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Self-Perceived Attractiveness and Its Influence on the Halo Effect and the Similar-to Me Effect

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Self-Perceived Attractiveness and Its Influence on the Halo Effect and the Similar-to-Me Effect

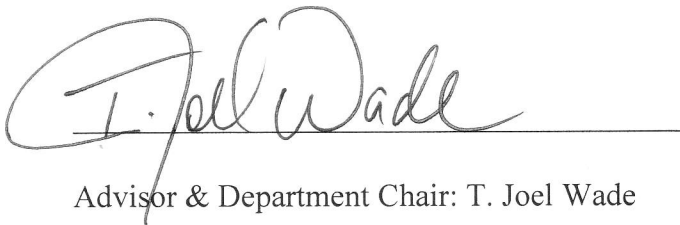
By

Lauren Cotter

A Thesis Submitted to the Honors Council for Honors in Psychology

April 26, 2011

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "T. Joel Wade". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line. The signature is written in a fluid, connected style with a large initial 'T' and 'W'.

Advisor & Department Chair: T. Joel Wade

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I would like to thank Professor Wade for his constant support and invaluable assistance over the past year. This project would not have been possible without his encouragement and expertise. I would also like to thank the entire psychology department for their guidance throughout my past four years at Bucknell University. In addition, this study truly would not have been possible without my participants.

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Abstract

The present research examined the influences of the halo effect and the similar-to-me effect on physical and sexual attractiveness for hiring decisions. It was hypothesized that the halo effect would cause applicants rated highly in physical and sexual attractiveness to receive higher ratings of hireability than unattractive applicants. However, if the similar-to-me effect is influential for levels of attractiveness in hiring situations, participants who rated themselves as less attractive should favor unattractive applicants. The results did not show an interaction between participant self-ratings and ratings of hireability, indicating the similar-to-me effect does not apply to physical or sexual attractiveness. There was a main effect of sexual attractiveness of the applicant for hireability, showing support for the halo effect. This effect was only found for White applicants, potentially due to in-group bias and out-group homogeneity.

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Self-perceived attractiveness and its influence on the halo effect and the similar-to-me effect

The burgeoning specialization of psychology in the workplace devotes a great deal of attention to the process of employee selection. The employment interview has been heavily researched, particularly examining factors beyond the applicants' qualifications involving interviewer-interviewee interactions. Certain applicants gain an advantage over their peers with characteristics irrelevant to job performance, such as physical attractiveness and degree of similarity to the interviewer. A contradiction arises when the interviewer does not perceive himself to be attractive. The similar-to-me effect, judging those with similar traits favorably, should sway the interviewer to prefer an unattractive applicant. However, the halo effect, a perception of one trait, such as competence, influenced by the perception of another, like physical attractiveness, would bias the interviewer towards an attractive applicant. This thesis will focus on these two elements and their conflicting influence in the employment interview setting.

The study of attractiveness has appeared in numerous areas of inquiry, including the decision-making process of employment interviews. 'What is beautiful is good,' attributing positive qualities at initial interaction based on physical attractiveness (Dion, Bersheid & Walster, 1972) and the halo effect (Thorndike, 1920) can be applied to countless everyday interactions in impression formation. The halo effect suggests that attractive individuals are perceived as possessing more favorable qualities, from personality to achieving an overall higher quality of life. The impact of physical

attractiveness on perception has been thoroughly documented (Bercheid & Walster, 1974; Walster, Aronson, Abrahams & Rottman 1966; Langlois, Roggman, & Rieser-Danner, 1990). There is a high level of consistency of judgment of attractiveness, even across cultures (Cunningham et al, 1995; Langlois et al, 2000). Prior research shows that attractive individuals are treated differently in the workplace. The beauty premium, as discussed in economics, is the advantage of attractiveness in the labor market. People have higher expectations from attractive individuals (Andreoni & Petrie, 2008; Rosenblat 2008). People have a tendency to trust attractive individuals more than unattractive individuals (Wilson & Eckel, 2006). In a simulation of real-world exchanges using an ultimatum game, Solnick and Schweitzer (1999) found that in bargaining, attractive individuals were offered more and more was expected of them than unattractive individuals. Individuals are also more willing to cooperate with physically attractive individuals in everyday circumstances (Mulford et al, 1998).

