

January 2019

## Gay And Lesbian Discrimination In The Workplace: The Role Of Agentic And Communal Trait Expectations

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**GAY AND LESBIAN DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE: THE ROLE OF  
AGENTIC AND COMMUNAL TRAIT EXPECTATIONS**

by

**DANIEL R KRENN**

**DISSERTATION**

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

2019

MAJOR:

PSYCHOLOGY (Industrial/Organizational)

Approved By:

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Advisor

Date

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my advisor, Dr. Boris Baltes, for consistent feedback, recommendations, and support (both motivational and monetary). I would also like to thank my dissertation committee members, Dr. Shanique Brown, Dr. Kim Jaffee, and Dr. Louis Penner, each with their unique research backgrounds, for useful insight and feedback throughout the dissertation process.

In addition to those mentioned above, I want to thank the psychology faculty at both Wayne State University and Auburn University that contributed to my psychological, methodological, and statistical knowledge that helped me write this dissertation including Dr. Justin Carre, Dr. Malissa Clark, Dr. Marcus Dickson, Dr. Martha Escobar, Dr. Sebastiano Fisicaro, Dr. Seth Gitter, Dr. Jason Huang, Dr. Cary Lichtman, Dr. Lisa Marchiondo, Dr. Alyssa McGonagle, Dr. Dan Svyantek, Dr. Adrian Thomas, Dr. Larry Williams, and Dr. John Woodard.

I want to thank my fellow graduate students, especially my cohort (Dr. Shan Ran and Dr. Greg Thrasher) for helping to keep me motivated and focused throughout my time in graduate school, especially during the most stressful periods. I want to specifically thank Dr. Kevin Wynne, Dr. Ben Biermeier-Hanson, and Wyatt Stahl for supporting me throughout my years in graduate school. I also want to thank the graduate students that helped me to formulate and fine-tune this idea into a useful, usable dissertation topic.

I want to thank my former coworkers at Mobile County Personnel Board and my current coworkers at NASA for helping to improve the methodology, proof the manuscript, and pilot test the survey. I want to thank my parents for providing feedback, proofreading, and giving an outsider's perspective to the premise of my dissertation.

Finally, I want to thank my wife, Lindsay. At times, graduate school, including the completion of this dissertation, was emotionally and mentally challenging. I could not have made it through this process without the support and patience of my wife.

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

It is well established in the personnel management literature that discrimination exists in a variety of organizational processes including personnel selection (Arvey, 1979; Landy & Farr, 1980). For instance, previous research has shown that preferential treatment for certain races or genders frequently occurs in organizational settings (Kraiger & Ford, 1985; Maurer & Taylor, 1994; McConahay, 1983).

One demographic identity that has received little attention in the organizational literature is sexual orientation. Despite changes in scientific understanding of sexual orientation and steadily changing attitudes regarding sexual orientation in society, sexual minorities such as gay men and lesbian women continue to be disadvantaged in society due to stereotyping and prejudice (LeBlanc, Frost, & Wight, 2015; McFadden, 2015; McPhail, McNulty, & Hutchings, 2016; Ragins, 2004). Because of these disadvantages, gay men and lesbian women experience higher stress and more mental health problems than heterosexual men and women (Ragins, 2004; Szymanski, 2006).

Extant evidence suggests that gay men and lesbian women experience interpersonal forms of discrimination, though evidence of formal discrimination is inconsistent (Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002; Ragins, 2004). Examinations of formal discrimination (i.e., discrimination occurring in formal organizational processes such as personnel selection or performance appraisal) in gay and lesbian individuals have shown mixed results. For example, Hebl et al. (2002) examined discrimination against gay job applicants. In spite of finding evidence of interpersonal discrimination, there was little evidence of formal discrimination in their study. Van Hove and Lievens (2003) found comparable results when assessing biases in the hirability of gay applicants. However, other research supports the presence of formal discrimination. Most notably, Horvath

and Ryan (2003) found that employability ratings of sexual minorities differed from straight individuals with sexual minority applicants being rated higher than straight women but lower than straight men.

There are a few explanations for these disparities. One possible explanation is that existing formal discrimination is still subtle. Eagly and Carli (2007) suggest that women must travel through a metaphorical labyrinth to advance into higher positions in a company (i.e., advancement is possible, but more difficult for women). Perhaps a similar effect is happening with gay and lesbian employees. In fact, McPhail et al. (2016) found that gay and lesbian expatriate workers face similar barriers to advancement.

Another possibility is that gay men may experience discrimination differently than lesbian women. More specifically, they may experience discrimination in different contexts, in different ways, or to different extents. Related to this second explanation, different expectations may be held for gay men versus lesbian women. In support of this explanation, Sawyer, Salter, and Thoroughgood (2013) argued that the study of single identity components (e.g., sexual orientation, gender, etc.) is an inadequate approach to studying diversity-related issues. More explicitly, different minority groups face different challenges, and only studying one component of an identity fails to encompass all of the challenges that a person may face (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Sawyer et al., 2013).

Therefore, the answer to understanding how or when discrimination against gay men and lesbian women occurs may be found at the intersection of sexual orientation and other demographic identities. Some studies have explored this intersection between sexual orientation and demographic identities (e.g., Pedulla, 2014). However, more research is needed to understand the complex interrelationships among sexual orientation and other demographic identities on

discrimination at work. This paper focuses on the interaction between gender and sexual orientation.

One mechanism, role expectations, may influence how gay men and lesbian women are perceived differentially in the workplace. Specifically, Role Congruity Theory, which refers to role expectations brought on by demographic stereotypes, may explain this disparity (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Gay men and lesbian women are often stereotyped as having characteristics that are opposite of the stereotype for their gender (Kite & Deaux, 1987). Men and women are socialized to behave in stereotypically masculine and feminine ways (Cleveland, Stockdale, & Murphy, 2000). For example, men are expected to be aggressive and macho, while women are expected to be passive and caring (Cleveland et al., 2000; Ely & Meyerson, 2008). However, men and women are penalized when acting in ways that are inconsistent with gender stereotypes (Rudman & Glick, 1999). These differing traits/behaviors are referred to as communal (passive, friendly) and agentic (aggressive, dominating). While these stereotypes exist, contrary stereotypes exist for gay men and lesbian women. Gay males are frequently perceived as being more feminine, while lesbian women are frequently perceived as being more masculine (Kite & Deaux, 1987). Further supporting this premise, Tilcsik, Anteby, and Knight (2015) found evidence of career disparities gender stereotypes for gay and lesbian employees. If this is the case, perhaps trait and behavioral expectations in gay men and lesbian women are reversed from those of straight individuals.

Discrimination against gay and lesbian employees induces negative effects on those employees (Ragins, 2004). However, discrimination against gay and lesbian employees also has organizational implications, as it has been related to both task and contextual performance (Brenner, Lyons, & Fassinger, 2010; Cunningham, 2011). Therefore, more research is needed to identify the causes of gay and lesbian discrimination. The study presented in this paper examines

how gender non-conformity stereotypes of gay men and lesbian women may explain bias against gay men and lesbian women in personnel selection. First, key research on stereotyping and discrimination both outside of and inside of the workplace is reviewed. Then emerging issues among sexual minorities are discussed. The relationship between Role Congruity Theory and sexual orientation discrimination is explained. Finally, a study that examines the complexity of sexual orientation discrimination in workplace personnel selection is presented.

## **CHAPTER 2 DISCRIMINATION**

### **Structure of Discrimination**

Discrimination is a specific behavior aimed at an individual or group of individuals because of a stigmatized identity (Esses, Haddock, & Zanna, 1993). Discrimination can be positive (giving a particular group too much credit or favor) or negative (giving a particular group too little credit or favor). Discrimination occurs as a result of stereotyping and prejudice (Talaska, Fiske, & Chaiken, 2008). Stereotypes are cognitive appraisals or attitudes formed about a given group of people (Esses et al., 1993). Attitudes such as stereotypes are often formed because humans make quick judgments about an object or person based on the limited information available in a given situation (Wilson, Lindsey, & Schooler, 2000). Prejudice was defined by Allport (1954) as “an antipathy based on a faulty and inflexible generalization” and is expressed as an emotional reaction to an outgroup (Esses et al., 1993). Turner, Hewstone, and Voci (2007) suggested that this emotional appraisal is an anxiety-based evaluation. Anxiety, and the closely related emotion of fear, have an evolutionary cause and frequently elicit natural defensive responses (Ohman, 2008). If the anxiety in these evaluations functions in a similar way, discrimination may be an anxiety-based response to outgroup fear.

There is evidence that discrimination is changing. Modern discrimination can exist in a variety of forms, including overt, obvious, and intentional, as well as an ambiguous and unintentional (Fiske, 2002). Discrimination can also come in the form of microaggressions which are subtle often nonverbal actions (e.g., facial expressions) as well as subtle insults used in a discriminatory manner (Sue et al., 2007). Furthermore, biases now often function at an implicit level such that people are often unaware of their own biases, and people are even less likely to acknowledge their own stereotypes and prejudices when they see discrimination occurring toward

others (Fiske, 2002; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Jones et al., 2017; O'Brien et al., 2010). Because of this, discrimination has changed from an overt phenomenon to a covert phenomenon (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). This covert form of discrimination is often referred to as implicit discrimination. Even in interpersonal forms of discrimination, most discrimination is more in line with incivility, rudeness, and microaggression rather than overt manifestations such as bullying (Cortina, 2008; Sue et al., 2007). Evidence of this has been found for a variety of stigmatized groups. Dovidio and Gaertner (2000) proposed that racial discrimination in hiring has become a subtle phenomenon. Ambiguous and often unintentional biases affect how racial minorities are perceived, which in turn affects how likely they are to be hired. Such biases are often influenced by competence stereotypes functioning at an automatic level (Rodenborg & Boisen, 2013). Like racism, sexism is also becoming increasingly covert and subtle (Melgoza & Cox, 2009; Swim, Aikin, Hall, & Hunter, 1995). Implicit discrimination also exists towards other groups. For instance, Muslims often face implicit prejudice and discrimination (Park, Malachi, Sternin, & Tevet, 2009). Subtle forms of discrimination and implicit bias also exist against the gay men and lesbian women (Burke et al., 2015; Hoffarth & Hodson, 2014).

There are many theories that explain why discrimination occurs. If discrimination results from stereotypes and prejudices, understanding the causes of discrimination is contingent on understanding the causes of prejudices and stereotypes. One classic theory of both stereotyping and prejudice is ingroup-outgroup theory. Grounded in the evolutionary perspective, ingroup-outgroup theory accepts the proposition that humans throughout history have formed groups with those that are similar to them for survival and reproductive success (Brewer, 1999; Hewstone, Rubin, & Willis, 2002; Schneider, 2004). This theory proposes that genetic success is most likely for people who help their own group and are distrustful of people in rival groups (Brewer, 1999;

Hewstone et al., 2002). Evidence of this phenomenon exists in many classic studies, including the Robbers Cave Study, which found that even obscure distinctions can lead to ingroup favoritism and outgroup skepticism when groups are in competition (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, & Sherif, 1961). These feelings can lead to prejudice toward the outgroup. Furthermore, the outgroup homogeneity effect suggests that we assume individuals of outgroups are very similar to each other (Mullen & Hu, 1989).

Stereotyping often results from our desire to oversimplify the world. Termed social categorization, this theory suggests that humans put people into social categories in order to make snap judgments about them (Schneider, 2004). The representativeness heuristic is used to simplify the world in order to more readily make sense of it (Kahneman & Tversky, 1972). Unfortunately, this heuristic can go awry by oversimplifying people into categories (Schneider, 2004). This categorization combined with misinformation leads to the formation of stereotypes (Schneider, 2004).

Other explanations for stereotyping are a result of misinformation and how our brain interprets this misinformation. Factors such as cognitive errors and lack of intergroup contact often perpetuate stereotypes. For example, confirmation bias is a common error in which individuals ignore information that is contrary to their belief while carefully processing information that supports their belief (Nickerson, 1998). This relates to stereotyping in that people form opinions about a group of people and those opinions become difficult to break because they look for information that only confirms their stereotype and ignore information that refutes it. Another issue that often follows misinformation is that the stereotype is never challenged. Allport (1954) stated that intergroup contact is potentially a way to break stereotypes. However, this contact often does

not happen because we tend to congregate around people that are similar to ourselves (Avery, 2006).

A final theory, scapegoat theory, provides an additional explanation for why prejudice exists. Scapegoat theory posits that people tend to blame their problems on outgroups (Lindzey, 1950). This blame leads to resentment of the outgroup, which creates the emotional-cognitive element of prejudice.

Regardless of the reason for its existence or the form in which it is occurring, discrimination has consistently been related to a variety of negative outcomes. Discrimination has been shown to affect both physical and mental health (Kessler, Mickelson, & Williams, 1999; Pascoe & Smart Richman, 2009). A meta-analysis of both overt and subtle discrimination found that discrimination within organizations leads to negative individual and organizational outcomes (Jones, Peddie, Gilrane, King, & Gray, 2013). The effects of discrimination extend to the target's perceptions of their own abilities as well as leading to stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

### **Stigmatized Identities and Identity Issues**

Discrimination can occur when an individual endorses a stereotype about or is prejudiced against people with a specific identity. Therefore, identities are a key component of discrimination. Identities can exist in multiple forms, and are often stereotyped as having certain characteristics which are referred to as stigmas. Some identities are negatively stigmatized, while others are positively stigmatized. For example the warmth-competence model states that identities fall along two spectrums: warmth, which refers to friendliness and competence, which refers to perceived ability (Fiske, 2002). This model suggests that demographic groups are stereotyped as being varying degrees of friendly and varying degrees of capable. For example, the elderly are

stigmatized as being friendly but lacking in capability compared to other demographic groups. Other identities such as the rich are stigmatized as being competent but unfriendly.

The issue of identity visibility adds an additional level of complexity to the study of stigmas and stereotypes. Some identities, such as race and gender are usually visible, while identities such as sexual orientation, social class, and religion are usually invisible identities (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010).. However, there are instances where seemingly visible identities can be less visible, and seemingly invisible identities can be visible. For example, though religion is generally an invisible identity, certain religions require visible elements such as head coverings, which makes the identity visible (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013). The opposite can also be true. Though race is a visible identity, race is not always clear. Many individuals are multiracial and have unique challenges that are different from individuals of a single race (Good, Sanchez, & Chavez, 2013; Shih & Sanchez, 2009). Therefore, identity categories are not necessarily inherently visible or invisible.

