

The Effect of Conversation Topic on Dominance Behaviour

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Introduction

- Individuals with higher power may feel they have the authority to demand other's attention
- Men disproportionately fill positions of social, political, and economic power (Brescoll, 2011)

Speaking Time

- More dominant people talk more (Mast, 2002)
- Others may allow a more "powerful" individual to talk for longer (Brescoll, 2011)
- Even when a minority, men contributed larger proportions to discussions (Cutler & Scott, 1990)



Interruptions

- High dominance relates to more interruptions (Daigen & Holmes, 2000)
- Men interrupt significantly more than women (Daigen & Holmes, 2000)
- People with masculine traits are more likely to interrupt (Daigen & Holmes, 2000)
- Some research has found that status, not gender, explains differences in interruptions (Menz & Al-Roubaie, 2008)

Main Study

- How do dominance behaviors occur in a group outside a workplace setting?
 - Fewer gender based hierarchies within undergraduate students vs. workplaces
- Does topic of conversation influence differences in dominant conversation behaviours?

Hypotheses

H1. Main effect of gender: men will on average display more dominance behaviours than women.

- H1a.** Men will speak longer than women
- H1b.** Men will interrupt more than women

H2. Main effect of condition: participants on average will display more dominance behaviours in the Soft Skills focus group than the Gender Wage Gap focus group.

- H2a.** Longer speaking times in Soft Skills vs. Gender Wage Gap
- H2b.** More interruptions in Soft Skills vs. Gender Wage Gap

H3. There will be an interaction of gender and condition:



