

Directions: *There are 2 passages in this section. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C) and D). You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter on Answer Sheet 2 with a single line through the centre.*

Passage Two

Questions 51 to 55 are based on the following passage.

Female employees consistently pay lower airfares than men do for the same flights because they tend to book earlier.

We compared the airfare paid by employees in the same position within a company for the same class of travel and used a common statistical technique to account for other factors that might affect differences in airfares. We found that women paid on average \$18 less per ticket than their male colleagues. Further investigation allowed us to conclude that this gap is largely explained by the fact that women tended to book earlier than men, 1.8 days on average.

We wanted to determine what was causing these gender differences in booking business trips so we tested a variety of possible explanations, such as women choosing to plan ahead or male frequent travelers being inclined to book late. None of these explained away the gender gap, so we applied data collected from surveys that express consumer preferences that play a central role in economic decisions, such as patience and risk avoidance.

We found that only the concept of "negative reciprocity"—in which an employee who feels unfairly treated engages in negative behaviors, such as spending their company's money less carefully—explains these differences. The surveys showed men tend to exhibit more of these negative behaviors than women. This isn't to say that all men engage in these behaviors—or that booking relatively late is a sign of abnormal behavior. It only means that the gender gap disappears when we plug in the negative reciprocity variable.

Prior research on negative reciprocity among workers found that it can result in lower employee motivation, business performance and workplace morale(士气) and culture.

Our results show another way these negative behaviors can manifest themselves, like in airline bookings, and add to evidence that women are less likely to engage in them.

Companies spend significant sums of money on business travel. While that \$18 difference per ticket may seem small, it adds up. Our analysis suggests early booking by women can translate into savings of \$1 million a year for a large multinational company with 20,000 regular travelers.

51. What did the author's team conclude about the gender difference in airfares from their further investigation?

- A) It is largely attributed to women booking earlier than men.
- B) It is largely explained by women's choosing cheaper flights.
- C) It is mainly accounted for by male employees' readiness to pay more.
- D) It is due to the fact that women care more about their company's money.

52. What did the researchers want to determine by testing a variety of possible explanations?
- A) What made male frequent travelers book air tickets late.
 - B) What caused women to plan ahead in booking business trips.
 - C) What motivated women to book cheaper flights.
 - D) What accounted for the gender gap in airfares.
53. What happened when the negative reciprocity variable was taken into account?
- A) Both men and women were found to engage in negative behaviors.
 - B) Neither men nor women viewed booking late as a bad behavior.
 - C) The gender difference in airfare expenses no longer existed.
 - D) The gender gap tended to narrow to a significant degree.
54. What did prior research on negative reciprocity among workers find?
- A) It can do more harm to the workplace than to employees.
 - B) It contributes to the male-female divide in the workplace.
 - C) It proves to be counterproductive in a number of ways.
 - D) It can result in increasing labor-management conflicts.
55. What does the author emphasize about their analysis in the last paragraph?
- A) It can help companies increase their savings significantly.
 - B) It can duly contribute to companies' business performance.
 - C) It can translate women's booking practice into men's behavior.
 - D) It can enhance large multinational companies' competitiveness.