Do You Look Like Me?
How Bias Affects Affirmative Action in Hiring

By Ozias Moore, Alex Susskind and Beth Livingston

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In today's multicultural work environment, a better understanding of how bias affects hiring and promotion decisions, and what can be done to reduce its effects, is a major concern for hospitality industry human resource professionals and academics. Past research on racial bias and social identity theory shows contradictory effects; we propose that by examining additional boundary conditions we can clarify the "same-race" bias effect in hiring and candidate evaluation. We propose that perceptions of competence regarding job applicants provided to HR managers, and their attitudes toward affirmative action programs, can help reduce bias in the hiring process. Using an experimental design, we investigated these effects in two samples involving business college students and practicing HR managers at a full-service national hotel chain. We found that job candidate competence and raters' attitudes toward affirmative action reduced the same-race effect, with some important differences between the two samples. Affirmative action attitudes enhance same-race bias among African-American evaluators in both samples, the study shows, while information on candidate competence has the opposite effect in the student sample.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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Ozias Moore, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of management at Lehigh University's College of Business and Economics. He received his B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh, an M.S. in Engineering from the University of Pennsylvania, and an MS and PhD in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University. His major research interests focus on team and multi-team effectiveness. He is particularly interested in the multi-level effects of multiple team membership on team processes, emergent states, and team outcomes. His secondary area of research, which shifts from the team to individual processes and outcomes, focuses on the effects of individual differences that affect perceptions, judgments, and performance. Moore was awarded the 2016 Cornell University Provost Fellowship. In addition, he was selected as the highest ranked student to receive the 2016 Lee Hakel Graduate Student Scholarship by the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP).

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The large number of workers in the leisure, hospitality, and health care industries, representing 27 percent of the service sector and 21 percent of the total U.S. workforce as of 2014, presents several challenges for managers and owners in recruiting, hiring, and retaining a qualified and diverse workforce.[1] One challenge for the hospitality industry is a worker turnover rate estimated at 72.1 percent in 2015, up from 66.7 percent in 2014.[2] This puts pressure on unit-level managers to ensure staffing levels can deliver the products and services sought by their guests.

[1] Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015.

[2] Ruggless, 2016.

While all businesses have human resource standards and practices in place to ensure that the recruitment and hiring processes comply with regulations in concert with the organization's needs, high turnover complicates the hiring process. The result is "snap decisions," or snap hiring for line-level positions.[3] Human resource managers, facing time constraints and limited pools of qualified applicants to fill positions in both the front and back of the house make hiring decisions on basic, but limited, information, in short time frames. This does not mean that when making snap decisions HR managers do not screen applicants for competence, experience, fit, or diversity. In fact, they normally screen applicants well, looking for a set of specific basic qualifications (mainly prior experience, training, and education) and base decisions to hire on those qualities, subject to employment eligibility verification.

As part of this process, HR managers are compelled to hire and maintain a diverse workforce, including qualified minorities, based on their organization's affirmative action policies and goals. Given these issues and challenges, the focus of this study is to examine how the race of applicants and hiring managers affects snap decision hiring.

The Goal of Diversity and Inclusion

As HR leaders seek ways to eliminate workplace discrimination, there is greater recognition of the critical role evaluator bias plays in selection decisions. Evaluator bias based on job applicant demographics, such as race, continues to plague selection and hiring decisions.[4] This differential treatment may occur at any time during the recruitment, selection, and hiring process, in part because hiring decisions involve not only determining who is suitable for a position but also determining who is hired from that pool of suitable applicants.[5]

Is a Picture Worth a Thousand Words?

Recent research shows that, despite potential legal and ethical issues, more organizations reinforce their screening processes by gathering information about job applicants (including personal photos) from social networking sites. In fact, according to Kluemper and Rosen, 20 percent to 25 percent of managers use these sites to check job candidates' backgrounds.[6] Moreover, 40 percent indicated they are likely to do so in the future. As a result, hiring managers can easily learn information about a job candidate's race or ethnicity.[7] This practice creates a critical need to understand the implications of using applicant pictures during screening and for other employment decisions. Many companies now employ consulting firms to train employees who are charged with hiring to be more sensitive to diversity and inclusion. Google and BAE, for example, have engaged authorities on bias to train those who interview candidates and make selection decisions.[8]

Researchers have demonstrated that race similarity between the evaluator and the applicant similarity may favorably influence applicant assessments more than other demographic categories.[9] Social identity theory shows that applicants who are racially similar to hiring managers receive more favorable interview assessments and are more likely to receive job offers than are applicants who are racially dissimilar.[10] In our study we examine whether the race similarity of the hiring manager and job applicant affects job applicant selection and hiring decisions.

In our two studies we test two triple interactions: **(1)** the interaction between the hiring manager and job applicant's racial similarity and the hiring manager's evaluation of the job applicant's competence; and **(2)** the interaction between the hiring manager and job applicant's racial similarity and the hiring manager's attitude toward affirmative action policies.

Most research examining the effect of demographic similarity on work outcomes has not been conducted in field settings, so it is unclear whether biased outcomes due to evaluator-applicant race similarity occur when hiring managers make their decisions. We address this second limitation by including a replication of the impact of hiring manager–job applicant racial similarity across two experiments: a sample of business school undergraduate students and a sample of practicing human resource managers.

