Master Degree Project in Management

Men and Women's Use of Influence Tactics

Differences and Consequences

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Abstract

Despite the large amount of research on influence tactics, the potential gender differences regarding usage of tactics has been somewhat disregarded. An influence behavior questionnaire study with 20 managers, and an influence incident interview study with 5 people was conducted to investigate if some gendered patterns could be identified. The use of tactics was measured with the agent version of the IBQ-G, and the influence interview reports were conducted as interviews from a target perspective. Results indicated that women and men favor different influence tactics, even if gender is only one part of the puzzle. The men in *Study 1* rated themselves as more effective but worse at eliciting complete commitment in their targets compared to the women. *Study 2* indicated that men and women are believed to use different influence tactics, but that individual preferences will tend to be stronger. Rational persuasion was found to be the most frequent and effective tactic according to both studies.

This study suggests that women and men might favor using different tactics, even if differences are likely to also be affected by other contextual factors. Some tactics are shown to be more successful in eliciting commitment in targets, regardless of the gender of the agent. The results suggest that gender should be offered a stronger place in future influence tactic research to create a more complete analysis. Knowing what tactics both men and women could be in favor of using is also a contribution of this study.

Keywords: influence tactics, differences, gender, gender role theory, IBQ-G, influence incident reports

1. Introduction

Getting one's way by influencing people to do what you want them to is one of the greatest determinants of managerial success in organizations (Kipnis et al., 1980; Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990; Yukl, 1989; Yukl, 2010). In the absence of legitimate power sources this will prove especially important, where one cannot rely on the formal organizational systems and processes to exert influence (Mintzberg, 1983). Knowing which tactics that will have the highest likelihood of success regarding influencing you peers, subordinates or superiors, can also lead to improvements in managerial effectiveness (Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Kotter, 1986; Yukl, 2010; Yukl &

Falbe, 1990) and help promote individual career advancements (Barrick et al., 2009; Higgins & Judge, 2004; Judge & Bretz, 1994). Despite the apparent importance of the subject, there has not been much interest in looking further into the potential gender differences, compared to another research area such as e.g. leadership (e.g. Bass & Stogdill, 1990; Carless, 1998; Druskat, 1994; Rosener, 1990; van Engen, van der Leeden & Willemsen, 2001). Several studies have examined the effectiveness of specific tactics, combinations of tactics, tactics effect on commitment, and the role of power in influence tactics (e.g. Barry & Shapiro, 1992; Cohen & Bradford, 1989; Erez, Rim & Keider, 1986; Farmer et al., 1997; Kipnis et al., 1980; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993; Yukl, Kim, & Chavez, 1999; Yukl & Tracey, 1992), but rarely how gender may affect the use influence tactics, except for a couple of exceptions (e.g. Carothers & Allen, 1999; DuBrin, 1989; Eagly & Wood, 1982; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Smith et al., 2013). Smith et al. (2013) conclude that gender might not be the only cause, but it needs to be given more consideration. They continue to suggest that gender might have practical significance and consequences inside organizations (ibid), and some research also present evidence that men and women experience different outcomes when using certain tactis, meaning that they do not play inside the same conditions (e.g. Buttner & McEnally, 1996; Carothers & Allen, 1999; DuBrin, 1989; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007). This suggestion makes it even more relevant to explore it further, since gender might be a valuable variable for understanding influence (Bodla & Danish, 2013; Smith et al., 2013).

Kipnis et al. (1980) were some of the first to explore how people act to influence their colleagues and superiors to reap the fruits of influence in terms of either personal benefits or reaching organizational goals. Prior studies had most been aimed at how to influence subordinates to either strengthen morale or increase their efficiency (Kipnis et al., 1980), but their study pursued a more overall take on it. The results were defined as eight dimensions of influence: *assertiveness*, *ingratiation*, *rationality*, *sanctions*, *exchange*, *upward appeals*, *blocking*, and *coalitions*. Since their study new tactics have developed, and new directions have been pursued. Yukl and others (e.g. Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl, Falbe, & Youn, 1993; Yukl & Tracey, 1992) identified *nine* influence tactics by adding *consultation* and *inspirational appeals* to the list, whilst removing *blocking*. The number of tactics was then reviewed once again, and its latest version includes a total number of *eleven* tactics, which meant adding *apprising* and *collaboration* (Yukl, Chavez & Seifert, 2005; Yukl & Seifert, 2002).

As earlier mentioned, past research has identified several factors that affect the use and consequences of influence tactics but little regard has been given to the potential difference between how women and men use them. Therefore, this study investigated if the gender of an influence agent impacted the use of influence tactics, and if the gender of the agent had any consequences on the influence attempt. In turn, we might learn more about if there are any gender congruent influence tactics, and if a woman or a man would experience different consequences when sticking to those tactics. Some research has presented that there is no apparent difference (e.g. Dreher

& Dougherty & Whitely, 1989; Instone, Major, & Bunker, 1983; Kipnis et al., 1980; O'Neil, 2004; Thacker & Wayne, 1995), or that differences are mostly caused by other factors such as e.g. context, purpose, power bases, and the direction of influence. On the other hand, others have proclaimed that differences do exist (e.g. Bodla & Danish, 2013; Buttner & McEnally, 1996; Carothers & Allen, 1999; DuBrin, 1989; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Kulik & Olekalns, 2012, Smith et al., 2013). Due to this inconclusive prior evidence, gender deserves further attention, which has resulted in the purpose of this paper.

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this paper was to bring a demographical perspective into the area of influence tactics, namely if gender affects the use of influence tactics. Without any conclusive evidence in this area, this study can contribute to the basis for future research that aspires to look into if women and men need to give more concern to what tactics they are using, and if gender itself is relevant when discussing influence. In turn, possible consequences due to the use of different influence tactics will also be considered to deepen the analysis.

1.1.2 Identification of a Research Question

The major objective of this research was to investigate if women and men use different influence tactics. This research thus tried to add to what is currently known about the use of influence tactics by women and men. The secondary objective was to look at what possible consequences their use of influence tactics might have. This resulted in the research question pursued in this paper:

"Does the use of influence tactics differ between women and men, and what possible consequences might these differences carry with them?"

1.2 Delimitations

This study did not wish to establish a framework or step-by-step guide for how men and women should apply influence tactics, rather it aspires to increase the knowledge of gender's effect regarding what influence tactics are used. Neither did it try to prescribe a strategy for using a certain influence tactic or a combination of them to reach ultimate results.

2. Theoretical Framework

Below, past research will be presented to give a broader understanding of influence tactics and what areas that research primarily have been concentrating on, including the most recent 11 scientifically supported influence tactics (see List 1 in Appendix 1 for a complete overview and explanation of each tactic). Research on gender in terms of its effects in the workplace and on the individual will also be presented, creating a basis for the elaboration of gender's potential impact on influence tactics.

2.1 Influence Tactics

Kipnis et al. (1980) were some of the first to conduct two major studies regarding the tactics of influence that people use at work. Prior studies had mostly focused on how to improve employee efficiency and morale (ibid), whereas their study sought to broaden the perspective to include not only subordinates, but also colleagues and superiors. Their second study transpired in the creation of 8 tactics of influence: *assertiveness*, *ingratiation*, *rationality*, *sanctions*, *exchange*, *upward appeals*, *blocking*, and *coalitions*. This amount of tactics was greater compared to what had been found in prior studies (e.g. Falbo, 1977; Fleischman, 1973), and it was concluded that influence tactics concern all levels of personnel inside an organization, since everyone seeks to influence each other in an organization, regardless of job title (Kipnis et al., 1980).

Drawing from Kipnis et al. (1980), several directions of research have developed. From initially applying an "agent" outlook, subordinates were not expected to have the same reasons for influencing someone as a superior would have. This was expected to be dependent upon their different power bases (Erez, Rim, & Keider, 1986). The perception and interpretation of a used influence tactic was also put into consideration, since this too was expected to differ due to an individual's power base (ibid). Erez, Rim and Keider (1986) concluded that people with different amounts power in an organization would tend to use different influence tactics, and that some of them are more or less effective depending upon that person's individual power base and motives.

Due to the differing perceptions and motives for individuals using influence tactics (Erez, Rim, & Keider, 1986; White, 1988), studies that used both target and agent reports (i.e. assessing oneself and letting others assess the influence agent) were created. Kipnis et al. (1980) was now being criticized due to it was not adapted to a managerial context, that it suffered from a self-agent report bias (Yukl & Falbe, 1990), and that the structure and analysis of the study was not reliable enough (Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990). The continued work showed that the direction of influence had stronger effects on influence objectives compared to its effects on influence tactics (Yukl & Falbe, 1990). The direction of influence regards if the individual trying to influence someone is trying to influence a person "above" (i.e. *upward influence*), "below" (i.e. *downward influence*) or on the same level (i.e. *lateral influence*) as him/her in the formal hierarchical scheme. Some tactics were thus being used more than others, regardless of the individual's status in the organization (Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Two new tactics were added to the list: *consultation* and *inspirational appeal*. The two new tactics proved to be two of the most frequently used by managers, no matter the direction of influence (Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Yukl & Tracey (1992) continued and investigated the effectiveness of influence tactics for influencing subordinates, peers, and superiors. This included suggesting *task commitment* as a new assessment criterion. *Commitment* is described as when a target agrees internally with an action or decision and will exercise unusual personal effort and persistence to carry out the request successfully (Yukl, 2010). If commitment is the highest level of motivation a

target feels for a task/request, the lesser levels in a chronological order are *compliance* and *resistance*. Compliance means that the target carries out the request, but is rather indifferent to carrying it out compared to being enthusiastic and showing initiative. Resistance occurs when the target opposes the request and actively tries to avoid it by e.g. arguing, stalling, or trying to nullify the request (ibid). Prior studies had only included performance ratings as a measure of influence success, but now these three new criteria were included. Further, Yukl and Tracey (1990) found that consultation, inspirational appeal, and rational persuasion were factors moderately effective for creating task commitment, regardless of their direction. Thus, their findings showed that the direction of the influence tactics does not seem to be an important determinant in comparison with other factors (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). However, research (e.g. Gravenhorst & Boonstra, 1998; Kennedy, Fu & Yukl, 2003; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993) concluded that some tactics might be more efficient than others, and that there are many contextual factors besides the actual influence tactics themselves that can determine its results (Cable & Judge, 2003; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Therefore, it was suggested that future research should be concentrated on when certain tactics are more likely to result in compliance rather than commitment, and how different can be combined or sequenced for a desired result (Yukl & Tracey, 1992).

Influence tactics have been suggested to be able to group into three categories: (a) hard tactics, (b) soft tactics, and (c) rational persuasion (Kipnis & Schmidt, 1985).

a) *Hard tactics*: the use of authority and position power which tend to be used in a manipulative and impersonal way.
   a. Suggested to include the following tactics: pressure, legitimating, coalition, and exchange[1].
b) *Soft tactics*: the use of personal power and power sharing.
   a. Suggested to include the following tactics: ingratiation, consultation, inspirational appeal, and personal appeals.
c) *Rational persuasion*: the use of factual evidence and information to make a request seem relevant and feasible,
   a. Suggested to include the following tactics: exchange[2] and rational persuasion.

