

Forum: ECOSOC

Issue: Promoting measures against inherent hiring biases based on race, sex, religion, etc.



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Introduction:

Hiring bias is something many job applicants suffer from. It happens every day everywhere and is a difficult problem to solve, since people often are not aware that they're being biased. It's something that happens in our subconscious, after years of constant consumption of many stereotypes. This is something that has simply been integrated into our society.

However, there are also people who simply are racist or sexist, and have managed to find their way to an important position in a certain organization. They justify their ways, and that is a very different issue.

Whatever the reason is, hiring biases are everywhere. This research report will hopefully give you some insight on the issue and prepare you properly for the debate.

Definition of Key terms:

Bias: Prejudice for or against a certain person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair

Prejudice: Preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience

Racism: Prejudice, discrimination or antagonism by an individual, community or institution against a person or people on the basis of their membership of a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized

Sexism: Prejudice, stereotyping or discrimination on the basis of sex, typically against women

Minority: A small group of people within a community or country, differing from the main population in race, religion, language, sex, sexuality or political persuasion

Segregation: The enforced separation of different racial groups in a country, community, or establishment

The patriarchy: A system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it

Hate crimes: A crime, typically one involving violence, that is motivated by prejudice on the basis of ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or similar grounds

Background:

Racism

Segregation has always been reason for a massive division in society, leading to unfair treatment for many people. You only need to look at the figures to see that, though the world's come a long way, black people suffer from much more discrimination. This happens in many different situations: in schools, black teenagers are more likely to get a punishment, on the street black people are more likely to be stopped without reason and in the job market, which we are discussing at the moment, black people are less likely to be hired for a job that fits their level of education and/or experience.

The things still happening today come from centuries of prejudice and date back to the era of slavery. Though slavery has officially been abolished for over decades, in many countries modern slavery sadly still exists.

There are different theories from where racism may find its roots, one not excluding the other.

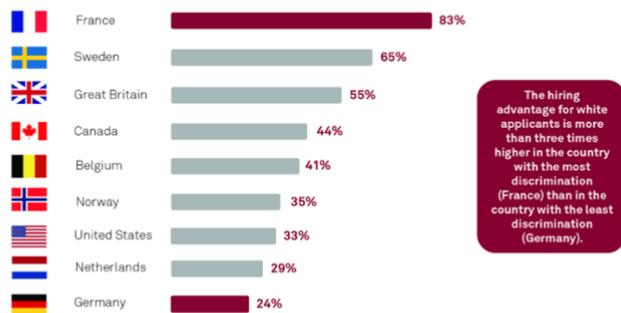
The first is Charles Darwin's survival of the fittest theory, which led to the belief that white people are simply better than black people, and therefore deserve more opportunities.

Another theory is that white supremacy has been so romanticized that white people simply do not believe they are doing anything wrong. The colonization has been so glorified that children are being taught that the intruders, who essentially robbed indigenous people, were heroes.

In the following pictures, you can see the results of an investigation run in nine countries. The countries are ranked according to the hiring advantage for white applicants. In the graphic underneath that you can see that racial discrimination in the US hiring has barely improved over the last twenty-five years.

Some Countries Discriminate More Than Others

IPR sociologist Lincoln Quillian and his colleagues find **pervasive hiring discrimination** in a meta-analysis of nine Western countries. They find that all nonwhite groups experience hiring discrimination, but the degree **varies widely between countries**. Below, the researchers show the **percentage of additional job interview callbacks** a native white person received, compared with a nonwhite person.



The hiring advantage for white applicants is more than three times higher in the country with the most discrimination (France) than in the country with the least discrimination (Germany).

Quillian, L., A. Heath, D. Pager, A. H. Midtbøen, F. Fleischmann, and O. Hexel. 2019. Do some countries discriminate more than others? Evidence from 37 field experiments of racial discrimination in hiring. *Sociological Science*. doi: 10.15195/v6.a18.

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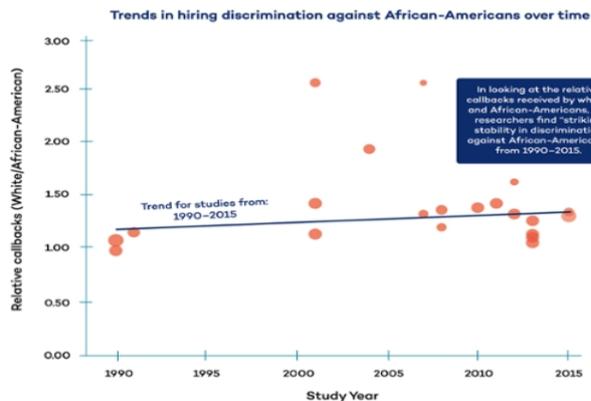
Persistence of Racial Discrimination in U.S. Hiring

IPR sociologist Lincoln Quillian finds hiring discrimination in the United States has not declined over time.

The researchers conducted a meta-analysis of:

21 studies of hiring discrimination since 1990

Whites receive **30%** more callbacks than African-Americans on average.



In looking at the relative callbacks received by whites and African-Americans, the researchers find "striking stability in discrimination against African-Americans" from 1990-2015.

Quillian, L., D. Pager, O. Hexel, and A. Midtbøen. 2017. The persistence of racial discrimination: A meta-analysis of field experiments in hiring over time. *Proceedings of the Academy of Sciences*. doi:10.1073.

Though the US seems like the most biased country, that infamous title actually goes to France, followed by Sweden. It is important these countries specifically work hard to overcome this issue.