Social desirable features as a result of the Halo Effect lend themselves to applicant favorability. An employment interview is one circumstance in which individuals form judgments rapidly with findings based on physical appearance. Physically attractive individuals are inferred to possess socially desirable features beneficial in the workplace (Livingston, 2001), such as competence (Jackson, Hunter, & Hodge, 1995) and cooperation (Mulford et al, 1998). In a meta-analytic study of the effects of physical attractiveness in the workplace, Hosoda, Stone-Romero and Coats

(2003) found that the amount of job-relevant information about the target did not influence the attractiveness bias. They also found that the bias was the same for men as for women.

Prior research indicates that the attractiveness bias in the workplace begins as early as the employment interview. Desrumaux, De Bosscher, and Léoni (2009) suggest that attractiveness influences hireability through two dimensions of value, social desirability and social utility. Social desirability refers to the approachability of an individual, whereas social utility refers to the individual's likelihood of success or failure hinging upon how well they can meet society's standards. Due to its consistent influence on the interviewer's decision-making process, attractiveness is undoubtedly a factor in employee selection. Though the halo effect is a strong presence in hiring decisions, it is not the only factor. Interviewers also seek applicants they find similar to themselves.

The similar-to-me effect, suggesting that individuals view those similar to themselves most favorably (Sears & Rowe, 2003), has also received strong support from thorough research. Application of the similar-to-me effect has been found in measures of attitudes (Peters & Terborg, 1975), race (Lin, Dobbins, & Farh, 1992), and personality (Sears & Rowe, 2003). This research indicates individuals preferred applicants displaying similarities in the aforementioned attributes. Mutual perception of similarity between an employer and his or her employee is an influential factor in the workplace. Manager-subordinate dyads were found to have high ratings of performance with mutually

perceived similarities (Pulakos & Wexley, 1983). Prior research indicates that these higher ratings of performance are not only explained by a bias, but also may be due to the differences in supervisor-subordinate interactions (Turban & Jones, 1988). The higher levels of similarity lead to belief of insight, confidence, and trust in the supervisor, fostering a positive work relationship. Therefore, when applying this effect to an interview, individuals should be more likely to hire applicants with similar characteristics to their own.

Applicant similarity, when linked with affect, then influences the interviewer's perception of job suitability (Howard & Ferris, 1996). So, applicants who are perceived as similar to interviewers should be perceived as more hireable. One would assume that the effect of applicant attractiveness in the hiring context may be a product of the similar-to-me effect. Yet, research examining the similar-to-me effect with respect to applicant attractiveness and hiring is sparse. A dearth of research examining attractiveness and hiring that takes into account the attractiveness of the interviewer exists.

Dipboye, Arvey, and Terpstra (1977) conducted a study examining the conflict between the similar-to-me effect and the halo effect, paying close attention to the instance of low physical attractiveness of the interviewer. They found that raters were more likely to hire an attractive candidate over a candidate of moderate or low physical attraction. Dipboye, et al. (1977) also reported that rater attractiveness had no effect on the selection of a candidate. However, rater attractiveness was based on an observer's rating of

attraction as opposed to a self-rating. One can argue that the similar to me effect was not tested correctly since observer ratings of the interviewer's attractiveness were utilized. While observer ratings of interviewer attractiveness have no effect in a hiring situation, self-ratings of attractiveness may have an effect. Intrasexual and intersexual competition, a product of evolutionary adaptations, affect self-evaluation. Individuals compare themselves to others in an attempt to appraise themselves, without any formal declaration of competition. Attractiveness can be a focus in this competition. This occurs because self-appraisal is pertinent to how others appraise us, making the consideration of intrasexual and intersexual competition as well as the use of self-rating in studying attraction essential (Wade, 2000, 2003). Therefore, with this in mind, the similar-to-me effect may operate in hiring contexts. The proposed thesis seeks to determine if the similar-to-me effect or the halo effect accounts for the effect of attractiveness in hiring contexts. In addition to prior research on interviewer attractiveness being sparse and the similar-to-me effect not being test appropriately, prior research has also not examined the effect of both physical and sexual attractiveness of the interviewer. The study of attractiveness effects in a hiring context should not be limited to analyzing only the effect of physical attractiveness.

