

MOBILE APP WILL POINT OUT HOW OFTEN WOMEN ARE INTERRUPTED BY MEN

A BETC São Paulo initiative, Woman Interrupted App counts interruptions in favor of female empowerment and male awareness.

Last year, much was said about the **Maninterrupting** phenomenon, one of the many kinds of violence against women. It's a sexist behavior that happens precisely when she cannot finish her speech because a man unnecessarily interrupts her. The subject was under the spotlight during the American election period, when Donald Trump interrupted Hillary Clinton 51 times during their first debate.

Inspired by this discussion, the agency **BETC São Paulo** created the mobile app **Woman Interrupted** - a platform that counts how many times a man interrupts a female speech. It is being launched in the week that celebrates the International Women's Day.

The objective of the Woman Interrupted App is to generate awareness and more debate around Maninterrupting. The innovation also aims to raise awareness in the male audience, who often does not recognize their behavior. In 2014, a study by researchers at the George Washington University (USA), published in the Journal of Language and Social Psychology, pointed out that women are significantly more interrupted than men. This phenomenon is interpreted as one of the demonstrations of gender inequality.

"At first glance, it may seem like a small problem, but it reflects deeper issues of gender inequality at work and in society. The app is a way of showing that, in fact, the interruption is real and alarming" says Gal Barradas, founder and Co-CEO of BETC São Paulo and the only female representative in the ranking of the ten most admired advertisers by top-executives in Brazil, according to the 2017 Agency Scope study by Scopen Consultancy.

Although it can be used in any environment, the agency created Woman Interrupted focused on women's workplace and professional meetings. To use it, simply download it on **Android** or **iOS** systems and start using it in one of the four available languages - Portuguese, English, Spanish or French.

To identify the interruptions more accurately, the platform asks the users to record and calibrate their voice. The app uses the phone's microphone to analyze conversations and detect the number of interruptions during the time it is activated. With the user's voice as a parameter and the difference in the frequency of male and female voice, its technology allows it to identify in which moments the user was interrupted by a man or, in the case of a male user, how many times he interrupted a woman. Woman Interrupted analyses the sound in real time and turns interruptions directly into data. **No conversation gets registered in the application**, only the number of interruptions, duration and date.

In the medium term, BETC plans to launch a **Global Dashboard** that will present an overview of the data collected around the world, in real time. Open to anyone who wants to know more about the topic, in this dashboard users will be able to find information such as the number of interruptions per minute and per country, as well as comparisons between countries, for example.

According to Gal Barradas, Maninterrupting devalues women's participation in meetings and presentations. *"We, women, struggle every day to get our space in the workplace and the right to express ourselves. When we get there, Maninterrupting reduces our participation," she explains. "We want men to ask themselves: am I doing this without even realizing it? After all, what's the point of having more women in a meeting room if nobody hears what they have to say?"*

The platform creator, BETC, is an agency that has gender equality in its DNA. The presidency of the network and also of all offices around the world - Paris, London and Sao Paulo - is shared by both a man and a woman since its foundation. In the São Paulo office, for example, the executive board is also divided equally between men and women and there is no salary distinction by gender on the same position, a reality still rarely found in the Brazilian or global labor market.

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