To conclude, since the rise of slavery in the 1600s, the world's come a long way, but not completely in the right direction. Segregation and discrimination still have a place in today's society, and probably will have one for a very long time. Today it is up to the delegates to find a way of perhaps creating new or irradiating old laws to finally find a world where racial segregation is illegal. We are all humans living on the same planet after all, and none of us deserve the bare minimum.

Sexism

The Patriarchy, too, has existed for centuries. Women are less likely to hold higher positions in politics and society and are usually paid less. They spend twice as much time as men on unpaid housework, and 80% of women have an experience with "mansplaining" and "maninterrupting" at work. Numbers variate with every nation but the bottom line is clear; women and men are not on the same level in working spaces.

Where does this come from?

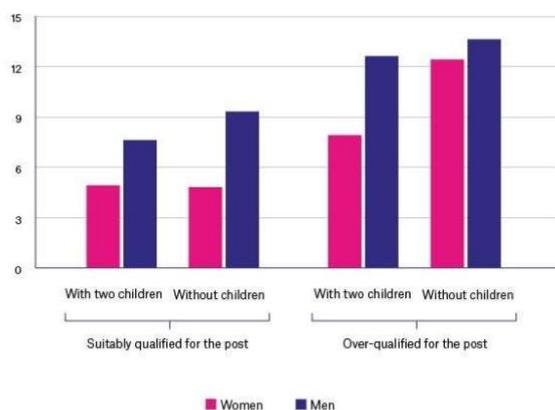
Looking at history, one can determine two societies: that of hunter-gatherers and that of agriculture and settling down. At first, it was not necessarily the norm that women moved in with their husbands, but as farms were passed on from father to son this changed.

In many nations, women and men now enjoy the same rights, but despite equality on-paper, reality still tends to disappoint. You also have the nations that still hold

their misogynist laws, making it even harder to find equality in the workspace.

Nations where this happens a lot are Afghanistan and other Middle Eastern countries.

This causes women to face more hurdles than men while trying to get a job. The following picture shows worrying graphics; take notice that the probability of over-qualified women with two children getting invited to a job interview is barely more than suitably qualified men with two children, and less than suitably qualified men without children.



Source: compiled by the author.

The reasons for these biases can vary from the trouble of maternity-leave to straight-up discrimination, but neither one of them should be justified. Women and men deserve the same rights and opportunities.

Roots

There are multiple forms of hiring bias, but the ones most common and relevant to the issue are affinity and social bias. These mean that people are more likely to hire someone that is more like them, and less likely to hire someone of color, a different gender or religion. Matters such as, but not limited to age, cultural background and

sexuality also influence people's decisions. The specific matters this research report discussed are hiring biases originating from sexism and racism.

Consequences

Consequences are that people with one of the above-mentioned characteristics are less likely to get a job. This will eventually result in a never-ending cycle of discrimination and poverty, where some people have a head-start simply because of the way they were born. It is important that this issue is resolved as soon as possible, in order to create fair opportunities for everyone.

Major parties involved:

USA: The United States of America have a long history of controversy, which influences people globally. Though they have accepted the civil rights act of 1964, recent events show that not everyone agrees. The impact of events in the USA can be seen all over the world, like the black lives matter movement.

France: The amount of people in France that have suffered from a form of discrimination in the workplace is shocking. The French government has, however, ran several studies investigating this issue and attempts to help. Despite this, numbers are still high and the issue remains unresolved.

Committee on elimination of racial discrimination (CERD) and the committee on elimination of discrimination against women (CEDAW): These are both independent organizations, consisting of experts whose primary task is to monitor the conventions against these types of discrimination. More information about the organizations can be found through this link: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/treaty-bodies>

Relevant UN treaties, resolutions, and reports:

The resolution adopted by the General Assembly 1904 (XVIII). United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination:

[https://www.oas.org/dil/1963%20United%20Nations%20Declaration%20on%20the%20Elimination%20of%20All%20Forms%20of%20Racial%20Discrimination,%20proclaimed%20by%20the%20General%20Assembly%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20on%20November%2020,%201963,%20resolution%201904%20\(XVIII\).pdf](https://www.oas.org/dil/1963%20United%20Nations%20Declaration%20on%20the%20Elimination%20of%20All%20Forms%20of%20Racial%20Discrimination,%20proclaimed%20by%20the%20General%20Assembly%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20on%20November%2020,%201963,%20resolution%201904%20(XVIII).pdf)

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, adopted 21 December 1965, by the UN General Assembly resolution 2106 (XX):

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-convention-elimination-all-forms-racial>

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women New York, 18 December 1979, adopted on 18 December 1979, by the United Nations General Assembly:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>

Other documents can be found through the official UN-website or the website mentioned with the CERD and the CEDAW.

Previous attempts to solve the issue:

All over the world people have tried and are still trying to solve this issue. These attempts can vary from studies to find out where the problem lies to using artificial intelligence to objectively select candidates.

One of the most popular solutions is to ensure that people are trained against unconscious bias. Many times, people do not intend to be biased, but people are people. Sometimes they will fail to be objective.

However, artificial intelligence lacks the human element. They can, for example, not understand a motivation letter.

To conclude, it is important that you find a solution that makes it possible for everyone to have the same chances in the job market.

It starts with the law, it starts with awareness and it ends with equality.

Extra information on the subject, specifically on different types of bias, can be found through this link: <https://www.equalture.com/blog/10-types-of-unconscious-hiring-bias/>

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