A distinction should be made between physical attractiveness and sexual attractiveness. Sexually attractive individuals display traits indicating sexual maturity and reproductive fitness (Wade, 2000, 2003). This contrasts the concept of physical

attractiveness, a more general evaluation (Wade, 2000, 2003). Wade (2000, 2003) finds that individuals rate themselves on these two dimensions.

In two studies using a repeated measures design, the current research seeks to determine whether or not attractiveness halo effects or similar-to-me attractiveness effects occur in a hiring context focusing on both self-perceived physical and self-perceived sexual attractiveness of the interviewer. Since beauty also affects inferences regarding personality traits (Dion, et al., 1972) and prior research has not looked at applicant beauty and resultant personality inferences in hiring contexts, a measure of the Big-5 personality dimensions will also be included. The Big-5 dimensions, Extraversion, Neuroticism, Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, and Agreeableness are considered the most important dimensions of personality (Soldz & Vaillant, 1999). Study 1 will focus on White women applicants and Study 2 will focus on Black women applicants. Women are focused on because attractiveness carries more weight in evaluations of women (Buss, 1989; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Wade, 2000, 2003, 2010).

Hypothesis

Prior research strongly supports the existence of the attractiveness halo effect and its application in employee selection. Under this theory, one would expect to find a positive effect of attractiveness on hireability as well as an interaction between sex of the participant and hireability. Ratings of hireability, physical, and sexual attractiveness and personality for attractive applicants should be more exaggerated in male participants.

Self-perceived attractiveness should have no effect on hireability according to the halo effect. However, in consideration of the similar-to-me effect, an interaction of participant sex, ratings of applicant, and participant attractiveness is anticipated. Males should give more exaggerated ratings of attractive and unattractive applicants when males consider themselves attractive. This pattern should be strongest for sexual attractiveness self-perceptions.

Study 1

Methods

Participants

Participants included students from the Psychology 100 subject pool at a Northeastern University. Psychology 100 participants range in age from 18 to 22. Due to the nature of the administration of the survey, a broader aged population was also obtained. Thus, the full age range of participants was from 18 to 59, with a mean age of 21.67. There were 73 participants. The majority of participants were White (84.9%) and female (67.1%). The participants of this study were not required to have prior interviewing experience. However, a lack of experience should not skew the results of this study. Even experienced interviewers show biases towards attractive applicants (Marlowe, Schneider, & Nelson, 1996).

Procedure

Participants completed the study online. They were presented with a cover story indicating that they are assisting Bucknell's Career Development Center with research on hiring selection. The participant was randomly assigned to study 1, rating the hireability

of White female applicants. The participants were given a preliminary questionnaire, including demographic information such as sex, age, and race. Participants were presented with the resumes of two fictitious recent Bucknell University graduates, identical in qualifications, as well as two photographs of an unattractive individual and an attractive individual. These photographs were randomly selected from a pool of 6 photographs found online. Three photographs were of attractive applicants and three were of unattractive applicants. In a prior manipulation check, the attractiveness of each photograph was rated on a 7-point scale, 1 = unattractive to 7 = attractive. The photos that received the highest and lowest ratings were selected to be used in this study. The participants were asked to rate each applicant on a 7 point scale indicating how likely he or she would be to hire each individual where 1 indicates that the participant is not at all likely to hire the individual, 4 indicates that the participant may hire the individual, and 7 indicates the participant is incredibly likely to hire the individual. The participants also received additional filler questions related to the cover story assessing the clarity and sufficiency of the resume.

The participants then received a questionnaire that asks him/her to make inferences about the personality traits of the applicants using the TIPI (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann, 2003) if the participant felt one resume held higher qualifications than the other, how physically and sexually attractive the participant considers each applicant to be, and the participant's self-perceived physical and sexual attractiveness. Finally, the participant received a short version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, the

Marlowe-Crowne 2(10) (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972), to allow for a check of the truthfulness of the participants responses.