Researchers have questioned whether the findings relating to evaluator-applicant demographic similarity apply to assessment outcomes and to hiring decisions.[11] We address this third limitation by considering the hiring managers' evaluation of the applicant's suitability for the job and the decision to hire the applicant.

We suggest that a hiring manager's consideration of information that breaks the evaluator's same-race bias would reduce the adverse effects of that bias. By explaining why there is bias during same-race selection decisions—and also testing the interaction of information present during an evaluator's hiring decisions that may help to reverse or attenuate this bias—we seek to demonstrate the importance of expectation violations during the hiring process to more fully understand the impact of racial similarity on selection and hiring decisions. Next, we introduce and describe the theoretical and practical elements that support this study.

[3] Buckley and Elder, 1988

[4] Lee, Pitesa, Thau and Pilluta, 2015.

[5] Boudreau, Boswell, Judge and Bretz, 2001; Smith and Kidder, 2010.

[6] Kluemper and Rosen, 2009.

[7] Smith and Kidder, 2010; Seidner, 2007.

[8] Lublin, 2014.

[9] Tajfel and Turner, 1986

[10] Dovidio and Gaertner, 200; Goldberg, 2005.

[11] Goldberg, 2005; Graves and Powell, 1996.

Hey, He Does Not Look Like Me!

Social identity theory and the social categorization perspective suggest that hiring managers tend to categorize themselves and others into social categories, such as race, and evaluate members of their own group or category more favorably.[12] Likewise, the idea of person-organization fit suggests that since supervisors view themselves as successful organizational members, they will evaluate similar individuals more favorably than dissimilar individuals to maintain a positive identity and self-regard.[13]

Kraiger and Ford's meta-analysis finds support for the positive effects of evaluator racial similarity on work outcomes, but findings are mixed.[14] The wide range of results from studies in this domain indicates that same-race bias likely follows a more complex pattern.

Those mixed research findings raise questions of when and why individuals might be biased against members of their ingroup and outgroup. For example, Jackson *et al.*, contrary to their predictions, found that African-Americans maintained their level of ingroup bias, whereas Caucasians evaluated African-American and Caucasian targets equally favorably, despite the level of positive information provided.[15] In contrast, Jost found that low-status groups (i.e., African-Americans) exhibit outgroup favoritism on status-relevant dimensions, but ingroup favoritism on dimensions unrelated to status differences, whereas high-status groups tend to exhibit strong ingroup favoritism.[16] Each of these studies calls for additional research to better understand the complex influence of information processing on ingroup and outgroup members' evaluations.

Likewise, researchers have acknowledged the limitations of social identity theory to fully explain the phenomenon of status differences on ingroup favoritism.[17] We contend that the impact of evaluator-job applicant racial similarity in hiring and selection decisions is more complex than previous findings suggest. As a result, a fuller understanding of the relationship between evaluator and applicant racial similarity is warranted.

Not Exactly As I Expected

If an evaluator incorporates additional information during the review of a same-race applicant that does not correspond to the biased influences associated with same-race characteristic perceptions, we argue that such effects are more likely to be attenuated. Expectancy violation theory suggests that when applicant information signals a violation of the evaluators' expectations of applicants based on racial similarity, the applicants are subjected to greater scrutiny.[18] This type of bias occurs in the opposite direction of the expected evaluation and is termed a "contrast effect."[19] The contrast effect, in this case, emerges from a comparison of an evaluator's more favorable evaluation (due to racial similarity with the applicant) with new information that violates this biased expectation. In this study we propose that, when information is provided during the hiring process that violates same-race similarity biased information searches and evaluation processes, it should attenuate the influence of evaluator-applicant same-race bias on hiring outcomes. Thus, integrating expectancy violation theory should enhance our understanding of how to avoid the bias of racial similarity on hiring outcomes related to social identity theory and the similarity-attraction paradigm.

Researchers have demonstrated the effect of expectation violations (compared to expectation confirmation) on distracting and redirecting an individual's awareness resources.[20] For example, Geddes and Konrad were surprised to find that in racially similar supervisor-subordinates dyads, African-American subordinates' reactions to feedback that violated their expectations (i.e., lower-than-expected rating and negative feedback) were more extreme when the supervisor was also African-American.[21] This information likely did not meet their expectations of a supervisor who shared their same-race category, whereas racial dissimilarity had no effect on reactions to extreme information. Similarly, we contend it is likely that unexpected job candidate information or personal beliefs about affirmative action will divert cognitive processing from biased evaluations and reduce the likelihood of bias in hiring decisions for racially similar evaluator-applicants. Thus, in the sections that follow, we test two moderating factors (information about competence and attitudes toward affirmative action on the effect of evaluator-candidate race similarity in candidate ratings and hiring decisions.

Does Job Suitability Matter?

Our perceptions are based on processing information assembled from the surrounding environment such that exposure to salient information or contextual aspects of the work environment can influence which socially derived information is relevant.[22] How individuals search for and acquire information in a social environment is often biased by the seeker's beliefs and

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[12] Tajfel and Turner, 1986; Lee *et al.*, 2015.

