
Overview of Leaders' Perceptions of the Gender Microaggression on Women in the Workplace

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Abstract. *This study aims to explore leaders' perceptions of gender microaggression impacts on women in the workplace. The role of the leader in reducing or even increasing gender microaggression in the workplace is adequately central that the leader's perception, especially their opinion of gender microaggression, will describe the leader's decision if the female employees at the workplace obtain gender microaggression. This study used a qualitative research design with data analysis methods, particularly thematic analysis with an inductive approach. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and short stories (vignettes) for each participant. The results of the study stated that both microinsults & microinvalidation have positive impacts and microassaults have negative impacts on women. Overall, the participants did not realize that gender microaggression could lead to some negative impacts on women with the result that the participants felt no obligation to execute any intervention in reducing gender microaggression.*

Keywords: *gender microaggression, impact, leader*



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Introduction

Some of us may be more familiar with the gender discrimination term, which is different and unfair behavior directed at a particular gender, both women and men (Cardo, 1994). Today, many people believe that gender discrimination has begun to decrease, while gender discrimination still exists but manifests itself in a more subtle or veiled form, known as gender microaggression (Basford et al., 2014). The definition of gender microaggression is an intentional or unintentional act or behavior that ostracizes, degrades, insults, oppresses, or expresses hostility and indifference towards women (Basford et al., 2014). Gender microaggression often occur in women because women belong to a group whose position is lower than men in the social system (Israpil, 2017).

Researchers highlight various gender microaggression on women in the workplace, one of which is the publication of job vacancies with the requirement of not being married or not having children for female candidate. This is because married women are often considered incapable to manage their work roles as well as their roles as housewife in the family (Haryadi, 2020). Other forms, such as the behavior of female employees, are judged differently from male employees despite doing the same thing. For example, when negotiating, female employees will receive negative labels such as aggressive and intimidating, whereas when male employees negotiate, they will be considered assertive and free from negative labels (Anderson, 2019). Other forms are the statement, “You are too beautiful to do coding work” (Kim & Meister, 2023).

Researching gender microaggression on women in the workplace is important because, from the point of view of female victims who experience gender microaggression, they report that they experience a variety of negative emotions, such as sadness and anger (Kim & Meister, 2023). In addition, gender microaggression experiences also cause cognition fatigue because they have to reflect and interpret the gender microaggression events that they experience in order to respond to the abuser (Kim & Meister, 2023). Women also experience a sense of threatened identity, decreased self-esteem, decreased belief that they have value and meaning (self-worth), and decreased individual ability to understand themselves (self-perception) (Kim & Meister, 2023; Sue, 2010). Furthermore, decreased self-esteem, self-worth, and self-perception can decrease job satisfaction and productivity (Kumar, 2017).

In the workplace context, leaders have to initiate and strive in creating an inclusive and collaborative organizational culture (Basford et al., 2014). However, on the other hand, several phenomenon show that leaders are one of the parties who carry out gender microaggression, such as paying female employees less than male employees, hesitating to promote female employees to higher positions, and considering female employees not more capable than male employees in working (Parker & Funk, 2017).

Examining leaders' perceptions of the gender microaggression on women in the workplace is essential. Perception is a manifestation of individual behavior, so by knowing the perception of leaders about the impact of gender microaggression, researchers will get an overview of the leaders' behavior if they find gender microaggression occur to women in the workplace (Dijksterhuis & Bargh, 2001). Will the leaders intervene to reduce the behavior in accordance to their role or normalize the gender microaggression so that no intervention of any kind is formulated.

Based on the explanation above, the research question that can be formulated is leaders' perception regarding the gender microaggression on women in the workplace. The study was conducted with semi-structured interviews and vignettes on several leaders within the company. The leader will express his opinion as an observer or the perpetrator of gender microaggression on female employees in the workplace.