Results

A 2 (sex of participant) x 2 (physical or sexual attractiveness of participant) repeated measures ANOVA was completed. The repeated measures were: hireability and Big 5 personality dimensions, respectively. The Social Desirability score acted as a covariate for each ANOVA to ensure the data was not skewed by untruthful responses. The covariate was not significant. An order variable was created to ensure the order of presentation of attractive and unattractive photos did not skew the results also. Order did not have a significant effect on ratings of attractiveness or hireability. High and low physical and sexual attractiveness were determined by a median split. For both physical and sexual attractiveness, the median score was 5. Therefore, scores of 5 to 7 were considered to be high ratings of each type of attractiveness and scores of 4 and below were considered to be low ratings of attractiveness.

Hireability Rating

There was a significant main effect for hireability for White applicants, $F(1, 68) = 4.065, p < .05$, supporting the Halo Effect ($M=4.90, SD=1.07$; $M=4.71, SD=1.21$, for attractive and unattractive applicants respectively). Attractive White applicants were rated as more hireable than unattractive White applicants.

Personality Traits

The analysis revealed a significant effect for personality measure, $F(9,54) = 3.00, p < .006$, see Table 1. Pairwise comparisons revealed that the attractive White applicant

was rated higher in extraversion than the unattractive white applicant, $p < .001$. There were no other significant findings for White applicants.

Discussion

This study tested whether or not the halo effect or the similar-to-me effect operates in hiring decisions. Based on prior research, it was hypothesized that the halo effect would produce a positive effect of attractiveness on hireability, as well as an interaction between sex of the participant and ratings (hireability, personality, attractiveness). This interaction was predicted to be more exaggerated in male participants. Self-perceived attractiveness was not predicted to have an effect on hireability according to the halo effect. However, in consideration of the similar-to-me effect, an interaction of, attractiveness of the participant, and ratings (hireability, personality, attractiveness) was anticipated where attractive participants would give higher ratings (hireability, personality, attractiveness) to attractive applicants. This pattern was expected to be strongest for sexual attractiveness self-perceptions.

The main effect for hireability that occurred for the White applicants shows moderate support for the halo effect and shows no evidence for the similar-to-me effect. These data indicate that white female applicants are more likely to be hired if they are perceived as sexually attractive by the interviewer. A high level of applicant attractiveness also leads to assumptions of extraversion, a typically valued character trait in the workplace. This evidence, supporting the Halo Effect, was only seen for sexual attractiveness. Differing levels of attractiveness affected hiring decisions because highly

attractive individuals are perceived to possess socially desirable features beneficial to the workplace (Jackson et al, 1995; Livingston, 2001; Mulford, et al, 1998). This is consistent with prior research. Dipboye, et al (1977) also found that individuals preferred an attractive applicant, even if they were not attractive.

Significant results were only found for ratings of sexual attractiveness, not for physical attractiveness. The distinction of these two types of attractiveness is consistent with the hypothesis that ratings of sexual attractiveness would create a stronger pattern of interaction. These results could potentially have occurred for men because of the desire to find a mate. Sexual attractiveness indicates features of reproductive fitness, ideal for a mate. The workplace presents itself as a place to potentially meet a future spouse. Therefore, individuals would prefer to surround themselves with ideal mates. Level of anticipated contact influences hiring decisions as well. High levels of expected contact led to preference of attractive applicants of the opposite sex (Luxen & Van de Vijver, 2006). But, additional research is needed to verify this explanation. Sexual attractiveness may have influenced female participant's ratings of applicants due to intrasexual competition (Buss, 1988). Prior research shows that women compare themselves to other women on dimensions related to reproductive fitness and rate themselves lower, effectively rating the comparison woman higher (Wade & Abetz, 1997). That may account for the rating of women participants in the present research. But, additional research is needed to verify this explanation. Taken together these speculative explanations account for the lack of sex differences in male and female ratings of the applicants.