[13] Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman and Johnson, 2005.

[14] Kraiger amd Ford, 1985; King, Mendoza Madera, Hebl and Knigbht, 2006; Sacco *et al*, 2003; Terpstra and Larsen, 1980.

[15] Jackson *et al*, 1987.

[16] Jost, 2001.

[17] Hinkle and Brown, 1990; Jost and Banaji, 1994; Sidanius, 1993.

[18] Burgoon, 1978; Jussim *et al*,1996; Jackson, Sullivan and Hodge, 1993; Jussim *et al*, 1996; McKirnan, Smith and Hamayan, 1983.

[19] Murphy, Balzer, Lockhart and Eisenman, 1985.

[20] Livingston, Schilpzand and Erez, 2014.

[21] Geddes and Konrad,2003.

[22] Fiske and Neuberg, 1990; Goldman, Gutek, Stein and Lewis, 2006; Kunda and Spencer, 2003.

expectations.[23] Jonas, Schulz-Hardt, Frey, and Thelen demonstrated that individuals have a preference for information that supports their existing biases, whether that information is processed sequentially or simultaneously.[24] This pattern is particularly relevant as it mirrors the information presentation and processing in a hiring manager's recruitment and selection process.

Based on these principles, we contend that when an evaluator is provided only with a job candidate's picture, race is salient and serves as the primary basis for same-race bias. However, when suitability information about a job candidate is provided, the evaluator is given concrete examples of competence, which should allow evaluators to move beyond a social identity bias that may cause outgroups to be seen as less competent for a position.[25] The presence of information, such as applicant suitability, should attenuate the effect of available demographic characteristics on selection outcomes. With that said, we suggest that a job candidate's suitability information leads to an expectancy violation when the information does not meet expectations about a candidate based on the picture alone. Hence, we argue that this expectancy violation should attenuate and reverse evaluator-applicant same-race bias.

Expectancy violation theory suggests that there often are lower expectations for cross-race candidates, and when these expectations are violated in a positive direction (i.e., higher actual suitability than one expected), evaluations will be more positive.[26] Because of the potential for an expectation violation, we predict that the relationship between a candidate's suitability for the job and ratings of candidate appropriateness are stronger for cross-race pairs than for same-race pairs.

For example, an African-American evaluator might initially evaluate a Caucasian job candidate less favorably given the similar-to-me effect.[27] However, expectancy violation theory suggests that when a job candidate's suitability violates stereotype-based expectations, evaluations should become more extreme in the direction of the expectancy violation (e.g., high actual suitability). Empirical research supports this prediction.[28]

These results, in conjunction with the preceding discussion, suggest suitability information should reduce the importance of the job candidates' race for cross-race job candidates. We thus predict that African-American evaluators will evaluate Caucasian job candidates more favorably than similarly suited African-American candidates when accompanied by high suitability and competence information because, although they may have expected to rate someone of similar race more highly at first, being provided with overwhelmingly strong information on a Caucasian candidate's competence will invoke an expectation violation that attenuates that inclination.

Research Proposition 1: Considering the race of the job applicant, the race of the evaluator, and the job applicant's actual suitability, we propose that applicants of the same race as the evaluator will receive **(a)** higher job suitability ratings and **(b)** more favorable recommendations to hire, except when the job candidate's actual suitability rating is high.

Personal Attitudes toward Affirmative Action

We contend that stereotyping and elements of social identity create differences in how same-race and opposite-race job applicants are viewed by evaluators. Because affirmative action polices make salient the explicit consideration of an applicant's race, we further extend that reasoning, and hence the research propositions, to assess the extent to which individuals' personal beliefs about affirmative action policies are connected to an improper assessment of applicants' qualifications and suitability for a job.[29] Individuals' attitudes toward affirmative action can also activate biases toward or against specific candidates, exacerbating or attenuating same-race bias.[30] Affirmative action policies may reinforce (i.e., make social categories more salient) rather than dissolve racial barriers, and for the evaluator it may suppress or magnify the intensity of bias.[31]

Further, if affirmative action policies appear to involve a lowering of employment standards, negative expectancies and behaviors will be attached to outgroup (minority group) member status.[32] The consequences of evaluator bias, then, may involve inconsistent evaluations of the job applicant's suitability and decisions on whether to hire the applicant. This bias may also be connected to the evaluator's expectations, which then influence decision-making.[33] The second boundary condition that we consider and test is the evaluator's attitude toward affirmative action policies.

Research has demonstrated that differences in attitudes toward public policy are driven by the personal or collective self-interest considerations.[34] We therefore propose that given enduring self-interest motives and beliefs, the same-race effect will be bolstered when evaluators report positive perceptions of affirmative action policies.

Currently, the empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of affirmative action policies to attenuate discrimination

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[23] Johnston, 1996.

[24] Jonas, Schulz-Hardt, Frey and Thelen, 2001

[25] Dunn and Spellman, 2003.

[26] Burgoon,1978; Jussim *et al*, 1996.

[27] Lin, Dobbins and Farh, 1992.

[28] Jussim *et al,* 1996.

[29] For a review see Harrison, Kravitz and Mayer, Lesle and Lev-Arey, 2006.

[30] Kravitz *et al.*, 1997.