Examining leaders' perceptions regarding the gender microaggression on women in the workplace would provide several theoretical and practical benefits. Theoretically, the results of this study would add insight into the gender microaggression's literatures. In practical terms, the results of this study would be helpful for female employees, institutions or companies, and governments. For female employees, this study's results could be an alternative tool to reflect in order to maintain and improve self-esteem, self-worth, and self-perception (Sue, 2010). For institutions or companies, this study's results could be a reference to reduce gender microaggression practices. For the government, the results of this study could be a recommendation for creating policies in supporting female employees' psychological well-being. There are three forms of gender microaggression: gender microinsults, gender microassaults, and gender microinvalidation.

Gender Microinsults

Gender microinsults are forms of gender microaggression that being carried out unconsciously, indicate insensitive actions, and indirectly denigrate identity as a woman. For example, a teacher always calls male students while teaching in the classroom, implying that male students are more intelligent than female students (Sue, 2010).

Gender Microassaults

Gender microassaults are behaviors and expressions of individuals that are laden with gender discrimination (sexism) and are usually realized by the perpetrators. Gender microassaults manifest as an explicit insult that is verbally or non-verbally abusive, as well as attacking by making the atmosphere less comfortable and intending to hurt and oppress. For example, labelling woman as a bitch for trying to express an opinion (Sue, 2010).

Gender Microinvalidation

Gender microinvalidation is an unconscious form of gender microaggression. Gender microinvalidation manifests as actions that exclude, negate, or ignore women's thoughts, feelings, or psychological experiences. For example, male employees watch football after work and never

invite female employees because they suspect that female employees will not be interested in watching football (Sue, 2010).

One factor that influences the perception about gender microaggression's impact is the phenomena's explicitness that is being seen by observers (Basford et al., 2014). This shows that the more explicit the gender microaggression that are being seen, the more it is believed that they will have negative impacts on female victims, such as decreased job satisfaction, desire to stay in the organization, work motivation, and performance (Basford et al., 2014).

The gender of the observer also influences their perception about gender microaggression. Kobryniewicz & Branscombe (1997) found that women were more aware of discrimination against women than men did. This is because women tend to experience discrimination more often, so they are more easily aware of the gender microaggression's practices, even if it is very subtle. Furthermore, in the concept of "us" versus "them" mentality, women tend to be able to identify and feel the negative impact of gender microaggression because it occurs in their group as a fellow women (Luke et al., 2020).

This perception about the negative impact on the female victim may not appear in men's perception. This can happen because of the "us" versus "them" mentality, where men are a different social group than women and therefore, potentially have different judgments regarding gender microaggression (Luke et al., 2020). Therefore, by knowing the perceptions of leaders, especially male leaders, the researchers will know whether leaders have similar perceptions with female employees regarding the negative impact of gender microaggression or not.

Methods

The research design used in this study is descriptive qualitative (Colorado & Evans, 2016; Sandelowski, 2000). This study's design aims to obtain a comprehensive picture of a particular phenomenon (Colorado & Evans, 2016; Sandelowski, 2000). In this study, researchers intend to get an idea of the gender microaggression on employees in the workplace from the point of view of leaders.

Participants in this study are leaders (team/unit/division/c-level) from a male-dominated field. The reason for choosing participants in male-dominated work fields is that gender microaggression are more likely to occur in work environments dominated by male employees (Zacharek et al., 2017). The number of participants in this study was three people. Participants in this study were selected using the method of purposeful sampling, that is the selection of

participants who were not random but based on the participants' capabilities in providing answers to the research topic (Palinkas et al., 2015). The purposeful sampling method was chosen so that researchers could get participants who could articulate their experiences reflectively and were able to express their opinions clearly (Palinkas et al., 2015).

Although the variables from this study do not pose a substantial ethical risk to participants, this variable is personal because it asks for personal views from participants about behavior that hurts others. Therefore, before the interview begins, to maintain research ethics, researchers provide informed consent so that participants better understand the objectives, stages of research, and participant rights more deeply.

This study used two data collection methods: semi-structured interviews and vignettes. Researchers chose a semi-structured interview in order to explore participants' perceptions of gender microaggression as profoundly as possible but still be able to maintain the flow of conversation (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). Here are the interview guidelines used in the study :

Table 1.
Interview Guidelines

Number	Questions
1.	Looking at the daily life around us or everyday experiences, in your point of view, what behaviors might a person exhibit differently due to sex differences?
2.	Does the phenomena that happens in your current company also happen in other companies ?