Support for the Halo Effect was also found in the participant's evaluation of the personality traits of the applicant. The Big Five factor model of personality is known as the most powerful measure of personality. These five broad dimensions incorporate hundreds of personality traits (Goldberg, 1993). This study used the Ten Item Personality Inventory, or TIPI, a shortened scale to measure the Big Five personality dimensions. Prior research on the convergent and discriminant validity, test-retest reliability, and patterns of external correlates of shortened personality scales concludes the TIPI to be adequate in all criteria (Gosling et al., 2003). The only trait of the Big 5 to demonstrate significant differences in evaluation based on attractiveness was extraversion. Prior research shows other traits part of the Big 5 to be valuable in the workplace as well. Conscientiousness, openness to new experiences, and agreeableness have all been shown to be beneficial and sought after traits during employment interviews. The higher ratings of extraversion for attractive applicants are consistent with prior research on the Halo Effect. The 'What is Beautiful is Good' phenomenon (Dion, Bersheid & Walster, 1972) and the Halo Effect (Thorndike, 1920) established that more attractive individuals are credited with other positive attributes. A meta-analytic study showed that high ratings of social skills were related to physical attractiveness in both experimental and correlational literature (Feingold, 1992).

According to the results of this study, the similar-to-me effect has no influence at the level of attractiveness for hiring decisions. Though prior research suggests a strong effect on other applicant qualities, such as personality traits and attitudes, it is not seen in physical or sexual attractiveness in this study.

Study 2

Methods

Participants

Participants included students from the Psychology 100 subject pool at a Northeastern University. Psychology 100 participants range in age from 18 to 22. Due to the nature of the administration of the survey, a broader aged population was also obtained. Thus, the full age range of participants was from 18 to 56, with a mean age of 21.84. There were 69 participants. Similar to Study 1, the majority of participants were White (85.5%) and female (69.6%).

Procedure

Participants completed the study online. They were presented with the same cover story as Study 1, indicating that they are assisting Bucknell's Career Development Center with research on hiring selection. The participant was randomly assigned to Study 2, rating the hireability of Black female applicants. The participants were given a preliminary questionnaire, including demographic information such as sex, age, and race. Participants were presented with the resumes of two fictitious recent Bucknell University graduates, identical in qualifications, as well as two photographs of an unattractive individual and an attractive individual. These photographs were randomly selected from a pool of 6 photographs found online. Three photographs were of attractive applicants and three were of unattractive applicants. The manipulation check from Study 1 was also conducted for Study 2. The participants were asked to rate each applicant on a 7 point

scale indicating how likely he or she would be to hire each individual with 1 indicating that the participant is not at all likely to hire the individual, 4 indicating that the participant may hire the individual, and 7 indicating the participant is incredibly likely to hire the individual. The participants also received additional filler questions related to the cover story assessing the clarity and sufficiency of the resume.

The participants then received a questionnaire that asks him/her to make inferences about the personality traits of the applicants using the TIPI (Gosling, Rentfrow & Swann, 2003) if the participant felt one resume held higher qualifications than the other, how physically and sexually attractive the participant considers each applicant to be, and the participant's self-perceived physical and sexual attractiveness. Finally, the participant received a short version of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale, the Marlowe-Crowne 2(10) (Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972), to allow for a check of the truthfulness of the participants responses.

Results

A 2 (sex of participant) x 2 (physical or sexual attractiveness of participant) repeated measures ANOVA was completed. The repeated measures were: hireability and Big 5 personality dimensions, respectively. The Social Desirability score acted as a covariate for each MANOVA to ensure the data was not skewed by untruthful responses. The covariate was not significant. An order variable was created to ensure the order of presentation of attractive and unattractive photos did not skew the results also. Order did not have a significant effect on ratings of attractiveness or hireability. High and low physical and sexual attractiveness were determined by a median split. For both physical

and sexual attractiveness, the median score was 5. Therefore, scores of 5 to 7 were considered to be high ratings of each type of attractiveness and scores of 4 and below were considered to be low ratings of attractiveness.

Hireability Rating

There were no significant findings in this study for hireability.

Personality Traits

There were no significant findings in this study for the personality measure.

Discussion

This study, like Study 1, tested whether or not the halo effect or the similar-to-me effect operates in hiring decisions. Based on prior research, it was hypothesized that the halo effect would produce a positive effect of applicant attractiveness on hireability, as well as an interaction between sex of the participant and ratings(hireability, personality, attractiveness) of the applicant. The ratings(hireability, personality, attractiveness) of attractive applicants were predicted to be more exaggerated in male participants. Self-perceived attractiveness was not predicted to have an effect on hireability according to the halo effect. However, in consideration of the similar-to-me effect, an interaction of, attractiveness of the participant, and ratings(hireability, personality, attractiveness) was anticipated where attractive participants would give higher ratings(hireability, personality, attractiveness) to attractive applicants.. This pattern was expected to be strongest for sexual attractiveness self-perceptions.