[31] Cf. James, Brief, Dietz and Cohen, 2001.

[32] See Crosby and Clayton, 1990; Kravitz and Platania, 1993; Leslie, Mayer and Kravitz, 2014.

[33] Jussim *et al.*, 1996.

[34] Kravitz and Platania, 1993.

and bias is mixed.[35] On one hand, affirmative action policies may encourage egalitarian behavior, and weaken the saliency of group boundaries.[36] On the other hand, external pressure to control bias can result in responses to outgroup members that are more negative, rather than less biased.[37]

Because an individual's attitude toward affirmative action policies may be affected by self-interest,pressure to behave in a non-biased way may also backfire and lead that person to behave in more biased ways based on expectations of ethnic minorities.[38] We believe that HR managers' internal beliefs about affirmative action are connected to their assessments of Caucasian and African-American job applicants. We believe that racial-similarity bias is accentuated when evaluators' attitudes toward affirmative action are positive. To evaluate this hypothesis, we test the interaction between evaluator race, job candidate race, and the evaluators' personal attitudes toward affirmative action.

Research Proposition 2: Considering the race of the job applicant, the race of the evaluator, and the evaluator's personal affirmative action attitudes, we propose that applicants who are the same race as the evaluator will receive **(a)** higher job suitability ratings and **(b)** more favorable recommendations to hire, except when the evaluator's personal affirmative action attitudes are positive, and the job applicant's actual suitability rating is high.

Method

To test our research propositions we conducted two field-based experiments using a sample of business school undergraduates (Study 1) and a sample of human resource managers who were responsible for recruiting and hiring employees at the unit-level of a large international hotel company (Study 2). Both sets of participants were presented with a hypothetical job description and were asked to rate a hypothetical applicant's qualifications relative to the position—the applicants varied on race (by a picture attached to the résumé) and qualifications for the job—suggest a hiring decision, and report their attitudes about affirmative action policies. Before we conducted our primary study we developed and tested our stimulus materials in a series of pilot studies to ensure that we could effectively manipulate race through pictures; that the candidate pictures appeared as reasonable candidates for the position; that the candidates in the photos were reasonably attractive; and that the applicant photos influenced the raters' assessments. These pilot studies were conducted in lieu of traditional manipulation checks so that we could maintain the integrity of the study and not contaminate our experiment.[39] Following the pretest analysis, we yielded six job applicant conditions: a 3 x 2 design (that is, three levels of suitability: poorly suited, well suited, perfectly suited; and two of applicant race: Caucasian, African-American; see Exhibits 2 and 3).

Study 1: Procedures and Sample

Participants for Study 1 (n = 256) were drawn from several lower level organizational behavior classes at two large universities in the United States. Evaluators first completed the snap-decision rating task on a single applicant randomly assigned from one of the six conditions, and one week later they completed the attitude measures to reduce the potential for influence on their attitudes from rating tasks. We yielded a response rate of 85.9 percent from the 435 surveys initially distributed. The average age of participants was 21.5 and 52 percent were male. Evaluators were predominantly Caucasian (74 percent), 9 percent were African-American, 8 percent were Hispanic, and 6 percent were Asian. Because we were interested in same-race effects, we dropped all Hispanic and Asian evaluators from subsequent analyses. The evaluators were asked to determine the suitability of an applicant to an entry-level sales position presented in the hypothetical scenario.

Our sample yielded two evaluator race conditions: African-American (n = 26), and Caucasian (n = 231). In concert with the two applicant race conditions: African-American (n = 123) and Caucasian (n = 134), we examined the main effects of evaluator race and applicant race, as well as the possible evaluator race–applicant race interaction on each dependent variable. Applicant suitability is represented as the match between the seven job requirements presented in the job description sheet and the applicant's credentials.

Study 2: Procedures and Sample

For Study 2, we secured a sample of 241 unit-level human resource managers as evaluators from 160 units of a national full-service hotel chain to complete the rating task and the survey measures. Company leadership endorsed this study, which was framed as an independent research project conducted by professors from a large private university for strictly academic purposes. In their roles as unit-level human resource managers, the evaluators were responsible in varying degrees for recruiting, hiring, and training of employees at their hotel in addition to other functions, such as community relations, union relations (when applicable), and payroll and benefits administration. The survey invitation for this two-part study went out to 380 managers in the company, with a 63-percent response rate.

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[35] Harrison *et al.*, 2006.

[36] Kravitz and Platania, 1993.

[37] Monin and Miller, 2001; Plant and Devine, 2003.

[38] Monin and Miller, 2001; Jussim *et al.*, 1996; Livingston *et al.*, 2014; Susskind, Brymer, Kim, Lee and Way, 2014.

[39] Details of these pretests are available from the first author upon request.