The visibility of identity also creates unique challenges because visible and invisible identities affect people in unique ways. People with visible identities have no way of escaping discrimination as their identity is readily recognizable. However, invisible identities require the individual to make a decision about whether or not to disclose the identity (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010; Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010; Ragins, 2008). For those who disclose, they risk discrimination just like those with visible identities (Jones & King, 2014; Ragins, 2008). For those who choose to hide their identity, they risk negative affective and cognitive outcomes related to the stress of hiding the identity from others (Jones & King, 2014). Additionally, those who choose to hide their stigmatized identity often experience lower perceptions of belongingness in their group (Newheiser & Barreto, 2014). The negative effects of hiding an identity can be perpetuated when considering that our lives contain multiple domains. Ragins (2008) suggests that hiding an identity

at work while disclosing the identity outside of work leads to a disclosure disconnect. Hiding an identity often leads to further distress because the individual must act differently in different domains of their life.

Another issue related to identities is that we all have more than one identity. Most research on discrimination focuses on how a single stigmatized identity leads to mistreatment. However, identities are often more complicated than that. Sawyer et al. (2013) argued that organizational research is devoting too much attention to individual identities and is failing to account for the intersection of multiple identities. The intersectionality approach suggests that that we need to focus on the interaction of multiple identities rather than focusing our attention on individual identities (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Evidence for why intersectionality is important can be found in previous research on intersectional identity. For example, stigmatization and discrimination of genders can differ by age, race, and sexual orientation (Diamond & Butterworth, 2008; Ruggs, Hebl, Walker, & Fa-Kaji, 2014; Walker & Melton, 2015). Discrimination based on sexual orientation can differ by race and age (Bowleg, 2013; Cronin & King, 2010; Foglia & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2014). Therefore, more research is needed to examine the interaction of multiple identities.

### **Workplace Discrimination**

Within the context of the workplace, similar issues emerge when examining stigmatization and discrimination based on identity. Particularly, workplace discrimination also results in negative outcomes regardless of the source or location (Landy & Farr, 1980; Pascoe & Smart Richman, 2009; Ragins, 2004). Due to the variety of identities that are often stereotyped, workplace discrimination is as complex as discrimination in other life domains, taking on many

forms and affecting many individuals in various ways (Fiske, 2002; Hebl et al., 2002; Ruggs et al., 2014). Similarly, discrimination can also be overt or covert in organizational settings.

Like other kinds of discrimination, workplace discrimination can also be targeted at individuals for a variety of social identities. Of these identities, race and gender have been well explored (Heilman & Eagly, 2008; McConahay, 1983). For example, different races are often evaluated differently in both hiring and performance appraisal (Jones et al., 2017; Landy & Farr, 1980; McConahay, 1983). Regarding gender, men are often evaluated more favorably than women, and are given more favorability in promotions and networking as well (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Ibarra, Carter, & Silva, 2010; Landy & Farr, 1980). In addition to race and gender, other demographic characteristics can be the basis for discrimination as well, including age, attractiveness, religion, weight, and sexual orientation (Agerström & Rooth, 2011; Ghumman & Ryan, 2013; Hebl et al., 2002; Heilman & Stopeck, 1985; Posthuma & Campion, 2009).

Though some parallels can be drawn between general discrimination research and workplace or organizational discrimination, there are some differences. Most notably, workplace discrimination offers unique avenues for people with stereotypes and/or prejudice to discriminate against others. One main difference between organizational and non-organizational settings is that power and role structure are more established. In non-organizational discrimination settings and organizational settings alike, there are interpersonal forms of discrimination such that one person mistreats another in a social interaction based on a characteristic (e.g., race, gender, etc.). However, organizational research has the added complexity of the source of discrimination where mistreatment may come from a supervisor, peer, subordinate, or customer. Hershcovis (2011) stated that the dynamics and outcomes of workplace mistreatment are contingent on the nature of the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. Therefore, discrimination might be slightly

different in organizations depending on where the discrimination is coming from. Another main difference between organizational and non-organizational discrimination is the configuration of formal discrimination. Formal discrimination in organizations usually refers to unfairness in personnel practices that favors certain demographic identities over others.

There are many ways in which formal mistreatment can occur within an organization. Formal discrimination has commonly been studied in the personnel selection context and can occur at the organizational level. For example, organizations can use biased tests or appraisals that result in adverse impact and potentially show differential validity across demographics (Aguinis, Culpepper, & Pierce, 2010; Berry, Clark, & McClure, 2011). Formal discrimination can also occur at the individual level in the form of unfairness in judgment-based organizational processes. For example, some groups may receive more favorable treatment in personnel processes such as hiring, promotion, etc. (Kulik, Roberson, & Perry, 2007).

Such discrimination can also occur in performance appraisal contexts such that stigmatized groups receive unfair evaluations from performance raters (Jones et al., 2017; Landy & Farr, 1980). Like other forms of workplace discrimination, performance appraisal discrimination occurs across a variety of identities (Jones et al., 2017; Landy & Farr, 1980). One demographic characteristic that is commonly stereotyped in terms of performance appraisal is race (Jones et al., 2017; Kraiger & Ford, 1985, 1990; Landy & Farr, 1980). The source of racial bias in performance appraisal exists from a variety of sources including supervisors and customers (Kraiger & Ford, 1990; Lynn & Sturman, 2011). Another stigmatized identity in performance appraisal is gender (Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Landy & Farr, 1980; Maurer & Taylor, 1994). However, one difference between gender bias and racial bias in performance appraisal is that gender stigmatization seems to be context dependent while racial stigmatization occurs consistently across contexts. More

specifically, women are more likely to receive unfair evaluations than men on the whole (Heilman & Eagly, 2008). However, discrimination is also partially dependent on factors such as job type where men are more likely to be underrated in feminine stereotyped jobs and women are likely to be underrated in masculine stereotyped jobs (Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004; Maurer & Taylor, 1994). Other identities also trigger stigmatization and bias in the performance appraisal process including physical attractiveness and disability status. Ratees with varying levels of physical attractiveness are likely to receive differential ratings even if their performance is of equal quality (Colella & Varma, 1999; Heilman & Stopeck, 1985; Ren, Paetzold, & Colella, 2008).

Previous research suggests that interpersonal discrimination is common against sexual minorities within organizations (Hebl et al., 2002; Ragins, 2004). However, findings regarding formal discrimination are a little less clear. Some research suggests that formal discrimination is uncommon against gay men and lesbian women (Hebl et al., 2002). Other researchers have found evidence of formal forms of discrimination against gay men and lesbian women (Drydakis, 2015; Ng, Schweitzer, & Lyons, 2012). Finally, some research suggests that formal discrimination against gay men and lesbian women exists, but in an unclear way. For example, in one study, Horvath & Ryan (2003) found that, in personnel selection decisions, straight men were favored over gay men and lesbian women, but that gay men and lesbian women were favored over straight women. To further explore how formal discrimination may occur against gay men and lesbian women, it is important to first understand how formal forms of discrimination occur toward other groups in organizations.

### **Discrimination in Personnel selection.**

One way in which formal workplace discrimination is common is in the context of personnel selection. In part because personnel selection is often judgement based, biases against stigmatized groups can potentially affect who gets selected and the extent to which the process is fair (Gatewood, Feild, & Barrick, 2008). Furthermore, personnel selection systems often draw on multiple assessments. Because varied personnel selection devices can be used, workplace discrimination in personnel selection can occur in many different ways. One way in which personnel selection discrimination can occur is with biased testing or assessment devices, most notably cognitive ability tests. As discussed previously, such devices often show adverse impact, and may potentially show differential validity across demographics such as race (Aguinis et al., 2010; Berry et al., 2011). Though cognitive ability tests are often considered the best predictors of future job performance, they potentially lead to organizational discrimination against various demographic groups (Berry et al., 2011; Gatewood et al., 2008). However, problems with such tests have been debated, and use of additional measures in the personnel selection system can often decrease the adverse impact caused by cognitive ability tests (Gatewood et al., 2008; Hunter, Schmidt, & Hunter, 1979; Sackett, Schmitt, Ellingson, & Kabin, 2001; Schmidt & Hunter, 1981). Arguably, the larger source of discrimination in personnel selection results from use of subjective judgements. Though subjectivity and intuition introduce increased levels of bias into the personnel selection process, organizations still tend to rely on them too often (Highhouse, 2008). Previous research has found that subjective components of the personnel selection process potentially bias personnel selection decisions. One example of this is with initial call backs. Stigmatized groups may be eliminated early in the personnel selection process as bias may stop them from passing through initial screening (Agerström & Rooth, 2011; Ghumman & Ryan, 2013). Another common source of personnel selection bias is in interviews, especially low structure interviews (Gatewood

et al., 2008). Such interviews can result in unfair evaluations and discrimination (Gatewood et al., 2008; Prewett-Livingston, Feild, & Lewis, 1996; Rudman & Glick, 1999). However, discrimination can also occur when managers are asked to evaluate biodata sources such as profiles, resumes, and applications forms (Atwater & Van Fleet, 1997; Cunningham, 2011; Glick, Zion, & Nelson, 1988; Horvath & Ryan, 2003; Marlowe, Schneider, & Nelson, 1996; McConahay, 1983; Ruggs et al., 2014).

Discrimination in personnel selection affects a wide variety of stigmatized groups (Cotton, O'Neill, & Griffin, 2008; Cunningham, 2011; Ghumman & Ryan, 2013; McConahay, 1983; Rudman & Glick, 1999). One commonly studied demographic is race. This can occur in multiple forms, but often results from implicit racism and stereotypes about the work ethic and abilities of various racial groups (Jones et al., 2017; McConahay, 1983). Even when groups are used as collective evaluators of applicants, the process can be biased in favor of some races over others. Within the context of panel interviews, Prewett-Livingston et al. (1996) suggest that the demographic distribution of race in the panel can influence how likely racism is likely to affect the outcome. Other similar characteristics have also been shown to affect personnel selection outcomes. Immigrants with names that appear foreign or strong accents are less likely to be selected (Cotton et al., 2008; Hosoda & Stone-Romero, 2010). Physical characteristics such as age, weight, and attractiveness have been shown to influence personnel selection outcomes (Agerström & Rooth, 2011; Marlowe et al., 1996; Ruggs et al., 2014). Less physical identities such as religious identity can also lead to stigmatization and discrimination, especially religions that require physical identifiers such as hijabs (Ghumman & Ryan, 2013).

Another commonly studied identity that can influence decisions in personnel selection is gender. For instance, Marlowe et al. (1996) found that gender affected perceptions of hirability

and expectations for future success of applicants. Other studies have also found main effects of gender on personnel selection decisions (Horvath & Ryan, 2003). However, there are some limitations on gender's effect on hiring decisions. One example of this is that gender biases may change with age. Ruggs et al. (2014) found that older men may be more disadvantaged than older women in personnel selection contexts. An additional example of limitations on gender differences in personnel selection is that it may be job specific. Gender bias may result from a perceived misfit between a person and a job such that men may be favored in some contexts while women may be favored in others (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 1999). In line with Role Congruity Theory, stigmatization and discrimination can result from the extent to which a given behavior is congruent with expectations of a given role. In other words, men may be favored in positions that are typically perceived as masculine, while women may be favored in positions that are typically perceived as feminine. Previous research supports this proposition as men are often discriminated against in jobs that are traditionally associated with men and women are more likely to be favored in jobs that are traditionally associated with women (Atwater & Van Fleet, 1997; Glick et al., 1988; Heilman & Wallen, 2010).

A final identity that may affect personnel selection decisions is sexual orientation. Research on sexual orientation in personnel selection has provided mixed results. There is some evidence that formal discrimination in personnel selection against sexual minorities is uncommon (Hebl et al., 2002). However, other research suggests that stigmatization of sexual minorities does affect hiring decisions (Horvath & Ryan, 2003). Furthermore, sexual minorities are less likely to be preferred for jobs than straight men and women (Cunningham, Sartore, & McCullough, 2010).

Like other forms of discrimination, identity stigmatization can be more complex than a single identity. On one hand, applicants for jobs often fall into multiple categories. Depending on

which category or categories are active in the evaluator's mind, the individual might be evaluated more or less favorably (Kulik et al., 2007). Some researchers have proposed that only one category can be active, and if an applicant has multiple stigmatized identities, that they will be no worse off than an individual with just a single stigmatized identity (Kulik et al., 2007). However, other researchers have suggested that the opposite may be true. One such theory, identity intersectionality, suggests that it is not a single identity but a combination of our identities that influences our likelihood of facing discrimination (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Sawyer et al., 2013). Identities can interact with each other to produce differential effects (Horvath & Ryan, 2003; Marlowe et al., 1996; Ruggs et al., 2014). Evidence of how intersectional identities can influence personnel selection processes exists in studies that find interactions between identities on personnel selection outcomes. For example, Ruggs et al. (2014) found that age and gender interact to influence personnel selection outcomes. Specifically, gender bias is more likely to favor men than women (Cleveland et al., 2000). However, there are exceptions to this. One exception is if the applicants are older. Older males face stronger stereotypes of being unable to perform the job than older females (Ruggs et al., 2014). Gender has also been shown to interact with attractiveness to influence hiring decisions (Marlowe et al., 1996). Additionally, gender interacts with sexual orientation to influence hiring decisions (Horvath & Ryan, 2003). There is also evidence that intersectional identities can diminish bias. For instance, Pedulla (2014) found that gay black men were perceived as less threatening than straight black men, thus are more likely to have success in hiring processes.

Discrimination in the context of personnel selection is a problem in the workplace. It occurs in multiple forms and across a variety of personnel selection devices. This problem is especially apparent in the demographics of race and gender, though other demographics are affected as well.

Though previous research on gay and lesbian discrimination in personnel selection has been somewhat inconclusive, evidence suggests that such discrimination at least occurs in some contexts. However, more research is needed to better understand the contexts in which such discrimination is likely to occur. It is also possible that issues of identity intersectionality account for some forms of personnel selection-based discrimination such that it is not membership in one stigmatized category that leads to such forms of discrimination, but is the result of multiple stigmatized categories and the extent to which individuals are perceived to fit into those categories.

### **CHAPTER 3 GAY AND LESBIAN DISCRIMINATION**

Though sexual orientation research has existed for decades, it has received more attention from organizational researchers in recent years due to increased public awareness (Anteby & Anderson, 2014). Gay men and lesbian women face hardships both inside and outside of work (Ragins, 2004). One such hardship revolves around how they manage their identity. Like other identities such as religion, sexual orientation is an invisible identity (Chaudoir & Quinn, 2010). As such, gay men and lesbian women face a difficult decision as to whether or not they should reveal their sexual orientation to others (Ragins, 2004; Ragins, 2008). If a gay employee chooses not to disclose, they may suffer a variety of negative psychological outcomes including decreased trust in others, psychological well-being, and physical health (Chaudoir & Fisher, 2010).