Method

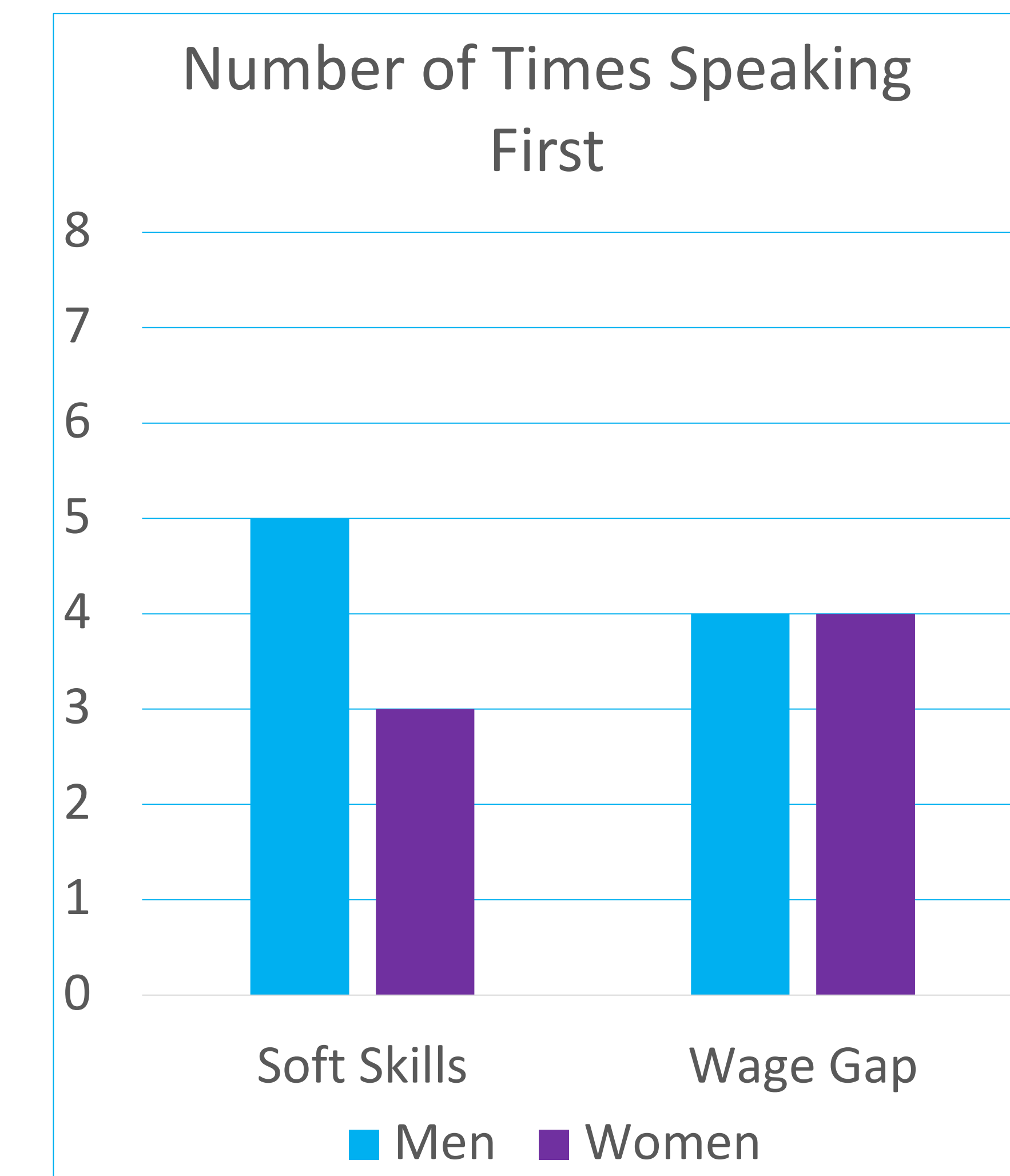
