

Revisiting Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Job Selection Dyad: An Empirical Study Comparing Sex-Role Biases in Selection Decisions Across Two Different Generations

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Abstract: Considerable attention has been devoted to differences in employment experiences between men and women since the passage of Title VII almost 60 years ago. This study analyzes survey data collected 20 years ago (N=231) against recent survey data collected in the same manner (N=365) to determine if perceptions regarding job selection decisions have changed over the last 20 years. An important contribution of this study is in its methodology. It assesses raw data collected 20 years ago against recent data in a hierarchical regression model to determine if there are differences in the effect size of gender role biases between the two generations. Results suggest that gender biases in the job selection dyad are beginning to disappear for the younger generation of workers.

Keywords: Gender Bias, Sex-Role Stereotyping, Selection Decisions, Diversity Initiatives, Human Resource Management, Generational Differences, Generation Y, Millennials in the Workplace

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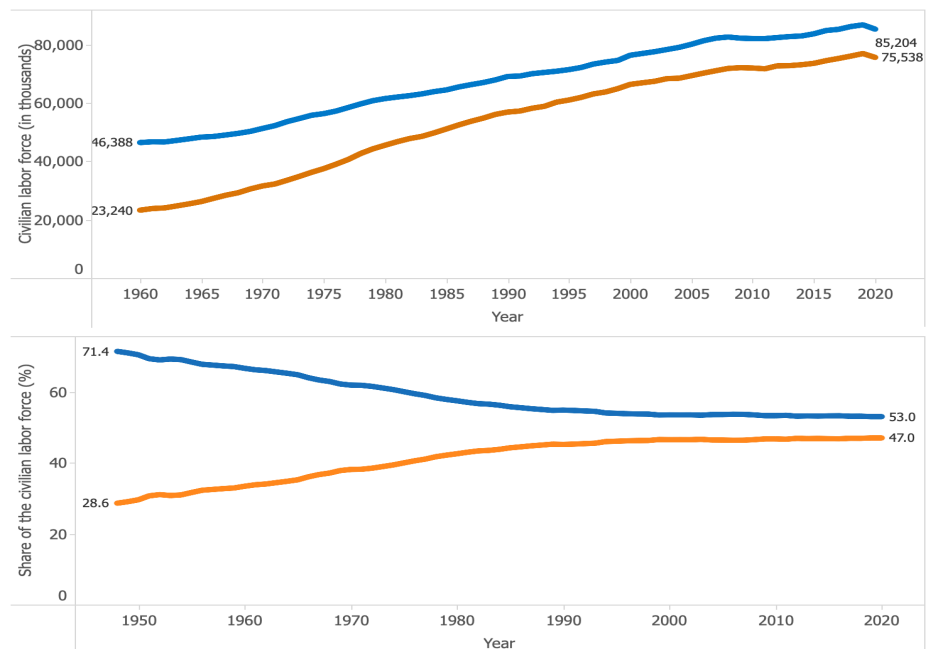
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Introduction

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (“the Act”) made it unlawful to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, or religion. The Act was passed almost 60 years ago. However, Title VII did not immediately change attitudes in the workplace. This would take generations to accomplish. Changes in worker attitudes, beliefs, and intentions are among the more considerable issues of interest in the social science literature. Older people, in particular, are often resistant to change and may see change as threatening to their strongly held beliefs and sense of security.

The second half of the 20th century brought about significant social changes in the area of women’s rights and employment opportunities. The women’s rights movement, largely based in the United States in the 1960’s and 1970’s, sought equal rights and opportunities for women. Since the 1960’s, women have continued to enter the workforce in greater numbers as changes in laws, technology, communications, educational opportunities, access to birth control, and growth in the services sector opened new doors for their employment opportunities. In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, since 1960 the number of women in the civilian labor force has more than tripled from 23 million to 76 million in 2020. In 1950, women represented a 29% share of the workforce, whereas in 2020 women represented almost half (see Figure 1 from the Department of Labor below).