Further, van Knippenberg (1999) defined *hard tactics* as somewhat controlling and coercive; whereas *soft tactics* were defined as allowing some freedom for the target to choose whether or no to comply. Research (e.g. van Knippenberg et al., 1999; Yukl & Fable, 1990; Yukl & Tracey, 1993) therefore suggested that the frequency of use of soft tactics is greater than the use of hard tactics, reasoning that hard tactics often are deemed less socially desirable and leave the target with less

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[1] "*When used in an impersonal, manipulative way, exchange appears to be a hard tactic*" (Yukl & Falbe, 1992).
[2] Included as a rational tactic by Kipnis and Schmidt (1985).

freedom of choice (Raven, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Yukl and Falbe (1992) concluded that combinations of tactics could be more effective than a single tactic, but pointed out that managers need to pay close attention to which combinations they use, since e.g. combining two hard tactics was not better than a single hard tactic. Hence, managers will be in advantage when knowing what and which tactics that have the highest likelihood of success (Yukl & Falbe, 1992). The findings of Barry and Shapiro (1992) also indicated that the combinations of tactics (e.g. combining rational persuasion and following up with inspirational appeals) are important for understanding the dynamics of influence attempts. They also found that the degree of personal influence is associated with knowing more than which single tactic that will be successful in an influence attempt, and understanding the effect of one tactic in the presence, or absence, of other tactics (ibid).

The interest in factors affecting influence tactics, contextual and internal, have constantly been growing, and as a result new research continuously focused in on new areas of potential interest. Many factors affecting a person's choice of influence tactics have been investigated, but somehow little regard has been given to the demographic variable of gender. However, some studies that did investigate it will be presented in the following sections.

2.2 Gendered Influence

Despite a large amount of previous research on influence tactics, the area is vast and calls for further investigation (Bodla & Danish, 2013; Higgins et al., 2003; Smith et al., 2013). Research that directly investigated the impact of gender on influence tactics choices and outcomes (Eagly & Wood, 1982; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007) has found that women and men actually do display different tactics (Carothers & Allen, 1999; DuBrin, 1989). Additionally, they experience different outcomes when doing so (Dreher, Dougherty & Whitley, 1989). However, some contrasting studies (e.g. O'Neil, 2004; Thacker & Wayne, 1995) did not agree with this notion and posit that the gender aspect is not needed to account for. Rather it can be considered a nuisance variable with possibly only marginal significance and weak effects (Instone, Major & Bunker, 1983).

In a meta-analysis regarding the gendered nature of lateral and upward influence attempts by Smith et al. (2013), they concluded that even if the gender aspect might not tell the whole part of the story it needs to be taken seriously. They suggested that gender in fact will have practical significance and consequences in organizational settings, and that the aspect of gender surely would benefit from an expanded investigation (ibid). Future studies should investigate the contextual nature of gender as well as focusing on potential gender differences (Bodla & Danish, 2013).

2.2.1 Gender Role Theory

In their meta-analysis, Smith et al. (2013) were inspired by Eagly's (1987) *gender role theory*. Gender role theory (Eagly, 1987) suggests that all women and men are prescribed a particular set of role-congruent behavioral norms. These might then be expected to translate into the choice of influence tactics and the effectiveness a

woman or a man reaches when using them (Buttner & McEnally, 1996; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Kulik & Olekalns, 2012). Smith et al. (2013) continued to suggest that if women and men use tactics which are considered as appropriate according to the role-based behavioral norms, they will reach better results. In other words, this will ultimately impact their frequency of use and effectiveness.

Further, gender role theory specifies three groups of different behaviors, whereas one of them is more female-oriented and the other one more male-oriented (Eagly, 1987). These three are (a) communal tactics, (b) agentic tactics, and (b) neutral tactics.

a) *Communal tactics*: associated with expressing e.g. sympathy, gentleness, and submissiveness. Assumed to be more associated with women than with men.
   a. Suggested to include the following tactics: *ingratiation*, *supplication*, *exemplification*, *personal appeals*, *the indirect use of sexuality*, *consultation*, and *collaboration* (Smith et al., 2013).
b) *Agentic tactics*: associated with expressing assertiveness, dominance, and aggression. Assumed to be more associated with men than with women.
   a. Suggested to include the following tactics: *assertiveness*, *sanctions*, and *blocking* (ibid).
c) *Neutral tactics*: not strongly linked to either communal or agentic characteristics, neither are they specially linked to either men or women.
   a. Suggested to include the following tactics: *rationality*, *appraising*, *upward appeals*, *exchange*, *coalitions*, and *inspirational appeals* (ibid).

Smith et al. (2013) also made the point that women using communal tactics compared to women using agentic tactics will achieve a greater potency in their influence attempts. This will thus determine both how they behave, and how others will evaluate and perceive their behaviors (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Smith et al., 2013). If a woman or a man was to step outside the designated box of prescribed behaviors, there is a high risk of being penalized for it (Acker, 2012; Kulik & Olekalns, 2012; Shaughnessy et al., 2011; Smith et al., 2013), especially for women (Barbuto et al., 2007; Eagly et al., 2003). In other words, both men and women are expected to behave according to these prescribed behaviors (Shaughnessy et al., 2011, Tepper, Brown & Hunt, 1993), e.g. women use communal tactis while men use agentic tactics (Bodla & Danish, 2013). The ones who disregard this will most likely suffer negative consequences, i.e. being questioned of their behavior, being disregarded, disobeyed, making fewer influence attempts, etc. (Acker, 2012; Shaughnessy & et al., 2011; Shaw, 1976). One could thus expect that given these circumstances, women and men will use the tactics they are prescribed to use according to gender congruent behavior.

2.2.2 Gendered Workplaces
Except for the prescribed role-congruent behaviors, Smith et al. (2013) also made the point that an individual's environment will affect the effectiveness and choice of

influence tactics. This means that workplaces are influenced by social norms that both men and women are expected to follow. The ones who do not behave "appropriately" will in many cases suffer some kind of sanctions (Acker, 2012; Cialdini & Trost, 1998). The norms are suggested to get stronger if there is a majority of males working in the organization, and vice versa (Ely, 1995). For instance, in a male dominated workplace, male-oriented behaviors would be in favor compared to female-oriented behaviors (Ely, 1995). One would then do best to adapt one's behavior accordingly, if a stronger potency of used influence tactics is to be achieved (Smith et al., 2013). Smith et al. (2013) defined a workplace to be female dominated if women composed more than 60% of the population for a type of work (e.g. more than 60% working in the customer service department are female), and male dominated if men composed more than 60% of the population for a type of work. In turn, this means that male-dominated work environments are probably represented by mostly agentic behaviors (Ely, 1995; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Smith et al., 2013) whereas female-dominated work environments are represented by communal tactics.

The presented theoretical framework had the intention to give a basic understanding for all current elements that are part of the influence tactic equation. The influence tactics that are of main interest and will be applied throughout this text are presented and explained in List 1 in Appendix 1. These 11 tactics are most frequently used and have the greatest scientific support in present research. Further, the theoretical framework provided an overview of how the influence tactics have come to develop over time, how influence tactics have been used, and how factors outside the actual tactics might affect both the potency and frequency of usage. This served as a basis when evaluating how gender might have a more extensive role in affecting influence tactic usage compared to what previous research have given it credit for.

The aspect of gendered influence tells a story of how women and men possibly could be ascribed to contrasting types of behavior, which would translate into them resorting to using different influence tactics. Ideas about gendered congruent behavior and gendered environments thus provided some indications of how to better understand the possible effects these factors might have on men and women's use of influence tactics. This helped to answer if gender is a crucial factor affecting the use and consequences of using influence tactics.

2.3 Hypothesis
Drawing from the prior work that has been conducted on influence tactics, gender role theory, and gendered workplaces, a hypothesis was put to the test.

Hypothesis 1: Men and women use different influence tactics.

3. Methodology
The research that supported this paper applied both a quantitative and qualitative approach. A hybrid approach offered the opportunity to deepen the knowledge about

the subject after the quantitative findings had been gathered, opening up for an even more aware and elaborated analysis. While the quantitative analysis provided notions of what to look further into, the qualitative elements could be added and were able to suggest paths for future research to pursue. Additionally, it helped to dig deeper into the concepts initially found to be the most intriguing.

Two different organizations served as the basis of analysis in this paper. The first organization that is presented in *Study 1* participated in the IBQ-G survey questionnaires, whereas the second organization that is presented in *Study 2* participated in the influence incident interviews. Reports of each study will be presented in a chronological order.

3.1 Study 1 – The Influence Behavior Questionnaires

Survey questionnaires were utilized due to the fact most other research on influence tactics have utilized the same methods (e.g. Barbuto et al., 2007; Kipnis et al. 1984; Schriesheim & Hinkin, 1990; Yukl, Chavez, & Seifert, 2005; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992), it would therefore pose as a good comparison and provided an opportunity to elaborate further about what is currently known about the area. Previous studies on influence tactics that utilized survey questionnaires have also been extensively tested for their measurement constructs regarding validity and reliability (Charbonneau, 2004; Kennedy, Fu, & Yukl, 2003; Tyrovola, Papanikolaou, & Adamis, 2011; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl, Lepsinger, & Lucia, 1991; Yukl & Tracey, 1990), which is an important aspect to make sure that the presented results are trustworthy (Boyd et al., 2005; Echambadi, Campbell, & Agarwall, 2006).

The survey questionnaires used in this research applied the newest version of the IBQ, namely the IBQ-G. The IBQ-G has mostly been used in validation studies over the past years and has been shown to accurately measure an agent's use of tactics (Yukl, Seifert, & Chavez, 2008). The IBQ-G utilizes the 11 influence tactics and each tactic scale in the questionnaire has 4 items, which are measured on a 5-point Likert type scale to indicate frequency of usage (see List 2 in Appendix 2). Most influence items in the questionnaire are rather general to make the widely relevant for studying influence attempts in organizations. The scale score for one of the 11 tactics will therefore be the mean value of the 4 item scores. The IBQ-G has also shown that respondents rarely leave any of the items unanswered (Yukl, Seifert, & Chavez, 2008), thus it was fit to be a part of this study.

3.1.1 Creating the Questionnaires

Due to that some respondents were assumed not to be as proficient in English as the questionnaire demanded them to be, a Swedish version of the questionnaire was created. The original version was first translated into Swedish by the author of this paper, since he knew the concept of influence tactics and thus had a better chance of making more accurate translations. The translated version was then sent to the English department of "Institutionen för språk och litteraturer" (the Department of Languages and Literatures) to compare the original text in comparison with the translated

version. The Swedish version was refined and thereafter retranslated into English again. Email correspondence was established with the original creator of the IBQ-G, who offered to validate the retranslated version for equivalence. This procedure was undertaken to minimize the risk of language causing impoverished findings, which is often neglected in cross-cultural studies (Usunier, 2010). The retranslated version was deemed as valid and fit for usage in a Swedish context, with only one major clause to keep in mind: the IBQ was developed and validated in the United States, which differs in its culture compared to the Swedish one (Hofstede, 2001; the Hofstede Centre, 2016). Despite that the 11 influence tactics included in the IBQ-G have been shown to be relevant for managers in 12 different countries (Kennedy, Fu, & Yukl, 2003), this does not mean that the included items are appropriate for all cultures (Yukl, Seifert, & Chavez, 2008). Despite these circumstances, the benefits of using the IBQ-G outweighed the possible cons.

