

Running head: SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND HIRABILITY RATINGS

The Effects of Sexual Orientation on Hirability Ratings: An Experimental Study

Greet Van Hoye and Filip Lievens

Ghent University, Belgium

Greet Van Hoye, Ph.D. Student, Department of Personnel Management, Work, and Organizational Psychology; Filip Lievens, Associate Professor, Department of Personnel Management, Work, and Organizational Psychology.

We would like to thank Michael Harris for his valuable comments on a previous version of this manuscript.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Greet Van Hoye, Department of Personnel Management, Work and Organizational Psychology, Ghent University, Henri Dunantlaan 2, 9000 Ghent, Belgium. E-mail: greet.vanhoye@rug.ac.be.

Abstract

Despite its rising importance, empirical research about sexual orientation in the workplace is still scarce. This experimental study examined if gay candidates, with the same work-related qualities as heterosexual candidates, would be judged less favorably in a personnel selection context. Written candidate profiles were varied in a 3 x 3 between-subjects factorial design, with candidate quality and sexual orientation as experimental variables. Our results indicated that the hirability ratings of 135 selection professionals were based on candidate quality and that no discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation occurred. Implications of these findings and directions for future research are discussed.

KEY WORDS: Employment discrimination, personnel selection, sexual orientation.

The Effects of Sexual Orientation on Hirability Ratings: An Experimental Study

Increasingly, the labor market consists of people differing in age, gender, race, nationality, religion, work experience, and other personal characteristics. By 2020, the population of the United States is expected to be composed of 47% Hispanics, 22% African Americans, 18% Asians and other ethnic minority groups, and 13% Whites (Perkins, Thomas, & Taylor, 2000). This shows that a diverse work force constitutes a daily reality and challenge for many organizations. The growing diversity has, in turn, given rise to diversity management, an approach aimed at creating a work environment, in which all employees are able to feel good and develop themselves, regardless of the many personal attributes in which they are different. The underlying idea is that differences between people are valuable and can be useful in the achievement of company goals (Barry & Bateman, 1996; Brown, Snedeker, & Sykes, 1997; Chemers, Oskamp, & Costanzo, 1995; Cox & Blake, 1991; Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000; Jackson, 1992; Kossek & Lobel, 1996; Powell, 1998; Prasad, Mills, Elmes, & Prasad, 1997).

Within diversity management, sexual orientation represents a nonobservable or underlying type of diversity, as opposed to more visible characteristics such as race or gender (Milliken & Martins, 1996). This is because gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees can generally choose to what extent they disclose their sexual orientation in the workplace (Chrobot-Mason, Button, & DiClementi, 2001). In recent years, sexual orientation has received a growing amount of attention. For instance, in 1993, the Board of the Society for Human Resource Management officially recognized sexual orientation as a source of diversity (Day & Schoenrade, 1997). Currently, twelve states of the US and the District of Columbia prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation for both private and public employees. In eight more states, this prohibition is only valid for public employees (“12th state bars”, 2001). According to a recent report (Kohn, 1999), over 1000

companies explicitly include sexual orientation in the list of protected categories in their non-discrimination policies. Furthermore, about 570 companies, 87 cities, counties, and states, and about 141 universities and colleges offer domestic partnership benefits, instead of just granting benefits to heterosexual, married employees. In many large organizations, Lesbian and Gay Employee Groups are demanding the prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation, the provision of training to increase tolerance in the work environment, and the equal treatment of significant others (e.g., with regard to health care benefits) (Button, 2001; Diamant, 1993; Martinez, 1993; Waldo, 1999; Williamson, 1993).

Parallel to these social and societal developments, there has been an increase in scientific research on sexual orientation in a work-related context (Button, 2001; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2001; Croteau, 1996; Croteau & Bieschke, 1996; Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Ellis & Riggle, 1995; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001a, 2001b; Waldo, 1999). In light of diversity management, it is indeed necessary to understand the specific work-related experiences and discrimination encountered by gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Therefore, both practitioners and scholars have called for more research about the effects of sexual orientation in workplace-related issues (American Psychological Association, Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns, 1991; Button, 2001; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2001; Chung, 2001; Croteau, 1996; Croteau & Bieschke, 1996; Diamant, 1993; Elliott, 1993; Herek, Kimmel, Amaro, & Melton, 1991; Kitzinger, Coyle, Wilkinson, & Milton, 1998; Lonborg & Phillips, 1996; Morin & Rothblum, 1991; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001a, 2001b; Rothblum & Bond, 1996; Waldo, 1999; Williamson, 1993).