In addition to using interview guidelines, this study also used vignettes as one of the data collection methods because gender microaggression is rarely discussed in research and by ordinary people (Aujla, 2020). By using vignettes, the phenomenon of gender microaggression will be better described to participants so that participants can provide answers according to their perceptions (Aujla, 2020). Here are the examples of vignettes used in the study :

Table 2.
Vignette

No	Forms Of Gender Microaggression	Vignette	Probing Questions
1.	<i>Microassaults</i>	During break time at work, Bella planned to smoke at smoking area. As she lit her cigarette and started smoking, Adit, his work colleague, also join to smoke. Adit smokes while looking at Bella concerned, "Don't you think more about your future?"	1) Why do you think Adit said/behaved that way? What prompted you to think so? 2) How do you think Bella responded to Adit's words/behavior? What prompted you to think so?

		Bella looked at Adit and asked, "What do you mean?" Adit exhaled the cigarette smoke and said, "Yes, your children and your husband later. Smoking cigarettes is not good for women."	3) In your opinion, after meeting with Adit, what did Bella think/feel/do?
2.	<i>Microassaults</i>	An oil mining company is currently opening a geological position in charge of exploring points of potential oil resources to be excavated. Bagas, as a recruitment staff, is busy selecting CVs from the candidates who applied. Bagas was surprised when his supervisor suddenly entered his room. "What is it, Sir?" asked Bagas wondering His supervisor sat on the available seat. "Give me some of the CVs" said the supervisor. "Here they are Sir." Bagas handed over several CVS to his supervisor. "Hm.. Diah.. She is experienced in this area but... she looks nerd? Is there anyone who looks more attractive?" asked the supervisor.	1) Why do you think the supervisor said/behaved that way? What prompted you to think so? 2) How do you think Diah will respond if she hears the words/behavior of the supervisor? What prompted you to think so? 3) In your opinion, after hearing the words/behavior of the supervisor, what did Diah think/ feel/do?
3.	<i>Microinsults</i>	In a job interview, after asking questions that reveal the candidate's competence, the recruiter smiled and asked, "Okay, Amanda, so are you currently married or single?" Amanda smiled and replied, "Im married, Alhamdulillah, I have a 2 years old daughter." "So glad to hear that! 2 years old babies are the most active ones, so if you work, who will take care of your daughter?" asked the recruiter. "My husband will be in charge for that. He is a freelancer and can work from home," replied Amanda "That's very incredible! Your husband is a rare one. You indeed are very lucky." answered the recruiter.	1) Why do you think the recruiter said/behaved that way? What prompted you to think so? 2) How do you think Amanda responded to the recruiter's words/behavior? What prompted you to think so? 3) In your opinion, what do you think Amanda thought/felt/did after the interview?
4.	<i>Microinvalidation</i>	In a mining company, during the feedback session of employee performance, Laras conveyed her anxious feelings to his supervisor. "Hm.. Sir, about me, who will host the employee engagement event with Aldo..." said Laras. "Oh yeah, what is it?" asked the supervisor. "I was in the cafeteria when I accidentally heard the operator's conversation. The point is they doubt that I could host the	1) Why do you think the supervisor responds to Laras by saying /behaving that way? What prompted you to think so? 2) How do you think Laras responded to the words/behavior of the supervisor? What prompted you to think so?

		event successfully. Maybe because I am a woman?" said Laras "Really? There is no way they think like that." replied the supervisor.	3) In your opinion, what did Laras think/feel/do after meeting with the supervisor?
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The researchers used the qualitative content analysis method based on this qualitative research method. Qualitative content analysis is an analytical method that subjectively perceives the results of interviews with systematic categorization (coding) and the determination of several accurate themes (Supratiknya, 2015). Considering that this study has variable that is rare as a research topic, the analysis method used is conventional content analysis or inductive approach in which researchers let the data produce the latest findings about the topic (Supratiknya, 2015).

