Paying due heed to others’ opinions: A meta-analysis on gender differences in advice taking

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We focused on ‘Judge Advisor System’ (JAS) Studies that used the Weight of Advice (WOA) measure.

\[ WOA = \frac{|\text{judge final estimate} - \text{judge initial estimate}|}{|\text{advisor recommendation} - \text{judge initial estimate}|}. \]

- Participants are asked to make two numerical estimates: Before and after the advice.

- WOA represents the degree to which the second estimate “moves” toward the advice relative to the first estimate (0 = none, 1 = completely, 0.50 = in the middle)
2 Research Questions

1) To what degree people use others’ advice?
   • Average WOA across studies
   • “Average principle” → WOA = 0.5 (Clemen, 1988; Hogarth, 1978)
   • “people adjust, on average, about 30% of the distance between their initial estimate and advice” (Soll & Larrick, 2009, p. 781).

2) Do men take less advice than women?
   • Reasons to expect this would be the case:
   • Men are more overconfident than women (Bordalo et al., 2019; Soll & Klayman, 2004). In turn, overconfidence predicts advice taking (Tost et al., 2012; See et al., 2011).

2 path models:
1) Gender → Overconfidence → Advice Taking
2) Gender → Overconfidence → Advice Taking → Accuracy Final Estimate
Research Question 1: To what degree people use others’ advice?

• \( k = 102 \) independent samples
• Overall WOA was \( \hat{\mu} = .373 \) (95% CI: [.346, .399])

• Moderator: Whether advice was manipulated.

→ Only studies that didn’t include a manipulation.
• \( k = 37 \)
• Overall WOA was \( \hat{\mu} = .305 \) (95% CI: [.256, .355]).
Research Question 2: Do men take less advice than women?

- $k = 48$
- Men took less advice than women, but the effect was small, Cohen’s $d = -0.216$ (95% CI: 0.140, 0.292).

Using a meta analytical path model (Jak & Cheung, 2018) we found:
- Indirect effect of gender on WOA through (over)confidence
  - Also a direct effect of gender on WOA.
- Indirect effect of gender on accuracy of final estimate through (over)confidence and WOA.

→ Men take (slightly) less advice than women (partly) because they are more overconfident. This leads them to be (slightly) less accurate in their final estimates, relative to women.
Finally, we obtained primary data from 40 studies. 

Gender differences in WOA seem to be driven by a larger proportion of men who completely disregard the advice.