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An Exploration of Gender Impact in Virtual Teams
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Abstract:
Gender issues have been researched broadly in a traditional face-to-face context but not in virtual teams yet which function in settings without face-to-face meetings. As virtual teams have been increasingly applied across time and geographic borders in business, gender issues which revolve on cultural effects cannot be ignored in virtual team research. This study built an intact framework for evaluating gender differences in a virtual environment, conducted an experiment and interviews to validate the framework and explore the gender issues in depth. The results indicated that females perceived higher extent of relationship building, commitment and satisfaction than males but perceived no significant differences in communication, trust, collaboration and performance. It was found that females were more adaptive and enjoyable to work in virtual teams because of the equality and fairness created by CMC (Computer-Mediated Communication). Females also regarded CMC as a tool to reduce conflict. The managerial application is provided at the end.