Both the original and the translated questionnaires were initially tested on a group of 25 students enrolled at the Master in Management programme at Gothenburg University: School of Business, Economics and Law. Tests were conducted to find any potential problems or errors, and to discuss if any of the questions were difficult to understand. The questionnaires had exactly the same amount of questions and response items as intended to, and no significant changes were made after the feedback was received. Only corrections including e.g. changing spelling mistakes and altering the layout were performed.

The questionnaire used in the study was finally created with the online survey tool Webropol. It applied the IBQ-G format and was updated according to the changes made after the test survey.

3.1.2 Study 1 – Procedures and Presentation

An invitation to participate in the study was sent to the 10 largest organizations regarding the number of employees with foreign ownership, located inside the Gothenburg business region (Business Region Göteborg, 2015). This was done since the number of possible respondents was expected to be greater in the potential companies that decided to participate.

After one of the companies expressed their interest, further communication was established to allow for their complete participation.

3.1.3 The Organization (Study 1)

The participating organization in this study that wishes to remain anonymous is operating within the service management industry. The company has operations in 80 countries worldwide, and is one of the leading operators of service management in the Nordics. They employ about 8.000 people in their Swedish operations, and their headquarters in Sweden is located in Solna.

The organization has globally been one of the frontrunners in terms of its commitment to increasing its diversity and creating a more gender-neutral demography on leading management positions. The current top management group in Sweden is split 50/50 between men and women, and 46 % women and 54 % men

represent other leading managerial positions in the organization. Globally, women hold 42 % of the management positions. The company is therefore according to Smith et al. (2013) then to be considered as gender neutral, including its operations in Sweden.

One specific division within the company participated in the study, and it is operating in several areas of Sweden. A total number of 30 managers accepted to take the survey. Four of them are working at the HQ in Solna, and the remaining 26 are placed on different sites throughout Sweden, but the majority of them inside the Stockholm area.

3.1.4 The Questionnaire Process

An Internet link to the survey was sent to the contact person at the company to forward to the 30 managers. All managers were sent an individual email inviting them to participate in the survey, and the invitation also came with an enclosed one page long pdf-file describing the purpose of their participation, and one pdf-file describing the 11 influence tactics (List 1 in Appendix 1).

The survey was answered from the managers' perspective (List 2 in Appendix 2), i.e. what influence tactics they believe that they usually use themselves to influence people in their surroundings. The survey also included two questions regarding how many of the influence attempts made by the agent resulted in the target's complete *commitment* to a task and/or request, and the assessed overall *effectiveness* of the agent (List 2). Commitment was measured on a ranking scale from 1-7, and efficiency on a ranking scale from 1-9.

The survey was sent to the respondents on the 21st of March. A first reminder to respondents was issued one week after the initial survey was sent out, and a second reminder was distributed one week thereafter. A third and final reminder was sent four weeks after the initial survey invitation, and after this reminder respondents had an initial week to take part in the survey. After this stage, there was no time left to wait for additional answers since the analysis of the questionnaires had to begin. Access to the survey was therefore closed on the 22nd of April.

3.1.5 The Sample

The collected data consisted of 20 respondents (a 66% participation rate). The non-response of 10 managers was considered as randomized since these managers also held positions on the same levels as the actual sample respondents, and were almost also split 50/50 between men and women. Consequently, no direct effects (e.g. using dramatically different tactics than the ones used by the sample respondents) were assumed to have come from the non-response, and the participation rate of 66 % was reasoned to be satisfactory for further analysis. The average age of respondents was 42.1 years and the majority of them had an educational background from upper secondary school or higher. The mean tenure with the company 9.92 years, and most managers held the position of "site manager". Gender wise, there was an even 50/50 percent distribution of all the respondents, making this sample considered as gender neutral according to Smith et al. (2013). Further, including only managers in the

sample might have some potential effects on the results. As explained, only one division within the company participated in the survey, and one cannot be sure if managers in other departments in the company use the same influence tactics. Including only managers also present what type of influence tactics people on that level might use, hence results would be more representative for an individual with a managerial role. This is however not considered an issue since managers are expected to be more frequent in their use of influence tactics due to the nature of their work. It might therefore give a better representation of tactics compared to when being used by a more inexperienced agent.

3.1.6 Analytical Techniques

Results from descriptive statistics and t-test analyses are reported in Appendix 4 (Tables 1-5).

Means, standard deviations, reliability coefficients and, bivariate correlations between tactics, between the studied tactics, gender, commitment and efficiency are reported (Table 1 in Appendix 4). To check what influence tactics that were most frequently used by the sample group, the mean and standard deviation of all item scores and tactics were calculated. Reliability coefficient Cronbach Alpha (CA) was calculated to measure the internal consistency among questionnaire items, and a score close to 0,7 was deemed satisfactory for a tactic to be included in the results. A CA score of at least 0,7 is what previous research (e.g. Yukl, Seifert & Chavez, 2008) has found to be sufficient enough for what is being measured is to be considered valid and reliable, which is why that value was used in this study. Only one tactic, *coalition*, had to exclude one of its questionnaire items (item number 43, see List 2 in Appendix 2) for it to reach an acceptable CA value of 0,635. Otherwise, all other tactics included four items and had CA scores close to or above 0,7, making them acceptable enough to include in the analysis. Also, the CA score is likely to be somewhat lower in a scale that includes such a wide variety of behavioral examples, especially when all of the items describe different ways of utilizing a tactic. Therefore, CA values with a little lower score than 0,7 are considered as acceptable.

Consistent with previous research (e.g. Cable & Judge, 2003; Yukl, Seifert & Chavez, 2008) an independent sample t-test was used to compare the mean influence tactic scores between males and females, as well as he mean commitment and efficiency scores between males and females. The sample size might be argued not be large enough to fulfill the requirements of a t-test, but when trying to measure if differences due to gender were statistically significant or not, a t-test would prove to be a powerful method despite these circumstances. Non-parametric techniques were an option that was considered when one could not assume a normal distribution of data and when sample size is small. However, after each variable was analyzed in a histogram to control that an assumption of normal distribution was not violated (the analysis showed that all variables were more or less normally distributed for each gender group), parametric techniques remained as the method of analysis. Additionally, parametric tests are more powerful in detecting relationships between

variables and tend to be more robust to departures from normality (de Winter & Dodu, 2010). This further justified the use of a t-test.

The sample was also split into men and women, allowing for a comparison between the two respective groups' most frequent influence tactics and potential differences. This was done by calculating the mean score of all 11 tactics for each individual group, then comparing scores against each other on a ranking scale from 1-11.

To determine how good managers deemed themselves at eliciting *commitment* and estimating their own *efficiency,* the means and standard deviations of their self-rated scores were compared (Table 4 in Appendix 4).

Due to a small sample size, the alpha value was set at a level of 0,1. A level of 0,05 might historically have been more accepted as the standard, but in this sample including only 20 respondents, a level of 0,1 is deemed to be more appropriate. This might be seen as a fairly generous condition, but in smaller samples where statistical significance is harder to find, a level of 0,1 is more likely to tell us something about the results. One extreme factor will then be less likely to skew the results of the analysis since small samples may be less precise (Agresti, 2002).

Further, the small sample indicates that the analyzed data will not be able to make any particularly strong statements or assumptions outside of this study. A small sample will make it harder to find statistically significant results. Due to these quantitative limitations, a second qualitative-based study acted as a complementing part in areas where quantitative measures might not have been as strong.

3.2 Study 2 – Influence Incident Interviews

Except for using questionnaires for data collection in influence studies, an alternative that has shown great potential is the influence incident reports (e.g. Yukl, Chavez, & Seifert, 2005; Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl, Falbe, & Youn, 1993; Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995; Yukl, Kim, & Falbe, 1996). The reports can be reported from either a target or agent perspective, and reports are often made in the form of interviews or written "stories" that describe prior influence attempts. The written stories are often a couple of paragraphs long, where respondents describe what was said or done by the agent, and how the target reacted to these actions. The inclusion of details and quotes are highly encouraged. Respondents are often asked to recall at least three prior influence experiences, either as a target or agent. The described experiences are required to be of an important nature where important issues or requests are involved, and cannot simply be routine task assignments where a simple request would be sufficient. The respondents must also indicate the direction of influence (i.e. downward, upward, or lateral).

What separates the critical incident reports from the questionnaires, is that the former is better at assessing the effectiveness of each tactic used alone or in combinations (Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl, Falbe, & Youn, 1993; Yukl, Guinan, & Sottolano, 1995), and is less sensitive to respondent bias and selective memory (Yukl, Chavez, & Seifert, 2005). In surveys, respondents are more likely to avoid choosing tactics that seem "socially undesirable", picking socially acceptable tactics instead

(Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993). It also makes it easier to connect if an influence tactic(s) is related to the immediate outcome of the influence attempt (ibid). Consequently, critical incident reports have shown quite the same results as previous research that used questionnaires, but still even more can be learnt how the tactics affect different people in different situations (Yukl, Falbe, & Youn, 1993). Therefore, it was a complementary source of data that supported the complete analysis made in this paper, increasing the amount of data since the number of survey respondents was somewhat limited.

3.2.1 The Organization (Study 2)

In the *Study 2*, the participating organization that has chosen to remain anonymous is operating within the Scandinavian insurance and financial advisory industry, and is currently one of the largest actors within that industry. Their headquarters is situated in Stockholm, but they have offices in more than 70 locations across Scandinavia, about 40 of them in Sweden. The interviews were however conducted at their second biggest office in Gothenburg.

At this specific department at their Gothenburg office, there are a total amount of 19 people working full time. Eight of them are male and eleven of them are female (making this department female-dominated according to Smith et al. (2013). The interviews gathered people form different levels of the company, as the opportunity to participate in the interviews was voluntary. This offered the potential of getting a broader perspective of what tactics that might be used in this particular setting.

3.2.2 The Sample

In total, 5 people agreed to take part in the study when the opportunity was presented to them during the organization's weekly Monday meeting. The interviews were conducted during respondents' working hours, and all participants were assured of their complete anonymity to provide the most honest and reliable answers. The average interview lasted about 30-40 minutes, and was set up in a separate conference room at the company's office.

The respondents represented different levels inside the organization: administration, advisory, middle-level management, and senior-level management. The average age of respondents was 40 years and the majority of them had an educational background from 3 years of university studies or more. The mean tenure with the company 7,3 years, and gender wise, two men and three women participated in the interviews. Compared to *Study 1*, *Study 2* offered the opportunity to also include how people except managers use influence tactics. This could present a bigger picture of influence tactics usage, since managers' use might differ from how other people use it due to experience and it being explicitly included in their job.