Figure 1:
Graph Showing Civilian Labor Force by Gender Over Time
(blue line = male; orange line = female)



Notes: Includes persons in the civilian noninstitutional population 16 years of age and older that are employed or actively looking for work.
Data: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey, 1948-2020 annual averages
Graphic: U.S. Department of Labor, Women's Bureau

As shown in Figure 1 above, the share of women in the workforce has held fairly constant since the late 1990's, but there has been another shift in attitudes towards women's roles in the workplace of late. According to an article published by the Pew Research Center in 2020, although a majority of U.S. adults say the country "hasn't gone far enough when it comes to giving women equal rights with men," progress is not always linear, and these gains have not come without a cost. Recent research conducted by the Pew Research Center (2020) suggests that almost 30% of male workers think "women's gains have come at the expense of men." This male backlash may have come in part from the tremendous strides that women have made in education and in the workplace, especially over the last few decades. Women now make up 44% of college-educated workers in STEM occupations, they are more likely to graduate from college with a bachelor's degree than men (39% of women versus 37% of men), they have earned the majority of master's and doctoral degrees for over a decade, and they now make up more than one-third of all physicians in the U.S. and are the growing majority among medical students. Although still in the minority, the percentage of women in leadership roles is also increasing significantly. In 2021, about 26% of all CEO's and managing directors were women, up from 15% in 2019 (Catalyst, 2022).

Employment data suggests that women's roles in the workplace have changed significantly over the last few decades. The primary purpose of this study is to investigate generational changes in perceived gender roles in the workplace. Do gender sex-role stereotypes still exist, and if so, do they continue to affect hiring decisions? This study investigates two different data sets: one from Generation X (workers born between 1965 and 1980) and one from Generation Y (workers born between 1981 and 1995) to determine if changes in attitudes towards gender roles in the workplace are occurring in congruence with the increase in women in leadership roles.

Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Gender Stereotypes in the Workplace

Stereotypes are perceptions that people have towards a group of people that are a result of past experiences, learned attitudes, or accepted beliefs regarding the group (Welle & Heilman, 2007). These perceptions, or stereotypes, lead to expectations about how members of a group should behave. Although they can be somewhat accurate in the aggregate and helpful in some situations (such as determining an appropriate benefits package for an organization given its employee demographics), stereotypes can result in bias and individual discrimination in the workplace and can be very destructive in employment decisions.

Past research has suggested that gender stereotypes for females relate to nurturing, concern for others, and emotionally expressive and affectionate behaviors. Gender stereotypes for males generally relate to assertiveness, directness, dominance, independence, and confidence. Gender bias can arise when people judge men and women differently based on these gender stereotypes. "One proposed explanation for gender bias in the workplace is role congruity theory (Eagly & Karau, 2002) which explains bias in terms of the congruence between stereotypes held about job requirements and stereotypes held about gender groups. The greater the incongruence between stereotypical gender traits and the gender stereotype of a job, the greater the gender bias."

Some researchers have argued that a “backlash effect” can cause bias against those applicants and workers who deviate from their stereotypical gender norms (Kark & Eagly, 2010). This backlash effect typically leaves females in a difficult dilemma: if the female applicant does not exhibit the normal masculine traits associated with male-dominated positions, such as aggression and emotional toughness, she may be viewed as inadequate for the male-dominated job. However, if she does exhibit these traits often associated with men and not women, she may be viewed as “deviant and unlikeable,” which could also lead to hiring discrimination. Female applicants may feel they need to exhibit some traditionally masculine traits to appear qualified for male-dominated jobs, yet they may still be penalized for doing so (Koch, D’Mello, & Sackett, 2014).

Gender Biases in the Job Selection Dyad

Past studies have found that employers have used gender roles and gender identity in making hiring decisions (Koch, D’Mello, Sackett, 2015). However, little data exist on the differences in hiring decisions between generations. One potential selection problem identified in 1976 by London and Poplawski is that of female leniency, which suggests that female evaluators tend to consistently rate applicants higher on most every measure. Some research supports this notion (Oswald, 1988; Snipes, Oswald, & Caudill, 1998). However, while the overall hiring decision will likely support female leniency, research supports the premise that males and females may place more stringent expectations on female workers when the job has a male orientation (Snipes, Oswald, & Caudill, 1998). Male-dominated occupations are particularly vulnerable to reinforcing harmful stereotypes and creating unfavorable environments that make it more difficult for women to be hired and excel in those occupations (Snipes, Oswald, & Caudill, 1998). These include jobs in manufacturing, construction, engineering, transportation and storage, utilities, technology, and medicine.