A possible explanation for the lack of significant finding for Black applicants is in-group bias, the preferential treatment people give to those whom they perceive to be members of their own group (Bettencourt et al. 2001) and out-group homogeneity, individuals seeing members of their own group as more varied than members of the out-group (Judd 1988). Linville (Linville et al 1989) attributes out-group homogeneity to the use both individual exemplars and an estimate of the group as a whole. She distinguishes between differentiation, making distinctions, and variability, noting variance.

Differentiation is most applicable to this study. According to her theory, because we have more individual exemplars for the in-group, levels of variability and differentiation are higher. The majority of the participants in this study identified themselves as White (85.5%) and only 2 participants identified themselves as Black (2.9%). This places the Black applicants in the out-group for a preponderance of the respondents. These biases suggest that the participants would have focused more on the differences of attractiveness for the White applicants than for the Black applicants, explaining the significant results for white applicants without similar results for black applicants.

The lack of significant findings in Study 2 can also be viewed as a similar-to-me effect for race. This would be consistent with prior research (Lin, Dobbins, & Farh, 1992). The primarily White participants did not find similarities between themselves and the Black applicants of Study 2.

Conclusions from Study 1 and Study 2

The results indicate that White female applicants are more likely to be hired if they are perceived as sexually attractive. Also, attractive White female applicants are

perceived to be more extraverted than unattractive applicants. The Halo Effect can explain these results. Significance for only White applicants can be attributed to in-group bias, out-group homogeneity, and potentially a similar-to-me effect based on race.

Limitations

There were some concerns with the validity of this study. The majority of participants were from the Psychology 100 subject pool and participated in the study for class credit. Though prior research shows college students are equally susceptible to the attractiveness bias as professionals (Hosoda et al, 2003), there is always the possibility that some students did not take time and consideration in completing the survey. Another difficulty with the subject pool is a lack of variation in age. Though not all participants were part of the subject pool, allowing an age range of 18 to 59, the mean age was only 21.76 with a standard deviation of 8.02. This limits the generalizability of the results. Another potential pitfall of the study was the lack of full deception. Despite the cover story, a few participants reported knowledge of the study's connection to perceptions of attractiveness. Those participants could have elected to answer the questions on attractiveness of the applicant and hireability in what they believe to be a more socially accepted way. In future studies, the design could be altered with participants rating two applicants randomly rather than rating a pre-designated matched pair of photos. With this design, participants would not necessarily rate one attractive and one unattractive applicant and may not be able to uncover the true nature of the study.

Another potential limitation of the study is the use of photographs instead of personal interactions, potentially diminishing the ecological validity. Photographs

provide less information than face-to-face interactions, especially when rating personality. Future studies should consider filming actors to create a more realistic simulation of an interview. Prior research supports the use of “thin slicing” as an accurate form of non-interactive evaluation (Allport, 1937; Goffman, 1979). Video clips as short as 6 seconds can allow participants to form accurate judgments (Ambady & Rosenthal, 1993).

Future Study

This study sparks many new potential areas of research. Only female applicants were used in this study. It has been argued that females are judged more based on their appearance and attractiveness than males (Buss, 1989). However, it would be interesting to replicate the study using male applicants and compare the results. This study did not show a difference in ratings of female applicants between men and women, but a difference might be found with male applicants. Perhaps attractive males would also be rated highly for other personality traits commonly associated with success in the workplace, such as agreeableness and conscientiousness. Sexual attractiveness and physical attractiveness should also be considered in a study with male applicants. Though significant results were only found for women with sexual attractiveness, a study with male applicants may produce different results. Perhaps this additional study could indicate a greater influence of physical attractiveness for male applicants. A study using both male and female applicants and participants could allow a comparison between same-sex and opposite-sex ratings of attractiveness and hireability.