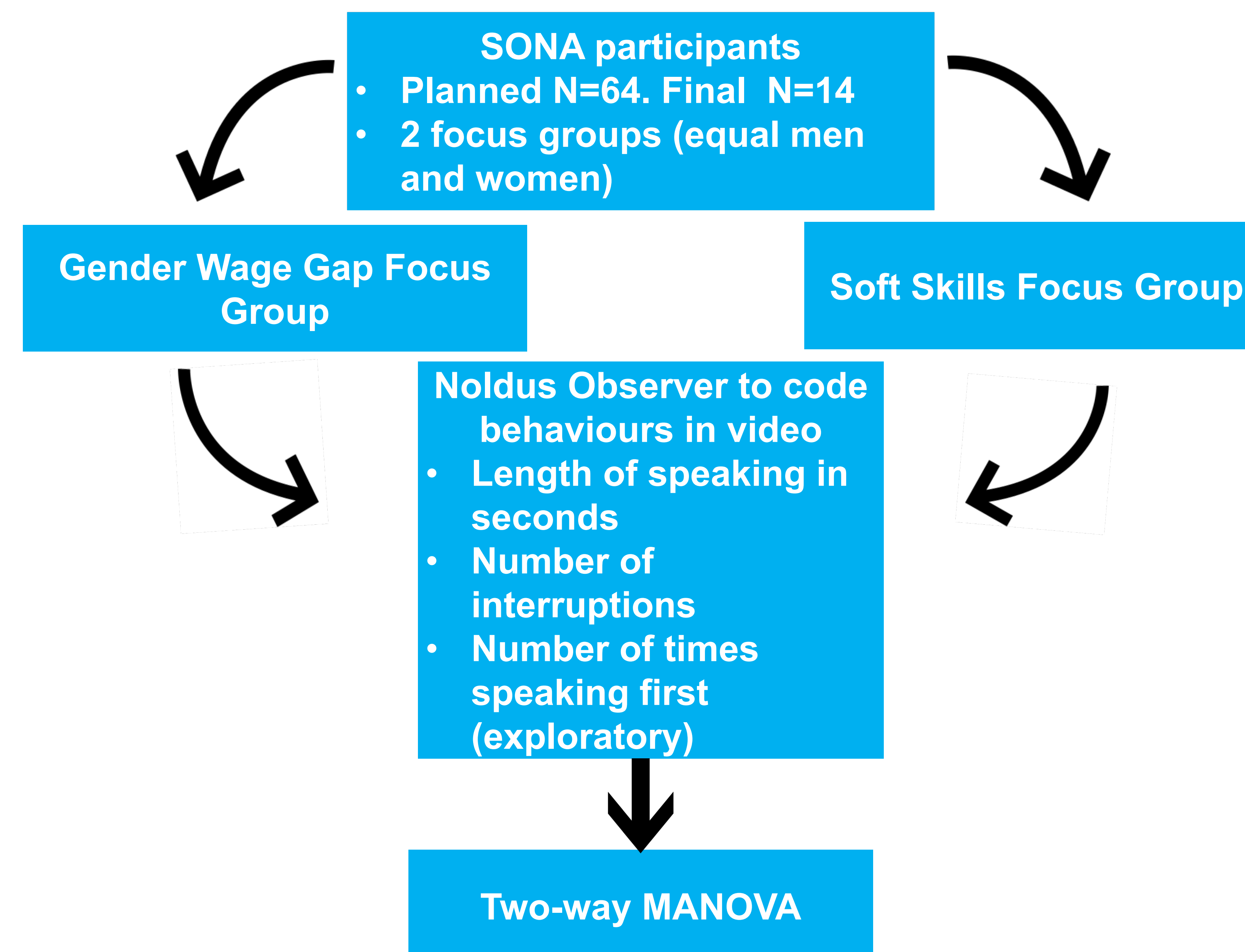