Sex-role stereotyping refers to the way evaluators perceive certain positions as being more appropriately male or female roles. Although the percentage of women in male-dominated roles has increased dramatically over the last few decades, males still control the bulk of decision-making in most organizations. With the changing complexion of the workforce and push to increase the number of women in positions of authority, even a small gender bias in hiring would be of concern today.

Gender Role Perceptual Differences Between Generations X and Y

A generation normally spans a time frame of almost 20 years. Generation “Y” – also known as the “Millennials” - includes those people born between about 1983 and 2002. Therefore, as of 2017, the oldest Millennial would be 35 and the youngest would be 15. Generation Y started entering the workforce in the early 2000’s. Researchers have suggested that Generation Y employees are distinct from their parents, called the “Baby Boomers” and born between about 1945 and 1964, and their immediate predecessors, called Generation “X” and born between about 1965 and 1982.ⁱ

It has been suggested that Generation Y employees are distinct from the other generations in that many of them do not remember the world prior to 9/11, they grew up with technology and are thus more technology savvy, and they spend significantly less time reading than their predecessors but spend significantly more time using electronics and technology such as video

games, the internet and social media. While Baby Boomers were influenced by the Vietnam War, television, and the Civil Rights movement, Generation Y has grown up with the internet, globalization, and increasing workplace diversity which has given them different attitudes towards work and gender roles at work.

A 2002 study by the Family and Work Institute found that only 37% of Generation Y employees agree that traditional gender roles are better compared to about 51% of Baby Boomers. The study postulates that this may be in part because Generation Y employees are the “children of working mothers” in a period of corporate downsizing (p. 2). Berger (2017) points out that “the understanding of the concepts of masculine and feminine are just as unstable as men’s and women’s looks, activities, and practices” so should be continually monitored (p. 113). Given the previous research in the area, the following two hypotheses are advanced in this study:

Hypothesis #1: Gender bias exists in employment decisions such that evaluators are more favorable to applicants whose gender matches that of the job sex-role orientation.

Hypothesis #2: There will be a significant difference between the two generational cohorts in their evaluation of applicants such that the younger generation will be less likely to be affected by the job sex-role orientation.

Method

Study Design

This study followed a between-subjects design with three independent variables of interest: job orientation, applicant gender, and rater gender. Two hypothetical job descriptions, taken from actual jobs, were used to depict job orientation. The job chosen for the “male-oriented” job was a mechanical engineer. The job chosen for the “female-oriented” job was a nurse. About half of the study sample received a copy of the mechanical engineer job description and the other half received a copy of the nurse job description. Two versions of a resume were written for each job situation. One version of the resume portrayed the applicant as obviously a female (first name “Mary”), while the other portrayed the applicant as a male (first name “John”). All remaining information on the resumes (e.g., GPA, work experience, education, etc.) was identical. Only the first name was changed to reflect the applicant’s gender.

In both 1997 and 2017, participants were randomly assigned resumes and job descriptions (between-subjects design). Each participant reviewed one of the four possible situations: female applicant (Mary) for a female-oriented job (nurse), female applicant (Mary) for a male-oriented job (mechanical engineer), male applicant (John) for a male-oriented job (mechanical engineer), or male applicant for a female-oriented job (nurse). After reviewing a job description and the applicant’s resume, participants were asked to complete a short survey containing questions about their perceptions of the applicant’s qualifications for the job.

Manipulation Check

In 1997 and again in 2017, a pilot test was conducted prior to the study to confirm the gender typing of the two job positions. In the 1997 pilot test, 42 students were given the two job

descriptions and asked to rate the two jobs as “female-oriented” (likely to be held by a female), “male-oriented” (likely to be held by a male), or “neutral” (neither female- or male-oriented). The same manipulation check was done again in 2017 with 37 students. The male-oriented job was a Mechanical Engineer, and the female-oriented job was a Registered Nurse. Both times the vast majority of the respondents confirmed the gender-orientation of the jobs chosen for the study. Table 1 below shows participant responses from the manipulation check by cohort.