Another area to be studied further is in-group bias and attractiveness in hiring decisions. With multiple races equally represented in the participant group, out-group homogeneity would be examined as an influential factor in hiring decisions. Personality traits as well as the distinction between physical and sexual attractiveness should also be considered in this study to highlight any potential differences in valued or favored characteristics.

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Table 1. Personality ratings based on applicant attractiveness

Big-5 Dimension	Applicant	
	Attractive	Unattractive
Extraversion	5.29 * (1.02)	4.29 * (1.09)
Agreeableness	4.72 (0.78)	4.54 (0.89)
Conscientiousness	5.09 (0.90)	5.14 (1.04)
Neuroticism	4.66 (0.88)	4.60 (0.97)
Openness	4.58 (0.88)	4.36 (0.94)

Note: higher numbers mean more of the attribute, standard deviations are in parentheses.

* = $p < .05$.

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

Student Consent Form Bucknell University

Project Name: “Career Development Center Research” Purpose of the research: I understand that I will be exposed to information about a person and asked to answer some questions about that person. General plan of the research: I understand that I will be answering questions about a person and questions regarding my demographic information (sex, race, age, etc.). Estimated duration of the research: I understand that my participation in this study will take no more than thirty minutes. Estimated total number of participants: I understand that the researcher wishes to include approximately 150 participants in this study. Questions or concerns: I understand that if I have any questions or concerns related to this study I may contact the Principal Investigator, Lauren Cotter, via email at: lec018@bucknell.edu. I may also contact Professor T. Joel Wade, Chair, Department of Psychology at Bucknell University, at (570)-577-1693 or by email at jwade@bucknell.edu. For general questions regarding human subject research or questions regarding ethical treatment and rights of human subjects, I may contact Abe Feuerstein, Chair of the Institutional Review Board at Bucknell University, at (570)-577-3293 or by email at abe.feuerstein@bucknell.edu. Minimal risk or discomfort is anticipated for this study, but it is not possible to anticipate everything that may occur. All possible measures will be taken by the Principal Investigator to reduce or prevent discomfort. Subject participation is voluntary: I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary. I understand that if I agree to participate I may change my mind at any time. I also understand that I reserve the right to refuse to answer any question(s) and may withdraw from the study at any point without penalty. No compensation: I understand that I will not receive any compensation for my participation in this research. Possible risks or discomforts: I understand that minimal risks are associated with participation in this study and that no more than mild psychological discomfort is anticipated. I also understand that information I disclose for the purposes of this study will be secured and kept confidential to protect my privacy. Possible benefits: I understand that my participation in this study will contribute to and build upon already existing knowledge on person perception as well as help to give insight into the how psychological research is conducted. Confidentiality: I understand that data acquired through this study will be kept confidential. I also understand that all data collected will be secured and only made available to those persons conducting the study unless I provide written permission to do otherwise. I understand that no reference will be made in any oral or written reports that could possibly link me to the study. All data that I provide for the purpose of this study will be retained for a period of five years after its publication and then destroyed. I have read the above description of the research. I understand that I will be debriefed upon completion of this study. I agree to participate in this research, and I acknowledge that I have received a personal copy of this signed consent form. By clicking below, I affirm that I am at least 18 years of age or older.

Appendix B: Resume 1

Alex Johnson458 Maple Lane
Baltimore, «Address» 21202T 410 544 8936
acj854@gmail.com**PROFILE**

I received my Bachelors of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) from Bucknell University in May of 2010. I am a highly motivated individual, seeking a position in sales.

EXPERIENCE**Teacher's Assistant, Management Department; Lewisburg, PA — Spring 2009-May 2010**

Worked with students on an individual basis and in group settings for Management 101 - Introduction to Organization and Management and Management 160 - Foundations of Accounting and Financial Management.

Gained leadership and teaching ability.

Management Intern, The Brocker Group; Essex, MD — May - July 2009

Worked closely with finance analysts and service representatives.

Gained valuable experience in customer relations and staff management.

Sales Associate, Robertson's Shoes and Apparel, Ellicott City, MD — June 2005 - Aug 2006

Worked directly with customers and as a cashier.

Responsible for maintaining neatness in the store.

EDUCATION

Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA — B.S.B.A, 2010

GPA: 3.39

SKILLS

Strong communication skills and experienced in promotion.