The approach used in *Study 2* followed an interview-based influence incident reporting. This meant that the researcher himself met with the respondents and conducted an interview that examined prior influence attempts that the respondents could recall, which have been done as a complementary procedure in previous studies (e.g. Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Respondents were asked to

describe one influence attempt in all directions (downward, upward and lateral) where they were the targets of the attempt. The interviews followed a semi-structured interview approach (List 3 in Appendix 3), allowing for further elaboration on areas that felt most intriguing and had not been explored in the quantitative study. All of the attempts were coded as resulting in commitment, compliance, or resistance, which meaning was thoroughly explained to the interviewees beforehand.

The answers provided by interviewees were noted down during the interviews, which formed the basis of the analysis and caught the key ideas topics of what was said. This made the analytical process more efficient and made it easier to sort the direction of influence as well as to identify the used tactics and contextual elements. The interviews were also recorded to make sure that no important points or quotes were forgotten or neglected during the interviewing process, and made it possible to re-analyze the material again. The interviews were later transcribed and analyzed according to a theme-based categorization (downward influence, upward influence, lateral influence, and gendered and environmental effects), which further simplified the data analysis and complemented the note taking.

3.2.3 Coding of Interviews

When reported incidents involved only one initial influence attempt, they were coded as *single-phase incidents* (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). This means that the first influence attempt made by the agent resulted in commitment, compliance, or resistance; and was not followed by another attempt. When incidents included more than one influence attempt, this was coded as *sequential incidents* (ibid). This could mean that e.g. the agent started her/his influence attempt by using *pressure*, but when this failed and resulted in resistance from the target, the agent resorted to using *rational persuasion* in a second attempt. However, since the majority of influence attempts (87 %) included only single-phase incidents, this will be of main focus in the discussion.

The incidents described by the interviewees were coded by the author, and later categorized into the 11 types of influence tactics. In influence attempts where more than two tactics were included, the most vital tactics were chosen for analysis and categorization. The categorization also divided the influence attempts into categories of soft/communal tactics, hard/agentic tactics, and rational persuasion/neutral tactics. This combination was done due to the similar description of categories/nature of tactics, which also included regarding the influence tactic *appraising* as a rational persuasion/neutral tactic, and *collaboration* as a soft/communal tactic. These two tactics had not been categorized as belonging to any of the three categories in previous research presented in this paper, but according to each respective tactic's explanation (List 1 in Appendix 1) and the description of each group of tactics, the inclusion of *appraising* and *collaboration* into their respective groups was deemed as a good fit.

The categorization of tactics was complemented by categorizations of different concepts outside of the 11 established influence tactics, as this paper also realizes that other factors except the tactics themselves can impact an influence attempt. Furthermore, the interview notes was re-reviewed, the transcriptions were re-

analyzed, and after this process the more relevant and vital themes started to become more apparent. By re-analyzing this multiple set of data, the core concepts emerged and the analysis had reached a point of saturation, where no further analysis was required.

Previous research (e.g. Yukl, Chavez & Seifert, 2005; Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993) has divided the coding among several people to increase the reliability of the data, but since there was no other researcher involved in this study that option was ruled out. The data analysis is therefore based on the opinions of one person, which does not follow the same procedure as in previous research. It may then be argued that the coding of these incidents are not as reliable as in previous studies, but all available procedures for making sure that the coding was conducted according to prior study procedures were undertaken. However, one must keep in mind that coding process based on several peoples' opinions might have provided an even more reliable analysis.

4. Results

The results are described and presented in two different sections: the first considering *Study 1*, and the other *Study 2*.

4.1 IBQ-G Agent Version Questionnaires

Full sample statistics from *Study 1* are reported in Appendix 4 (see Tables 1-5).

4.1.1 Results

The results present that the top three most used influence tactics regardless of gender are *rational persuasion*, *collaboration*, and *legitimating*, whereas the least used ones are *personal appeals*, *pressure*, and *exchange* (see Table 1 in Appendix 4). Cronbach's alpha (CA) values were all within the range of what is considered to be reliable (Table 1). Some of the strongest significant correlations between influence tactics can be traced to the following tactics: *personal appeals*, *collaboration*, *appraising*, and *coalition* (Table 1). These four tactics have the strongest correlation with at least two other tactics, where *consultation* and *collaboration* reaches the strongest positive correlation of 0,81. Statistically significant positive correlation is also found between the tactics *inspirational appeal* and *consultation*, as well as between *exchange* and *pressure* (Table 1).

Table 1 also presented a statistically significant correlation between *efficiency* and the two following tactics: *rational persuasion* and *pressure*. The self-rated efficiency thus seem to increase when using the tactic rational persuasion (0,54), and decrease when using the influence tactic pressure (-0,49) (Table 1).

Looking at the correlation between gender and influence tactics, there are three numbers that stood out (Table 1). The strongest negative correlation is found between gender and *apprising*, with a score of -0,41. This indicates that women (coded as 2) used *appraising* less than the male group (coded as 1). Further, there was also a negative correlation between gender and the two influence tactics *consultation*

and *collaboration*, suggesting that women less frequently used these two tactics compared to the men.

Regarding the differences in usage of influence tactics between women and men, the results showed that they are not consistent in their usage of influence tactics (see Table 2 in Appendix 4). The top two for both groups are almost identical: women favored *rational persuasion* (a mean score of 3,75) as their number one tactic compared to the men who favored *collaboration* (Mean = 4,13) as their number one tactic (Table 2). The second most frequently used tactic for both groups is the opposite group's most used tactic, i.e. *collaboration* (Mean = 3,63) for women and *rational persuasion* (Mean = 4,05) for men. The results also presented that the men were more strongly leaning toward using their top two influence tactics, since both scores are above 4,00 points in frequency of usage (Table 2). Women maximized their frequency of usage at 3,75; coming in 0,38 points below the males' most used influence tactic *collaboration*. Moreover, one may notice that *apprising* was rated as the 3rd most frequently used influence tactic for the male group, whereas it is only the 6th ranked tactic for the women. From the 7th most used tactic (*ingratiation*) until the least used tactic (*personal appeals*), both men and women ranked these tactics on the same levels (Table 2).

The t-test that compared the mean values between males and females in their usage of influence tactics (see Table 3 in Appendix 4) showed that there was a statistically significant difference between their usage of *consultation* and *appraising*, since the *p*-value is ≤ 0,10. Looking at Table 1, one also notices that the correlation between *gender* and these two influence tactics are two of the strongest negatives ones, which further supports that there is a difference between women and men's use of these two influence tactics. Also, the t-test gave an indication that men and women's use of the influence tactic *collaboration* might have differed (*p* = 0,13), indicating that men used it more than women. Further, Table 1 revealed that *collaboration* reaches the third highest negative correlation (-0,36) with gender, thus marginally supporting the indication that there might be a difference in usage. For the remainder of correlations between influence tactics and gender, no direct differences were found (Table 3).

Results present that women rated themselves better at eliciting complete commitment in their influence targets (Mean = 4,90 points), where the men's mean score was 4,60 points (see Table 4 in Appendix 4). This means that the women thought that they succeeded in eliciting complete commitment in targets in close to *more than half* (List 3 in Appendix 1) of their influence attempts. When comparing women and men in the aspect of *efficiency* (Table 4) the male respondents ranked themselves as *moderately above average, in the top 25 %* (List 3) (Mean = 6,70), whereas the female respondents ranked themselves as *a little above average, in the top 40 %* (Mean = 5,90).

The t-test applied for the mean comparison between the mean values of men and women concerning *commitment* and *efficiency* did not show any statistically significant results (see Table 5 in Appendix 4).

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4.1.2 Summary

The results of the survey indicated that women and men differed in their frequency of usage of influence tactics up to a certain point (Table 1). After this point, they seemed to use the same influence tactics, whereas they both rated *personal appeals* as the least preferred influence tactic. *Rational persuasion* had the strongest positive correlation with *efficiency*, whereas *pressure* reached the strongest negative correlation (Table 1) with *efficiency*. The male respondents favored *collaboration* as their primary influence tactic, whereas the women favor *rational persuasion* (Table 2). However, an overall ranking placed *rational persuasion* as the most used influence tactic (Table 1). Statistically significant results were found between males and females regarding the influence tactics *consultation* and *appraising*, whereas *collaboration* only gave an indication to differ in usage (Table 3). To a certain extent, the data suggested that men and women seem to prefer using different influence tactics, even if the differences were only marginally supported by the quantitative data of this small sample, which has to be kept in mind when interpreting the results. Thus, a sample of this size will make it more difficult to find statistically significant results that can be generalized outside of this sample.

Regarding the ability to elicit complete *commitment* in influence targets and rating one's own *efficiency*, women deemed themselves better at eliciting *commitment* in targets but not as *efficient* as the men believed they were (Table 4). Furthermore, a mean comparison between the mean values of men and women regarding *commitment* and *efficiency* did not show any statistically significant results (Table 5).

Finally, hypothesis 1 was partially supported by the results.

4.2 Influence Incident Reports – Interviews

In this part, the recounted incidents will be labeled as *downward, upward*, and *lateral* influence, since that was how interviewees were asked to describe their memories. All interviewees were also asked to elaborate on how their gendered environment and preconceptions about how women and men act could affect the use of influence tactics, which will be presented under *gendered influence and environment*. Finally, their thoughts concerning *efficiency* and *commitment* will also be found under its own section. No "labeling" of certain influence tactics will be made in this part, since that will be dealt with in the discussion part of this paper.

Quotes made by interviewees will appear inside citation marks and is written in *italic* letters. Quotes have also been translated from Swedish into English.

4.2.1 Downward Influence Attempts

All interviewees reported that they seldom question any of the tasks that they are assigned with from a person hierarchically above them in the organization. All of them felt that they have the "right" to question requests or tasks that they are assigned with if they would like to, but many of them pointed at past interaction with the agent,

which if it in general has been good, there is rarely any other reaction than commitment to tasks they are assigned with.

"If it feels like a reasonable task for the position I have here, I don't think it over that much" – Advisor, female.

"He's my boss and he's providing me with my salary – it's nothing that you would usually question" – Advisor, female.

The above quotes point toward the relationship between their role and the work they are asked to do, as well as a rational element. Thus, most of them reported that if they feel that facts and information they receive from the influence agent seem fair, there is seldom any questioning, then they "just do".

However, even if none of the described downward influence attempts explicitly had the agent offering her/his help, all interviewees mentioned that they all feel that they can ask for assistance if needed. The agent offers nothing of this sort, but the majority said that the agent is present in cases where help is needed. Thus, further interaction after having being assigned with a task or receiving a request is usually followed up by the target him-/herself, and not by the influence agent. They all mean that after they have received a task, not much following up or indications of "do you need help" is offered, indicating that they have accepted the task/assignment without any immediate hesitation.