Table 1 – Manipulation Check Responses By Cohort

Job Orientation	1997 Participants (Generation “X”)	2017 Participants (Generation “Y”)
Male job – % Male Orientation	80%	76%
Male job - % Neutral	20%	24%
Male job – % Female Orientation	0%	0%
Female job – % Female Orientation	73%	70%
Female job - % Neutral	27%	30%
Female job - % Male Orientation	0%	0%

Sample

The samples for this study consisted of two cohorts: Generation X collected in 1997 and Generation Y collected in 2017. The sample data for Generation X consisted of 231 business students in upper-level business courses (mainly junior- and senior-level courses) at universities located in the southeastern part of the U.S. The sample data for Generation Y consisted of 365 business students in the same upper-level business courses, in the same universities and the same region of the U.S. As can be seen in Table 1 below, the two cohorts were very similar in their demographic makeup. Descriptive statistics of the respondents is shown in Table 1 below. For the survey data collected in 1997, 51% of the survey respondents were male and 49% of the respondents were female. For the survey data collected in 2017, 53% of the survey respondents were male and 47% of the survey respondents were female. All respondents for each cohort were between the ages of 19 and 35 (respondents over the age of 35 were removed from the study in order to isolate responses to the two generations). The average age for the respondents in the 1997 cohort (22.3) was almost the same as the average age for the respondents in the 2017 cohort (22.6). As can be seen in Table 2 below, respondent demographics were very similar across the two cohorts.

Table 2 - Sample Descriptive Statistics

Control Variable	1997 Participants (Generation “X”)	2017 Participants (Generation “Y”)
% Male Participants	51%	53%
Age Range	19 to 35	19 to 35
Mean Age	22.3	22.6
Mean GPA	2.48	3.01

Control Variable	1997 Participants (Generation “X”)	2017 Participants (Generation “Y”)
% Married	11%	12%
% Undergraduate	88%	78%
% Graduate	12%	22%

Measures

The subjects were instructed to read the job description and the applicant resume presented, and then answer a short survey regarding the applicant’s qualifications for the job. The questions used to evaluate applicants were similar to the questions used by others conducting this type of research (Snipes et al., 1998; Davis & Penner, 1986). Applicants were asked whether they would hire the applicant on a scale of 1 to 7, with 7 = would definitely hire. The additional questions on the short survey related to four other factors: (1) the applicant’s future job success (example: “I think this applicant has the background and requirements to be successful in this position”); (2) the applicant’s future career success (example: “I think this applicant will have a long career”); (3) the applicant’s ability to keep his/her clients satisfied (example: “I think this applicant will keep his/her clients satisfied”); and (4) the applicant’s ability to work well with coworkers (example: “I think this applicant will work well with his/her coworkers”). The respondents were asked to rate their agreement with each of the statements on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 = strongly disagree and 7 = strongly agree.

Along with the questions pertaining to the respondent’s perceptions of the applicant’s job success, several demographic variables were included to control for their potential contaminating effects. The control variables included the respondent’s age, GPA, marital status, and academic level (e.g., freshman, sophomore, etc.).

Results

Descriptive statistics of the participants on each of the cohorts as well as the means for responses on the hiring question are listed below in Table 3. Table 3 shows a comparison of the mean ratings by sex of the rater, sex of the applicant, and the sex-role orientation of the job. Raw descriptive results suggest that differences exist between the ratings of male and female applicants across the two cohorts. For example, for the Generation X cohort, it appears that female raters consistently rated males lower across all job types, whereas the ratings from male raters more closely matched the sex-role orientation of the job. However, for the Generation Y cohort, the only significant difference appears to be in the way that the male raters seemed to rate females lower in male-oriented jobs. It also appears that Generation Y raters give higher ratings across all applicants and jobs (average ratings for Generation Y = 5.57 versus 4.66 for Generation X). Graph 1 shows the differences in male ratings of female applicants by cohort (i.e., Generations X and Y). As shown in the graph, the slope of the line for Generation X is greater than that for Generation Y, which means that the effect that job sex-role orientation has on male raters is greater for the Generation X cohort than the Generation Y cohort.