If a gay employee chooses to disclose, they potentially face discrimination (Ragins, 2004; Ragins, 2008). Despite opinions of sexual minorities improving over previous decades, sexual orientation-related bias has not completely disappeared (Burke et al., 2015; Herek, 2000). However, there is substantial variability in the degree to which people are biased, with bias levels varying from not biased to extremely biased (Rutledge, Siebert, Siebert, & Chonody, 2012). Furthermore, like other stigmatized identities, sexual minorities are experiencing increasing levels of subtle or aversive discrimination resulting from implicitly biased perpetrators (Burke et al., 2015; Hoffarth & Hodson, 2014). Like other groups, the effects on non-heterosexual identities are compounded when examining other identities in intersectional combination. For instance, the negative outcomes of being a sexual minority are influenced by other demographics such as age, race, and gender (Bowleg, 2013; Cronin & King, 2010; Diamond & Butterworth, 2008; Foglia & Fredriksen-Goldsen, 2014; Horvath & Ryan, 2003).

Many explanations have been proposed to explain why negative attitudes exist towards sexual minorities. Some of these explanations stem from homophobia, a genuine fear of people who are gay (Callender, 2015; Herek, 2000; Ragins, 2004). For example, fear of contagion stemming from a belief that sexual minorities have a sexual transmitted disease may lead to prejudice and, in turn discrimination (Callender, 2015). Other explanations align with the heterosexist explanation wherein biased individuals hold beliefs that straight individuals are in some way superior to sexual minorities (Callender, 2015; Herek, 2000; Ragins, 2004). For example, cultural barriers including norms and public policy prohibiting same sex relationships may create beliefs that a non-heterosexual identity is in some way wrong (Callender, 2015; Herek, 2000). Additionally, people who believe that being gay is a choice, or results from nurture, are more likely to hold antigay biases (Callender, 2015). Some people even hold mixed or unclear attitudes toward sexual minorities, which can also make them more likely to discriminate (Hoffarth & Hodson, 2014). A final explanation stems from research on gender bias. Gay men and lesbian women may be stigmatized because they often do not fit into existing mental schemas for men and women (Blashill & Powlishta, 2009; Capezza, 2007). Furthermore, gay men and lesbian women are more likely to experience discrimination when behaving in ways that coincide with stereotypes (Lehavot & Lambert, 2007).

Regardless of why discrimination occurs against gay men and lesbian women, evidence suggests a variety of negative outcomes of experienced discrimination. Most notably, sexual orientation discrimination results in increased stress (Meyer, 2003; Meyer, 1995; Ragins, Cornwell, & Miller, 2003; Ragins, Singh, & Cornwell, 2007). Some of this increased stress stems from issues related to the decision of sexual minorities to disclose or hide their stigmatized identity (Ragins et al., 2003; Ragins et al., 2007). Discrimination against sexual minorities has also been

associated with increased negative emotions and emotional distress (Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar, & Azrael, 2009; Conlin et al., 2019). Sexual orientation discrimination has also been related to both life satisfaction and quality of life (Conlin et al., 2019; Mays & Cochran, 2001). Experiences of sexual orientation discrimination are associated with more negative mental health outcomes including mental disorders and decreased psychological well-being (Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar, & Azrael, 2009; Meyer, 2003; Szymanski, 2006). Such outcomes appear to be more common in states that do not have laws protecting sexual orientation (Hatzenbuehler, Mclaughlin, Keyes, & Hasin, 2010). There are also behavioral outcomes of sexual orientation discrimination. For instance, there are differences in career trajectories between straight and gay individuals (Ragins, 2004). Beyond the effects of career trajectory differences, pay discrepancies exist between straight and gay individuals (Drydakis, 2015; Ragins, 2004). Sexual minorities are also more likely to have substance abuse problems as a result of discrimination (English, Rendina, & Parsons, 2018; Hatzenbuehler et al., 2010; McCabe, Bostwick, Hughes, West, & Boyd, 2010).

### **Gay and lesbian workplace discrimination.**

As the previous sections suggest, gay men and lesbian women experience discrimination, and this discrimination leads to fear of disclosure of their stigmatized identity. The workplace shows similar parallels in that gay men and lesbian women experience discrimination in a variety of forms (King & Cortina, 2010; Ragins, 2004). In fact, as high as 66% of sexual minorities have experienced some form of discrimination at work, and at least a third have experienced severe mistreatment, as a result of their sexual orientation (Ragins, 2004). Due to fear of discrimination, sexual minorities have to make decisions about whether or not to disclose their sexual identity to coworkers, supervisors, and the organization as a whole (Bell et al., 2011; Ragins, 2004; Ragins et al., 2007). This occurs, in part, because of varying laws regarding sexual orientation

discrimination (Barron & Hebl, 2013). In the United States, sexual orientation is not protected by federal legislation. Though some states have passed such legislation, sexual minorities are largely unprotected in many states. However, as discussed previously, societal norms and legal policy in states that protect sexual orientation are decreasing public forms of discrimination (Barron & Hebl, 2013). Some forms of discrimination, including subtle forms of discrimination, are still a persistent problem in organizations (Barron & Hebl, 2013; Burke et al., 2015; Hebl et al., 2002; Ragins, 2004).

Like other protected groups, sexual minorities could conceivably experience formal forms of discrimination and interpersonal forms of discrimination in the workplace (Hebl et al., 2002; King & Cortina, 2010). Evidence strongly supports the presence of interpersonal forms of discrimination against sexual minorities (Eliason, Dibble, & Robertson, 2011; Hebl et al., 2002; Ryan & Wessel, 2012). However, evidence on formal forms of discrimination is a little less clear as some research has found support for formal discrimination against sexual minorities, while other studies have found no support (Bauermeister et al., 2014; Hebl et al., 2002; Horvath & Ryan, 2003; Van Hove & Lievens, 2003).

There are many ways in which interpersonal discrimination can occur. How interpersonal discrimination occurs is partially affected by how a gay employee manages their identity at work (Lynch & Rodell, 2018). Often interpersonal discrimination can come in the form of negative interpersonal behaviors such as harassment, derogatory comments, or disrespect (Eliason, Dibble, et al., 2011; Ryan & Wessel, 2012). Derogatory comments can be problematic regardless of whether the individual has revealed their sexual orientation identity. Often, derogatory comments come in the form of gay jokes or slurs which potentially lead to negative outcomes for an out individual because they are likely the target of the comment, and can affect those that are not out

because they hear a joke that is still offensive to a portion of their identity (Eliason, Dibble, et al., 2011; Velez & Moradi, 2012). Furthermore, the presence of derogatory comments may create a climate of hostility toward gay men and lesbian women, which could increase prejudice and discrimination toward the group (Goodman, Schell, Alexander, & Eidelman, 2008). Interpersonal discrimination can also take the form of exclusion such as not inviting a gay or lesbian individual to social events, ignoring them, or refusing to help them build their social network (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Ragins, 2004). Interpersonal discrimination can also take the form of an organizational-level phenomenon as an LGBT unsupportive culture may make gay men and lesbian women less comfortable disclosing their identity or prevent them from getting close to coworkers (Ragins et al., 2007; Velez & Moradi, 2012; Walker & Melton, 2015)

Evidence of interpersonal mistreatment exists in organizational procedures, measurable behaviors, self-reports of stigmatized sexual minorities, and other perceptual measures of the stigmatized group. As previously stated, laws do not always protect the sexual minorities from being discriminated against (Barron & Hebl, 2013). As such, discrimination exists in society against sexual minorities. Likewise, many organizations do not have policies protecting sexual minorities from being discriminated against, allowing for mistreatment of coworkers with non-heterosexual orientations (Eliason, DeJoseph, Dibble, Deevey, Chinn, 2011; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Objective behaviors have also supported the proposition that interpersonal sexual discrimination occurs. For example, Hebl et al. (2002) found that interactions within a business tend to be shorter when individuals are perceived as being non-heterosexual. Self-reports of discrimination further suggest that interpersonal discrimination exists. (Eliason, DeJoseph et al., 2011) found that sexual minorities report increased levels of harassment in the workplace, and Hebl et al. (2002) found that sexual minorities are more likely to report feelings of being

stigmatized. Perceptions of stigmatization are usually higher when heterosexuals make up a larger percentage of the company (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001).

Additional evidence for interpersonal discrimination can be found in outcomes. Gay men and lesbian women are more likely to experience a variety of affective and cognitive outcomes (Eliason, DeJoseph, et al., 2011; Ragins, 2004). For instance, gay men and lesbian women that perceive discrimination are likely to have diminished positive job attitudes including organizational commitment, job satisfaction, organizational self-esteem, and career commitment (Lyons, Brenner, & Fassinger, 2005; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Ragins, 2004; Velez & Moradi, 2012; Walker & Melton, 2015). They are also more likely to experience negative mental health symptoms such as depression, distress, and decreased general mental health (Ragins, 2004; Smith & Ingram, 2004; Szymanski, 2006). They are more likely to feel like they don't fit with the company (Lyons et al., 2005; Velez & Moradi, 2012). For those that have not revealed their sexual orientation, they frequently feel negative emotions such as fear at the thought of their sexual identity being revealed (Ragins, 2004; Ragins et al., 2007; Walker & Melton, 2015). As a result of many of these other negative outcomes, they are more likely to turnover (Ragins & Cornwell, 2001; Velez & Moradi, 2012; Walker & Melton, 2015)

To date, federal laws in the United States do not protect against discrimination by sexual orientation. Even though some state and local laws do prohibit formal discrimination, formal discrimination against gay men and lesbian women is believed to occur (Barron & Hebl, 2013; Bauermeister et al., 2014; Ng et al., 2012). Bauermeister et al. (2014) suggests that the prevalence rates may be higher as they found that at least 15 percent of sexual minorities report that they had experienced at least one instance of formal discrimination in the previous year. Eliason et al. (2011) found similar rates when examining percentages of gay men and lesbian women that had requests

for job referrals refused by heterosexual colleagues. However, the existence of formal sexual orientation discrimination has been challenged by others who suggest that sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace usually occurs in only interpersonal forms (Hebl et al., 2002). Therefore, the existing literature on formal sexual orientation discrimination provided contradictory findings.

Evidence that refutes the existence of formal sexual orientation discrimination comes from research on personnel selection and recruitment. One such study examined interpersonal and formal discrimination in the context of applying for jobs. Hebl et al. (2002) had individuals walk into stores and ask for job applications while wearing either an LGBT supportive or neutral hat. Confederates acting as job applicants reported increased hostility when wearing the LGBT supportive hat. However, no differences emerged in whether or not they were allowed to apply for the job. While the study supports the notion of interpersonal discrimination against gay men and lesbian women, it suggests that formal discrimination is less likely to occur. Similar studies have examined the effects of sexual orientation on personnel selection decisions. Van Hove and Lievens (2003) examined the effects of sexual orientation and applicant quality on hirability ratings, and found no evidence of bias based on sexual orientation.

Though some evidence points toward the proposition that formal discrimination does not affect gay men and lesbian women, other evidence suggests that formal discrimination against gay men and lesbian women does occur. Formal discrimination against gay men and lesbian women comes in many forms. Sexual minorities may experience unfair termination (Bauermeister et al., 2014). They may also be unfairly denied promotion or salary increases (Bauermeister et al., 2014). They may also face additional barriers to promotion (Mcphail et al., 2016). In addition, sexual minorities are less likely to receive referrals from coworkers than heterosexual individuals

(Eliason, Dibble, et al., 2011). There is also consistent evidence that salary gaps exist between heterosexual and non-heterosexual employees (Badgett, 1995; Drydakis, 2015; Ng et al., 2012). In fact, sexual minorities often expect to receive lower pay than heterosexuals in parallel positions, especially when laws do not prohibit such practices (Burn, 2018; Ng et al., 2012). Though the relationship between sexual orientation and formal organizational processes such as personnel selection may be complex, there is also evidence that sexual discrimination does exist in such processes (Bauermeister et al., 2014). Sexual orientation may affect perceptions of position suitability and perceived fit (Barrantes & Eaton, 2018; Lim, Nam, & Trau, 2018). For instance, Horvath & Ryan (2003) found that straight males were evaluated more favorably than sexual minorities. However, straight females were evaluated even less favorably. It is important, however, to consider that only one job type was examined in this study. This may confound the study as job type may influence the likelihood of sexual orientation discrimination (Drydakis, 2015; Pichler, Varma, & Bruce, 2010). Additionally, the gender of the applicant and evaluator may also influence sexual orientation bias in personnel selection (Cunningham et al., 2010; Pichler et al., 2010). Sexual orientation bias may extend to performance appraisal contexts as well (Bauermeister et al., 2014). However little research has examined the topic of performance appraisal bias against sexual minorities specifically. In one experimental study, Goodman et al. (2008) manipulated leaders of fictional groups to be perceived as either gay or straight and had participants evaluate them. Overall, gay leaders were evaluated less favorably than straight leaders. However, the difference was only significant if the evaluation followed an anti-gay remark. There are a few possible explanations for this. One explanation is that the derogatory remark decreased the strength of social norms that typically stop discrimination. A second explanation would be that the derogatory remark primed the gay stereotype in some way.

Though most research examining the existence of formal sexual orientation discrimination has found evidence that such discrimination exists, there are some studies that suggest that the opposite is true. More research may be needed to thoroughly understand why formal sexual orientation discrimination exists in some contexts but not others. One plausible explanation can be found in the prevalence rates reported for formal discrimination. Previous studies suggest that sexual orientation discrimination occurs in about 10-15 percent of sexual minorities each year (Bauermeister et al., 2014; Eliason, Dibble, et al., 2011). If this is the case, perhaps the existing studies refuting formal sexual orientation discrimination were capturing populations that are less likely to discriminate. However, another possible explanation may be found in research on gender bias and formal discrimination through Role Congruity Theory.