Exhibit 1

Study 1: Correlations, means, and standard deviations

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Manipulated suitability	2.02	.82	1.00								
2. Candidate race	.48	.50	.01	1.00							
3. Evaluator race	.10	.30	-.15*	-.01	1.00						
4. Suitability ratings	4.30	1.62	.61*	-.05	-.02	1.00					
5. Hiring recommendation	.06	.24	.23*	-.15*	.07	.39*	1.00				
6. Evaluator age	21.62	4.61	.05	-.02	.01	.03	-.05	1.00			
7. Evaluator school	.74	.44	-.06	-.17*	.14*	-.16*	-.03	.08	1.00		
8. Evaluator AA attitudes	3.02	.89	.01	.04	.37*	.07	.09	-.01	-.04	1.00	
9. Evaluator sex	.52	.50	-.02	.02	.00	.05	-.09	.02	.05	-.08	1.00

Notes. n = 256. * $p < .05$ (one-tailed), ** $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Evaluator sex is coded 1 = male, 0 = female; evaluator and candidate race is coded 1 = African-American, 0 = Caucasian; manipulated suitability is coded 1 = poorly suited, 2 = moderately suited, 3 = perfectly suited.

Similar to Study 1, once the evaluators completed the snap-decision rating task, they were sent a follow up email asking them to complete the attitude measures. Demographic characteristics of the Study 2 evaluators were measured to control for any potential influence of sex, race, or ethnicity. Thirty-six percent of the evaluators were male, ranging in age from 22 to 47 (M = 26.86, SD = 3.69). The evaluators were predominantly Caucasian (n = 190 or 77%), while 9 percent were African-American (n = 23), 8 percent were Hispanic (n = 21), and 3 percent were Asian (n = 7). As in Study 1, our final sample included 20 African-American evaluators and 154 Caucasian evaluators who rated either African-American candidates (n = 77) or Caucasian candidates (n = 97).

Analytic Strategy

To test our research propositions, we conducted linear and logistic moderated regression analyses in Stata 11.[40] Dependent variables were regressed onto all main effects and then onto each three-way interaction posited by the two research propositions. All steps completely controlled for the variables entered at prior steps, but coefficients were interpreted only at the first step that they were entered. For the logistic regressions, given the low base rates of the occurrence (6 percent "yes" in both samples), we used "firthlogit" in Stata, also known as penalized likelihood. This reduces small-sample bias in maximum likelihood estimation.

Measures

Dependent variables. Dependent variables were the same as used in the pilot study described previously: a 1-7 scale assessing applicant suitability and a 1/0 dichotomous variable stating whether the evaluator would hire the candidate.

Evaluator race. Evaluators reported their race as African-American or Caucasian. We included dummy variables for race, with Caucasian as the comparison group.

Manipulated applicant race. The applicants were depicted on the credential sheet with a picture as either Caucasian or African-American.

Manipulated applicant suitability. We manipulated actual suitability as the match between the job requirements presented in the job description sheet and the applicant's credentials presented in the applicant's résumé. An applicant's actual suitability score was either 1 (poorly suited), 2 (well suited), or 3 (perfectly suited).

Evaluator attitude toward affirmative action policies. Evaluator attitude toward affirmative action policies was assessed with Kravitz and Platania's six-item, single-factor scale.[41] A sample item was, "I would be willing to work at an organization with an AA plan." Response options ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this six-item attitude toward affirmative action policies scale was .92.

Control variables. In each analysis, we controlled for evaluator age, sex, and organizational tenure measured as number of months in their current position.

Study 1 Results

In examining the initial results, it is clear that African-American candidates are not necessarily seen as less suitable (r = -.05, $p > .05$), but they are significantly less likely to be hired (r = -.15, $p < .05$). To test research propositions 1a and 1b, we regressed both dependent variables onto all the control variables (shown in the first three columns of Exhibit 2 and Exhibit 3), and the interaction between candidate race, evalu-

[40] StataCorp, 2009.

[42] Kravitz and Platania, 1999.

Exhibit 2

Study 1: Predicting ratings of suitability (1-7 scale)

Variable	B	SE	t	B	SE	t	B	SE	t
Evaluator age	.01	.02	.30	.00	.02	.20	.01	.02	.36
Evaluator school	-.59	.19	-3.16**	-.64	.19	-3.44*	-.61	.18	-3.36**
Evaluator sex	.23	.16	1.38	.22	.16	1.36	.17	.16	1.06
Evaluator AA attitudes	.08	.11	.71	.03	.11	.36	.17	.15	1.09
Manipulated suitability	1.20	.10	12.16**	1.43	.14	10.11**	1.25	.10	12.66**
Evaluator race	-.28	.16	-1.73*	1.14	1.00	1.14	-.25	1.53	-.17
Candidate race	.37	.30	1.25	.32	.45	.72	.43	.60	.73
Evaluator X candidate race				1.16	1.29	.90	-10.59	3.71	-2.85**
Candidate race X manipulated suitability				-.33	.20	-1.62			
Evaluator race X manipulated suitability				-.62	.57	-1.09			
Three-way				-.29	.72	-.41			
Candidate race X AA attitudes							.05	.39	.12
Evaluator race X AA attitudes							-.27	.20	-1.37
Three-way							2.85	.91	3.12**
Constant	2.06	.63	3.28**	2.06	.63	3.28**	1.82	.70	2.60**
R^2	.40**			.43**			.44**		

Notes: $n = 256$. * $p<.05$ (one-tailed), **$p<.05$ (two-tailed). Evaluator sex is coded 1 = male, 0 = female; evaluator and candidate race is coded 1 = African-American, 0 = Caucasian; manipulated suitability is coded 1 = poorly suited, 2 = moderately suited, 3 = perfectly suited.

ator race, and actual candidate suitability (shown in the latter columns). Means, standard deviations, and correlations for the student sample are presented in Exhibit 1. However, in assessing the three-way interactions, we do not find support for research proposition 1a ($B = -.29$, $p > .05$) predicting ratings of candidate suitability. We found similar results for research proposition 1b ($B = 1.92$, $p > .05$, Odds Ratio = 6.81), indicating that suitability, candidate race, and evaluator race do not interact to predict recommendations for hire.