This research seeks to increase the credibility of research data in various ways. First of all, is building and maintaining relationships long before retrieving research data. This is done to build mutual trust between participants and researchers so that participants are comfortable in conveying actual information (Cope, 2014). In the data analysis phase, researchers always try to be reflective. That is, the researchers are women, and have gender similarities with the gender microaggression's victims. In addition, the work experiences of the researchers may also influence the data interpretation process. Such conditions demand researchers to always be neutral and objective, perform any process based on scientific literature, and be careful in interpreting the data (Polit & Beck, 2012). After the interpretation is made, the researchers did member checking, which allows participants to check and correct the researchers' interpretation if it is less precise (Cope, 2014).

Result

Table 3.
 Descriptive Data

Participants	An overview of the gender microaggressions' forms that occur in participants ' workplace
Participant 1 (B)	<i>Microinsults</i>
Participant 2 (T)	<i>Microinsults</i>
Participant 3 (N)	<i>Microinsults</i>

Based on the observation of participant 1 (B), the job has been structured based on gender within the company where he works. For example, administrative jobs such as finance and secretarial are given more to female employees. Meanwhile, jobs that involved physical labor, such as the field of production, are given more to male employees. Similarly, as a leader, participant 1 (B) admitted that the way he gave feedback to male and female employees was

different. Participant 1 (B) gave male employees more direct and assertive feedback, while on female employees, participants tended to be more careful in giving feedback. It can be concluded that in the company where participant 1 (B) worked, there were several microinsults captured because these behaviors that he mentioned were carried out unconsciously by showing insensitivity and indirectly degrading the identity as a woman who was considered not physically strong and psychologically fragile. Participants tends to not mention microassaults and microinvalidation phenomenon in the workplace.

Based on the observation of participant 2 (T) in the company where he works, the job has been structured based on gender. As a leader, participant 2 (T) contributed in dividing the work based on gender. For example, administrative jobs such as cashiers, jobs that involved creativity such as decorating, and jobs that involved interacting with others, such as receptionists, are more given to female employees. Meanwhile, jobs that involved more physical activity are given to male employees. Participant 2 (T) also often shows different behavior when dealing with female and male employees. On female employees, participant 2 (T) tried to be more supportive and calm when employees faced job problems. Meanwhile, on male employees, participant 2 (T) didn't need to do these efforts. It can be concluded that in the company where participant 2 (T) worked, there were several microinsults captured because these behaviors that he mentioned were carried out unconsciously by showing insensitivity and indirectly degrading the identity as a woman who was considered not physically strong and psychologically fragile. Participants tends to not mention microassaults and microinvalidation phenomenon in the workplace.

Slightly different from the two participants above, participant 3 (N) did not divide the work based on gender in his business. However, participant 3 (N) plans to do so if his business is getting bigger and broader. Participant 3 (N) also gave different behaviors in giving feedback to male and female employees. In giving feedback to female employees, participant 3 (N) did not directly state what he wanted to say but arranged the words in such a way before stating what he wanted to reprimand. However, among male employees, participant 3 (N) can directly state his intentions and goals in giving feedback. It can be concluded that in the company where participant 3 (N) worked, there were several microinsults captured because these behaviors that he mentioned were carried out unconsciously by showing insensitivity and indirectly degrading the identity as a woman who was considered not physically strong and psychologically fragile. Participants tends to not mention microassaults and microinvalidation phenomenon in the workplace.

Table 4.
 Research results from interviews and vignette

Leaders' Perceptions of the Gender Microaggression on Women in the Workplace	Participant 1 (B)	Participant 2 (T)	Participant 3 (N)
Impact of Gender Microaggression	1) Negative impact on women (microassaults) 2) Positive impact on women (microinsults & microinvalidation)	1) Positive and negative impact on women (microassaults) 2) Positive impact on women (microinsults & microinvalidation)	1) Negative impact on women (microassaults) 2) Positive impact on women (microinsults & microinvalidation)

In Table 4, all participants believe that if gender microaggression is done unintentionally (microinsults & microinvalidation), it will positively impact women. The impact is that women will feel happy, more confident, able to take care of themselves, and motivated to improve their skills. Participant 1 (B) and participant 3 (N) believed that gender microaggression behavior if done intentionally (microassaults), would hurt women by causing feelings of offense, discomfort, disappointment, and indifference. Participant 2 (T) believes the negative impact is similar to what the previous two participants have said. However, he also believes that the behavior of gender microaggressions committed intentionally (microassaults) can positively impact women's ability to take care of themselves better.