## CHAPTER 4 ROLE CONGRUITY

With inconclusive and inconsistent findings in research on formal discrimination against gay men and lesbian women, more research is needed that examines why bias exists against them in some contexts and not in others. One explanation for these inconsistent findings may come from Role Congruity Theory, a theory frequently used to explain gender bias and discrimination (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Research suggests that gender inequality in the workplace exists for numerous reasons. One explanation that, in part, accounts for disparities is that, in many societies, men and women are raised differently. For example, subtle differences in how men and women are treated societally and interpersonally influence career and educational interests and goals (Eccles, Jacobs, & Harold, 1990). In addition to upbringing, other societal norms may also influence career decision differences of men and women. For instance, American gender stereotypes place more responsibility for family related roles on women than men (Bowles & McGinn, 2008; Powell, Greenhaus, & Powell, 2010). A final explanation is that gender bias influences expectations about men and women which in turn affect organizational processes and career trajectories (Bowles & McGinn, 2008; Cleveland et al., 2000). One of the most discussed theories for explaining gender related biases is known as Role Congruity Theory. A central premise of Role Congruity Theory is that stereotypes about various demographic identities create differences in expectations across those identities (Cleveland et al., 2000; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Put another way, our identities generate norms for behavior and expectations for characteristics. In the case of gender, males are expected to behave in certain ways, be good at certain things, and possess certain traits, while females are expected to behave in different ways, be good at different things, and possess different sets of traits (Heilman & Wallen, 2010). Important components of this theory include gender-role

stereotypes, which are societal expectations about what roles and behaviors are considered appropriate for men versus women, and gender-trait stereotypes, which are beliefs that men possess certain traits that are less common in women (Cleveland et al., 2000). These gender-role stereotypes and gender-trait stereotypes lead to expectations that men will show agentic qualities such as assertive, achievement-oriented behaviors and women will show communal qualities such as sensitive service-oriented behaviors (Cleveland et al., 2000; Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Rudman & Glick, 1999). When individuals show qualities that contradict these expectations, this leads to a perceived misfit between expected behavior and observed behavior. (Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Maurer & Taylor, 1994). This perceived misfit often results in discrimination against the individual (Heilman & Eagly, 2008; Heilman & Wallen, 2010). Men and women both face role related gender stereotyping. Like women, men are often feel pressured to behave in ways that are consistent with gender-trait expectations, and face discrimination when failing to conform to those expectations (Heilman & Wallen, 2010). Furthermore, if a man's masculinity is threatened, he may attempt to prove his masculinity by intentionally acting in a macho manner (Ely & Meyerson, 2008). However, while men do face discrimination when they are perceived as acting feminine, women potentially face discrimination regardless of how they behave (Leskinen, Rabelo, & Cortina, 2015). When women are seen as agentic, they violate expected gender roles, but women seen as communal are often perceived as weak.

Gender role stereotyping results in a variety of negative outcomes for the target. Like other stigmatized groups, formal and interpersonal discrimination can occur against individuals based on their gender (Cleveland et al., 2000). For instance, in rating-based personnel decisions, leniency bias occurs when a rater is exceptionally merciful in their judgment, while severity bias occurs when a rater is exceptionally unforgiving in their judgment (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011). Gender

discrimination may occur due to disparities in personnel outcomes as men are generally more likely to experience leniency while women are more likely to experience severity in personnel practices (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011; Cleveland et al., 2000; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman et al., 2004; Rudman & Glick, 1999). However, in line with Role Congruity Theory, men may also experience such outcomes when working in or pursuing a job that is perceived as incongruent with gender expectations (Heilman & Wallen, 2010). An additional outcome of gender role stereotyping and discrimination is that women often struggle to advance in organizations (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001). Traditional notions of this struggle to advance suggest that compassion related stereotypes are often mistaken for weakness (Heilman, 2001). As a result, women often hit a metaphorical glass ceiling, where they can see the where their career trajectory could go, but are prevented from achieving their full potential (Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman, 2001). However, as Eagly & Carli (2007) point out, the increasing subtlety of gender bias has altered the barriers to women's advancement. Instead of a glass ceiling, barriers now resemble a labyrinth, where women face significant challenges to advance rather than facing outright prevention of advancement (Eagly & Carli, 2007).

Gender role-based discrimination can take on many forms, including traditionally studied organizational processes. For example, gender has been shown to influence personnel selection outcomes (Atwater & Van Fleet, 1997; Rudman & Glick, 1999). Agentic and communal trait expectations are a likely explanation for why gender influences personnel selection outcomes (Rudman & Glick, 1999). Likewise, gender role expectations have been linked to performance appraisal and leadership evaluations (Cleveland et al., 2000; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Heilman et al., 2004; Landy & Farr, 1980). However, gender role-based discrimination can potentially occur in other ways as well. Bias can exist in negotiation settings, leading to pay and other employment

term differences between males and females (Kulik & Olekalns, 2012). Gender role expectations to family responsibilities create differences in how work-family conflict is viewed for men and women (Butler & Skattebo, 2004). Furthermore, due to role expectation differences between men and women, women are often denied equal networking opportunities, denied access to important resources, and given less support than men (Cleveland et al., 2000; Ibarra et al., 2010).

One additional way in which Role Congruity Theory may influence gender stereotyping is through job title stereotyping. This refers to instances where an individual believes that a particular job may be appropriate for some demographic groups, but not for others. Job stereotyping could potentially exist toward a variety of stigmatized groups. However, research on this phenomenon has traditionally been examined in the gender stereotyping literature. Eccles et al. (1990) suggested that gender stereotypes about the appropriateness of jobs are developed early in the lifespan. Early life influences of parents, teachers, and other children create differing expectations for what men and women are capable of doing, in turn affecting what jobs men and women are most likely to pursue.

One commonly studied job stereotype relates to leadership and managerial positions. Managerial jobs are often stereotyped as masculine (Cabrera, Sauer, & Thomas-Hunt, 2009; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). This is partially evidenced by the fact that women have difficulty advancing into managerial positions, and, when reaching such positions, are often evaluated less positively than men (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Still, there are some exceptions. Women are more likely to be accepted as leaders when working in fields that are stereotyped as more feminine (Cabrera et al., 2009; Koenig et al., 2011). Koenig et al. (2011) found that masculinity is perceived as less important for fields such as education. Cabrera et al. (2009) found that teams led by female leaders in stereotypically feminine

fields have elevated expectations for team performance. However, reported expectations for leader success were unaffected by perceived gender-field congruence. Collectively, these studies suggest that leaders are generally stereotyped as masculine, but that women may be more accepted as leaders in fields that are traditionally feminine.

Furthermore, job stereotyping extends beyond leadership and managerial positions. Eccles et al. (1990) suggested that stereotypes about which jobs are appropriate for men and women are introduced early in life. These stereotypes not only affect career decision differences between men and women, but also add to the formulation of gender stereotypes that lead to biases in perceived job fit. Though much of the research on gender discrimination has focused on discrimination against women, job stereotyping may also affect men. For instance, male nurses are often stigmatized because they are perceived as working in a job that is incongruent with gender stereotypes (Clow, Ricciardelli, & Bartfay, 2015). In a promotion simulation experiment, Atwater and Van Fleet (1997) found that, regardless of organizational level, men were favored for stereotypically masculine jobs while women were favored for stereotypically feminine jobs. Specifically, men were favored in fields such as electrical engineering, sports medicine, accounting, and architecture, while women were favored in fields such as social work, social sciences, and nursing. In a meta-analytic examination of this effect in performance appraisal contexts, Davison and Burke (2000) found a similar pattern of results where men were favored in stereotypically masculine jobs (such as life insurance agent, auto sales worker, or heavy machinery sales) and women were favored in stereotypically feminine jobs (such as secretary or day care director). This has also been supported in personnel selection contexts. Glick et al. (1988) found that job type moderated the effects of gender discrimination in personnel selection contexts.

The extant research on job stereotyping provides evidence that some jobs are deemed appropriate by society for only certain individuals. However, explanations for this phenomenon are grounded in Role Congruity Theory (Cleveland et al., 2000; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Two factors consistently seem to explain why some jobs are perceived by society to fit one gender (Cleveland et al., 2000). The first of these is behavioral expectations. Some behaviors are considered inappropriate for men, while others are considered inappropriate for women. For example, men in leadership positions often face social penalties when asking for help because they are expected to be directive and decisive (Rosette, Mueller, & Lebel, 2015). Even being successful at a gender inconsistent behavior can lead to negative consequences. Men who perform stereotypically feminine tasks (or perform tasks in stereotypically feminine ways) are often seen as weak and are given less respect, while women performing in stereotypically masculine tasks face interpersonal mistreatment and ostracism (Heilman & Wallen, 2010). The second factor, gender trait expectations, may be the predominant mechanism in job stereotyping. As discussed above, gender stereotypes often lead to expectations that men should be agentic and women should be communal (Cleveland et al., 2000; Ely & Meyerson, 2008). If certain jobs require agentic or communal traits, gender stereotypes might make it seem that one gender is more appropriate for a certain job than the other gender. In other words, gender stereotypes about the traits that men and women have may affect others' expectations for what jobs men and women are likely to be successful at.

The previous paragraphs show that gender is a powerful identity that influences expected social roles and traits. More broadly, the implications of Role Congruity Theory suggest that our identities can affect societal expectations for behaviors, traits, and careers. While Role Congruity Theory has traditionally been used to explain why gender discrimination exists, Role Congruity Theory could potentially be applied to other stigmatized identities including sexual orientation.

One reason that role congruity should be examined in sexual orientation discrimination is that there are a lot of similarities between sexual discrimination and gender discrimination. Most notably, stereotypes of gay men and lesbian women align very closely to stereotypes of men and women. Stereotypical behavioral and trait norms for women are very similar to stereotypical behavioral and trait norms for gay men. The same can be said for men and lesbian women. Stereotypical behavioral and trait norms for men are very similar to stereotypical behavioral and trait norms for lesbians. In other words, role expectations for gay men and lesbian women may be reversed from heterosexual individuals. Because of the similarities between these two demographic characteristics, Role Congruity Theory may extend to sexual orientation.

A second reason role congruity should be examined in sexual orientation discrimination is that perceived role congruity/incongruity could exist within other identities. Though little research on Role Congruity Theory exists outside of gender, Role Congruity Theory has been shown to extend to age (Krings, Sczesny, & Kluge, 2011). There is also some evidence that identities that align with gender can lead to role congruity/incongruity perceptions. Koenig and Eagly (2014) found that individuals with feminized mental illnesses (e.g., depression) were perceived as more qualified for communal roles and less qualified for agentic roles. The opposite was found for individuals with masculinized mental illnesses (e.g., alcoholism), who were only perceived as qualified for agentic roles. Though this is just one example of non-gender related role congruity bias, it suggests that role congruity may extend to other demographics aside from gender.

A final reason that role congruity should be examined in sexual orientation discrimination is that more research is needed on complex identity combinations. From research on identity intersectionality, researchers have traditionally ignored the intersection of multiple identities, particularly in the discrimination literature where individuals that hold multiple stigmatized

identities often get ignored (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008; Sawyer et al., 2013). The term intersectional invisibility has come to refer to this tendency to forget about the differing experiences of these complex identity stigmatized groups (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Furthermore, Sawyer et al. (2013) called for more research on intersectional identities in the discrimination literature. By examining role congruity of sexual orientation and gender simultaneously, important information on the differing experiences of gay men and lesbian women may be captured more effectively.

So far, it is established that discrimination exists in both formal and interpersonal forms within organizations. It is also established that gay men and lesbian women suffer a variety of negative outcomes inside and outside of work because of stereotyping and discrimination. However, it is unclear whether formal discrimination exists against gay men and lesbian women in the workplace. Finally, it is also established that social identities can dictate what is perceived as appropriate behaviors and traits. However, amongst these points, several questions remain unaddressed. Particularly, more research is needed to identify when and under what circumstances formal sexual orientation discrimination exists in the workplace. More research is also needed to determine whether Role Congruity Theory and job stereotyping may explain the lack of main effects for sexual orientation discrimination in formal organizational processes such as personnel selection.

## CHAPTER 5 PRESENT STUDY AND HYPOTHESES

The findings from the extant literature on formal discrimination against sexual minorities in the workplace are mixed. Therefore, further research is warranted to better understand the factors that affect sexual orientation discrimination in the workplace. Consequently, examining potential moderators of sexual orientation discrimination may explain why some studies find evidence of formal sexual orientation discrimination while others find no evidence of formal sexual orientation discrimination. The goal of the present study is to explore such factors in the context of personnel selection, where most of the research on formal sexual orientation discrimination has been done previously. As most behaviors are the result of an interaction of individual and situational forces, it is important to examine both as causes of behavior (Lewin, 1951). More specifically, this study will examine how characteristics of the applicant, characteristics of the rater, and characteristics of the job can collectively influence the likelihood that sexual orientation discrimination is likely to occur in personnel selection.

Intersectional effects of sexual orientation and other demographic identities have been previously found to influence personnel selection disparities (Pedulla, 2014). Specifically, Horvath and Ryan (2003) found that gay men and lesbian women are more favored than straight women, but less favored than straight men in gender neutral jobs. Because gay and lesbian employees are stereotyped inversely of straight employees, they may be seen as someone who doesn't fit squarely into preexisting notions of man or woman (Blashill & Powlishta, 2009; Kite & Deaux, 1987). This complexity of identities for non-heterosexual individuals may create confusion in the mind of a biased hiring manager, as. Because of this, gay men and lesbian women may be stereotyped as being less masculine than straight men are and less feminine than straight women are. Therefore,

it is expected that the findings of Horvath and Ryan (2003) will be replicated as sexual orientation and gender will interact.

H1: Gender will moderate the effects of sexual orientation on personnel selection discrimination such that gay men and lesbian women will receive lower hirability ratings than straight men and higher hirability ratings than straight women. (See Table 1.)

Despite previous research suggesting an interaction between sexual orientation and gender, the generalizability of Horvath and Ryan (2003) may be relatively limited. This limitation stems from the job that was used. The job that was used in the study (technical writer) is a gender-neutral job. While their design allowed them to isolate the combined effects of gender and sexual orientation, the findings of Horvath and Ryan (2003) may only apply to personnel selection in jobs that are gender neutral. Role Congruity Theory provides a framework for why job type may affect sexual orientation discrimination. As previously discussed, Role Congruity Theory suggests that society places different expectations on men and women, and that these expectations lead to roles (including jobs) that are seen as appropriate for one gender but not both (Davison & Burke, 2000; Eagly & Karau, 2002). Because of the similarities between gender stereotypes and sexual orientation stereotypes, the mechanisms that enable gender discrimination to occur are likely similar to those that are influential in sexual orientation discrimination, including job stereotyping. Therefore, someone that believes the stereotypes of gay men and lesbian women to be accurate would likely expect gay men to struggle in positions stereotyped as masculine while expecting lesbians to struggle in positions stereotyped as feminine.

H2: There will be a three-way interaction between sexual orientation, gender, and job type on hireability ratings. (See Table 2.)