Table 3 – Means by Cohort and Group^a

Applicant Gender	Generation X (1997 Survey) ^b				Generation Y (2017 Survey) ^c			
	---Female Raters---		----Male Raters----		---Female Raters---		----Male Raters----	
	Male Job	Female Job	Male Job	Female Job	Male Job	Female Job	Male Job	Female Job
Female	4.97	5.12	3.80	5.28	5.36	5.88	5.07	5.78
Male	4.33	4.98	4.47	4.33	5.55	5.67	5.70	5.51
All (avg.)	4.65	5.05	4.14	4.81	5.46	5.78	5.40	5.65

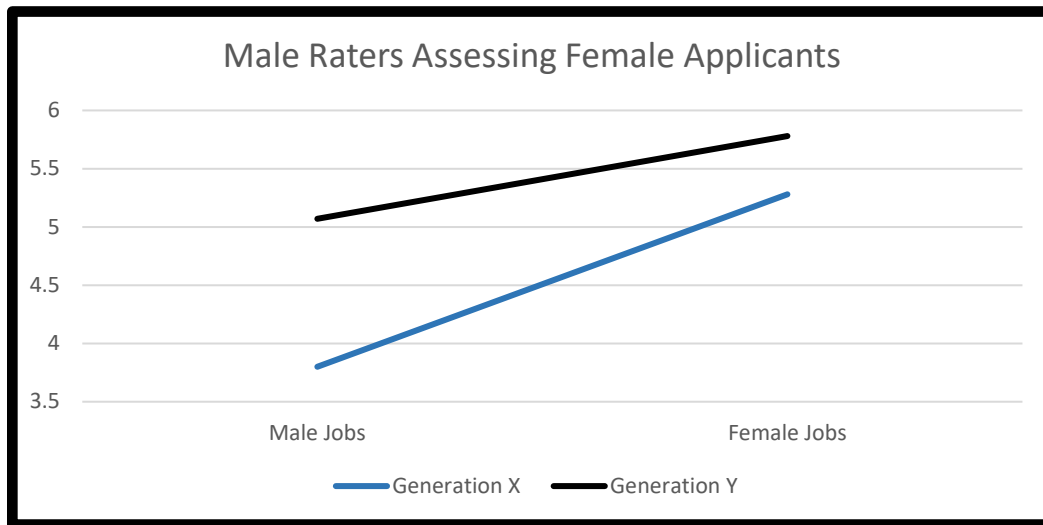
^aHigher number indicates higher likelihood to hire applicant (7 = would definitely hire applicant)

^bN for 1997 Cohort = 231

^cN for 2017 Cohort = 365

Figure 2 below shows the differences in male ratings of female applicants by cohort (i.e., Generations X and Y). As shown in the graph, the slope of the line for Generation X is greater than that for Generation Y, which suggests that the effect of job sex-role orientation on male raters is greater for the older cohort.

Figure 2:
Graph Showing Male Ratings of Female Applicants by Cohort – Generation X Versus Generation Y



These differences are further supported by the estimation of results from a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). A MANOVA analysis showed a significant three-way interaction (applicant x job orientation x rater gender) for the “likelihood to hire” variable at the $p = .05$ level of significance for Generation X without the control variables entered into the equation. However, once the control variables were entered as covariates (age, GPA, academic level, and marital status), the “likelihood to hire” variable was no longer significant. It is interesting to note, though, that the applicant’s “likelihood of success” variable remained significant for the older generation even with the inclusion of the demographic control variables.

However, for the younger generation (Generation Y) group, when the control variables were added to the analysis, none of the measures were significant at the $p = .05$ level. See Table 4 below for the results of the MANOVA analysis comparing the Generation X cohort with the Generation Y cohort.

Table 4 – MANOVA Analysis Comparing Generation X with Generation Y¹

Survey Measure	----- Generation X -----				----- Generation Y -----			
	(W/O Control)		(With Control)		(W/O Control)		(With Control)	
	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.	F	Sig.
Would you hire?	4.20	.04**	2.82	.10*	1.39	.24	.03	.96
Applicant success?	6.77	.01**	4.94	.03**	5.07	.03**	.66	.42
Long career?	2.72	.10	1.53	.22	2.36	.13	.02	.88
Keep clients satisfied?	2.92	.09	2.33	.13	2.67	.10	.29	.59
Work well with coworkers?	4.44	.04**	2.91	.10*	4.32	.04**	.49	.48