All interviewees also described that they all seem to have a pretty big personal responsibility over the task/assignment they are asked to perform in these cases. Most of them portray this as something positive, feeling good about that it is "*in my own hands now*" as some of them said, being allowed to take own action and decisions without the restraints of someone else. Some of them spoke about it as a way to show what they are made of, whereas others presented it as doing their best for the customer. Sine they are the ones now handling the matter, many of them felt that it is up to them to report back to the agent, and to ask questions if something unexpected shows up.

When asked if anything could have been done to increase the commitment interviewees felt for the task/request they were faced with, their answers differed. Some react a bit surprised and refers back to examples like "*Well, it is reasonable and in line with my job I don't question it*" and point to the common good of the group or the customer. However, some of them would appreciate actions from the agent that would indicate that they had been selected to perform the task for a special reason, or if it simply were not assumed that they would be fine with accepting to do it. "*It feels more prioritized and I'm more encouraged to do it when it feels like you have been selected for a reason*" Thus, no direct contrasting views are presented regarding increasing their commitment, rather it seems that some of them had not even considered that to be possible before.

In all of these reported incidents, the interviewees reported that they rated their feelings about the tasks they were asked to do/were assigned with as feeling

committed to completing it. By chance all influence agents in these cases happened to be men, which presented a distinct notion of how male managers acted when using downward influence.

4.2.2 Upward Influence Attempts

These incidents were mainly characterized as having to do with a) *time restraints or knowledge gaps*, as well as b) *business opportunities*.

a) In incidents where targets recalled incidents having to do with time restraints or knowledge gaps, this presented itself in terms of the agent simply pointing at his/her inability to complete a task due to other more urgent matters, indicating that the target needed to take care of the matter for them.

The knowledge gaps concerned situations where the agent did not feel capable of completing something on her/his own, hence asked the target for help or to simply take responsibility over the matter for them. These incidents could be both urgent and less urgent, where the former often was represented by some type of behavior that indicated that the agent had given up and was not particularly interested in proceeding with his/her task. When situations were less urgent, the agent occasionally followed up the first influence attempt to update him-/herself of the status of the task, or to offer help to complete it.

The incidents characterized by time restraints were often associated with the agent expressing initial feelings of urgency or even sometimes true hopelessness. One of the interviewees meant that it might be an opportunity for the agent to express his/her initial irritation regarding the task, saying things in line with "*I can't take this any longer, so can you do it!?*" Thus, some situations might not always be associated with explicitly asking for something, instead it is implicitly understood that the agent wishes for the target to handle the task from now on, or even demands him/her to do so. In cases where the target possessed a formal role as superior to the agent, some of the agents had referred to their formal position, which according to the interviewees "forced" them to take care of it.

One interviewee also expressed that she was more likely to accept an influence attempt when the agent had viable reasons and an explanation to why the agent was not capable of completing the task him-/herself. A hopeless attitude and complaints regarding the task worsened the chances of her being willing to help out, and she meant that a more solution-oriented approach increased the chances of the agent's influence attempt being successful. Thus, questions in line with "*Can you advise me on how I can complete this assignment?*" was far more encouraging than just referring to the agent's feelings of personal distress.

b) In situations that were described as some sort of business opportunity, the influence target was often faced with some kind of proposal that she/he could choose to pursue or not. What all interviewees seemed to agree on, was the importance of receiving important and sufficient information if they were to consider taking on what was asked of them. Thus, it was not so much the approach they were faced with from the influence agent, rather what she/he had to explain or offer. In situations when information or concrete arguments are insufficient, the interviewees stated that they felt less inclined to take on what was asked of them.

"When someone does not get to the point or present irrelevant information, I usually hesitate" – Middle-level manager, female.
"I have this company and this is the information we need – how should we proceed? – Senior-level manager, male.

The above quotes presented two differing views of how these incidents could play out.

The information that the agent presents is also what supports their arguments, since the interviewees also explained that they would not simply accept everything that is asked of them without any questioning. If the influence attempt is associated with an opportunity that seems intriguing based on the underlying information, chances were higher that the interviewees would accept.

Many of the interviewees also pointed to the fact that past history with the agent plays a part in how they react to upward influence attempts. Some explained that people that they have been working with for a longer time were not required to present as much information or arguments in comparison to a more recent colleague. Consequently, if their past interactions had positive outcomes in terms of e.g. satisfied customers or completed assignments, many of them expressed that they are more likely to accept on a more immediate basis.

"I much rather accept a request made from person that I like, since I know that I can trust him or her" – Advisor, male.

In all of these reported incidents, the interviewees reported that they rated their feelings about the tasks they were asked to do/were assigned with as feeling *committed* to completing it. Some interviewees expressed that they felt commitment because they could see "the greater good" for the company in taking on what was asked of them, whereas others rather referred to that they felt that it was due to their official position in the organization, making them the ones "expected" to deal with it.

Three of the upward influence attempts were between two women, one between a woman and a man, and one between two men. No matter the interaction between the same genders or opposite gender, information and past interactions stood out as the most important factor for influence attempt success, according to all interviewees.

4.2.3 Lateral Influence
All the interviewees recalled that in lateral influence attempts, their initial feelings are often positive ones, since you want to be able to help out your colleagues when they ask something of you. However, it is not simply about being "*a friendly team player*" as one interviewee put it, since you also feel an obligation to take care of business in the best interest of the firm.

Another thing that all interviewees seemed to talk about is that in lateral influence attempts, an element of some sorts of cooperation is offered. The

collaboration is not exemplified by "if you do this for me now, I'll do something for you later", rather it is a sense of helping out since you "know" that this person will offer her/his advice further down the road. The lateral influence attempts often had something to do with a common interest that could benefit both the individual and the firm, presenting the target with an opportunity to do well in both arenas of his/her work life.

The lateral influence attempts also seemed to include an aspect of an obligation on the agent's part to follow-up what is asked of the agent. Three of the interviewees expressed that this was promised by the agent at the first influence attempt, who could consider to offer their help if the agent would need it. The two other interviewees did not share the same story, but they although expressed that they felt that there was an implicit notion that the agent was ready to help out, even if it was not offered in the actual influence attempt.

Some interviewees expressed that the approach that they are met with from the agent also is of importance. If it is a person they have been working with together for a longer time, they stated that it does not require as much effort from the agent's part. However, many of them are more inclined to accept to help out if their past relationship with the agent is good, and if the agent is able to make the target feel that he/she has been chosen for a reason.

"*I chose to ask you since it turned out so great last time*" - Middle-level manager, female.

In incidents where personal praise is not that strong, the interviewees expressed that information about the task and why he/she has been asked to do it is most relevant. The information gives a notion of why the task is fit for the target, as well as giving him/her an opportunity to contemplate about if she/he wishes to do it. Thus, the interviewees expressed that a component of rationality associated with the influence attempt could help sway their minds, since there have been times when this has not been present, and then they have turned it down or questioned it.

In all of these reported incidents, the interviewees reported that they rated their feelings about the tasks they were asked to do/were assigned with as feeling *committed* to completing it. The feelings of commitment seem to have two explanations according to the interviewees. On the one hand, three of them expressed commitment since they are able to lend a helping hand to the agent, as well as showing that they are capable of doing good work. The other two talked about helping out as doing a service for the company, if they find the request to be reasonable and present itself with a good business opportunity. Thus, it is not simply about circumstances presented in the influence attempt, it also includes other contextual factors.

"*I work a lot based on feeling, and there is a reason for us to cooperate to create a best case scenario for our clients*" – Advisor, male.

One of the described lateral influence attempts was between two men, one between a woman and a man, and three of them between two women. No matter the gender of the influence agent, the dominant influence behaviors seemed to be associated with personal praise and information giving. This was the case even if the level of these two behaviors appeared to be dependent on the personal relationship between agent and target.

4.2.4 Gendered Influence and Environment
The general agreement among the interviewees seemed to have been that the way people use influence tactics might affected by their gender, and because of the fact that they work in a female dominated workplace. Some of them suggested that people might use a more soft approach due to their environment, suggesting that men might not always be as "straightforward" as other environments might allow them to. It was also suggested that a more friendly tone usually is more effective during influence attempts. Two of the female interviewees explained that women might be a bit more cautious when making a request from someone, but they do also both agree that this probably has to do with individual preferences more than it has with the gender of the agent.

One of the male interviewees made the following point when asked if there are any differences between how men and women use influence tactics:

"You know, men speak in a certain way to each other, and when you speak to women you have to be more prepared. You can't go as much by feel as you do between men"
– Advisor, male.

"I think there is a bigger variation within gender than between the genders, but I do think there is a difference between women and men" – Middle-level manager, female.

However, the point the male advisor made about "being prepared" to strengthen one's chances of succeeding in an influence situation goes for both men and women, but he did that speaking to men do not require as much preparation as with women. All other interviewees also pointed at the importance of valid information and the request feeling feasible for an agent to be more successful in an influence attempt, regardless of the agent's gender.

Three of the interviewees mentioned that people will probably react differently when a woman acts outside of gendered-congruent behavior compared to when men do it. The reactions are described as being more evident or strong since it were not that common, but for that matter it does not have to include any negative consequences. Rather, the common agreement among all interviewees was that influence tactics that are more "to the point" would be favored by both women and men, since they claimed that swift decisions and action usually is improved that way.

"If a woman requests something of me in a short and concise way I appreciate it, perhaps because that I appreciate that kind of communication" – Advisor, female.

Despite that some of the interviewees indicate that there might be some differences in influence tactic usage due to gender, the general agreement sways toward that the individual's preferences and tendencies are stronger. They mean that due to that a person is a female she could be just as likely to use hard/agentic tactics than soft/communal tactics. The only difference would be the target's reaction to her action, and probably not the outcome of the attempt. In the same way a man could use soft/communal tactics, and the reaction would yet again be what is affected, not the outcome of the influence attempt.

"There will always be a deviation in behavior that you cannot categorize, and all kinds of categorization of that kind is meaningless since it's the individual who is important, nothing else!" – Senior-level manager, male.

4.2.5 Commitment and Efficiency

When the interviewees are asked what they believe are the most effective ways to elicit commitment in them when an agent makes an influence attempt, a lot of suggestions are presented. Examples include the personal relationship between agent and target, past interactions between agent and target, what kind of information that is presented during the influence attempt, if the request seems appropriate regarding the target's role in the organization, etc. There was thus an array of different approaches that could be effective in eliciting target commitment according to the interviewees. What was constant in all of their answers is the way the agent is able to make her/his request on the basis of information, showing that the request is feasible to complete and that it is in line with the target's duties at work. The "personal touch" during an influence attempt seemed less relevant, even if many of them claimed that they would expect more from a person that they do not know that well, or have interacted with less frequently.

"The starting point might be the norms of both masculine and feminine behavior, but then you get to know the person and then it becomes on a more personal level what you accept and don't accept" – Administrator, female.

A friendly approach that simply does not assume that the target will be fine with accepting the request was favored, since some claimed that this will increase the feeling of that you as a target are doing something for the team or company, not just to serve the agent here and now.