H2A: Lesbian women applying for feminine jobs will be rated lower than gay men or straight women.

H2B: Gay men applying for masculine jobs will be rated lower than lesbian women or straight men.

This study also attempts to explore the mental mechanisms that explain discrimination against gay men and lesbian women. As previously stated, one common mental mechanism associated with discrimination is stereotyping (Talaska et al., 2008). Stereotypes can affect perceptions of ability, motivation, or fit (Atwater & Van Fleet, 1997; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Glick et al., 1988; Nosek, Banaji, & Greenwald, 2002; Reyna, 2000). Thus, if rater endorses sexual orientation stereotypes, interaction with a sexual minority will activate a stereotype about the individual's ability, motivation, and/or fit. If the activated stereotype suggests a misfit between the applicant and the job, the rater will be less likely to rate them fairly. As a result, the applicant will be disadvantaged in the hiring process. Therefore, endorsement of stereotypes about gay men and lesbian women should be associated with disparate ratings, especially if the applicant is applying for jobs that are seen as incongruent with existing stereotypes.

H3A: Lesbian women will be rated lower when the rater endorses stereotypes about the abilities of lesbian women.

H3B: Gay men will be rated lower when the rater endorses stereotypes about the abilities of gay men.

H4A: For female applicants, there will be a three-way interaction between sexual orientation, job type, and stereotype endorsement such that lesbian women will be rated lower than straight women, but only when lesbian women are applying for feminine positions and are being rated by a rater that endorses sexual orientation stereotypes. (See Table 3.)

H4B: For male applicants, there will be a three-way interaction between sexual orientation, job type, and stereotype endorsement such that gay men will be rated lower than straight men, but only when gay men are applying for masculine positions and are being rated by a rater that endorses sexual orientation stereotypes. (See Table 3.)

An additional factor that may influence evaluations is prejudice. An attitude is prejudiced if it is guided primarily by emotions (Allport, 1954). Like stereotyping, prejudice has been linked to discrimination (Meyer, 2003; Talaska et al., 2008). Previous research on anti-gay discrimination supports that this notion extends to anti-gay prejudice. Prejudice against sexual minorities stems from a variety of sources. These explanations include feelings of fear, superiority, and disgust (Callender, 2015; Herek, 2000; Ragins, 2004). Prejudice, regardless of the cause, has been shown to be one of the best predictors of discrimination (Talaska et al., 2008). Therefore, someone who is prejudiced against sexual minorities would likely find avenues to treat sexual minorities differentially. It is expected that people with strong prejudiced views should be more likely to discriminate against sexual minorities.

H5A: Lesbian women will be rated lower when the rater endorses anti-gay prejudice.

H5B: Gay men will be rated lower when the rater endorses anti-gay prejudice.

Though individuals with prejudice may or may not acknowledge stereotypes about gay men and lesbian women, their decision to discriminate may not be guided by the stereotypes. As prejudice, an emotionally charged feeling toward a group of people, is such an important predictor of discrimination, one could expect a prejudiced rater to discriminate against gay men and lesbian women regardless of job type or gender. However, strong societal norms now exist against discrimination, which often forces discrimination to be subtle (Cortina, 2008; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; Hoffarth & Hodson, 2014; Sue et al., 2007). While a rater who is prejudiced against sexual

minorities may desire to discriminate against a gay man or lesbian woman in any context, societal norms could force them to attempt to hide their prejudice (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000). Someone who is prejudiced may only discriminate when they believed they could rationalize their actions to others. In the case of personnel selection, this could occur in the form of identifying traits or characteristics that they expect others to believe that the applicants hold. In other words, they may attempt to discriminate through known stereotypes about applicants. Therefore, like stereotyping, emotional prejudice against gay men and lesbian women should result in increased discrimination, and this may be more likely to occur when the job is perceived by societal stereotypes to be a misfit for the applicant.

However, because anti-gay prejudice does not necessarily result from stereotyping alone, individuals that hold anti-gay prejudice should be inclined to have consistently negative feelings toward sexual minorities. In other words, someone that holds prejudice against sexual minorities should dislike gay men and lesbian women evenly, regardless of what job they are applying for. Thus, if their rating is guided by prejudice, they should discriminate against gay men and lesbian women no matter which job they apply for.

In sum, prejudiced raters may overtly discriminate regardless of job type, or they may be inclined to only discriminate when they believe that they can get away with it. Thus, discrimination against gay men and lesbian women by individuals who are prejudiced against them may occur evenly across gender regardless of job type, but it may also follow the same pattern as discrimination resulting from stereotyping. Therefore, the following research question is proposed. RQ1: Will the effect of anti-gay prejudice on applicant ratings be moderated by job type and sexual orientation?

## **CHAPTER 6 METHOD**

### **Pilot Test**

The manipulations used in this study were pilot tested to ensure that the stimuli were noticeable enough to potentially have biasing effects. To assess the feasibility of the proposed manipulations, 40 undergraduates participated in this pilot test. Participants read a sample job application and identified the name, gender, and sexual orientation of the applicant. The participant also identified the name of the applicant's spouse and job that the applicant was applying for. Participants identified 85% of the job application elements correctly. More specifically, 92.5% of participants identified the name and gender of the applicant correctly, while 75% identified the applicant's sexual orientation correctly. Additionally, 80% of participants identified the spouse's name correctly, while 85% identified the job correctly. Previous research on sorting tasks identifies 75% agreement as an acceptable cutoff for sorting tasks such as this one (Greenberg, 1986). Therefore, the pilot test supported the adequacy of the application manipulations.

### **Participants**

Participants were working adults in the United States recruited through a Qualtrics panel. For the present study and given a small to medium effect size, a power analysis conducted in GPower suggested that approximately 580 participants should complete the study. In all, 1961 participants began the study. Responses were screened by Qualtrics for attention using the attention check implemented in the pilot study. Participants that failed the attention check, did not complete the study from start to finish, or did not indicate that they were employed were prevented from finishing the study, and were removed from the pool by Qualtrics. Because of the Qualtrics screening mechanisms, 1392 participants were removed from final data set. Of the participants that failed the attention check, 386 answered the gender question incorrectly, and 362 failed to

identify the correct applicant name. Of the participants that failed the manipulation check, 479 missed the question on sexual orientation, and 414 failed to identify the name of the applicant's spouse. In addition, 337 failed to identify the job that the applicant was applying for.

This left 569 participants of useful data. Sex breakdown of the participant pool was 80.3% female and 19.7% male. The gender breakdown was 80.7% women, 19.2% men, and 0.1% other. Approximately 1% of the respondents were transgender. In terms of sexual orientation, 85.9% of respondents identified as straight. Most respondents were Caucasian (83.1%), and the majority identified as an ethnicity other than Hispanic or Middle Eastern (91.9%). In terms of religion, 66.3% of respondents were Christian, 22.2% of respondents were non-religious or unaffiliated, and 11.7% belonged to religions other than Christianity. Participants were 39.4 years old on average, and worked an average of 40.5 hours per week. (For a full breakdown of demographics, see Table 4.)

## **Design**

The present study utilized a three-way factorial manipulation (2x2x2). The first manipulation was gender of the applicant by adjusting the name on the application. The first name of the applicant was either James (for a male applicant) or Mary (for a female applicant). These two names were chosen because they are not usually considered gender neutral names. The second manipulation was sexual orientation. The applicant was either identified as gay or straight. Because such information is not usually directly reported in applications, multiple subtle manipulations similar to those used in Horvath and Ryan (2003) served as manipulations of sexual orientation. First, the resume contained a volunteer position at either an LGBTQ support center or a marital counseling center. Second, the questionnaire, letter of recommendation, and cover letter contained references to the individual's spouse. In these references, the name of the partner was manipulated

as Sarah (for heterosexual men and lesbian women) or Paul (for heterosexual women and gay men). Like the names chosen for the applicants, names of the spouse were chosen because they are usually considered to not be gender neutral. The third manipulation was job type. Cross and Bagilhole (2002) examined differences percentages of males and females working in various fields. Results suggested that the field of nursing is predominantly composed of women while technical fields such as IT and computer engineering are predominantly composed of men. Furthermore, a study of child stereotypes jobs found that nursing is stereotyped as being appropriate for women and computer technology jobs are stereotyped as being appropriate for men (Sinclair & Carlsson, 2013). Therefore, nurse was used as a feminine job and computer technician was used as a masculine job.

### **Procedure**

Participants were instructed to take on the role of a hiring manager for a fictional organization. Then, participants were randomly assigned to one of the conditions, and presented with a completed application packet from a fictional applicant that included a cover letter, resume, an open-ended questionnaire, and a letter of recommendation. After reading through the application, participants rated the extent to which they believed that the person was a hireable candidate. Applications were identical across participants with the exception of the manipulations discussed above. (For a sample application, see Appendix A.) After rating the applicant's hirability, participants completed a measure of sexual orientation stereotyping. To avoid contaminating responses on the sexual orientation stereotyping measure, the questions for this measure were mixed with questions from unrelated measures on conservatism and conspiracy beliefs. Finally, participants completed a measure of sexual orientation prejudice.

### **Measures**

**Manipulation check quiz.** The manipulation check quiz contained 5 questions that assess whether the participant paid attention to the applicant's characteristics and the application job type when completing the study. First, participants were asked to identify the name, gender, and sexual orientation of the person they rated. Then they were asked to identify the applicant's spouse and the job that the applicant was applying for.

**Hirability.** Hirability was assessed using a scale identical to the scale from Horvath and Ryan (2003). Participants assessed the hirability of the applicant on a 100-point scale with the following anchors: 0 = extremely unqualified, 25 = moderately unqualified, 50 = barely qualified, 75 = moderately qualified, and 100 = extremely qualified.

**Sexual Orientation Stereotyping.** Stereotyping was assessed using 10 modified items from the beliefs dimension of the gender-role scale developed by Prasad and Baron (1995). The items in this scale originally assessed gender stereotypes. The items were modified to assess differing stereotypes of sexual minorities compared to straight individuals. For example, "Boys are naturally better at most sports" was changed to "Straight men are better at most sports compared to gay men." These items were used to assess role stereotyping of sexual minorities. Participants rated the extent to which they agree with the premise of each statement by responding to a five-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Scores were computed by averaging responses across items. Reliability for this scale was 0.97.

**Sexual Orientation Prejudice.** Prejudice toward ratee was originally measured using 5 items from the 14 item LGBT contact measure developed by Holland, Matthews, and Schott (2013). The specific items selected from this scale were chosen because they appeared to assess negative attitudes towards interactions with sexual minorities. The 5 items selected correspond to those that only address sexual orientation prejudice and are the most covert items of the scale.

Participants rated the extent that they agree that each statement describes them. An example item was “I would feel nervous being in a group of gay men.” Participants responded to a five-point Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. However, an initial analysis of the five items indicated an exceptionally unreliable measure. To improve the reliability, only 3 of the 5 items were used for the final measure. Scores were computed by averaging responses across items. Despite attempts to use an adequately reliable measure, no combination of items yielded a measure above the recommended value of 0.70. The final alpha these 3 specific items was 0.57.

**Religiosity.** Religiosity was measured using the 4 item Brief Multidimensional Measure of Religiousness/Spirituality created by the Fetzer Institute (2003). This measure examines the role that religion/spiritual beliefs have in a person’s life. A sample item is “I believe in a God that watches over me.” Participants responded on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). Reliability for this measure was 0.93.

**Demographics.** Participants reported their own religious preference, sex, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and average hours worked a week.

(Items for these measures can be found in Appendix C.)

## CHAPTER 7 ANALYSES

Through examination of z-scores and visual inspection of the scatter plot for the study criterion, three outliers were detected and removed from subsequent analyses. Visual inspection of the scatter plot also indicated the possibility of non-normality in the criterion variable. A Shapiro-Wilk test conducted on the criterion variable was significant, indicating significant non-normality in the variable (0.90,  $p < 0.001$ ). The variable was subsequently evaluated for skew and kurtosis. Analyses revealed significant skew of -1.26 (SE= 0.10) and kurtosis of 2.32 (SE=0.21). Given the significant non-normality, data for the criterion measure was transformed using the moderate negative skew procedure outlined in Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). The transformation reduced skew and kurtosis below statistically significant levels. The resulting measure was negatively correlated with the original criterion measure, so the resulting measure was multiplied by -1 and linearly transformed. This resulted in the final transformed measure being negatively correlated with the original transformation at -1.00, and positively correlated with the original criterion at 0.96. In all subsequent analyses, this transformed measure was used as the criterion.

With the exception of the two main effects presented in hypotheses 3 and 5, all hypotheses were analyzed using factorial analysis of variance (ANOVA). Hypothesis 1 predicted an interaction between sexual orientation and gender such that straight men were rated highest and straight women were rated lowest. To examine hypothesis 1, a factorial ANOVA was run examining the combined effects of applicant gender and sexual orientation. The main effect of applicant gender on hirability rating was not significant,  $F(1, 562) = 0.05, p = 0.82$ . The main effect of applicant sexual orientation on hirability rating was also not significant,  $F(1, 562) = 0.90, p = 0.34$ . However, the interaction term was significant,  $F(1, 562) = 3.86, p < 0.05$ . Pairwise comparisons indicated a significant difference between the hirability ratings of straight men and

gay men. Hirability ratings for straight men ( $M=5.05$ ,  $SD= 1.82$ ) were higher than those of gay men ( $M=4.63$ ,  $SD=1.80$ ). Pairwise comparisons indicated no significant difference between straight and lesbian women. Since there was a significant interaction between gender and sexual orientation on hirability ratings, hypothesis 1 is partially supported. However, contrary to the hypothesis and in contrast to the findings of Horvath and Ryan (2003), ratings of straight women were not found to be rated lower than gay men.

Hypothesis 2 predicted an interaction among sexual orientation, gender, and job type such that gay men would be rated lower than straight men or lesbian women for masculine jobs and lesbian women would be rated lower than straight women or gay men for feminine jobs. To examine hypothesis 2, a factorial ANOVA was run examining the combined effects of applicant gender, sexual orientation, and job type. The results of the ANOVA yielded a non-significant 3-way effect,  $F(1, 558) = 1.80$ ,  $p=0.18$ . Thus, hypothesis 2 was not supported. Though the interactions were non-significant, the interactive effects were further interpreted to determine if results were trending in the hypothesized directions. Despite the differences being non-significant, mean rating patterns largely aligned with hypothesized directions. Gay men were rated lowest when applying for masculine jobs, and lesbian women were rated lowest when applying for feminine jobs. Surprisingly, straight women were rated higher than straight men for masculine jobs, and straight men were rated higher than straight women for feminine jobs. The highest ratings overall came from men applying for feminine jobs.