To test research propositions 2a and 2b, we examined the interaction between candidate race, evaluator race, and affirmative action attitudes as again shown in Exhibits 2 and 3. We found support for research proposition 2a ($B = 2.85$, $p < .05$). Positive personal attitudes toward affirmative action were most strongly related to favorable suitability ratings for African-American evaluators rating African-American candidates. We also found statistically significant results when testing research proposition 2b ($B = 7.82$, $p > .05$, Odds Ratio = 2491.04). For hiring recommendations, the strongest positive effect is for Caucasian candidates rated by African-American evaluators, while there is a negative effect for African-American candidates rated by Caucasian evaluators. The "same-race" effect is positive for both African-American and Caucasian evaluators, although it is much stronger for Caucasian evaluators, which provides support for research proposition 2b, albeit mixed.

Study 2 Results

In examining the initial results for study 2, we found that African-American candidates are seen as less suitable ($r = -.16$, $p < .05$), but not significantly less likely to be hired ($r = -.12$, $p > .05$). Means, standard deviations, and correlations for the worker sample are presented in Exhibit 4. Additionally, in assessing the three-way interactions for research proposition 1 (Exhibits 5 and 6), we find support for research proposition 1a ($B = -1.80$, $p < .05$) predicting ratings of candidate suitability. The weakest effects are same-race effects (African-American evaluators and African-American candidates), while the strongest positive effect is for African-American evaluators evaluating Caucasian candidates. We find non-significant results for research proposition 1b ($B = 1.15$, $p > .05$, Odds Ratio = 3.15), such that suitability, candidate race, and evaluator race do not interact to predict hiring recommendations.

Exhibit 3

Study 1: Predicting if hired

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	z	B	SE	Odds Ratio	z	B	SE	Odds Ratio	z
Evaluator age	.02	.04	1.02	.45	.00	.04	1.00	.11	.01	.04	1.10	.26
Evaluator school	-.64	.63	.53	-1.01	-.42	.65	.66	-.64	-.26	.72	.77	-.36
Evaluator sex	-.38	.57	.68	-.67	-.65	.58	.52	-1.13	-.98	.63	.38	-1.55
Evaluator AA attitudes	.25	.41	1.29	.62	.02	.44	1.02	.04	.50	.55	1.65	.91
Manipulated suitability	1.59	.67	4.88	3.18**	3.28	1.45	26.46	2.26**	3.00	1.11	20.01	2.70**
Evaluator race	.98	.88	2.68	1.12	9.20	5.01	9895.55	1.84	-11.41	7.44	.00	-1.53
Candidate race	-1.65	.67	.19	-2.47**	3.32	5.67	27.84	.59	5.59	3.36	266.47	1.66
Evaluator X Candidate race					-.33	6.38	.04	-.52	-29.38	14.14	.00	-2.08**
Candidate race X manipulated suitability					-3.74	2.19	.18	-1.71*				
Evaluator race X manipulated suitability					-1.74	1.96	.02	-.89				
Three-way					1.92	2.69	6.81	.71				
Candidate race X AA attitudes									-2.56	1.29	23.53	-1.98**
Evaluator race X AA attitudes									3.16	1.90	.08	1.66
Three-way									7.82	3.33	2491.04	2.35**
Constant	-9.42	2.86		-3.30**	-13.13	4.89		-2.68**	-13.54	4.42		-3.06**

Notes: $n = 256$. * $p<.05$ (one-tailed), ** $p<.05$ (two-tailed). Evaluator sex is coded 1 = male, 0 = female; evaluator and candidate race is coded 1 = African-American, 0 = Caucasian; manipulated suitability is coded 1 = poorly suited, 2 = moderately suited, 3 = perfectly suited.

Exhibit 4

Study 2: Correlations, means and standard deviations

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Manipulated suitability	2.10	.80	1.00								
2. Candidate race	.11	.31	.02	1.00							
3. Evaluator race	.44	.50	-.04	.04	1.00						
4. Suitability ratings	4.11	1.72	.68*	-.16*	-.06	1.00					
5. Hiring recommendation	.06	.23	.22*	-.12	-.01	.34*	1.00				
6. Evaluator age	26.72	3.58	-.04	-.04	-.01	.04	.08	1.00			
7. Evaluator tenure	19.67	10.68	-.03	-.00	-.04	.07	.11	.76*	1.00		
8. Evaluator individual AA attitudes	2.90	.91	.08	-.00	.39*	.09	.04	-.02	.02	1.00	
9. Evaluator sex	.30	.46	-.00	.03	-.04	.08	-.00	-.10	.03	-.08	1.00

Notes: $n = 173$. * $p < .05$ (one-tailed), ** $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Evaluator sex is coded 1 = male, 0 = female; evaluator and candidate race is coded 1 = African-American, 0 = Caucasian; manipulated suitability is coded 1 = poorly suited, 2 = moderately suited, 3 = perfectly suited.