Consequently, behaviors that seemed to be valued the highest in eliciting commitment in the interviewees are the ability to provide sound and concrete information about the request, why the agent is making it, as well as making the request in a friendly manner that shows respect for the target. Nevertheless, a friendly approach seemed to be of less relevance if the relationship between agent and target is already on good terms.

The collective agreement among interviewees in *Study 2* was that some influence tactics would be more efficient and frequent compared to others. Rational reasoning and feasible requests that were supported by agent information were expressed as the most preferred way of influence, regardless of gender. However, interviewees also stated that they believe gender to have an effect on the use of tactics, which first and foremost was based on expectations of how to behave. Despite these expectations, individual preferences and other contextual factors were also suggested to be in effect, and might become even more prevalent as you interact more frequently with a person. The relationship between agent and target was therefore also an important factor according to the interviewees.

5. Discussion

Not many previous studies on influence tactics have mainly focused on the potential differences in usage between women and men, putting the aspect of gender to the test. The amount of research that has been made mostly found notions of discrepancies combined with contrasting evidence. To be harsh, most studies have not even given it any attention. This study investigated whether influence tactic usage is affected by a person's gender, and if this might carry some particular consequences with it. The results of this work revealed that men and women somewhat seem to differ in their usage of influence tactics, even if differences are not as big as expected. The results therefore partially supported hypothesis 1. Qualitative data from this study seem to suggest that men and women are believed to act different due to their gender to some regard, but also affirm that there are many other contextual factors affecting an influence attempt precisely as previous research have suggested. However, both *Study 1* and *Study 2* indicate that some tactics will be more frequent and more efficient compared to other tactics, regardless of the gender of the user and directions of usage. An individual's gendered environment provides an unclear picture if it affects a person's choice of influence tactics or not. The combined main findings of the quantitative and qualitative data, as well as the support for these statements, their implications and contributions, will be discussed in the following sections.

5.1 Women and Men's Influence Tactic Usage

Rational persuasion and *collaboration* showed to be the most frequently used tactics by both women and men in *Study 1*, supporting previous research (e.g. Yukl, Chavez & Seifert, 2005; Yukl & Falbe, 1992; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993) in terms of what previously have been suggested to be the most frequently used tactics. Furthermore, *rational persuasion* was the most frequently used tactic when combining the mean scores of men and women in *Study 1*, as well as when analyzing the interviews from *Study 2*. All interviewees reported that the chances of responding with commitment to an influence attempt was higher when information about the task was solid (Yukl, Kim & Falbe, 1996), and that they felt that it was a task in line with their own work. This did not seem to be a matter of a man or a woman made the request; it was rather the factual information that was presented to them, yet again certifying *rational persuasion* as a strong influence tactic This reinforces its positions as one of the more

frequently used and most effective tactics (Gravenhorst & Boonstra, 1998; Kennedy, Fu & Yukl, 2003; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993), regardless of an individual's gender, formal organizational position, and direction of influence (Yukl, Chavez & Seifert, 2005; Yukl, Kim & Falbe, 1996). Thus, a *rational/neutral* tactic in this case prevails over the two other categories, suggesting that these types of tactics might be more frequent/useful than the previously favored soft/communal tactics (Yukl, Chavez & Seifert, 2005; Yukl & Tracey, 1992; van Knippenberg et al., 1999). However, both studies provided data that supported the proposed more frequent use of soft/communal tactics compared to hard/agentic tactics.

Pressure was ranked as the 10th most frequently used tactic by both men and women in *Study 1*, indicating that both genders might consider it to be a non-favorable tactic, where one also could find a pretty strong negative correlation with efficiency. *Pressure* that is labeled as a hard/agentic tactic have usually been suggested to be less preferred in influence attempts, or have simply been used when the agent's power base is stronger than the one of the target or when resistance is anticipated (Camilleri, Berger, & Connor, 1972; Raven, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). The tactic is considered as socially undesirable (Raven, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992), and findings from *Study* 2 indicated that *pressure* might be accepted in downward influence attempts made by a superior, but that it rarely resulted in commitment with the target, which is supported by data from *Study 1*. For the remainder of lower ranked influence tactics, gender does not seem to have an effect on how frequent men and women use these tactics. Consequently, gender may be suggested not to significantly affect the use hard/agentic tactics, contrasting the claims made regarding that men tend to use more hard/agentic tactics than women and vice versa (Eagly, 1987; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007, Shaw, 1976, Smith et al., 2013).

Furthermore, the use of influence tactics in a Swedish setting did not seem to differ due to its national culture, which Hofstede (2001) suggested could be one determinant of how people act, and possibly alter what influence tactics managers use (Kennedy, Fu & Yukl, 2003). Especially the managers in *Study 1* applied the same tactics as managers in 12 other countries across the world (ibid), for which *rational persuasion*, *collaboration*, *consultation*, and *appraising* were among the top influence tactics. *Pressure* and *personal appeals* were among least favored tactics in *Study* 1, which was the same case in the study by Kennedy, Fu and Yukl (2003). Both *Study 1* and *Study 2* also supported that *rational persuasion* is likely to be the most efficient tactic, regardless of direction and country (ibid). Consequently, the use of influence tactics in a Swedish setting did seem to follow the same pattern as suggested by Kennedy, Fu and Yukl (2003), making its usage seem to be regardless of national culture.

The most striking difference due to gender was found for the tactics *consultation* and *appraising*. Here, one notices a statistically significant difference, indicating that women are less likely to use these two tactics compared to men. *Appraising* is suggested to be less effective than *rational persuasion* and *collaboration*, which might explain its ranking by both men and women. Neither is it positively correlated with commitment nor efficiency, which maybe asserts its fit as a

supplementary tactic (Yukl, Chavez & Seifert, 2005). *Study 2* did indicate that *collaboration* was more of a supplementary or follow-up tactic as have been suggested before (ibid), or at least it was assumed by targets that some sort of help often was involved. However, the frequency of using *consultation* or *appraising* could not be considered as strong drawing from the qualitative results compared to the quantitative data, therefore one should interpret results with caution.

The least used tactics in *Study 1* are somewhat contrasting when comparing them. *Personal appeals* that is labeled as a soft/communal tactic together with *pressure* that is labeled as a hard/agentic tactic, are in the bottom two. The former of the two have previously been suggested to be more socially desirable, whereas the latter have often shown to be ineffective (Bodla & Danish, 2013; Yukl & Tracey, 1992). It is therefore slightly surprising to see the two together at the bottom of the list, ranked equally low regardless of the agent's gender. Nevertheless, *Study 2* tells another side of the story, suggesting that female agents are more prone to include *personal appeals* in their influence tactic arsenal. These incidents are not strong in number but compared to when agents have been male, women seem to be more in favor of using this tactic. The interviews although pointed out that agents using this tactic built a lot on the previous relationship between the agent and the target, which suggested that despite the gender of the agent, an array of outside factors also played its part. It is therefore not wrong to assume that the choice influence tactics is affected by several other contextual elements except gender, and that the personal relationship and history between target and agents is of relevance (Barbuto, Fritz & Marx, 2002; Barry & Shapiro, 1992; Cable & Judge, 2003; Yukl, Chavez & Seifert, 2008; Yukl, Falbe & Youn; 1993; Yukl, Kim & Chavez, 1999).

5.2 Commitment and Efficiency

The results from *Study 1* implied that some tactics are more efficient than others, irrespectively of gender. A lot of prior research supports this notion (e.g. Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993; Yukl & Tracey 1992), and data from *Study 2* also indicated that effective tactics were most frequently used regardless of the agent's individual status in the organization, or direction of influence (Kennedy, Fu & Yukl, 2003; Yukl & Falbe, 1990; Yukl & Tracey 1992). *Rational persuasion* was the most frequently used influence tactic in both studies, and in *Study 1* it also showed the highest positive correlation with the agent's self-rated efficiency level. *Study 2* provided data that strongly supported *rational persuasion* as being the most favored tactic for eliciting commitment in targets (Gravenhorst & Boonstra, 1998; Yukl, Falbe & Youn, 1993), since it made clear what was expected of targets and gave them a certain sense of freedom over what was requested of them (Thacker & Wayne, 1995; Yukl, Kim & Falbe, 1996). Efficiency ratings when using *rational persuasion* thus seem to be positively correlated with effectiveness when manager rate themselves, as well as when influence targets rate the use of the tactic (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Men believe themselves to be more efficient in their work but worse than women in eliciting complete commitment in their targets, at least according to their own opinions. Some claims have been made that women tend to make fewer influence

attempts than men and also use a more limited range of influence tactics (Instone, Major & Bunker, 1983), but unfortunately this was not controlled for in *Study 1*, and the influence incidents in *Study 2* were evenly distributed among female and male agents.

Data from *Study 1* showed that *pressure* was negatively correlated with the agents' self-rated efficiency. This data is supported by previous research (Bodla & Danish, 2013; Raven, 1992; Yukl & Tracey, 1992), which has suggested that hard/agentic tactics rarely are in favor for influence agents. Further, *exchange* is rated as the 9th most used tactic by the respondents in *Study 1*, which have been suggested to be of a hard/agentic or rational/neutral character (Kipnis et al., 1980; Smith et al., 2013). Due to its low ranking by both women and men, combined with a negative correlation with efficiency, maybe it encompassed the character of a hard/agentic tactic in *Study 1,* making it less frequently used. It showed a positive correlation with commitment, but is still to be considered as moderately effective tactic (Yukl & Tracey, 1992) since none of the data from *Study 2* identified exchange as a frequently exhibited tactic.

No statistically significant effects were found between gender, commitment, and efficiency. Yet, one could assume that a better ability to elicit complete commitment in targets during influence attempts would be positively correlated with one's own self-rated degree of efficiency, this was not the case. Therefore, other factors than simply being able to influence targets could be suggested to be of relevance when rating one's own effectiveness. If one would associate a higher self-rated efficiency as to having better self-confidence, that would be the case for the men in *Study 1*. Lower self-confidence has been suggested to be associated with using more hard tactics (Shaw, 1976), and even if the women score slightly higher on the hard/agentic tactics, no statistically significant results are found that can support this. *Study 2* only provided stereotypical descriptions that one may assume that men find it easier to use that type of tactics, but none of the influence attempts included the use of such tactics. Further, *Study 2* only provided examples of influence incidents that resulted in commitment, where an aspect of efficiency more often with the agent had to do with the general impression of the person, not his/her actions in influence attempts. Efficiency could although be suggested to have a weak relationship with some of the tactics (especially *rational persuasion*), since instances where influence agents did not "get to the point" of a suggestion/request, these were often met with more negative reactions. Further, people that were presented as more "straight forward" and/or "honest", usually got a higher praise from the interviewees regarding their general efficiency.

5.3 Gendered Environments

This section is mostly based on the findings from *Study 2*, since *Study 1* did not include any particular questions regarding if respondents believed that their work environment could have an impact. However, information about the work environment of the respondents in *Study 1* could present some possible suggestions for an answer.