Hypothesis 3 proposed a main effect of sexual orientation stereotyping on hirability ratings for gay applicants. Specifically, it was expected that lesbian women and gay men would be rated lower when the rater endorses gay and lesbian stereotypes. To examine hypothesis 3, two regressions were run examining the effects of sexual orientation stereotyping on ratings of gay and

lesbian applicants. For hypothesis 3, only participants that rated gay and lesbian applicants were included in the analyses.

Before testing hypothesis 3, normality was assessed for the stereotyping variable. A Shapiro-Wilk test conducted on the stereotyping variable was significant, indicating significant non-normality in the variable (0.72,  $p < 0.001$ ). The variable was subsequently evaluated for skew and kurtosis. Analyses revealed significant skew of 1.33 (SE= 0.15) and kurtosis of 0.77 (SE=0.29). Given the significant non-normality, data for the stereotyping measure was transformed using the substantial positive skew procedure outlined in Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). The transformation reduced skew and kurtosis. In all subsequent analyses involving stereotyping, the transformed measure was used.

For hypothesis 3A, a regression was run to assess the relationship between stereotyping and hirability ratings for participants that rated lesbian women. For participants that rated lesbian women, the relationship between stereotyping and hirability ratings was non-significant,  $F(1,141) = 0.01$ ,  $p = 0.91$ . Thus, hypothesis 3A was not supported. For hypothesis 3B, a regression was run to assess the relationship between stereotyping and hirability ratings for participants that rated gay men. For participants that rated gay men, the relationship between stereotyping and hirability ratings was significant,  $r^2 = 0.05$ ,  $F(1,139) = 6.79$ ,  $p = 0.01$ . Ratings for gay men were significantly lower when the rater endorsed gay and lesbian stereotypes. This provides support for hypothesis 3B, and some support for hypothesis 3 as a whole.

To test hypothesis four, two factorial ANOVAs were run examining the combined effects of applicant sexual orientation, job type, and evaluator stereotype endorsement. The analyses were split with one ANOVA assessing this interaction in male applicants and one ANOVA assessing this interaction in female applicants. Hypothesis 4A predicted an interaction among stereotype

endorsement, sexual orientation, and job type for participants that rated female applicants. Specifically, it was expected that lesbian women would be rated lower than straight women when being rated by a participant that endorses sexual orientation stereotypes, particularly when the job application is for a feminine job. A factorial ANOVA was run examining the combined effects of applicant sexual orientation, rater stereotyping, and job type. The results of the ANOVA yielded a non-significant 3-way effect,  $F(2, 276) = 0.32, p=0.74$ . Thus, hypothesis 4A was not supported. Hypothesis 4B predicted an interaction among stereotype endorsement, sexual orientation, and job type for participants that rated male applicants. Specifically, it was expected that gay men would be rated lower than straight men when being rated by a participant that endorses sexual orientation stereotypes, particularly when the job application is for a masculine job. A factorial ANOVA was run examining the combined effects of applicant sexual orientation, rater stereotyping, and job type. The results of the ANOVA yielded a non-significant 3-way effect,  $F(1, 274) = 1.37, p=0.24$ . Thus, hypothesis 4B was not supported. However, a significant 2-way interaction was found between applicant sexual orientation and stereotyping,  $F(1, 274) = 7.12, p=0.01$ . Pairwise comparisons indicated a significant difference between the hirability ratings of straight men and gay men among raters with high stereotype endorsement. For high stereotyping raters, hirability ratings for straight men ( $M=5.36, SD= 0.26$ ) were significantly higher than those of gay men ( $M=3.93, SD=0.32$ ).

Though the 3-way interactions were non-significant, the interactive effects were further interpreted to determine if results were trending in the hypothesized directions. To interpret the interactive effects for hypothesis 4, three groups were created using the standard deviation of the stereotype measure. Participants showing stereotyping more than 1 standard deviation above the mean were labeled high endorsement. Participants showing stereotyping within one standard

deviation of the mean were labeled average endorsement. Despite the reduction in skew from transformation, the measure still contained some skew because 38% of participants showed no evidence of stereotyping. As a result, no participants fell below the value of 1 standard deviation from the mean. The 38% that demonstrated no stereotyping were relabeled low endorsement.

For hypothesis 4A, high stereotyping raters rated lesbian women lower when the applicant was applying for a traditionally feminine job. In contrast, raters showing low to medium stereotyping rated straight women applying for feminine jobs the lowest. This is consistent with the projected direction of the hypothesis. For hypothesis 4B, high stereotyping raters rated gay applicants lower than straight applicants regardless of job type. This is in contrast with the hypothesized direction, which projected that gay men applying for traditionally masculine jobs would be rated lowest.

Hypothesis 5 proposed a main effect of sexual orientation prejudice on hirability ratings for gay applicants. Specifically, it was expected that lesbian women and gay men would be rated lower when the rater endorses gay and lesbian prejudice. To examine hypothesis 5, two regressions were run examining the effects of sexual orientation prejudice on ratings of gay and lesbian applicants. Like hypothesis 3, only participants that rated gay and lesbian applicants were included in the analyses for this hypothesis.

Before testing hypothesis 5, normality was assessed for the prejudice measure. A Shapiro-Wilk test conducted on the criterion variable was significant, indicating significant non-normality in the variable (0.84,  $p < 0.001$ ). The variable was subsequently evaluated for skew and kurtosis. Analyses revealed significant skew of 1.21 (SE= 0.15) and kurtosis of 1.42 (SE=0.29). Given the significant non-normality, data for the criterion measure was transformed using the severe negative skew procedure outlined in Tabachnick and Fidell (2013). The transformation reduced skew and kurtosis. The resulting measure was negatively correlated with the original prejudice measure, so

the resulting measure was multiplied by -1 and linearly transformed. This resulted in the final transformed measure being negatively correlated with the original transformation at -1.00, and positively correlated with the original prejudice measure at 0.93. In all subsequent analyses involving prejudice, the transformed measure was used.

For hypothesis 5A, a regression was run to assess the relationship between prejudice and hirability ratings for participants that rated lesbian women. For participants that rated lesbian women, the relationship between prejudice and hirability ratings was non-significant,  $F(1,141) = 0.07, p=0.80$ . Thus, hypothesis 5A was not supported. For hypothesis 5B, a regression was run to assess the relationship between prejudice and hirability ratings for participants that rated gay men. For participants that rated gay men, the relationship between prejudice and hirability ratings was non-significant,  $F(1,139) = 3.46, p=0.07$ . Thus hypothesis 5B was not supported. Given the combined results of hypothesis 5A and hypothesis 5B, hypothesis 5 was not supported.

To test the research question, two factorial ANOVAs were run examining the combined effects of applicant sexual orientation, job type, and evaluator prejudice. The analyses were split with one ANOVA assessing this interaction in male applicants and one ANOVA assessing this interaction in female applicants. With the participants that rated female applicants, a factorial ANOVA was run examining the combined effects of applicant sexual orientation, rater prejudice, and job type. The results of the ANOVA yielded a non-significant 3-way effect,  $F(1, 276) = 0.14, p=0.71$ . With the participants that rated male applicants, a factorial ANOVA was also run examining the combined effects of applicant sexual orientation, rater prejudice, and job type. The results of the ANOVA yielded a non-significant 3-way effect,  $F(1, 274) = 0.14, p=0.71$ . The results of these analyses suggest that prejudiced raters were not significantly influenced by job stereotypes.

Though the interactions were non-significant, the interactive effects were further interpreted to determine if results were trending in the hypothesized directions. To interpret the interactive effects, three groups were created using the standard deviation of the prejudice measure. Participants showing prejudice more than 1 standard deviation above the mean were labeled high endorsement. Participants showing prejudice more than 1 standard deviation below the mean were labeled low endorsement. Participants showing prejudice within one standard deviation of the mean were labeled average endorsement. For female applicants, high prejudice raters rated lesbian women applicants applying for masculine jobs lowest. For low prejudice raters, straight women applying for masculine jobs were rated lowest. For medium prejudice raters, straight women applying for feminine jobs were rated lowest. Male applicants showed different patterns. For low and medium prejudice raters, gay men applying for masculine positions were rated lowest. For high prejudice applicants, gay men applying for feminine jobs were rated lowest.

Due to the unexpected pattern of findings, follow up analyses were conducted to examine potential confounding factors on the findings of this study. First, rater race and ethnicity could be a factor. Some previous research suggests that disadvantaged and stigmatized groups see other stigmatized groups as competition, potentially making disadvantaged racial and ethnic minorities more likely to discriminate against sexual minority applicants (Craig & Richeson, 2014). However, other research suggests that disadvantaged groups may find solidarity in other disadvantaged groups (Cortland, Craig, Shapiro, Richeson, Neel, & Goldstein, 2017). Regardless of which theory holds in the present study, it suggests that race and/or ethnicity may influence sexual orientation bias. Given that more than 80% of the sample was Caucasian, race may have potentially influenced the results of the study. However, follow up analyses yielded no evidence of rating disparity by race or ethnicity.

Rater gender was also examined for interactive effects with some of the key study variables. Like race/ethnicity, stigmas exist around gender, with discrimination against women being especially common (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Landy & Farr, 1980). So, because women are also stigmatized, perhaps women may be more inclined to show leniency. Additionally, there are similarities between gender stereotypes and sexual orientation stereotypes. So, women may be even more likely to support sexual minority applicants because they both face similar barriers to employment. On the other hand, being a traditionally stigmatized group, women may appraise sexual minorities as a group in competition with themselves, thus making them more likely to discriminate (Craig & Richeson, 2014). In this study, stereotyping was higher for men than for women,  $t(140) = -3.54, p = .001$ . Prejudice was also higher for men compared to women,  $t(564) = -3.27, p = .001$ . However, an examination of ratings of sexual minority applicants revealed no significant differences by rater gender. Similarly, no relationship was found between rater gender and ratings of gay men. However, a significant main effect was found between gender and ratings of lesbian women applicants,  $t(141) = -2.13, p = .04$ . Male raters ( $M = 5.63, SD = 1.32$ ) rated lesbian applicants higher than female raters ( $M = 4.82, SD = 1.70$ ). However, additional analyses revealed no significant difference between straight women rated by women and lesbian women rated by women. Furthermore, there was a significant 2-way interaction between applicant gender and rater gender, with women rating male applicants higher overall compared to female applicants,  $F(1, 276) = 4.35, p = .04$ . Therefore, collectively, the results suggest that rater gender did not confound the study.

Another demographic identity that may have influenced the results of the study is age. Previous research has found that sexual orientation attitudes may differ by age (Garretson, 2015). In this study's sample, 56% of participants were under 40, and the average age of the sample was

39.4 years. Given that the sample skews young, perhaps participant age influenced the results of the study. Age is significantly correlated with stereotyping ( $r=0.08$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). Age is also significantly correlated with prejudice ( $r=0.20$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Age did not correlate with ratings of sexual minority applicants. However, age positively correlated with ratings of lesbian women applicants ( $r=0.20$ ,  $p=.02$ ). Ratings negatively correlated with ratings of gay male applicants ( $r=-0.25$ ,  $p=.003$ ). The same pattern of results did not hold for straight applicants as age did not predict ratings for straight male or female applicants. There were no interactive effects between age and job type. Given the extant results, age may have had some influence on the results of the present study.

A final identity that may impact sexual orientation discrimination is religion. Many of the world's religions contain negative appraisals of non-hetero identities and have rules prohibiting same-sex relationships. Thus, religion and religiosity may impact sexual orientation discrimination. Religion significantly predicted stereotyping,  $F(6, 493)=3.66$ ,  $p=.001$ . Stereotype endorsement was significantly higher for Evangelical Christians compared to those given by Mainline Christians, Atheists, Agnostics, and those that identified as Spiritual but Not Religious. Religion significantly predicted prejudice,  $F(6, 493)=4.91$ ,  $p<.001$ . Prejudice was highest among Evangelical Christians and lowest among Atheists and Agnostics. However, subsequent analyses did not find evidence of a link between religious affiliation and hirability discrimination. Like religion, religiosity did correlate with stereotyping ( $r=0.24$ ,  $p<.001$ ) and prejudice ( $r=0.26$ ,  $p<.001$ ). However, no subsequent analyses indicated that religiosity influenced ratings for sexual minority applicants in either job type. Therefore, it is unlikely that religion or religiosity influenced the findings of this study.

Applicant sexual orientation may also have been a factor in the results since such a large percentage of the sample identified as straight. However, the sample did not have enough sexual minorities to examine this premise.

## CHAPTER 8 DISCUSSION

The goal of this paper was to examine how and in what situations sexual orientation can create biasing effects within formal workplace processes. First, Role Congruity Theory was used as a framework to examine the sexual orientation bias. The importance of job type was examined as a possible moderator to explain why studies on sexual orientation bias in personnel selection have previously shown mixed results. Specifically, the premise of this study was that sexual orientation bias in employee personnel selection may exist through job characteristic stereotypes like those that perpetuate gender bias. However, the present study found no evidence to support this notion as job type did not affect ratings differentially among straight and gay men and women. In other words, gay men and lesbian women were not more likely to experience discrimination in personnel selection when applying for masculine and feminine jobs respectively.

Second, the moderating roles of both cognitive and emotional processes were examined as potential moderators on the perpetration of sexual orientation discrimination. In terms of cognitive moderators, it was proposed that stereotyping would influence personnel selection bias against sexual minorities by interacting with job type. Specifically, it was proposed that gay men would be most disadvantaged in applying for masculine jobs and lesbian women would be most disadvantaged in applying for feminine jobs when the rater endorsed sexual orientation stereotypes. The premise that job type and stereotyping collectively influence rating disparities was not supported by the study presented in this paper.

In terms of emotional processes, it was proposed that prejudice would have a direct effect on sexual orientation discrimination. However, previous research suggested conflicting hypotheses regarding prejudice's interaction with job type. Some research suggested that job type could moderate the effects of sexual orientation because those with prejudice may only choose to

discriminate when they believe that stereotypes will allow them to get away with it. On the other hand, prejudice has been previously found to have a strong, direct relationship with discrimination. The results of the study presented in this paper found no relationship between sexual orientation prejudice and rating disparities. Furthermore, job type did not have a moderating effect on this relationship. In other words, prejudice did not predict discrimination in any circumstance within this study.