¹Dependent variables = rater gender, job orientation, applicant gender

The results of a hierarchical regression model (dependent variable = likelihood to hire) provided more support for Hypothesis #2 that there is a significant difference between the two generational cohorts in their evaluation of applicants. Early indications pointed to differences in the decisions of male and female raters based on applicant gender for Generation X (see Table 5, Model 1 below). In contrast, none of the individual variables were significant for the younger Generation Y cohort (See Table 5 results below). However, for the older group (Gen. X), there was a significant rater x job orientation interaction at the $p < .05$ level (see Model 2 results for Gen. X). Additionally, the three-way interaction term approached significance at the $p < .10$ level. Furthermore, for the Generation Y group, the regression model was not a good fit ($F = 1.59, p = .102$) and only explained about 5.6% of the variance in the “likelihood to hire” variable when the interaction terms added to the model. In contrast, for the older cohort (Gen. X), the model was significant ($F = 3.58, p < .01$) and explained a significant portion of the variance in the dependent variable “likelihood to hire” (15.2%). These results support the notion that the effect of gender bias in hiring decisions may be beginning to disappear for the younger generation.

**Table 5 – Hierarchical Regression Parameter Estimates
 (Dependent Variable = Likelihood to Hire)**

Independent Variable	Model 1 Gen. X	Model 1 Gen. Y	Model 2 Gen. X	Model 2 Gen. Y
Age	-.687	-1.13	-.762	-.871
Marital Status	-.453	-.725	-.493	-.879
Academic Level	-3.26***	-1.58	-3.07***	-1.34
GPA	-.437	-.330	.212	-.251
Rater Gender	1.38	.774	-1.26	-.528
Job Orientation	1.05	1.45	-1.68*	-.601
Applicant Gender	3.46***	-1.16	-.521	-1.146
Applicant X Rater			1.05	.524
Rater X Job Orientation			2.02**	.241
Applicant X Job Orientation			1.46	.663
Applicant X Job Orientation X Rater			1.68*	-.130
Model F	4.85***	1.80	3.58***	1.59
Model Significance	.00	.09*	.00	.11
Model R ²	.124	.040	.152	.056

*** $p < .01$

** $p < .05$

* $p < .10$

The estimation results of the full regression model with the interaction terms are found in the hierarchical regression model above. For the younger “Generation Y” cohort, no statistically significant difference was found between the male and female raters in either model. In contrast, applicant gender was found to be significant in the regression model for the older (see Model 1 for Gen. X above). When the interaction terms were added to the model, a rater x job orientation interaction was found to be statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level, suggesting that the gender of the rater and the job sex-role orientation does have a significant effect on hiring decisions for this cohort (see Model 2 for Gen. X above). Additionally, for this cohort the three-way interaction term (applicant x job orientation x rater) approached significance at the $p < .10$ level.

Because the individual assessments of future expected job performance were found to be important in the MANOVA analysis, four additional regression models were employed to determine if gender bias continues to play a part in perceptions of *future* performance for Generation Y employees. Again, these were questions related to the raters expectations of the applicant’s future success on the job, and included: (1) the applicant’s future job success (example: “I think this applicant has the background and requirements to be successful in this position”); (2) the applicant’s future career success (example: “I think this applicant will have a long career”); (3) the applicant’s ability to keep his/her clients satisfied (example: “I think this applicant will keep his/her clients satisfied”); and (4) the applicant’s ability to work well with coworkers (example: “I think this applicant will work well with his/her coworkers”). The results of these models (including the interactions terms) are found in Table 6 below. The dependent variable for the first model is the applicant’s likelihood of future success in the position (“Success”), the dependent variable for the second model is the applicant’s likelihood of a long

career (“Career”), the dependent variable for the third model is the applicant’s likelihood to satisfy his/her clients (“Clients”), and the dependent variable for the fourth (and last) model is the applicant’s likelihood to work with this his/her coworkers (“Coworkers”).