Expertise in leadership and training.

Experience with computers.

Appendix C: Resume 2

Casey Smith764 Waterview Drive
Baltimore, «Address» 21202T 410 975 7634
cas674@gmail.com**PROFILE**

I am recent graduate of Bucknell University, where I received my Bachelors of Science in Business Administration (BSBA). I am disciplined and goal oriented, seeking a fast-paced position in sales.

EXPERIENCE**Research Assistant, Professor George Stimely; Lewisburg, PA — Jan. 2009-May 2010**

Worked closely with Professor Stimely in researching future projects as well as assisting in record keeping.

Independent research on marketing strategies.

Administrative Intern, Bank of Catonsville, Catonsville, MD — June - Aug. 2009

Worked closely with senior finance staff and with customer service.

Profited from experience in customer relations and financial management.

Sales Representative, Joan Clothing and Design; Rosedale, MD — 2005-2006

Primary responsibilities of customer assistance, scheduling appointments and cashier.

EDUCATION

Bucknell University, Lewisburg, PA — B.S.B.A, 2010

GPA: 3.42

SKILLS

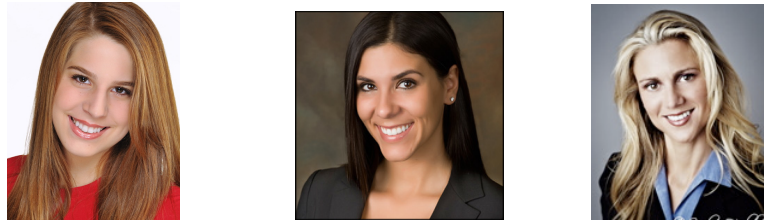
Experience in retail, sales, and marketing.

Strong customer service experience.

Skilled in general computer use.

Appendix D: Photographs

Study 1: Attractive Applicants



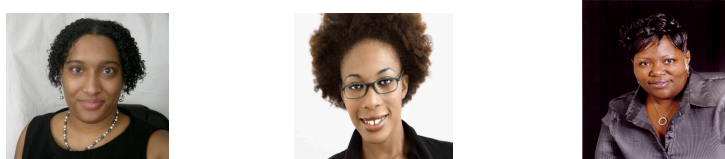
Study 1: Unattractive Applicants



Study 2: Attractive Applicants



Study 2: Unattractive Applicants



Appendix E: Hireability Questions

The following questions are based on a 7-point scale, 1 being the lowest and 7 being the highest.

1. How likely would you be to hire Applicant A?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. How likely would you be to hire Applicant B?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Please rate the clarity of Applicant A's resume.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Please rate the clarity of Applicant B's resume.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. How sufficient was the information provided in Applicant A's resume?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. How sufficient was the information provided in Applicant B's resume?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Please rate the readability of Applicant A's resume.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. Please rate the readability of Applicant B's resume.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. How appealing was the resume format?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. Please make any comments or suggestions for improvement.

Appendix F: Ten Item Personality Questionnaire

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to the applicant. Please rate each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statement.

- 1 – Disagree strongly
- 2 – Disagree moderately
- 3 – Disagree a little
- 4 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 5 – Agree a little
- 6 – Agree moderately
- 7 – Agree strongly

1. Extraverted, enthusiastic

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Critical, quarrelsome

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. Dependable, self-disciplined

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Anxious, easily upset

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Open to new experiences, complex

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. Reserved, quiet

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Sympathetic, warm

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. Disorganized, careless

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. Calm, emotionally stable

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. Conventional, uncreative

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Appendix H: Debriefing Statement

Debriefing Statement

The questionnaire you just completed was examining hiring preferences of attractive individuals or similar individuals. The only deception employed was that you were not informed of the hypothesis of the research. We hope that you understand the need for this mild deception to accomplish the purposes of the experiment. If you were troubled or offended by the deception, you have the opportunity now to deny permission to use your data in the final study. The only individuals who will see the responses are the experimenter, my supervisor, Professor Wade and myself. If you wish to exercise this right to withhold your data at this time, simply exit the browser. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have either at this time or in the future. I may be contacted via email at lec018@bucknell.edu. Thank you for your participation.