Despite the main premises being unsupported by the study, there were some significant findings in the present study. First, the combination of applicant sexual orientation and gender did appear to affect ratings. Specifically, straight men were rated significantly higher than gay men, while no difference existed in ratings between straight women and lesbian women. Thus, the results suggest that gay men may be the most disadvantaged in personnel selection contexts. Additionally, sexual orientation stereotype endorsement had an impact on hirability ratings. Gay men were rated lower when the rater endorsed gay stereotypes. The same pattern did not hold for any other group (straight men, straight women, or lesbian women) further suggesting that gay men are the most likely to experience personnel selection discrimination. Surprisingly, job type did not moderate the effects of stereotype endorsement. Instead, endorsement of gay stereotypes led to lower ratings of gay men regardless of which job they were applying for. In sum, the results of the study presented in this paper suggest that gay men may have the largest disadvantage in hiring processes.

A surprising finding in this study is that a disparity existed between ratings of straight men and gay men that did not exist between straight women and lesbian women. There are many potential reasons why this may have occurred. However, the most plausible explanation is that the gender disparity in the sample may have influenced the results. The sample was predominantly

female. Perhaps the women in the study were showing favoritism by exhibiting less bias toward their own ingroup. In other words, women participants may have overlooked sexual orientation for lesbian women because they had the same gender identity. If that is the case, it would suggest that a more male dominant sample could show a substantially different pattern of results.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Though the main premise of the study was not supported, there are still some implications for theory. First, this study provides evidence that sexual orientation discrimination does exist in formal processes such as personnel selection. Specifically, this study provides evidence that gay men may be disadvantaged in hiring. Furthermore, Ruggs et al. (2013) argued that many identities are underrepresented in diversity and discrimination research. Therefore, as evidence of sexual orientation discrimination was found, the study's findings support the call by Ruggs et al. (2013) to investigate less explored stigmatized identities by showing that other demographic biases can affect work outcomes. Thus, this study suggests the importance of studying discrimination against traditionally less researched marginalized groups like sexual minorities.

Second, the present study suggests that key moderators are important in explaining inconsistent findings regarding sexual orientation discrimination. This study specifically identified applicant gender and rater stereotyping endorsement as key moderators of sexual orientation discrimination. This suggests the importance of continuing to search for moderating factors that influence discrimination against various demographic groups, including sexual minorities.

Related to the previous implication, this study provides additional evidence for the importance of studying intersectional identities. The present study found no main effect of sexual orientation on ratings. However, when examined with the moderating effect of applicant gender,

evidence of discrimination was found, which replicates the findings of Horvath and Ryan (2003). As such, discrimination theory and research needs to continue to implement a multiple identity approach to the study of both diversity and discrimination. This also suggests that other identities may also have moderating effects on the presence and extremity of sexual orientation discrimination.

This study also provided some evidence for the importance of examining cognitive factors that predict discrimination. Stereotype endorsement was an influential factor in rating disparities between straight and gay applicants. However, prejudice did not significantly impact ratings in this study. Nevertheless, the results of the present study suggest the importance of accounting for cognitive factors like stereotyping in discrimination studies. Though evidence of sexual orientation-based stereotyping and prejudice was found, it is important to note that rates of stereotype endorsement and prejudice were relatively low. However, the present study lacks sufficient data to determine whether the results reflect societal levels of sexual orientation-based stereotyping and prejudice, as it is possible that the purpose of the study was too salient to participants. (See “Limitations” section for more detail.) Thus, low levels of stereotyping and prejudice may be influenced by socially desirable responding.

Finally, the present study casts some doubt on the transferability of Role Congruity Theory to the context of sexual orientation discrimination. Because job type was not an influential factor, the study results suggest that disadvantages experienced by sexual minorities do not result from perceptions of job misfit. However, given some of the sample characteristics (see limitations section for more detail), it is possible that rater characteristics may be an additional moderator in the transferability of Role Congruity Theory. More research is needed to further explore this explanation for the results of this study.

## **Practical Implications**

There are also potential implications for practice. First, the results would suggest that sexual orientation is another characteristic that needs careful attention like race and gender have gotten in the past. In the context of personnel selection, sexual orientation can be a biasing factor. Organizational leaders need to be aware of biases that can exist, and they need to ensure that biased employees are not put in positions to make key organizational decisions. Raters and evaluators need to be employees who are less likely to show bias, including bias against sexual minorities. To avoid bias contaminating other organizational processes (e.g., performance appraisal, subordinate development), it is also important that organizations place unbiased employees that can manage diverse employees into managerial and leadership roles.

While using unbiased raters and managers is ideal, such biases can be difficult to detect. So, it is essential that organizations take proactive measures to decrease discrimination against applicants and employees, including sexual minorities. Training sessions and bias interventions should be implemented to try to decrease the influence of sexual orientation related stereotypes and prejudices on personnel decisions. For example, structured free recall interventions have met success in decreasing racial and weight based biases (Baltes, Bauer, & Frensch, 2007; Rudolph, Baltes, Zhdanova, Clark, & Bal, 2012). Similar interventions could perhaps be used to decrease the influence of stereotypes, including sexual orientation stereotypes, in personnel selection decisions.

Relatedly, measures should be taken to remove potential biases from personnel processes altogether. The results lend further support to the importance of using objectivity in personnel selection activities. Highhouse (2008) posits that subjectivity in hiring decisions, which allows for bias to affect outcomes, is a rampant problem, particularly in interviews. To avoid opportunities

for bias to affect hiring outcomes, organizations should implement structured and validated personnel selection systems instead of relying on subjective, unanchored assessments (Melchers, Lienhardt, von Aarburg, & Kleinmann, 2011; Schmidt & Hunter, 1998).

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

Though this study extends our understanding of a variety of issues in organizational science, there are still limitations on the findings. First, there are some methodological limitations to the study. The present study is experimental and used a fictitious organization. In fact, the low levels of prejudice and stereotyping could be an indicator that the study was not realistic enough. In other words, participants may not have been able to adequately put themselves in the mindset of a manager making a hiring decision. In the future, researchers should attempt to examine this phenomenon in real organizations. It is also possible that the jobs that were chosen were not effective enough manipulations. On one hand, the positions (particularly the computer position) may not have had strong enough stereotypes associated with it to be seen as masculine. However, the positions (particularly the nurse position) also may have been so stereotypically gendered that it made the purpose of the study too obvious. Future studies should consider using a wider array of positions.

There were also some measurement issues with the present study. Most notably, most of the measures, including the ratings, stereotyping, and prejudice measures, were highly skewed. Although, it is unclear whether this skew was a result of a legitimately skewed distribution versus socially desirable responding. In addition, the prejudice measure demonstrated very low reliability even after the number of items was reduced from 5 to 3. No decipherable explanation was identified for the low reliability. The items selected were specifically picked because they assessed the emotion-based thought patterns that are indicative of prejudice. The items that were used only

made up a subset of the original scale, which may have contributed to the poor reliability. However, most measures related to sexual orientation bias either assess discriminatory behaviors directly or assess sexual orientation stereotyping. Virtually no well validated survey measures exist that specifically assess this emotion-based prejudice construct, which made selecting adequate items for this construct difficult. Future researchers should examine innovative ways to assess this emotion-based sexual orientation prejudice more reliably.

There were also some limitations with the sample used. First, a small number of initial respondents correctly completed the manipulation check. Thus, only about a quarter of those who signed up for the study completed it. There may have been important variance in the participants that did not correctly complete the manipulation check (e.g., more reliance on mental shortcuts) that may more completely explain the research questions examined in this study. The best way to address this issue is to conduct research in actual organizations. In addition to the manipulation check issue, the sample was more than 80% female. Given that women experience higher rates of discrimination, this sample may have exhibited less stereotyping and prejudice than the general population. Unfortunately, this study lacked sufficient power to thoroughly examine these hypotheses with rater gender as a moderator. In the future, researchers should aim for a more gender diverse sample and should consider looking at rater gender as a possible moderator.

In addition to the methodological, measurement, and sample considerations, there are a few theoretical limitations to this study. First, this study focuses on the evaluator/rater perspective. More research is needed to completely understand how the experiences of discrimination in personnel practices affect gay men and lesbian applicants/ratees. While the study presented in this paper does examine intersectional identity, only a select set of identities were used. Future research should look at other potential intersectional identities such as age, race, social class, weight, etc.

Future research should look deeper into cognitive explanations for why discrimination occurs against certain groups such as the LGBT community. Additionally, one major limitation of this study is that it only examines these predictors in the context of a personnel selection scenario. There are other contexts such as leader evaluations, promotion, performance appraisal, etc. that may or may not show similar patterns of bias. Finally, the present study only examines demographic characteristics of the applicant, and does not examine demographics of the rater. Future research studies should examine how characteristic matches/mismatches between the rater and applicant can influence hirability ratings.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, previous research suggested that most discrimination against gay men and lesbian women is informal (Hebl et al., 2002). This paper challenges those findings by presenting evidence formal discrimination against gay employees does exist. However, it is influenced by additional factors such as other demographic characteristics of the ratee/applicant and views of the rater/evaluator. Therefore, it is important for organizations to carefully consider methods of decreasing such bias in organizational processes such as personnel selection.

**APPENDIX A**

**Sample Applications:**

**Straight Male Masculine Job**

**Lesbian Female Feminine Job**

**Application for  
Computer Technician  
at  
Cisco Health Systems**

James Parker

(285) 412-0387

[James.Parker@gmail.com](mailto:James.Parker@gmail.com)

*Dear Hiring Manager,*

*I am a recent college graduate with a background in both a technical and healthcare environment. I have a passion for working in this industry and a strong drive to learn. Because of my versatile background, I believe I am a great candidate for this position.*

*I became interested in your company after my wife Sarah was hospitalized in one of your hospitals with a serious illness. I was impressed with the service of your staff and the professionalism of your doctors. I knew at that point that I wanted to work for this company.*

*For a little background on myself, I completed a BA in Computer Science. During my time as an undergraduate, I volunteered at the West University Marital Counseling Center. I also volunteered in the front office of the Computer Science Department.*

*For the past few months, I have worked as an office assistant in a medical center where I have processed patient paperwork, maintained medicine administration logs, and provided customer service to incoming patients and their families. Prior to working in the medical center, I served as a technical customer service assistant for a local software company. As an employee of this company, I answered phone calls from people who purchased our software and helped them to troubleshoot problems that they were having with their software.*

*Combining the learned and practiced skills I acquired from these jobs, I believe I a lot of valuable experience that would translate well to this job. Furthermore, as a result of my background in the medical industry, I believe I'd have an advantage over other applicants in learning how to thrive in your company.*

*I believe that I would be a good fit for this position because of my passion for this industry, my educational background, my experience, and my strong drive to learn. If you would like to contact me, please call me or email me using the information above.*

*Sincerely,*

*James Parker*

# Cisco Health Systems

## Application for Computer Technician

**1. Are you eligible to work in the United States for any employer?**

Yes

**2. Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to any offense under the law? If so, please explain.**

No

**3. Have you ever been fired, discharged, or forced to resign for behavioral or performance issues? If so, please explain.**

No

**4. Are you willing to be employed for this company full time?**

Yes

**5. Are you willing to travel? If so, please indicate a percentage.**

Yes. Up to 50%.

**6. Please describe your educational background.**

I have a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Crawford College, a small liberal arts college. I graduated with a 3.3 grade point average.

**7. Why do you want to work for this company?**

Two years ago, my wife Sarah became extremely ill, and had to be hospitalized. This company not only helped her to recover, but also took great care of us, providing excellent customer service. I am so grateful for what the company did for us that I wanted to give something back to the company, and also wanted to help the company continue to thrive.

**8. What skills do you have that you believe would make you successful in the job you are applying for?**

I have extensive knowledge of computer engineering and Information Technology operations. I am very organized and take good notes. I am detail oriented. I am excellent at managing my time, and do so using calendars and to-do lists. I have a devotion to customer service and try to put those whom I'm serving first. I also learn very quickly.

**9. Describe your career goals.**

I eventually hope to obtain a supervisory position in my field where I can make the practice of computer science better within organizations. Ideally, I hope to use this position to improve my skills as a computer technician to prepare me for a supervisory role in the future.

James Parker

(285) 412-0387

James.Parker@gmail.com

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**Experience**

**Saraville Medical Center:**

Office Assistant, July 2016-Present

- Answered phones; Filed paperwork; Answered emails; Other general office duties

**Emergesoft, Inc.:**

Technical Customer Service Assistant, June 2014- June 2016

- Answered phones; Helped clients troubleshoot technical problems; Provided customer service

**West University Marital Counseling Center:**

Volunteer, January 2012- July 2016

- Helped with the promotion and advocacy of the center to the general public

**Crawford University**

Part Time Office Assistant, December 2011 – May 2014

- Answered student questions; Filed paperwork; Made copies; Assisted the full time staff as needed

**Target:**

Checkout Clerk, January 2010 – May 2011

- Operated checkout registers; Provided customer service; Other duties as needed

---

**Education**

- Bachelor of Arts in Computer Science (2016)
  - *Crawford College*
  - Graduated Cum Laude with a 3.3 GPA
  - Minor in Philosophy
- High School Diploma (2011)
  - *Brandon W. Reed High School*
  - Graduated with a 3.6 GPA

To whom it may concern,

My name is Alex West. I was James Parker's supervisor at Emergesoft, Inc. I supervised James for the entire time that they worked for our company.

I first got to know James through his wife, Sarah, about five years ago. What first caught my attention was James's hard working attitude and inquisitive nature. After knowing them for a few years, I offered to hire them to work in one of our customer service positions, where they continued to impress me with their attitude and ability to learn quickly.

I strongly recommend James Parker for this position because I think they will be an asset to your organization. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 285-392-3949.

Best,

Alex West

Customer Service Manager

Emergesoft, Inc.