Table 6 –Regression Parameter Estimates – Four Separate Models

Independent Variable	Success Gen. X	Success Gen. Y	Career Gen. X	Career Gen. Y	Clients Gen. X	Clients Gen. Y	Coworkers Gen. X	Coworkers Gen. Y
Age	-.006	-.833	1.91**	-1.90*	-.757	-1.51	-.042	-.780
Marital Status	-1.44	-1.81*	-1.49	-1.81*	-.006	-1.62	-.763	-1.97**
Academic Level	-3.27***	-2.19**	-3.26***	-2.05**	-1.81*	-2.97***	-3.38***	-1.90*
GPA	1.13	-.155	1.22	.268	.786	.006	.595	-1.06
Rater Gender	-1.60	-1.51	-.557	-.311	-.808	-1.10	-.831	-1.09
Job Orientation	-2.19**	-1.05	-1.23	.179	-1.69*	-.659	-1.84*	-1.05
Applicant Gender	-1.46	-1.91*	-.466	-.936	-1.03	-1.82*	-1.07	-1.46
Applicant X Rater	1.75	1.45	.551	.580	-1.02	1.36	1.09	1.03
Rater X Job	2.23**	.859	1.20	-.427	1.61	.495	1.71*	.682
Applicant X Job	2.33**	1.34	1.40	.061	1.65*	1.13	1.88*	.966
Applicant X Job X Rater	-2.22**	-.831	-1.24	.309	-1.53	-.660	-1.71*	-.546
Model F	5.10***	3.11***	3.24***	3.23***	2.33**	4.06***	3.71***	1.99**
Model Significance	.00	.00	.00	.00	.01	.00	.00	.03
Model R ²	.192	.104	.131	.108	.098	.131	.147	.069

*** $p < .01$
 ** $p < .05$
 * $p < .10$

The estimation results of the full regression models for each of the four applicant success measures with the interaction terms are found in the hierarchical regression models in Table 6 above. As can be seen from this table, for the younger “Generation Y” cohort, no statistically significant difference was found between the male and female raters in any of these four models. Additionally, none of the interaction terms were significant for the Generation Y cohort. In contrast, for the older cohort (Gen. X), all of the two- and three-way interaction terms were found to be statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level for the “Success” measure, suggesting that the gender of the rater, gender of the applicant, and the job sex-role orientation does have a significant effect on the rater’s perceptions of the applicant’s future success in male-dominated positions.

Discussion

The most compelling findings in this study are that the gender biases found in the hiring decisions of females in male-dominated positions are beginning to disappear with the younger

generation. For the older Generation X cohort, the likelihood to hire females in male-dominated positions and the evaluator's perception of the applicant's future job success were generally less favorable for female applicants applying for male-dominated positions. Although there were slight differences for the Generation Y cohort, the differences were not statistically significant, which supports Hypothesis #2 that the younger generation will be less likely to be affected by job sex-role orientation.

The respondents in this study were presented with detailed resumes about the job applicants' work experience, education, and so forth. Therefore, there was little need for them to fall back on stereotypes to make judgments about the suitability of the applicant for a job. Although earlier research has shown that differences exist in the way that men and women evaluate applicants' ability to succeed on a job, the results of the current study suggest that the present generation of workers may no longer consider jobs specifically male- or female-oriented. This suggests that efforts to increase female engagement in the workforce and in male-dominated roles are continuing to have a positive effect on female hiring decisions almost 60 years after the passage of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

A 2022 study by Women at Work provides a grimmer outlook on women's current experiences and engagement in the workplace since the pandemic began in 2020. The study analyzed responses of 5,000 women across 10 countries to assess the impact the pandemic has had on female engagement in the workforce. It suggests that women are experiencing stress levels and burnout at higher levels than men. In this study, over half of the women surveyed said that they want to leave their employer in the next two years with only 10% planning to stay with their current employer for more than five years. More alarming, though, is that workplace harassment and microaggressions appear to be on the rise, with more than 59% of the women surveyed having experienced harassment and/or microaggressions in the last year. Furthermore, over 90% of the respondents believe their employer will not take action if they report non-inclusive behaviors and feel that reporting such behaviors might actually impact their careers.

The good news is that next generation of workers, Generation Z (born after 1995), is beginning to enter the workforce in large numbers. Initial research on Generation Z suggests that this new generation is more flexible in their attitudes towards gender roles than previous generations (Glocalities, 2022). Future studies should continue to monitor the changes in hiring attitudes of the new generation of workers to determine if gender biases continue to disappear. As Baby Boomers retire and competition for talent continues to intensify, businesses will most likely be motivated to develop strategies to attract and retain female leaders which should create a more equitable future for the next generation of workers.

ⁱNote that the birth dates for each generation vary slightly from study to study and this study is using the ones defined by Howe and Strauss in 2007.

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