of visual dominance, which involves showing relatively higher amounts of eye gaze while speaking than while listening and is associated with status and authority, reduces women's likeability and influence but can actually increase men's influence (Copeland, Driskell, & Salas, 1995; Mehta et al., 1989, cited in Ellyson, Dovidio, & Brown, 1992). Further, this pattern of particular resistance to female dominance has also been found in studies involving young children; teachers of infants and toddlers ignore the negative influence attempts of girls more than the negative assertions of boys (Fagot, Hagan, Leinbach, & Kronsberg, 1985).

*Warmth and communality.* Much research has revealed that women continue to be viewed as warmer and nicer than men (Diekman & Eagly, 2000; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, this issue). Unfortunately, the stereotype of female warmth has become prescriptive; women are expected to show such communal traits.



Because women lack status (Heilman, this issue; Ridgeway, this issue) and possess relatively low levels of legitimate and expert power (Carli, 1999), they are penalized and rejected when they do not adhere to the prescription for warmth and communality. Women who attempt to influence others while communicating a desire for personal gain or to enhance their own status are likely to be unsuccessful. Instead, people are likely to show greater receptiveness to female influence by a woman who is collaborative and communal and whose goals appear to focus more on helping others achieve their goals than on her own benefit (Lockheed & Hall, 1976; Meeker & Weitzel-O'Neill, 1985).

Research confirms that women's influence depends on their communicating in a communal style that shows a lack of self-interest. Communal behaviors include verbal and nonverbal behaviors, such as smiling, expressing agreement, and showing support of others (Carli & Eagly, 1999; Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, this issue) or explicitly stating that one is motivated to help or benefit others (Ridgeway, 1982). People dislike women who fail to show communal behavior and show self-interest instead. For example, self-promotion is viewed as less acceptable in women than in men and less acceptable in women than is modesty (Giacalone & Riordan, 1990; Wosinska, Dabul, Whetstone-Dion, & Cialdini, 1996). Moreover, self-promoting women are generally less influential and seen as less likeable than modest women (Rudman, 1998), even though women who self-promote are perceived as more competent and confident than those who do not. In group interactions, women who exhibit communal behaviors exert greater influence than women who do not, whereas men exert equal influence over other group members, regardless of how communally they behave (Carli, 1998; Rudman & Glick, this issue; Shackelford, Wood, & Worchel, 1996). Research on children (Killen & Naigles, 1995) has revealed the same pattern of findings: preschool girls attempting to influence others using a communal style, by agreeing with others and compromising, exert greater influence than girls using a more dominant style, such as commanding others or disagreeing. In contrast, preschool boys exert equal influence whether they communicate in a communal or dominant manner.

Men, in particular, respond unfavorably to women who communicate self-interest rather than friendliness, warmth, and other communal characteristics (Ridgeway, 1982). But even male resistance to the influence of competent women is tempered when women are able to combine competence with warmth. Women who use rapid, unhesitating, and clear language, which is associated with competence, are less persuasive than men who communicate in the same way; however, women who combine these competence cues with cues for warmth, such as smiling and nodding, are as persuasive as their male counterparts and more persuasive than women who show mere competence (Carli et al., 1995). In general, communality facilitates liking; people like both men and women who show warmth and agreeableness (Carli, 1989). Because being warm and likeable is prescriptive for women, however, but not for men, likeableness is associated with social influence

for women more than it is for men (Carli, 1989). In other words, a man can influence others even when they do not particularly like him, but a woman must be likeable to be influential.

### *Gender Bias of Task*

Because people generally consider women to be less expert than men, women should be at a disadvantage in gender-neutral contexts, in which without overwhelming evidence of a woman's superiority at the task, men would be presumed to be more competent and would therefore be more influential. The male advantage in influence should be even greater in contexts that are stereotypically masculine or that are explicitly described as favoring male expertise. On the other hand, women should be more influential than men in contexts that are considered stereotypically feminine, for under such conditions women would be presumed to be more expert and would also have more legitimate authority than men.

Although some studies have not revealed effects due to the gender bias of the task (Knight & Saal, 1984; Williams, 1983/1984), generally, the evidence indicates that women are more influential for stereotypically feminine than masculine tasks, whereas men are more influential for masculine or gender-neutral tasks (Falbo, Hazen, & Linimon, 1982; Javornisky, 1979; Pugh & Wahrman, 1983). For example, a study of heterosexual couples indicated that men exerted greater influence over their partners' opinions about premarital sex than women did, but women exerted greater influence over their partners' opinions about birth control than men did (Gerrard, Breda, & Gibbons, 1990). Another study revealed that men exerted greater influence over the opinions of their peers on a sports-related topic, whereas women exerted greater influence on a topic concerning women's fear of crime (Feldman-Summers, Montano, Kasprzyk, & Wagner, 1980).

### **Conclusion**

Why do people resist women's influence? First, to be effective, influence agents should be perceived as competent, and people typically perceive men to have higher levels of competence than women have, unless there is very clear evidence of female superiority. As a result, gender differences in social influence occur even when there are no objective differences in the behaviors or performance of male and female influence agents. In addition, even when women are perceived to be competent, they are often relatively ineffective as influence agents in domains or contexts that are not stereotypically feminine. Among both adults and children, when the context favors female expertise or is in a traditional female domain, women and girls exert greater influence than when the context is gender neutral or masculine, because female expertise and authority is likely to be viewed as entirely legitimate in feminine domains. Consequently, when a task

is stereotypically feminine, males defer to females and females resist male influence. The more general condition, however, is that tasks do not favor women but are either gender-neutral or stereotypically masculine. As a result, women typically have the extra burden of establishing their competence, whereas male competence is taken for granted.