In *Study 2*, the work environment according to Smith et al. (2013) would be considered to be of a female-dominated nature since the women represent more than 60 % of that department's workforce. Previous research (e.g. Ely, 1995; Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Smith et al., 2013) has then suggested that behaviors that are appropriate might be more of a "female nature", which indicates how both women and men "should" act. The interviewees did not seem to consider this to have a strong effect on their daily work life, and the majority believed that people act mainly due to their individual inclinations. The use of influence tactics in this department is however very similar for all described incidents, and the culture of an organization has also been suggested to impact the frequency of certain influence tactics (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). However, four of the interviewees state that there are differences in influence behavior between men and women, whereas one interviewee refused to think so. The interviewees did not present any concrete explanations of why there are differences or that it is due to their workplace environment, rather it to some extent seem to be based on an element of initial prejudice. Tepper, Brown and Hunt (1993) suggest that organizational participants might expect men and women to use influence in different ways, which seem to support this description. Tepper, Brown and Hunt (1993) continue to state violating these norms might lead to negative outcomes, but the qualitative data did not support this. All interviewees expressed that what is most important is rather if a request/task is duly presented with concise information, showing support for *rational persuasion* as one of the most frequent and effective tactics for eliciting target commitment. Nonetheless, the interviewees report that they would probably react more if a woman acted in a non-gender congruent manner, but their reaction would not be of a negative nature as suggested by prior research (e.g. Acker, 2012; Shaughnessy et al., 2011; Tepper, Brown & Hunt, 1993). The reaction would although be stronger when a woman acts outside of these norms compared to when a man does (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Eagly & Wood, 1982) so according to the interviewees.

Some of the women also explained that in an environment including a majority of women, there is a risk of too many emotions getting in the way of making more swift decisions. Dwelling on matters that are not that relevant to solving a task was suggested by two of the female interviewees to be more of a female-oriented behavior, which none of them appreciated. Thus, even in an environment that is female-dominated, it seems that just because a behavior is gender congruent, it does not translate into being accepted or "better" in some sense. Rather, behaviors that encouraged efficiency and better decision-making were the ones talked about in a positive manner. This supported that the environment will affect the choice of influence tactics (Guadagno & Cialdini, 2007; Smith et al., 2013), but it does not solely have to be dependent upon gender congruency, but also on the general manner of using influence.

Study 1 was characterized by a 50/50 split gender wise regarding respondents, but no information regarding the work environment of those managers was available except on an organizational level. The only data there is to rely upon is the organization's actions trying to become more gender neutral as well as pursuing a

diverse workforce as presented in the methodology. If one would speculate, no direct effects of this seem to have impacted the respondents' usage of influence tactics, even if both the men and women in *Study 1* are slightly in favor of using soft/communal and rational/neutral tactics. Therefore, a feasible but much speculative suggestion is that active efforts to encourage the development of a gender neutral environment might possibly make both women and men more apt to use rational/neutral or soft/communal tactics, which can be suggested to be in line with that particular environment (Ely, 1995; Smith et al., 2013). The majority of hard/agentic tactics are found in the bottom of most frequent tactics for both women and men. This supported what Smith et al. (2013) suggested, namely that the environment (not only the gendered environment) will affect the effectiveness and choice of tactics. However, these are only speculations that are not based on a large amount of concrete evidence.

Summarizing the data from both studies, the emerging results are that gender seems to have an effect on the use of influence tactics, especially for *consultation* and *appraising*. Men and women do not rank their top influence tactics the same, which also indicates a difference. *Rational persuasion* seemed to be seen as the most efficient and most frequent tactic, and soft/communal tactics prevail over hard/agentic tactics in frequency of usage. The qualitative data affirmed *rational persuasion* as the most efficient tactic for eliciting commitment in targets, regardless of the gender of the influence agent. *Study 2* also indicated that men and women are expected to behave somewhat differently and therefore use different influence tactics, but that individual preferences and personality traits are stronger determinants to the use of tactics. Further, qualitative data revealed that the personal relationship and history between agent and target also is of relevance. Lastly, results showed that the use of influence tactics in a national Swedish setting is much resemblant to the ones expressed in previous studies where a nation's culture was suggested to be one of its main determinants.

5.4 Practical Implications

The findings of this study have practical implications on two levels. First, both men and women benefit from knowing what influence tactics that in most cases are going to be the most effective in eliciting target commitment. The results of this *Study 1* and *Study 2* suggest that some tactics are more effective than others, especially when looking into a self-assessed level of efficiency. These tactics also seem to be effective irrespectively of gender as well as direction of influence. Thus, certain influence tactics will in general tend to be more effective, and all managers would benefit from knowing which these are, women and men alike.

Secondly, *Study 2* confirmed that the outcome of an influence attempt will be affected by many factors but the tactic itself, which every agent will need to take into account before making an influence attempt. One cannot simply rely on gender, the environment, organizational hierarchies, individual preferences, etc.; but must somehow be able to grasp all these aspects to be more influential. Learning and thoughtfully considering what tactic(s) is best fit to elicit commitment in the target is

therefore something that successful managers ought to keep in mind. Relying on "common sense" is not enough, hence actively engaging in understanding how influence tactics work could improve managers' skills concerning the selection of tactis.

5.5 Theoretical Implications

This study has been able to shine additional light on how gender affects the use of influence tactics, and if the gender of an influence agent will result in different consequences when using influence tactics. Results indicated that gender might affect usage of influence tactic, especially for *collaboration* and *appraising*. There is thus some evidence supporting that further elaboration on the matter should be of interest. *Rational persuasion* was affirmed as one of the most frequent and efficient tactics regardless of gender. Rational/neutral and soft/communal tactics were in favor compared to hard/agentic tactics, which was represented with both men and women. Knowing what tactics that are suggested to be more efficient in eliciting target commitment are also another contribution of this study. Further, an array of factors outside of gender were also suggested and believed to be affecting the use of influence tactics, highlighting a more complete awareness for influence efficiency.

6. Conclusion

Influence will continue to be a vital part of the manager's arsenal of tools throughout his or her career, and knowing how to use it correctly may certainly make a difference regarding what results and consequences she or he will face. The findings show that gender affects the use of influence tactics, even if many other contextual factors also come into play. Consequently, giving gender a bigger place in future influence tactic research is not completely unwarranted for, which was supported by this research.

The two studies showed that some influence tactics seem to be more effective no matter the direction of influence. However, this paper provided insights showing that effective tactics also seem to be effective regardless of the gender of the user, even if women and men's initial preferences showed to be different. Thus, managers could be suggested to give more consideration into which tactics they are using, since this might have an effect on their efficiency and ability to elicit commitment in influence targets.

The findings also indicated that prescribed gender congruent behavior do exist, even if it oftentimes was associated with preconceptions that tended to diminish over time. Adapting one's influence tactics according to the situation and the individual one is faced with would therefore possibly be considered a better starting point, compared to sticking to norms that only might have manifested themselves in the "common mindset", where too much is assumed and have not been tested. Considering past interactions and the relationship between agent and target was also shown to be of importance.

6.1 Recommendations

Future research should consider giving the aspect of gender a more relevant position in studies investigating the use of influence tactics. Factors that affect the use of influence tactics are plenty, and including this additional variable could help find new interesting results. Future studies should also focus on including several variables at the same time, e.g. context, gender, direction of influence, single vs. multiple influence tactics, etc. The chosen influence tactic is very likely to be dependent on more than just one single factor, and to single these out would support future research in terms of figuring out the potential correlations between all elements. This study mainly focused on the general usage of tactics for men and women, but also including facilitating conditions for each type of influence tactic could prove to be fruitful. For instance, an agent's understanding of target's values and/or attitudes in her/his choice of a tactic(s) would be interesting to learn more about. Also investigating the relative effectiveness of each tactic for certain objectives or situations could be relevant.

Continued research should also take a closer look at if the gendered environment of a workplace might affect the use of influence tactics. Adapting to the circumstances has shown to be an important aspect toward effective use of influence tactics, and considering the workplace environment on a more aggregated level could prove to be prosperous. When the subject of bringing in more females into boards and managerial positions is increasing in popularity, a more diverse landscape might change the current use of influence tactics and bring new important elements for future managers to keep in mind. Thus, investigating how women might use influence tactics to achieve specific organizational objectives when climbing up the hierarchical ladder is another idea.

6.2 Limitations

As with any other study, this study has suffered from some limitations. First of all, limitations mainly occurred when respondents were not able to participate or not willing to complete the survey that was sent to them. The sample in this *Study 1* compared to previous studies using the IBG-G questionnaire is a lot smaller, leading to that the generalizability of its results may be limited. Statistically significant results will be harder to trace, and the possibility of finding strong significant relationships between variables will not be as high. The interviews in *Study 2* gathered a couple of influence incident attempts, but compared to previous studies the amount of incidents were smaller than would be ideal, and thus suffered from the same limitations as *Study 1*.

Both the questionnaires and the influence incident interviews may also suffer from one of the most common errors, namely that people might rate themselves or others in a more socially desirable way. The questionnaire only included questions where the respondent had to rate her-/himself, making it open for a biased result and perhaps made the agent portray her/his behavior in a favorable light. Since only agent data was reported in *Study 1*, tactics that managers claimed themselves to use were included. An addition of target data regarding the managers' usage of tactics could have added an important element to the analysis, potentially more truthfully showing the agents' use of tactics. Further, the interviews asked respondents to tell their side of

the story, which also makes it vulnerable for memory and recall biases. Respondents might have left some parts out to make actions of agents seem more socially acceptable or to protect someone that has tried to influence them, when they in reality might have done something else completely. More subtle forms of influence (e.g. deception or information distortion) might also have been forgone which only works if the target is not aware of it being used, or simply because the interviewee found it more difficult to describe.

Moreover, both the questionnaire and the interviews are only able to focus on a couple of factors that might affect the use of influence tactics. Other contextual variable such as e.g. the personal relationship between agent and target or the history of prior interactions between the two was not included to a large enough extent; both of them suggested impacting an agent's use of or a target's reaction to influence tactics. The two studies might therefore have missed out on potential relevant factors, but since the main purpose of the paper was to investigate potential gender differences, the combination of both a quantitative and qualitative method was able to provide a sufficient basis of analysis. Despite the limitations of each method, only a few discrepancies in the pattern of influence tactic usage occurred, implying that some consistency in results could increase the measure of confidence in the study.

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Appendix 1

List 1. Definition of the 11 influence tactics

- *Agent*: the individual who is trying to influence the target in any way.
- *Target*: the person who is the target of the influence tactic(s)

Rational persuasion	The agent uses factual evidence to show that a request or proposal is feasible and relevant for important task objectives.
Consultation	The agent asks the target person to suggest improvements or help plan a proposed activity or change for which the target person's support is required.
Inspirational appeals	The agent appeals to the target's values and ideals or seeks to arouse the target person's emotions to gain commitment for a request or proposal.
Collaboration	The agent offers to provide assistance or necessary resources if the target will carry out a request or approve a proposed change.
Apprising	The agent explains how carrying out a request or supporting a proposal will benefit the target personally or help to advance the target's career.
Ingratiation	The agent uses praise and flattery before or during an attempt to influence the target person to carry out a request or support a proposal.
Personal appeals	The agent asks the target to carry out a request or support a proposal out of friendship, or asks for a personal favor before saying what it is.
Exchange	The agent offers something the target person wants, or offers to reciprocate at a later time, if the target will do what the agent requests.
Legitimating tactics	The agent seeks to establish the legitimacy of a request or to verify that he/she has the authority to make it.
Pressure	The agent uses demands, threats, frequent checking, or persistent reminders to influence the target to do something.
Coalition tactics	The agent enlists the aid of others, or uses the support of others, as a way to influence the target to do something.

