

From awareness of gender gap to social change.

Theoretical background

Gender equality is far from being reached, especially in the labour market (ILO STATS, 2020). Given the wide social implications, a comprehensive understanding of the socio-psychological drivers that can help to countermand gender inequalities is required. Relative deprivation models offer an important point of reference on how individuals can get motivated to act collectively to achieve their denied goals (Smith et al. 2012). However, to date, no empirical study has combined different forms of deprivation such as temporal and intergroup deprivation (Beaton et al. 2005; De la Sablonnière et al., 2015) to assess individuals' awareness of gender inequality and its relationship to collective actions. Furthermore, no research has highlighted the processes through which these forms of deprivation can lead to collective actions. Previous research has shown that emotional experiences associated with deprivation can be a powerful motivator to different actions (Smith et al. 2008). In addition, emotions can be strongly tied to people's actions because they trigger moral convictions that generally motivate efforts to social change (Skitka, 2010).

Aims and hypotheses

In light of the above contention, Study 1 will investigate if awareness of gender inequalities leads to collective actions in women, and if resentment and moral convictions about gender inequality account for these effects. It will be also explored the possible moderating role of temporal deprivation. It is hypothesized that women's experience of deprivation motivates them to act collectively through the sequential mediation of resentment and moral convictions on gender inequality. Moreover, it is hypothesized that a temporal perspective (improvement vs. stasis in time) moderates the direct and indirect effect of women's deprivation on their willingness to act collectively.

Study 2 will go a step further by examining if relative deprivation of behalf of women, shame and moral convictions on inequalities motivate men to act collectively for gender equality. It is hypothesized that men's experience of deprivation on behalf of women increases their intention to act collectively through the sequential mediation of shame and the moral values associated to gender equality. Moreover, it is hypothesized that the extent to which disparities between men and women are evaluated as unfair moderates the direct and indirect effect of men's deprivation on collective action.

Method

Procedure and sample

In both studies participants will be recruited among university students and the general population; questionnaires will be administered online via Qualtrics (roughly 15 minutes to complete the measures).

Study 1

Participants (N= 128 women- the minimum sample size has been calculated using G*power, Faul et al., 2009, to detect a small-to-medium effect size according to Cohen, 1988, with 80% power and an alpha level of .05) will be randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (which will be pre-tested) as a function of the design 2 (intergroup deprivation: high vs. low) × 2 (temporal deprivation: low vs. high). In each condition they will be presented with a scenario referring to the state of equality in Italy and the progress over the past 10 years. Then participants will rate their perceived deprivation, emotions, moral conviction and the willingness to act collectively.

Measures

All ratings will be provided on 7-points Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (absolutely).

Intergroup Deprivation will be measured by asking participants to compare the situation of men and women at work on multiple dimensions (Foster & Matheson, 1995).

Temporal deprivation will be measured by asking participants to rate the extent to which women's condition in the work context has improved in the past 10 years (5 items, De la Sablonnière et al., 2015).

Emotions will be measured by asking participants to rate the extent to which they experience a list of emotions (e.g. resentment, shame; Mackie et al., 2000) when thinking about gender inequalities at work.

Moral convictions will be measured by asking participants to rate the extent to which gender equality is a moral value for them (Van Zomeren et al., 2012).

The intention to *collective action* will be measured by asking participants their willingness to engage in 12 actions (Tausch et al., 2015).

Statistical analysis

ANOVAs will be run to test for variations in women's deprivation, resentment, moral convictions and willingness to act collectively across conditions.

A moderated mediation analysis will be run with PROCESS macro in SPSS (model 85; Hayes, 2017) to examine whether women's awareness of gender inequality predicts their intentions to act collectively.

Study 2

Procedure and sample

Participants (N=128 men– the same G*power procedure of study 1 has been adopted) will be randomly assigned to one of the four conditions (pre-tested) as a function of the design 2 (intergroup deprivation: high vs. low) × 2 (appraisal of deprivation: fair vs. unfair) and will be required to read a fictitious scenario describing the difference in salary between women and men, followed by ratings of fairness/unfairness of the pay gap. Then, they will rate their perceived relative deprivation on behalf of women, emotions, moral convictions and willingness to act collectively.

Measures

The same measures of Study 1 will be employed with the exception of temporal deprivation and by adding relative deprivation on behalf of women (RDBO).

RDBO will be measured by asking participants to compare the situation of men and women at work on five different aspects and the extent to which the situations are fair/unfair (Beaton et al., 2005).

Statistical analyses

ANOVAs will be run to test for variations in men perceived deprivation on behalf of women, emotions, moral convictions, and willingness to act collectively across conditions.

A moderated mediation analysis will be run with PROCESS macro in SPSS (model 85; Hayes, 2017) to examine whether the feeling deprivation for an unjust treatment of women increases men's willingness to act against gender inequality.

Expected results and implications

Studies 1 and 2 are expected to show that awareness of gender inequality, captured through multiple forms of deprivation are important predictors of collective actions for both women and men, and that emotions and moral conviction can account for these effects. Specifically, Study 1 will provide evidence on how women awareness of gender inequality may be critical in mobilizing them to collective action

Study 2 will highlight how men's awareness of gender inequality may increase their alliance with women in acting toward gender equality.

Declaration of commitment to request ethical approval

The studies will be conducted following APA and the University of Bologna's ethical norms. The studies will be submitted for approval to the Bio-Ethical Committee of the University of Bologna.

