Factors That May Attenuate Racial/Ethnic Discrimination in Hiring

Psychology Honors Thesis by Temma Schaechter ‘21
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Introduction

- Quillian et al. (2017) showed that White applicants get 36% more callbacks for jobs than Black, and 24% more than Latinx.
- Discrimination has great impacts on income, professional success, & mental/overall health of minority group members (Al Ramiah et al., 2010).
- Field and laboratory studies have illustrated discrimination in various stages of recruitment (Leslie et al., 2008; Quillian et al., 2020).
- Anti-racism has mainly been studied in education and racial/ethnic studies; its impact on behavior must be further explored (Piet erse et al., 2016).
- White Privilege (WP) awareness may lead to lower prejudice and high support of WP-reducing policies; low WP awareness is related to support of current system (Ehrke et al, 2020; Knowles et al, 2018; Wilkins & Kaiser, 2014).
- BLM support may affect racial behavior (Cole, 2020).
- Our study will fill a gap in knowledge about factors/behaviors that mitigate discrimination.
- We will use a laboratory study to observe S’s evaluations of Black, White, & Latinx job applicants for a business/finance staff writer.

Hypotheses

- (H1) Applicant race will change S’s endorsement of them; Black applicants will receive the lowest ratings, followed by Latinx, then White applicants.
- (H2) S’s WPAS level will change the relationship between race manipulation & applicant evaluation.
  a. High WPAS scorers will give White participants lower endorsements than Black & Latinx applicants.
  b. Low WPAS scorers will give higher endorsements of White than Black & Latinx applicants.
- (H3) S’s ARBI level will change the relationship between race manipulation & S’s evaluation.
  a. HI ARBI scorers will give higher endorsements of Black/Latinx than White candidates.
  b. LO ARBI scorers will give higher endorsements of White than Black & Latinx applicants.
- (H4) BLM support will change the relationship between race manipulation & S’s evaluation.
  a. Those low in BLM support will give higher evaluations of White than Black & Latinx applicants.
  b. Those high in BLM support will give higher evaluations to Black & Latinx than White applicants.

Method

- **Participants:** 1000 non-Latinx White American adults recruited via Prolific to complete survey.
- **Procedure:** S imagines they are a hiring manager at City Journal hiring a business/finance staff writer.
  a. Views one of three identical resume conditions:
     - Black (“Jamal Jenkins”), White (“James Sullivan”), or Latinx (“Jose Gonzalez”); King et al., 2006; 
     - All male to avoid gender interactions.
  b. Ambiguous qualifications (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000)
  c. Based on real resumes (online.reumeshelp.com)
  d. Rates applicants on competence, hirability, salary conferral, fit*, overall recommendation;
  e. Fills out independent measures of attitudes.

James Sullivan
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Professional Summary
Intelligent, ethical worker seeking business/finance staff position. Familiar with many aspects of news reporting.

Experience
Hires
Somerville Daily Times, Somerville, Massachusetts / August 2010 – present
- Organizes appointments and interviews for staff
- Attends every staff meetings and keeps bankers news stories with the tears
- Helps to research potential Hotwire headlines
- Occasionally writes articles for the website.

Skills
- Review and correct errors.
- Store Clerk
- Miami Sports Goods, Miami, Florida / January – August 2019
  - Sorted and labeled customer merchandise location on checkout desk.
  - Accepted cash in change cards for purchases.
  - Answered customer’s questions and advised them about merchandise.
  - Took inventory and examined merchandise to identify items to be restocked or repaired.

Education
BA in Communications, May 2017
Florida International University, Miami, FL
- GPA: 3.1
- Minor: English
- Intern: Fox 69 Sports Writing, Intro to Economics

Independent Measures

- **Resume Conditions:** Black, Latinx, or White applicant.
- **Anti-Racism Behavior Inventory** (Piet erse et al, 2016)
- **White Privilege Attitudes Scale** (Pinterse et al, 2009)
- **BML Support** (Rudan & Saud, 2020)
- **Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale** (Neville et al, 2000)

Dependent Measures:

- **Evaluation Scales** (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012)
  a. Applicant Competence
  b. Applicant Hirable
  c. Salary Conferences Slider ($20-80k, average at 50k)
  d. Applicant Fit* (Dupree & Torrez, 2020)
  e. General Recommendation of Applicant (yes/no)

- **If H1 is confirmed, this would contribute to discrimination research & support the theory of aversive racism (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000).**
- **If H2 is confirmed, this may show the importance of Whites’ decisions of how to manage WP, whether denying, distancing oneself, or dismantling (Knowles et al., 2014).**
- **If H3 is confirmed, it would reinforce the crucial need for further exploration of anti-racism in psychology, and its potential impacts on hiring behavior.**
- **If H4 is confirmed, this would show evidence that anti-racists consciously refrain from showing preference to ingroup members (Alimbo, 2012; Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 2004).**

Discussion

If H4 is confirmed, this could support ich & Frank’s (2020) results, that BLM opposition is predicted by symbolic racist attitudes, while Whites’ involvement in BLM teaches them to dismantle their role in racist structures (Ratele & Malherbe, 2020).

If our exploratory SEM model is supported, this suggests that BLM support in White Americans may drive anti-racism behavior and WP attitudes, which in turn drives applicant evaluations.

This result would indicate that White individuals’ engagement with BLM may inform hierarchy-attenuating actions, such as implementing inclusive hiring practices.

Planned Analysis

- **MANOVA across all outcome variables.**
- **ANOVA and moderated regression tests of main effects & interactions with covariates to test hypotheses.**
- **Planned contrasts to see meaningful differences between conditions.**
- **Competence, hirability, salary conferral, fit* will be analyzed as separate measures.**
- **Salary conferral will be standardized and averaged with competence to create composite competency index.**
- **SEM model, with BLM support as driver of selection evaluations, mediated by individual attitudes.**

Notes

- Use of asterisk (*) indicates hypothesis/measure being used for exploratory analysis.
- Please contact Temma_Schaechter@brown.edu with any questions or comments.