Discussion

In general, participants believed that microassaults hurt women because the behavior was done intentionally. These behaviors negatively affect women, that is the emergence of discomfort, disappointment, offense, and indifference from women.

Participants 1 (B) and 3 (N) had similar judgments of gender microaggression aimed at women who smoke (as in the first vignette showing microassaults). Participants revealed that the behavior would have a negative effect, that is, feelings of discomfort and negative responses such as ignoring the reprimand. The participants expressed this in the following statements :

"Yeah, probably first of all, I think it's simply as 'Why do you remind me when you yourself smoke as well?' That is probably the first reaction. It could be a different story when he does not smoke. However, he did it as well."

Participant 1 (B) considered that a person who reminds women to stop smoking when at the same time they are also smoking would hurt women. It is causing feelings of discomfort. In addition, the woman's response will likely confronting the person rather than listening to their words.

"Hm, I am not so sure because ee.. Bella, would say 'Why do you care?' That is all. 'Why are you minding my business when you smoke as well?' That one could be so, but yes, I think Bella although not saying anything and looks agreeing but deep down she might say, 'I could not care less, you smoke as well.'

In line with participant 1 (B), participant 3 (N) also stated that a person who reminds women to stop smoking when at the same time they are also smoking would hurt women. It is causing feelings of discomfort. In addition, the woman may not listening to their words.

In the second vignette (which also shows *microassaults*) about companies that select female employees based on their appearance, the three participants marked that this would hurt women, that is the emergence of feeling offended and disappointed. This is revealed in the following statements :

"Yeah, normally, she might feel offended. Because her ability, ee.. her capabilities means nothing, and her appearances are considered to not meet the supervisor's standard."

Participant 1 (B) stated that criteria which emphasized appearance in women would offend women. This is because her skill would means nothing if her appearance is not attractive.

"If Diah thought that she is judged by her appearance, it hurts a lot for her. She meant to show her skill not her appearance. At this point, 'If you want to hire a person whose attractive, just hire a model.' So maybe Diah is very disappointed."

"First things first, she will tell people around her about the company that she applied. She might told her colleagues that this company is being unfair in choosing employees. They just choose based on the physical appearance. And I think that's detrimental to the company."

In line with participant 1 (B), participant 2 (T) pointed that criteria which emphasized appearance in women would make women offended and disappointed. This is because her skill would means nothing if her appearance is not attractive. Furthermore, participant 2 (T) considered that it was likely that the woman who experienced this would tell the people around her about her bad experiences, so it would undoubtedly affect the company's image.

Yes, that's what I said. 'Are you looking for a salesgirl or an explorer? An explorer will sweats in the field.' That's my opinion. 'And then work outside in the heat.' Well, that's it. Maybe she will also feel offended ee... maybe if she could talk to the supervisor, she would strongly disagree with his judgments."

In line with participant 1 (B) and participant 2 (T), participant 3 (N) also considered that criteria which emphasized appearance in women would offend women. Furthermore, according to participant 3 (N), if there is an opportunity for confrontation, the woman will confess her discomfort to the supervisor.

Participant 2 (T) added his experience when observing the response of women who felt uncomfortable when receiving intentional gender microaggression behaviors (*microassaults*). The experience was related to the behavior of participant 2 (T), who questioned women's life choices for a career. Participant 2 (T) considered that women should not have a career because it is the women's nature to be a housewife, taking care of her husband and children. The response of the woman is revealed in the following statement :

"A lot (of problems). Like in this case, the child whose nurtured by the nanny must had a different result compared to when they are being nurtured by their mother. When the woman decides to work, the nanny will take care of the child. Right? That is a disadvantage because their parenting style is clear— the nanny takes care based on the salary that they received. As for the biological mother, she will take care with a sentiment, their way to scold the child are also different; that is the first disadvantage. Second, your husband is working, and when he comes home, you are still working. The point is your husband needs entertainment and support. When your husband needs some supports cause he got some problems at work, and the wife is still working. You are both tired, right? So when I meet a woman who also chose to have a career besides being a housewife, for me, you've been in a wrong path of destiny. After all, it's a women's destiny to take care of her children. For nine months, she did her role to nurture her baby in her womb."