Fig 3. Speaking first was an **exploratory** factor. Men spoke first slightly more in the Soft Skills condition, there was no difference between men and women in the Wage Gap condition.

Due to exploratory nature, small data pool and lack of power, significance test was not conducted.

Results

Univariate Between-Test

MANOVA RESULTS

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	η^2	Obs. Power
Dep. Speaking Time							
Gender	111080.241	1	111080.241	5.012	.047*	.310	.053
Condition	46.332	1	46.332	.002	.964	.000	.050
Gender*Condition	1495.484	1	1495.484	.067	.800	.006	.057
Error Total	1044315.85	15					
Dep. Interruptions							
Gender	.314	1	.314	.317	.582	.028	.081
Condition	5.931	1	5.391	5.432	.040*	.331	.566
Gender*Condition	.160	1	.160	.161	.695	.014	.066
Error Total	30.00	15					

Note: Multivariate function was not significant.

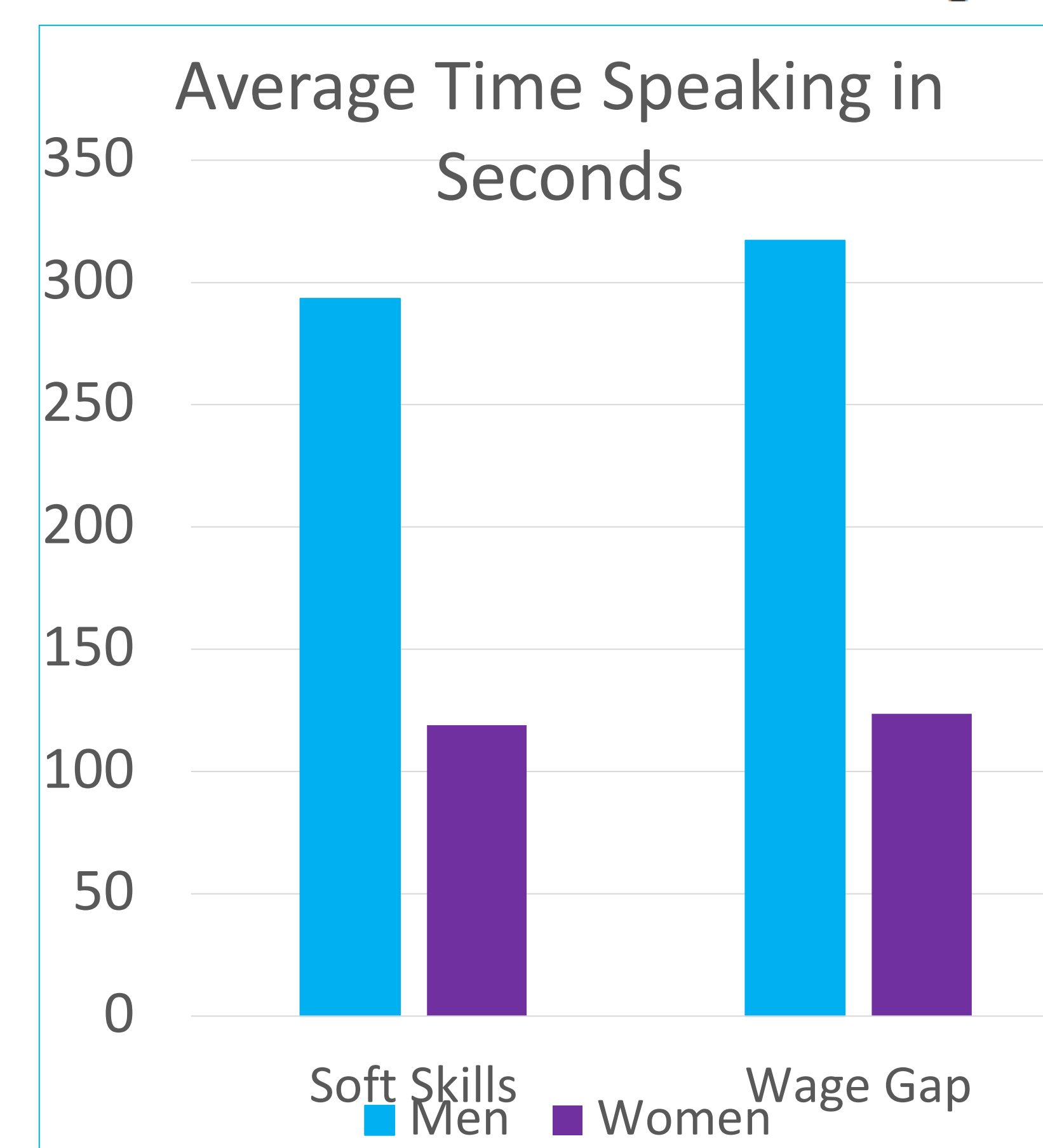


Fig.1. Interaction effect not significant. Significant main effect of gender $F(1, 14) = 5.012, p = .047$.

Men talked for a longer period of time in both conversation topics, only H1a supported.