**Application for  
Nurse  
at  
Cisco Health Systems**

Mary Parker

(285) 412-0387

[Mary.Parker@gmail.com](mailto:Mary.Parker@gmail.com)

*Dear Hiring Manager,*

*I am a recent college graduate with a background in both a technical and healthcare environment. I have a passion for working in this industry and a strong drive to learn. Because of my versatile background, I believe I am a great candidate for this position.*

*I became interested in your company after my wife Sarah was hospitalized in one of your hospitals with a serious illness. I was impressed with the service of your staff and the professionalism of your doctors. I knew at that point that I wanted to work for this company.*

*For a little background on myself, I completed a BA in nursing. During my time as an undergraduate, I volunteered at the West University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Support Center. I also volunteered in the front office of the Nursing Department.*

*For the past few months, I have worked as an office assistant in a medical center where I have processed patient paperwork, maintained medicine administration logs, and provided customer service to incoming patients and their families. Prior to working in the medical center, I served as a technical customer service assistant for a local software company. As an employee of this company, I answered phone calls from people who purchased our software and helped them to troubleshoot problems that they were having with their software.*

*Combining the learned and practiced skills I acquired from these jobs, I believe I a lot of valuable experience that would translate well to this job. Furthermore, as a result of my background in the medical industry, I believe I'd have an advantage over other applicants in learning how to thrive in your company.*

*I believe that I would be a good fit for this position because of my passion for this industry, my educational background, my experience, and my strong drive to learn. If you would like to contact me, please call me or email me using the information above.*

*Sincerely,*

*Mary Parker*

# Cisco Health Systems

## Application for Nurse

**10. Are you eligible to work in the United States for any employer?**

Yes

**11. Have you ever been convicted of or plead guilty to any offense under the law? If so, please explain.**

No

**12. Have you ever been fired, discharged, or forced to resign for behavioral or performance issues? If so, please explain.**

No

**13. Are you willing to be employed for this company full time?**

Yes

**14. Are you willing to travel? If so, please indicate a percentage.**

Yes. Up to 50%.

**15. Please describe your educational background.**

I have a Bachelor's degree in Nursing from Crawford College, a small liberal arts college. I graduated with a 3.3 grade point average.

**16. Why do you want to work for this company?**

Two years ago, my wife Sarah became extremely ill, and had to be hospitalized. This company not only helped her to recover, but also took great care of us, providing excellent customer service. I am so grateful for what the company did for us that I wanted to give something back to the company, and also wanted to help the company continue to thrive.

**17. What skills do you have that you believe would make you successful in the job you are applying for?**

I have extensive knowledge of best practices in nursing and medical company operations. I am very organized and take good notes. I am detail oriented. I am excellent at managing my time, and do so using calendars and to-do lists. I have a devotion to customer service and try to put those whom I'm serving first. I also learn very quickly.

**18. Describe your career goals.**

I eventually hope to obtain a supervisory position in my field where I can make the practice of nursing better within organizations. Ideally, I hope to use this position to improve my skills as a nurse to prepare me for a supervisory role in the future.

## Mary Parker

(285) 412-0387

Mary.Parker@gmail.com

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### Experience

#### Saraville Medical Center:

Office Assistant, July 2016-Present

- Answered phones; Filed paperwork; Answered emails; Other general office duties

#### Emergesoft, Inc.:

Technical Customer Service Assistant, June 2014- June 2016

- Answered phones; Helped clients troubleshoot technical problems; Provided customer service

#### West University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Support Center:

Volunteer, January 2012- July 2016

- Helped with the promotion and advocacy of the center to the general public

#### Crawford University

Part Time Office Assistant, December 2011 – May 2014

- Answered student questions; Filed paperwork; Made copies; Assisted the full time staff as needed

#### Target:

Checkout Clerk, January 2010 – May 2011

- Operated checkout registers; Provided customer service; Other duties as needed
- 

### Education

- Bachelor of Arts in Nursing (2016)
  - *Crawford College*
  - Graduated Cum Laude with a 3.3 GPA
  - Minor in Philosophy
- High School Diploma (2011)
  - *Brandon W. Reed High School*
  - Graduated with a 3.6 GPA

To whom it may concern,

My name is Alex West. I was Mary Parker's supervisor at Emergesoft, Inc. I supervised Mary for the entire time that they worked for our company.

I first got to know Mary through her wife, Sarah, about five years ago. What first caught my attention was Mary's hard working attitude and inquisitive nature. After knowing them for a few years, I offered to hire them to work in one of our customer service positions, where they continued to impress me with their attitude and ability to learn quickly.

I strongly recommend Mary Parker for this position because I think they will be an asset to your organization. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at 285-392-3949.

Best,

Alex West

Customer Service Manager

Emergesoft, Inc.

**APPENDIX B**

**TABLES**

Table 1

*Expected hirability ratings for Hypothesis 1*

	Straight	Gay
Woman	Low	Medium
Man	High	Medium

Table 2

*Expected hirability ratings for Hypothesis 2*

	Masculine Job	Feminine Job
Gay Woman	Medium	Low
Gay Man	Low	Medium
Straight Woman	Low	High
Straight Man	High	Low

Table 3

*Expected hirability ratings for Hypothesis 4*

	Masculine Job	Feminine Job
	Low Stereotype Endorsement	
Gay Woman	High	High
Gay Man	High	High
	High Stereotype Endorsement	
Gay Woman	Medium	Low
Gay Man	Low	Medium

Table 4

*Demographic breakdown of sample*

Sex			Race		
Female	457	80.3%	Asian	14	2.5%
Male	112	19.7%	African American	47	8.3%
Gender			Native American	9	1.6%
Woman	459	80.7%	White	473	83.1%
Man	109	19.2%	2 or More Races	16	2.8%
Other	1	0.1%	Other	10	1.8%
Transgender			Ethnicity		
Yes	4	0.7%	Hispanic or Latino	37	6.5%
No	565	99.3%	Middle Eastern	9	1.6%
Sexual Orientation			Neither	523	91.9%
Straight	427	85.9%	Religion		
Gay	21	4.2%	Agnostic	36	6.3%
Bisexual	34	6.8%	Atheist	43	7.6%
Other	15	3.0%	Christian- Evangelical	144	25.3%
Age			Christian- Mainline	59	10.4%
Under 30	135	23.7%	Christian- Catholic	121	21.3%
30-39	182	32.0%	Christian- Other	53	9.3%
40-49	129	22.7%	Hindu	1	0.2%
50-59	87	15.3%	Islamic	2	0.4%
60 and Over	36	6.3%	Jewish	9	1.6%
Hours Worked			Pagan	7	1.2%
Under 40	90	16.6%	Spiritual, Not Religious	47	8.3%
40 Hours	338	62.1%	Unitarian	1	0.2%
Over 40	116	21.3%	Other	46	8.1%

Table 5

*Study Correlation Matrix*

Measure	Mean	Range		SD	1	2	3	4	5
1.Rating	4.86	0.00	7.72	1.75	—				
2.Stereotyping	0.18	0.00	0.70	0.21	0.01	(0.97)			
3.Prejudice	1.33	1.00	1.80	0.27	-	0.45**	(0.58)		
					0.05				
4.Age	39.37	19.00	75.00	11.87	-0.01	0.08*	0.20**	—	
5.Hours Worked	40.48	0.00	80.00	8.07	-0.06	0.06	-0.03	-0.02	—

\*p<.05; \*\*p<.01

Note: Stereotyping, Prejudice, and Rating measures are transformed. Reliability is in parentheses.

Table 6

*Hypothesis 1 Factorial ANOVA*

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p--
Applicant Gender	1	0.16	0.16	0.05	0.82__
Applicant Sexual Orientation	1	2.76	2.76	0.90	0.34__
Gender X Sexual Orientation	1	11.82	11.82	3.86	0.049*
Error	562	1720.42	3.06		
Total	566	15086.57			

\*p&lt;.05

Table 7

*Hypothesis 2 Factorial ANOVA*

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p__
Applicant Gender	1	0.13	0.13	0.04	0.89__
Applicant Sexual Orientation	1	3.05	3.05	1.00	<0.001*
Job Type	1	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.95__
Gender X Sexual Orientation	1	11.59	11.59	3.81	0.05__
Gender X Job Type	1	15.15	15.15	4.97	0.03*_
Sexual Orientation X Job Type	1	0.11	0.11	0.04	0.85__
Gender X Sexual Orientation X Job	1	5.47	5.47	1.80	0.18__
Error	558	1699.72	3.05		
Total	566	15086.57			

\*p&lt;.05

Table 8

*Hypothesis 3A Regression*

Source	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	P
Stereotyping	-0.10	0.81	-0.01	-0.12	0.91

\*p<.05

Table 9

*Hypothesis 3B Regression*

Source	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	P
Stereotyping	-2.00	0.77	-0.22	-2.61	0.01*

\*p<.05

Table 10

*Hypothesis 4A Factorial ANOVA*

Source	df	SS	MS	F	P
Applicant Sexual Orientation	1	5.27	5.27	1.85	0.18
Job Type	1	5.38	5.38	1.89	0.17
Stereotyping	1	2.33	2.33	0.82	0.37
Sexual Orientation X Job Type	1	2.27	2.27	0.80	0.37
Sexual Orientation X Stereotyping	1	3.41	3.41	1.20	0.28
Job Type X Stereotyping	1	0.09	0.09	0.03	0.86
Sexual Orientation X Job Type X Stereotyping	1	0.32	0.32	0.11	0.74
Error	276	786.43	2.85		
Total	284	7551.19			

\*p&lt;.05

Table 11

*Hypothesis 4B Factorial ANOVA*

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p__
Applicant Sexual Orientation	1	0.30	0.30	0.10	0.76-
Job Type	1	16.30	16.30	5.16	0.02*
Stereotyping	1	5.11	5.11	1.62	0.21-
Sexual Orientation X Job Type	1	10.82	10.82	3.42	0.07-
Sexual Orientation X Stereotyping	1	22.51	22.51	7.12	0.01*
Job Type X Stereotyping	1	5.32	5.32	1.68	0.20-
Sexual Orientation X Job Type X Stereotyping	1	4.33	4.33	1.37	0.24-
Error	274	866.42	3.16		
Total	282	7535.38			

\*p&lt;.05

Table 12

*Hypothesis 5A Regression*

Source	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	P
Prejudice	-0.14	0.54	-0.02	-0.26	0.80

\*p<.05

Table 13

*Hypothesis 5B Regression*

Source	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	P
Prejudice	-1.04	0.56	-0.16	-1.86	0.07

\*p<.05

Table 14

*Research Question Factorial ANOVA- 1*

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p__
Applicant Sexual Orientation	1	0.14	0.14	0.05	0.83
Job Type	1	0.20	0.20	0.07	0.79
Prejudice	1	0.27	0.27	0.09	0.76
Sexual Orientation X Job Type	1	0.13	0.13	0.04	0.83
Sexual Orientation X Prejudice	1	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.93
Job Type X Prejudice	1	0.95	0.95	0.33	0.57
Sexual Orientation X Job Type X Prejudice	1	0.40	0.40	0.14	0.71
Error	276	791.89	2.87		
Total	284	7551.19			

\*p&lt;.05

Table 15

*Research Question Factorial ANOVA- 2*

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p__
Applicant Sexual Orientation	1	1.80	1.80	0.55	0.46
Job Type	1	2.05	2.05	0.63	0.43
Prejudice	1	6.40	6.40	1.96	0.16
Sexual Orientation X Job Type	1	1.07	1.07	0.33	0.57
Sexual Orientation X Prejudice	1	4.59	4.59	1.41	0.24
Job Type X Prejudice	1	0.76	0.76	0.23	0.63
Sexual Orientation X Job Type X Prejudice	1	0.45	0.45	0.14	0.71
Error	274	893.74	3.26		
Total	281	7535.38			

\*p&lt;.05

**APPENDIX C**

**MEASURES**

### **Manipulation Check**

Instructions: Please answer the following questions based on the application you just studied.

1. Please identify the job that the applicant applied for.
  - a. Computer Technician
  - b. Nurse
2. Please identify the applicant's gender.
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
3. Please identify the applicant's name.
  - a. James
  - b. Mary
4. Please identify the applicant's sexual orientation.
  - a. Gay
  - b. Straight
5. Please identify the applicant's spouse.
  - a. Sarah
  - b. Paul

### **Sexual Orientation Stereotyping**

Instructions: Please select the answer that best represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with each item. (Note: These items were presented within measures of conservatism and conspiracy theory endorsement.)

1. Straight men are better at science than gay men.
2. Straight women are better at languages, writing, and social studies than lesbian women.
3. Straight men are better at most sports compared to gay men.

4. Straight men are better at learning to use computers than gay men.
5. Straight men are more capable than gay men of killing the enemy in war.
6. Straight men are better at making decisions with money than gay men.
7. Straight women are better at making decisions about childcare than lesbian women.
8. Straight women are interested in different topics of conversation than lesbian women.
9. Straight women are more suited for childcare than lesbian women.
10. Straight women are better suited than lesbian women to work inside the house.

### **Sexual Orientation Prejudice**

Instructions: Please select the answer that best represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement. (Note: Items excluded from the 3 item measure are italicized.)

1. *It would be upsetting to me to find out I was alone with a gay man.*
2. I would feel nervous being in a group of gay men.
3. *I enjoy being in the company of lesbian women.*
4. If I knew someone was a lesbian, I'd be open to forming a relationship with that individual.
5. I would feel comfortable working closely with a gay man.

### **Religiosity**

Instructions: Please select the answer that best represents the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. I believe in a God who watches over me.
2. The events in my life unfold according to a divine or greater plan.
3. I try to carry my religious beliefs over into all my other dealings in life.

4. I find strength and comfort in my religion.

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**ABSTRACT****GAY AND LESBIAN DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE: THE ROLE OF AGENTIC AND COMMUNAL TRAIT EXPECTATIONS**

by

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Workplace discrimination is a recurring problem in organizations, particularly in organizational processes such as employee selection. Such discrimination is caused by a variety of factors including stereotyping of people by demographic identities and prejudice against various demographic groups. While federal and local legislation protects many stigmatized groups such as race and gender minorities, sexual minorities are largely unprotected. Previous research on sexual orientation reveals a diverse set of negative experiences. However, evidence for formal discrimination against sexual minorities in personnel selection has been inconclusive. Drawing on Role Congruity Theory, perceived characteristic misfit, cognitive stereotyping, and emotionally influenced prejudicial feelings are examined as explanations for how and when sexual orientation influences selection decisions. Results of the study reveal that situational and demographic moderators do affect sexual orientation-related hiring bias. However, results suggest that the central premises of Role Congruity Theory do not extend to sexual orientation.

**AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT**

Daniel Krenn is Diversity Data Analyst for NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center (MSFC). In his current role, he helps to guide MSFC's actions to decrease unfair personnel practices and barriers to employment that lead to demographic disparities in representation and success. Daniel previously served as a Personnel Analyst for the Mobile County Personnel Board, where he predominately focused on job analysis, employee selection, applicant assessment, and organizational restructuring. He received his B.A. in Psychology from Auburn University, and received his M.A. and PhD in Industrial/Organizational Psychology from Wayne State University. His research interests relate to employee well-being and organizational fairness. His research primarily examines aggressive and discriminatory behavior in the workplace, biases/accuracy in personnel practices, and work-life balance.