To test research propositions 2a and 2b, we examined the interaction between candidate race, evaluator race, and affirmative action attitudes. We found support for research proposition 2a ($B = 1.76$, $p < .05$). Positive personal attitudes toward affirmative action were most strongly related to suitability ratings for African-American evaluators rating African-American candidates. We did not find a statistically significant result when testing research proposition 2b ($B = 4.11$, $p > .05$, Odds Ratio = 60.83), for hiring recommendations.

General Discussion

In our study we showed that same-race bias not only exists, but also that it differs among student participants and practicing HR managers. In doing so, we show that the race of the applicant affects the hiring managers' assessment of the applicants' suitability for the job and their attitudes toward affirmative action. This study allowed us to examine how future managers and existing managers examine and evaluate applicants' qualifications, and make a hiring decision under conditions where applicant race and qualifications for a posted position varied.

We demonstrated that same-race bias is present in the hiring process and that violations of expectancy play an important role in explaining how same-race bias affects the hiring process. In these two studies, we found that four of the three-way interactions were significant. In Study 1, the student sample's information processing effects on the job candidate's suitability ratings and decision to hire were not affected by the job candidate's manipulated competency information, meaning that the same-race effect was not found in the student evaluators' assessments of applicant competence or their decision to hire.

Exhibit 5

Study 2: Predicting ratings of suitability (1-7 scale)

Variable	B	SE	t	B	SE	t	B	SE	t
Evaluator age	.03	.04	.77	.02	.04	.58	.03	.04	.62
Evaluator school	.00	.01	.34	.01	.01	.49	.01	.01	.48
Evaluator sex	.36	.21	1.73*	.12	.21	1.99**	.37	.21	1.72*
Evaluator AA attitudes	.10	.11	.86	.09	.11	.08	.13	.15	.85
Manipulated suitability	1.46	.12	12.37**	1.56	.16	9.70**	1.50	.12	12.25**
Evaluator race	-.12	.33	-.37	-2.40	1.29	-1.86*	1.54	2.71	.57
Candidate race	-.62	.19	-3.29**	-.21	.58	-.36	-.33	.67	-.47
Evaluator X Candidate race				1.01	1.67	2.41**	-6.24	4.07	-1.53
Candidate race X manipulated suitability				-.22	.26	-.85			
Evaluator race X manipulated suitability				1.00	.58	1.73*			
Three-way				-1.80	.77	-2.33**			
Candidate race X AA attitudes							-.12	.24	-.52
Evaluator race X AA attitudes							-.78	.69	-.70
Three-way							1.76	1.05	1.67*
Constant	.26	1.10	.24	.28	1.13	.25	.25	1.18	.21
R2	.51**			.54**			.52**		

Notes. $n = 173$. * $p < .05$ (one-tailed), ** $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Evaluator sex is coded 1 = male, 0 = female; evaluator and candidate race is coded 1 = African-American, 0 = Caucasian; manipulated suitability is coded 1 = poorly suited, 2 = moderately suited, 3 = perfectly suited.

Exhibit 6

Study 2: Predicting if hired

Variable	B	SE	Odds Ratio	z	B	SE	Odds Ratio	z	B	SE	Odds Ratio	z
Evaluator age	-.05	.17	.95	-.29	-.15	.18	.86	-.83	-.09	.21	.91	-.42
Evaluator school	.04	.05	1.04	.81	.08	.06	1.08	1.29	.06	.07	1.06	.92
Evaluator sex	.21	.77	1.23	.27	.09	.77	1.10	.12	.12	.75	1.13	.16
Evaluator AA attitudes	.08	.41	1.08	.19	-.14	.43	.87	-.32	.22	.48	1.24	.46
Manipulated suitability	1.38	.62	3.96	2.24**	2.85	1.44	17.31	1.98**	1.62	.72	5.08	2.24
Evaluator race	.38	1.03	1.45	.36	7.66	5.84	2120.99	1.31	-2.44	11.30	.09	-.22
Candidate race	-1.09	.73	.34	-1.47	4.49	5.25	89.58	.86	2.77	3.10	16.05	.89
Evaluator X Candidate race					-1.94	6.76	.14	-.29	-10.63	12.64	.00	-.84
Candidate race X manipulated suitability					-2.14	1.88	.12	-1.14				
Evaluator race X manipulated suitability					-2.97	2.34	.05	-1.27				
Three-way					1.15	2.90	3.15	.30				
Candidate race X AA attitudes									-1.65	1.29	.19	-1.28
Evaluator race X AA attitudes									.57	2.87	1.78	.20
Three-way									4.11	3.33	60.83	1.23
Constant	-5.07	4.49		-1.13	-6.51	5.82		-1.12	-5.24	5.17		-1.01

Notes. $n = 173$. * $p < .05$ (one-tailed), ** $p < .05$ (two-tailed). Evaluator sex is coded 1 = male, 0 = female; evaluator and candidate race is coded 1 = African-American, 0 = Caucasian; manipulated suitability is coded 1 = poorly suited, 2 = moderately suited, 3 = perfectly suited. Analyzed using penalized log likelihood for rare events (Firth Logit).