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Appendix 2

List 2. Survey Questions: IBQ-G Agent Version

Instructions: the purpose of this questionnaire is to learn more about the different ways people try to influence each other in work organizations. Please describe what behavior you usually use in an effort to influence another individual at work. For each behavior item, select one of the following response choices, and click inside the corresponding circle to make your choice.

1. *I can't remember ever using this tactic*
2. *I very seldom use this tactic*
3. *I occasionally use this tactic*
4. *I use this tactic moderately often*
5. *I use this tactic very often*

If an item does not apply to your situation, then use the #1 response. Please try to avoid letting the general impressions other individuals have about you bias your answers. Before you begin, it's helpful to look over the 11 different types of influence tactics so you don't get them confused with each other (these were enclosed as a pdf-file in the email invitation you received to take part in the survey).

I usually...

Rational persuasion
1. Use fact and logic to make a persuasive case for a request or proposal.
2. Explain clearly why a request or proposed change is necessary to attain a task objective.
3. Explain why a proposed project or change would be practical and cost effective.
4. Provide information or evidence to show that a proposed activity or change is likely to be successful.

Exchange
5. Offer something someone wants in return for his/her help on a task or project.
6. Offer to do something for someone in exchange for him/her carrying out a request.
7. Offer to do a specific task or favor for someone in return for his/her help and support.
8. Offer to do something for someone in the future in return for his/her help now.

Inspirational appeal
9. Say that a proposed activity or change is an opportunity to do something really exciting and worthwhile.
10. Describe a clear, inspiring vision of what a proposed project or change could accomplish.
11. Talk about ideals and values when proposing a new activity or change.
12. Make an inspiring speech or presentation to arouse enthusiasm for a proposed activity or change.

Appendix 2

List 2. Contd.

Legitimating
13. Say that my request or proposal is consistent with official rules and policies.
14. Say that my request or proposal is consistent with a prior agreement or contract.
15. Verify that my request is legitimate by referring to a document such as a work order, policy manual, charter, bylaws, or formal contract.
16. Say that a request or proposal is consistent with prior precedent and established practice.

Apprising
17. Explain how the task I want someone to do could help his/her career.
18. Explain the benefits someone could gain from doing a task or activity (e.g. learn new skills, meet important people, enhance his/her reputation).
19. Explain how my proposed activity or change could help someone attain a personal objective.
20. Explain why my proposed activity or change would be good someone you.

Pressure
21. Demand that someone carry out a request.
22. Use threats or warnings when I try to to get someone to do something.
23. Repeatedly check to see if someone has carried out a request.
24. Try to pressure someone to carry out my request.

Collaboration
25. Offer to help with a task that I want someone to carry out.
26. Offer to provide resources someone would need to do a task for you.
27. Offer to show someone how to do a task that I want someone to carry out.
28. Offer to provide any assistance someone would need to carry out your request.

Ingratiation
29. Say that someone has the special skills or knowledge needed to carry out your request.
30. Praise someone's past performance or achievements when you ask someone to do a task for you.
31. Praise someone's skill or knowledge when asking someone to do something.
32. Say that someone are the most qualified person for a task that you want someone to do.

Consultation
33. Ask someone to suggest things someone could do to help you achieve a task objective or resolve a problem.
34. Consult with someone to get someone's ideas about a proposed activity or change that you want someone to support or implement.
35. Encourage someone to express any concerns someone may have about a proposed activity or change that you want someone to support or implement.

Appendix 2

List 2. Contd.

36. Invite someone to suggest says to improve a preliminary plan or proposal that you want someone to support or help implement.

Personal appeals
37. Appeal to your friendship when asking someone to do something.
38. Say that you need to ask for a favor before telling someone what it is.
39. Ask someone as a friend to do a favor for you.
40. Ask for someone's help as a personal favor.

Coalition
41. Mention the names of other people who endorse a proposal when asking someone to support it.
42. Get others to explain to someone why they support a proposed activity or change that you want someone to support or help implement.
43. Bring someone along for support when meeting with him/her to make a request or proposal.
44. Ask someone he/she respects to help influence him/her to carry out a request or support a proposal.

How many of your influence attempts resulted in the target's (the person you tried to influence) complete commitment to what you suggested?
- None of them.
- A few of them.
- Some (less than half).
- About half of them.
- More than half of them.
- Most of them.
- All of them.

Please rate your overall effectiveness in carrying out your job responsibilities:
- The least effective person I have known.
- Well below average, in the bottom 10%.
- Moderately below average, in the bottom 40%.
- A little below average, in the bottom 40%.
- About average in effectiveness.
- A little above average, in the top 40%.
- Moderately above average, in the top 25%.
- Well above average, in the top 10%.
- The most effective person I have ever known.

Appendix 3

List 3. Interview Guide

1. Please provide an example of a downward/upward/lateral influence attempt that you have experienced at work (please use details and quotes of what was said and done during the attempt, how you reacted, and if there was more than one attempt).
- *What did the agent say?*
- *What did the agent do?*
- *Was the agent a man or a woman?*
  - *Would your reaction have changed if the agent was of the opposite gender?*
- *What is the agent's formal position in the organization?*
- *How is your relationship with the agent?*
- *Was there more than one influence attempt?*
  - *Could you describe each episode?*
  - *How did they differ form each other?*

2. If you were to rate this influence attempt as resulting in commitment, compliance, or resistance, what would you say your feeling toward the request/attempts was?
- *Why commitment/compliance/resistance?*
- *Would any other approach alter your reaction to the agent's request?*

4. Do you believe that gender can determine how people try to influence and how people react to influence attempts?
- *Why/why not?*
- *Do women and med use the same ways of influence?*
- *Do you react differently to an influence attempt depending on the agent's gender?*

3. In your opinion, do you believe that the workplace environment is able to affect how people try to influence each other?
- *Why/why not?*
- *In what way(s)?*
- *Do you believe that there are norms implicitly stating how to behave in your workplace environment?*
  - *Do these differ for men and women?*

5. In your opinion, what is the best way of eliciting commitment during an influence attempt?
- *Why is this way better than others?*
- *Can you use this tactic irrespectively of gender (concerning both target and agent)?*

Table 1. Bivariate Correlation Table: Influence Tactics, Commitment, Efficiency, and Gender

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Rational persuasion	1,00	-0,02	-0,08	0,17	0,03	-0,09	0,16
2. Inspirational appeal	-0,02	1,00	,49*	0,42	0,05	0,55*	-0,02
3. Consultation	-0,08	0,49*	1,00	0,29	0,27	0,52*	0,19
4. Ingratiation	0,17	0,42	0,29	1,00	0,40	0,44*	0,16
5. Exchange	0,03	0,05	0,27	0,40	1,00	0,36	0,09
6. Personal appeals	-0,09	0,55*	,52*	0,44*	0,36	1,00	-0,06
7. Legitimating	0,16	-0,02	0,19	0,16	0,09	-0,06	1,00
8. Pressure	-0,18	0,11	0,30	-0,05	0,48*	0,19	0,26
9. Collaboration	0,08	0,34	0,81**	0,32	0,31	0,45*	0,20
10. Apprising	-0,08	0,59**	0,48*	0,07	0,06	0,51*	0,00
11. Coalition	0,11	0,08	0,16	0,50*	0,46*	0,11	0,10
12.Commitment	0,22	-0,02	-0,38	0,18	0,29	0,17	-0,01
13.Efficiency	0,54*	0,06	-0,03	0,07	-0,23	-0,04	-0,21
14. Gender	-0,22	-0,12	-0,39	-0,04	0,03	0,14	-0,17

Note: * P < 0,05 Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** P < 0,01 Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Codes: 1 - Males 2 - Females

Variable	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Rational persuasion	-0,18	0,08	-0,08	0,11	0,22	0,55*	-0,22
2. Inspirational appeal	0,11	0,34	0,59**	0,08	-0,02	0,06	-0,12
3. Consultation	0,30	0,81**	0,48*	0,16	-0,38	-0,03	-0,39
4. Ingratiation	-0,05	0,32	0,07	0,50*	0,18	0,07	-0,04
5. Exchange	0,48*	0,31	0,06	0,46*	0,29	-0,23	0,03
6. Personal appeals	0,19	0,45*	0,51*	0,11	0,17	-0,04	0,14
7. Legitimating	0,26	0,20	0,00	0,10	-0,01	-0,21	-0,17
8. Pressure	1,00	0,04	0,36	0,13	-0,22	-0,49*	0,15
9. Collaboration	0,04	1,00	0,33	0,24	-0,10	0,27	-0,36
10. Apprising	0,36	0,33	1,00	-0,18	-0,02	-0,19	-0,41
11. Coalition	0,13	0,24	-0,18	1,00	0,28	-0,12	0,14
12.Commitment	-0,22	-0,10	-0,02	0,28	1,00	0,13	0,12
13.Efficiency	-0,49*	0,27	-0,19	-0,12	0,13	1,00	-0,25
14. Gender	0,15	-0,36	-0,41	0,14	0,12	-0,25	1,00

Note: * P < 0,05 Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** P < 0,01 Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Codes: 1 - Males 2 - Females

Appendix 4

Table 2. Mean Frequency of Influence Tactic Usage

Table 2: Mean Frequency of Influnce Tactic Usage						
	Mean		SD		Ranking	
Influence tactic	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Rational persuasion	4,05	3,75	0,52	0,87	2	1
Inspirational appeal	3,20	3,03	0,51	0,98	6	4
Consultation	3,48	3,00	0,32	0,78	5	5
Ingratiation	3,00	2,93	0,99	0,79	7	7
Exchange	2,05	2,10	0,80	0,83	9	9
Personal appeals	1,38	1,50	0,29	0,58	11	11
Legitimating	3,53	3,30	0,73	0,65	4	3
Pressure	1,80	1,98	0,45	0,72	10	10
Collaboration	4,13	3,63	0,40	0,88	1	2
Apprising	3,63	2,98	0,60	0,89	3	6
Coalition	2,13	2,33	0,80	0,68	8	8

Table 3. Mean Comparison Between Males and Females

Appendix 4

Table 4. Men and Women's Self-Rated Efficiency

Table 4: Men and Womens Self-Rated Commitment and Efficiency		
Variable	Men	Women
Commitment		
Mean	4,6	4,9
SD	1,65	0,99
Efficiency		
Mean	6,7	5,9
SD	0,95	2,13

Table 5. Mean Comparison Between Males and Females, Commitment and Efficiency