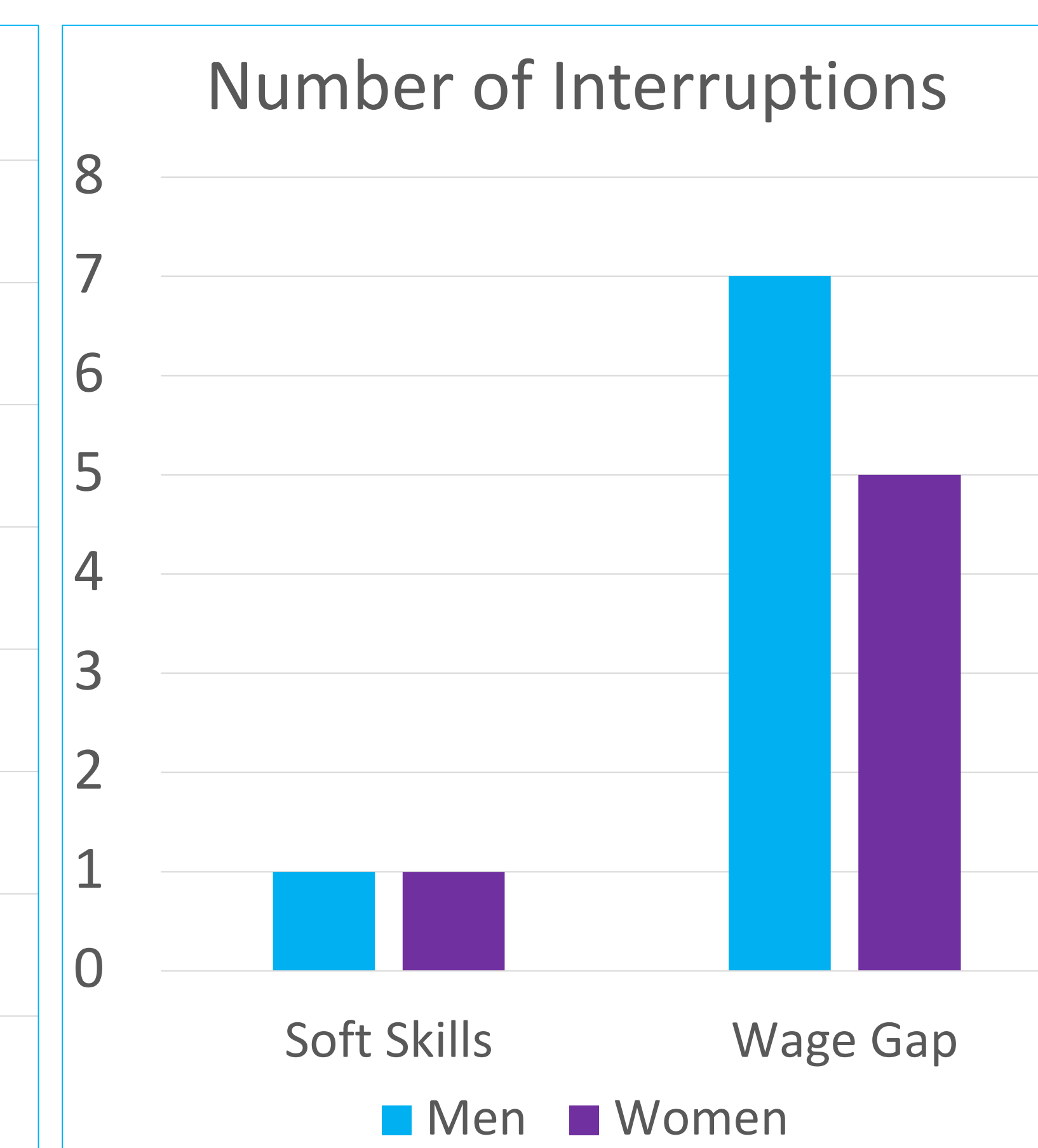


Fig. 2. Interaction effect not significant. Significant main effect of condition $F(1, 14) = 5.432, p = .040$.

Participants interrupted more in the Wage Gap condition. Hypotheses not supported.

Discussion

- H1a:** Main effect of gender on speaking time, men talked significantly more than women did.
- H1b:** No main effect of gender on interruptions, men and women interrupted each other the same amount.
- H2a:** No main effect of condition on speaking time, there was no significant difference in speaking time between the Soft Skills and Gender Wage Gap groups.
- H2b:** Main effect of condition on interruptions, but contrary to expected: Wage Gap condition had significantly more interruptions than Soft Skills condition.
- H3:** No interaction between gender and condition. Must be interpreted with caution because of the low power.

Limitations

- Participants did not show up to the focus groups they signed up for.
- Most focus groups had unequal genders and were therefore unusable.
- Small sample size, therefore there is low power and may have resulted in Type-2 error.
- Must be interpreted as a case study and cannot be generalized.
- Participants were hesitant to make conversation with each other therefore may not be representative of real world conversations.

Future Directions

- Overbooking focus groups to accommodate for absences, ensures there is equal gender ratio.
- Removing the interviewers from room to encourage more natural conversation.
- Exploring dominance behaviours in other minority/majority groups like racial or sexual minorities.
- This research can be used to encourage more inclusivity, innovation, and equality in the workplace.