"I once had a girlfriend. I said that thing, and she thought that I have an old-fashioned mindset."

Participant 2 (T) marked that the woman whose life choice was against his principle consider him as a someone with a conservative mindset. In other words, the woman feels uncomfortable with the behavior. Participant 2 (T) also added his experience when throwing jokes at women. The response of the woman is revealed in the following statement :

"I have experienced it firsthand. I once joked to my female friends, about sexual things. However, I could sense their mood as they are being annoyed at my jokes. And then I realized, 'I might said a wrong thing to them.'"

Participant 2 (T) admitted that he often had to be careful in making fun of women. This is because women sometimes feel uncomfortable with some jokes made by men, such as jokes about sexuality, which is one form of microassaults.

Participants believed that gender microaggression also had a positive impact on women. The positive impact is that women will take care of themselves, feel happy, increase women's confidence, and stimulate women to hone their skills better. Here are some of the participants' positive perception of gender microaggression in women :

"But I think maybe she will accept it. That is a good advice, and maybe Bella's response is, 'Okay, I will try to stop smoking.' 'Are you not afraid of your womb?' It is said that smoking can cause some serious effects on health. "

Quite in contrast to participant 1 (B) and participant 3 (N), participant 2 (T) pointed that the reprimands on a woman who smoke, as in the first vignette showing microassaults, would have a positive effect on women. That is because it implies that the person who lecture her is paying attention to her health so that women could maintain her own health.

All three participants marked that discussing the marital status of women during job interviews, as in the third vignette showing microinsults, would positively impact women. Women will feel happy and motivated to show their capabilities. This is revealed in the following statements :

"But on the one hand, if this compliment is pure and it is what the recruiter expects, the household things will not disturb the work, then, of course she will feel 'Wow, I'm glad! It seems like I will be accepted based on the comments.'"

Participant 1 (B) marked that discussing a woman's marital status during a job interview would not cause any problems. Furthermore, participant 1 (B) pointed that women should feel happy because the recruiter compliments their time management skills.

"If she get it, it means that Amanda could convince the HR that she will prioritize her job over her family. She is able to manage her time and used to control her emotions when facing problems both in the workplace and at home. She can be professional. What's at work, stay at work. As well as at home."

Like participant 1 (B)'s statement, participant 2 (T) also stated that women should feel happy if the recruiter praised their time management skills.

"Hm, to me, I guess Amanda had no problems."

Participant 3 (N) pointed that there was no problem in discussing the marital status of women during job interviews, and from the women's point of view, there would be no problem if their marital status were being discussed during job interviews.

All three participants stated that leader who did not heed women's uncomfortable expressions, as in the fourth vignette showing microinvalidation, would positively affect women. This will encourage women's self-confidence, and women will try to show and hone their abilities better. This is revealed in the following statements :

"Maybe her confidence started to emerge when her leader encouraged her. When she said, 'Is it because I am a girl?' Her leader replied, 'No, they didn't mean it like that. It is all your mind.' This motivation and encouragement from her leader... If the story continued, this would arouse and pump her confidence for sure."

Participant 1 (B) marked that leader who did not heed women's uncomfortable expressions would make women feel more confident. This is because the uncomfortable expression of women is interpreted as a lack of confidence, so women are considered to feel more confident when her feelings are ignored.

In line with participant 1 (B), participant 2 (T) also pointed that leader who did not heed women's uncomfortable expressions would make women feel more confident. This is because the uncomfortable expression of women is interpreted as a lack of confidence, so women are considered to feel more confident when her feelings are ignored. Participant 2 (T) expresses this in the following statement :

“Laras should be more confident if she has a strong willed. Her leader already believed in her, so she should too.”

In line with participant 1 (B) and participant 2 (T), participant 3 (N) stated that women would be more motivated to hone their skills when their leader did not heed their uncomfortable expressions. Here is the statement from participant 3 (N) :

“What is it? Ah.. She will prepares herself to be an excellent host.”