In contrast, the sample of HR managers in Study 2 showed lower negative effects of same-race bias for the job candidate suitability ratings, but that did not affect the managers' decision to hire when the job candidate's manipulated suitability rating was high. We found that this positive effect was the strongest for African-American evaluators evaluating Caucasian candidates' job suitability.

The second set of analyses across both studies examined the three-way interaction between the job candidate's race, the evaluator's race, and the evaluator's personal affirmative action attitudes. For this set of interactions, across both samples, the evaluators' decisions were influenced by their personal attitudes. Three of the four possible three-way interactions were supported, as the evaluator's attitudes did influence their ratings of job candidates' suitability. In both studies, the evaluator's positive personal attitudes toward affirmative action were most strongly related to biased suitability ratings for African-American evaluators rating African-American candidates.

Only in Study 1 did the evaluators' positive personal attitudes toward affirmative action also influence their decision to hire. We found a positive "same-race" effect for both African-American and Caucasian evaluators, although it was much stronger for Caucasian evaluators than for African-American evaluators. Our findings replicate those from other studies that showed that both ingroup and outgroup influences are connected to race-based affirmative action programs, showing that Caucasians' reactions to race-based programs are connected to their own attitudes toward affirmative action.[42]

As noted above, in Study 1, the same-race effect did not emerge for either research proposition 1a or 1b. However, in the student sample, personal attitudes toward affirmative action did

[42] Shteynberg, Leslie, Knight and Mayer, 2001; Harrison *et al.*, 2006.

influence job candidate suitability ratings and recommendations to hire (research propositions 2a and 2b).

In Study 2, HR managers' knowledge and familiarity with the candidate evaluation process of matching job candidates' information with job requirements may have influenced the interaction between their race, the candidate's competency, and the candidate's race on the job suitability ratings (research proposition 1a). However, given the complexity and involvement of multiple constituents in a decision to hire a job candidate (e.g., up-line department and manager approvals), the hiring managers' decision making may be constrained by their understanding of the organizations' hiring processes. This explanation may help to explain why research propositions 1b and 2b were not supported in this sample.

Practical Implications

While it is now common practice for employers to use social media sites to research the background and view the pictures of job candidates prior to and during the hiring process our findings suggest that hiring managers should consider the potential bias from viewing job candidates' photos and examine carefully the full merit of applicant credentials during screening and hiring decisions.[43] We have shown that the race of an applicant can influence the evaluation of a candidate by hiring managers. With organizations trying to improve the diversity profile of their workers, knowing the race of an applicant may help HR managers build a solid pool of diverse applicants. That said, caution should be applied to ensure that same-race bias or cross-race bias is not part of the hiring process. One approach to counterbalance this effect is to recruit diverse candidates and then add a blind evaluation component to the evaluation to ensure that race is used to include, rather than exclude, qualified minority applicants.

Our study illuminates the importance of individuals' attitudes about affirmative action, as research shows that evaluator bias in the workplace depends on an organization's policies and practices.[44] As a result, negative attitudes and beliefs about affirmative action may result in outgroup resentment and ingroup resistance, attenuating the positive effects of such programs and policies.[45] Training programs should clearly define the organization's policies to ensure that the correct message regarding affirmative action is delivered. It may be difficult to change entrenched views of affirmative action and diversity and inclusion programs, but managers and organization leaders should pay greater attention to their own attitudes (and those of their HR decision-makers) and strive to reduce evaluator bias throughout the hiring process.

Limitations, Future Research Directions, and Conclusion

Potential limitations to our research include the fact that little is known about the way in which employees' past performance influences their future job choices and performance.[46] Literature on evaluator bias is informed by the examination of how past evaluators' evaluations influence hiring decisions, but in our study, we did not have past performance data for either the evaluators or the applicants. Without such data, many of the intervening mechanisms, as well as the long-term effects of past applicant evaluations and hiring decisions, are open for future investigation.

Our findings can be applied to other organizational settings, given that the evaluators in Study 2 were HR managers, but it is possible that company-specific characteristics influenced the results. Future research should consider broadening the sample to include managers from other industries and lines of business, and also broadening the sample to include greater gender diversity and additional ethnic groups such as Asian and Hispanic evaluators and job candidates. Future studies also should have the evaluators rate multiple applicants so analyses can be conducted between and within subjects to improve ecological validity.

Still, this study highlights the importance of making all hiring managers aware of the potential for bias when race is included in the hiring process. The same-race bias we uncovered can have negative consequences for those who are hired and those who are passed over. Therefore, a better understanding of the factors influencing hiring bias provides avenues to counteract bias. In our multicultural workplaces, employers must ensure that hiring procedures are free from evaluator bias. ■

[43] Hunt, 2012.

[44] Harrison *et al.*, 2006; Nelson and Bridges, 1999; Shteynberg *et al.*, 2011.

[45] Leslie *et al.*, 2014; Shteynberg *et al.*, 2011; Susskind *et al.*, 2014.

[46] Castilla, 2008.

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