Second, it is men more than women who resist female influence. Men have greater legitimacy and authority than women do, and women who show a desire to influence others threaten men's power advantage. Male resistance to female influence parallels research findings on reactions to male and female leaders. Although there is evidence of a general bias against female leaders, this bias is particularly pronounced in men (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992; Forsyth, Heiney, & Wright, 1997). Men, but not women, consider task-oriented female leaders to be less effective than task-oriented male leaders (Rojahn & Willemsen, 1994), and it is men who view managerial skill as more characteristic of men than of women (Schein, this issue). Women are less likely to link managerial skill to gender or to denigrate the accomplishments of other women. The gender effect on influence, then, is not primarily due to behavioral differences between males and females but appears to be due to resistance to female influence, especially by males. Because men particularly resist the influence of a competent woman, unless they are likely to somehow benefit from her competence, one way to overcome male resistance would be to remind men of the potential benefit and value to them of women's contributions.

In general, behavior that is consistent with prescriptive gender role norms is more influential than behavior that violates those norms (Burgoon et al., 1983; Buttner & McEnally, 1996). Fulfilling prescriptive norms appears, however, to be more crucial for women than for men. Men are often influential even when they do not adhere to traditional gender role norms (see Carli & Eagly, 1999), perhaps because being influential is, in itself, more congruent with the traditional male gender role than with the female gender role. In general, people allow men much greater behavioral latitude than they allow women, and a man's likeableness and influence depend much less on his communication style than do a woman's. Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (this issue) have noted that the behavior of women leaders receives more attention than that of their male counterparts. In the same way, the behavior of female influence agents receives greater scrutiny than that of males.

Given the power of prescriptive norms, it is not surprising that displays of interpersonal warmth and collaboration can reduce resistance to women's influence, whereas displays of dominance or competence in the absence of warmth can increase that resistance. Women who display warmth are more influential primarily because they are more likeable than women who do not. Although being likeable benefits men as well, since it increases their ability to influence, likeableness appears to be essential for women. Likeableness, like warmth, is stereotypically linked to the female gender role and appears to be prescriptive for women.

Ridgeway (this issue) has noted that interactions among low- and high-status groups may create the perception that those of low status are communal, because low-status individuals are often seen supporting those of higher status. Nevertheless, it is important to note here that communality does not consistently reflect low status. In fact, some studies have revealed more communal behavior among higher than lower status managers (Hall & Friedman, 1999; Kelley & Caplan, 1993). Moreover, people do not consistently perceive communal behaviors, such as smiling, to reflect low status or powerlessness but instead see such behavior as orthogonal to status (Carli, Tse, Lyon, Martin, & Leatham, 1993). Therefore, communal behaviors should not be construed as weak and deferent. Indeed, as I have been arguing, use of a communal style of interacting can be a means to influence and is also the basis of referent power (Carli, 1999). The challenge for women, however, is that others perceive them to be lacking legitimacy and expertise, relative to men, which limits women's access to sources of power available to men.

If those who are competent and likeable influence people, then the path to influence must be very different for men and for women. Behavior that increases a man's perceived competence would likewise enhance, or at least not reduce, his likeableness, because competent behavior is congruent with the male gender role. For men, there is no conflict between role-appropriate behavior and behavior that is inherently influential, whereas for women displays of competence have a less clear effect on social influence. Although people may consider a woman's opinions to be more credible when she is relatively competent, such a woman is not behaving in a role-congruent manner and is consequently not very likeable. Therefore, competent behavior can simultaneously enhance a woman's influence by increasing her perceived competence and reduce her influence by lowering her likeableness. Indeed, given the complex relation of perceived competence to influence and the prescriptive demand that women be warm, it is not surprising that being likeable is particularly important for women influence agents.

Research on evaluation of leaders confirms this double standard. Women who lead in an autocratic manner receive less favorable evaluations than women who lead in a democratic manner; although men receive equally favorable evaluations regardless of their use of an autocratic or democratic style (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992). Women leaders, like women in general, must lead in a way that conveys communality or risk being perceived as illegitimate. In fact, research on gender differences in social and task behaviors both in ad hoc groups (Carli & Olm-Shipman, 2000) and among leaders (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, this issue; Eagly & Karau, 1991) indicates that women do show higher levels of social-communal behavior than men, whereas men show higher levels of task behavior. Such behavior, particularly in interactions with men, may be a pragmatic means by which women can reduce resistance to their influence and thereby achieve greater legitimacy as leaders.

Because gender stereotypes are linked to women's roles and status in society, as women become more visible in positions of authority, the stereotypes will likely change and become more favorable toward women. Indeed, the gender stereotypes about greater male competence may already be weakening (see Rudman & Glick, this issue). In the meantime, women can enhance their influence by combining highly competent behavior with warmth and by showing other-directedness in interactions with subordinates and colleagues. In addition, organizations can enhance women's influence by endorsing the authority of female leaders (Yoder, this issue) and publicizing the ways that the contributions of women leaders benefit organizations.

In conclusion, the present review provides evidence that men have greater influence than women and that this influence is moderated by the gender composition of groups, the communication style of interactants, and the gender bias of the task. Additional research on moderator effects would be useful in extending our understanding of the conditions and behaviors that enhance women's influence, particularly as the existing literature examining each moderator effect is not extensive. Moreover, with a larger base of studies it would be possible to meta-analyze this literature and more precisely quantify the relation of moderators to the gender difference in social influence. Nevertheless, the present review is emblematic of the challenges confronting women influence agents. Women more than men must overcome resistance to their authority in order to exert influence. The greater constraints on women's influence underscore the power differences between men and women and the persistence of traditional gender stereotypes.

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