Participant 1 (B) added his opinion about microinsults, that is, the job in the company where he works that were divided based on gender. Here is the following statement from participant 1 (B) :

"Yes, if the job is meant to be done by men, I think it does not matter."

Participant 1 (B) considered that women would be fine with microinsults, in the form of the job that were assigned to them as a women, because some physical jobs were meant to be done by men.

Participant 1 (B) added his observations regarding microinsults, in which women are rarely becoming the leading figures. Here is the following statement from participant 1 (B) :

"There are few female governors. Out of the 34 provinces in Indonesia, how many of them are lead by women? Out of the 540 districts or cities, how many of them are lead by women? Right? That is because there are little opportunities for women to lead."

"It depends on the persistence she had. I believe some women can prove that they could lead some projects. "

Participant 1 (B) marked that if a woman gets microinsult behavior and is rarely given a chance as a leader, she has to try harder to prove that she is able and skilled to be a leader.

Participant 2 (T) shared his experience related to microinsults, that is his decision in assigning the working hours of female and male employees. Here is the statement from participant 2 (T) :

Q: Okay, then ee.. You rarely scheduled an evening shift for your female employees, what's their reaction to that?

A: They're ok with it. In my opinion, it is safer for them too.

Participant 2 (T) pointed that the female employees had accepted his decision of their working hours during the day (microinsults). According to participant 2 (T), that working hours will guarantee the female employees' safety.

Overall, participants revealed that gender microaggression had several negative impacts on women, such as causing feelings of offense, discomfort, and disappointment and making women become indifferent. It is also revealed by Anderson (2019) that female workers often feel harassed and uncomfortable when they receive gender microaggression behaviors in the workplace. Participants revealed that gender microaggression, especially microassaults, negatively affect women. Basford et al. (2014) also found that the more explicit the gender microaggression's form, the perception of the gender microaggression's impact will be more damaging for the victim. On the other hand, gender microaggression such as microinsults and microinvalidation are considered to positively impact women as women will be able to feel happy, confident, and motivated to improve their abilities further.

This study highlight the observer's (male) perception about the gender microaggression's impact. In previous studies, according to the female point of view, gender microaggression generally has several adverse psychological effects, such as decreased self-esteem, self-worth, and decreased self-perception (Sue, 2010). In addition, previous studies have also revealed that gender microaggression can decrease work productivity in women (Kumar, 2017), a phenomenon that is not realized by the participants.

This study showed that participants, who happen to be male leaders, were unaware of the microinsults behaviors that they did while working or the microinsult and microinvalidation behaviors that they observed in the vignette. These findings in line with Basford et al. (2014), which state that men find it more challenging to identify gender microaggression. So, definitely, this will impact the perception created by the participants regarding the impact of microinsult and microinvalidation. In other words, participants could argue that gender microaggression have some positive impacts on women because participants are not aware of gender microaggression

behaviors that occur to women. Thus, participants certainly did not consider that gender microaggression behavior, especially microinsults and microinvalidation forms, was a problem for women, moreover negatively affecting women.

The findings of this study also prove the researcher's concern about gender discrimination. The researchers believe that gender discrimination against women in the world of work has indeed begun to decrease. However, researchers worry that gender discrimination is not entirely gone but turned into a more veiled or subtle, that is gender microaggression (Basford et al., 2014). Until now, gender microaggression behavior still occurs a lot on women in the world of work, one of which is in the fields of science, technology, and mathematics. These behaviors include of not respecting women's competence in technology and ignoring women's participation in technological jobs (Kim & Meister, 2023).

Conclusion

Overall, the participants believed that gender microaggression behaviors such as microassaults would hurt women, such as making women feel uncomfortable, offended, disappointed, and indifferent. In contrast, leaders do not realize that microinsult and microinvalidation behaviors also negatively affect women. They argue that these behaviors positively impact women, such as making women feel happy, confident, and motivated to improve their abilities further. It can be concluded that leaders tend not to consider the gender microaggression as a problem experienced by women, so leaders are also predicted not to formulate an intervention to reduce or anticipate the occurrence of these behaviors.

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