Do Male or Female Applicants Have an Advantage for Positions in the Veterinary Medicine Industry?

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Abstract

- Women earn an average of $36,278 per year and $669 per week, while men earn an average of $47,127 per year and $824 per week.
- Points to a 20% wage gap between men and women.
- Men are typically offered advancement opportunities three years before women are.
- Are employers more likely to hire a man over a woman, even if they are applying for the same job and have the same credentials?
- Is there also a difference in starting salary offered between men and women?
- Participants were given identical male/female resumes and were asked to evaluate the applicants for a veterinarian position.
- Rated the applicant on access or willingness to hire measures and appropriate starting salary.
- Results found no significant differences between ratings of the female applicant and ratings of the male applicant for both measures.

Background

Access Discrimination:
- Moss-Racusin et al., 2012
  - Participants: science faculty from research universities
  - Given packet of information identical except masculine or feminine name
  - Results: male applicants rated higher on competency, hireability, mentoring, and salary compared to female applicants

Salary Discrimination:
- Heath & Lanyon, 1996
  - Longitudinal study comparing first year incomes for veterinarians
  - Male first year income: $27,400
  - Female first year income: $25,400

Overview

- Examination of occurrence of sex bias during hiring practices in the field of veterinary medicine
- Given informed consent, resume review, survey questions, then debriefed
- Identical resumes: name randomly assigned to be Jacob Smith or Claire Smith
- Rating of applicant:
  - Five access discrimination items
  - One salary item
  - One manipulation check
  - Three demographic questions

Hypothesis: Participants will rate the male applicant higher on access and salary measures compared to the female applicant.

Methods

Participants:
- 72 undergraduate, animal science major students from Iowa State University
- 78% female, 22% male
- Age range: 18 – 28 years old, median: 20 years old
- 92% Caucasian, 3% Hispanic, 3% African-American, 2% Other

Sample access discrimination item:
1. To what extent does the applicant have adequate experience and skills for the job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex of Applicant</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not At All</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Little Bit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quite A Bit</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Much</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample salary discrimination item:
2. What salary would you indicate as an appropriate starting point for this applicant if hired?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary Item</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$40,000 or less</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$60,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$70,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$80,000 or more</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Independent variable: sex of applicant
Dependent variables: average rating on access and salary measures

Results

Access Discrimination:
- Contrary to the hypothesis, mean access discrimination ratings did not significantly differ for male and female applicants, t(70) = 0.448, p > 0.05. Means were very similar, see Table.

Salary Discrimination:
- Also contrary to the hypothesis, the salary rating did not differ for male and female applicants, t(70) = -0.376, p > 0.05. Means again were very similar, see Table.

Conclusions

- No significant differences between groups were found, indicating minimal discrimination based on access and salary measures.
- Results are encouraging for the future of the veterinary medicine industry as participants are potential future employers of veterinarians.

Limitations and Future Directions:
- Sample size and randomness: increase size and select from other classes
- Strength of the resume: decrease experience and skills
- Sample composition: include more male participants
- Examine possible discrimination in regards to advancement opportunities and raises