Sexual Orientation in the Workplace: An Overview of the Literature

In the literature about sexual orientation in the workplace, three research streams can be distinguished. The first research stream examines on a general level the discrimination and minority status experienced by gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in the workplace. In his

review of empirical self-report studies, Croteau (1996) concluded that 25 to 66% of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people have once experienced work-related discrimination. Along these lines, the construct of heterosexism plays a central role. Herek (1990) defined heterosexism as “an ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any nonheterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community.” (p. 316). Herek specified that heterosexism manifests itself in societal customs and institutions on the one hand (i.e., cultural heterosexism) and in individual attitudes and behaviors on the other hand (i.e., psychological heterosexism). Both levels are relevant for the study of heterosexism in the workplace. For example, cultural heterosexism might include employment legislation that discriminates against gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Workplace bullying (Hoel, Rayner, & Cooper, 1999) that is based on the stereotypes about homosexuality held by coworkers exemplifies psychological heterosexism. It has been demonstrated that heterosexism in the organization can lead to reductions of perceived productivity, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, career commitment, and organization-based self-esteem and to increases of perceived health problems, psychological distress, and turnover intentions among gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees (Button, 2001; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001a, 2001b; Waldo, 1999; Williamson, 1993).

A second strand of studies focuses on the issue of coming out at work. In fact, one of the work-related decisions that all gay, lesbian, and bisexual people face, is to what extent they disclose their sexual orientation in the workplace (Chrobot-Mason et al., 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Kitzinger, 1991; Woods, 1993). Recently, Chung (2001) identified five different levels of coming out, namely acting, passing, covering, implicitly out and explicitly out. Another possible classification distinguishes between counterfeiting, avoiding, and integrating (Button, 2001; Chrobot-Mason et al., 2001). Some of the consequences of coming out at work for gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees have already been studied. On an

individual level, it has been found that the concealment of one's sexual orientation can induce negative work attitudes, low job satisfaction, role conflict, and role ambiguity (Croteau, 1996; Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Ellis & Riggle, 1995). It is further speculated that "staying in the closet" can result in stress, impaired performance, negative self-image, anxiety, and alienation on an individual level; in low work team cohesion, dysfunctional communication, and negative conflicts on a group level; and in lower productivity and higher turnover on an organizational level (Button, 2001; Day & Schoenrade, 1997; Elliott, 1993; Williamson, 1993; Woods, 1993).

The third research stream pertains to the specific work-related problems of gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees (as opposed to the general and broad-mazed studies of the first research stream). To date, very few studies have taken this approach (Croteau, 1996; Diamant, 1993; Lonborg & Phillips, 1996). An example would be violence against gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in the workplace (Herek & Berrill, 1990; Kitzinger, 1991). Within this third stream of studies, the influence of the sexual orientation of job candidates on their evaluation by selection professionals constitutes another scarcely studied topic. On the basis of six qualitative self-report studies, Croteau (1996) concluded that the formal work-related discrimination experienced most often by gay, lesbian, or bisexual participants, involved employer decisions to fire or not to hire them due to their sexual orientation.

Although the results of these general, qualitative, and descriptive studies are insightful, an important limitation is that the results are based on small sample sizes and on self-reports of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Therefore, it remains unknown whether judgments of people, who are responsible for making hiring decisions, can be prone to discriminatory bias against gay, lesbian, and bisexual job candidates. As mentioned by Croteau (1996) and by Lonborg and Philips (1996), virtually no research has specifically examined the effects of sexual orientation on hiring decisions. One of the reasons of this paucity of studies is that it is

very difficult to investigate this issue in field settings with real candidates. Therefore, we used an experimental research design (with hypothetical candidate profiles) to examine the influence of sexual orientation on the evaluation of job candidates by selection professionals. A similar approach has typically been taken to investigate discrimination based on race, gender, age, and physical attractiveness in personnel selection (e.g., Collier & Shaffer, 1999; Harvie, Marshall-McCaskey, & Johnston, 1998; Marlowe, Schneider, & Nelson, 1996; Perry & Bourhis, 1998; Polinko & Popovich, 2001).

Because prior research found that gay candidates felt they were being discriminated against, (see Croteau, 1996, for a review) we hypothesized that selection professionals would evaluate gay candidates¹ less favorably than heterosexual candidates, even when both possessed the same work-related qualities and characteristics.

Method

Participants

The study was conducted in Flanders, the Dutch-speaking district of Belgium. The sample consisted of people who were involved in personnel selection and recruitment on a daily basis. In the remainder, we will refer to them as selection professionals. To identify selection professionals, we scrutinized job advertisements for names of contact persons and used specialized literature that listed existing consultancy firms and their key personnel. We used the following inclusion criteria. First, half of the participants were drawn from consultancy firms and the other half from the Human Resource departments of companies, because these are the two settings that selection professionals are typically employed in. Second, we included approximately the same number of men and women per setting. Third, to increase generalizability, we included selection professionals from a diversity of organizations (in terms of location, size, and industry).

On the basis of these inclusion criteria, we contacted a total of 252 selection

professionals by mail. We received complete responses from 135 selection professionals, yielding a response rate of 54%. The sample consisted of 69 male (51%) and 66 female (49%) selection professionals, employed in a wide variety of organizations. Sixty-one people (45%) worked for a consultancy firm; 74 people (55%) for other kinds of companies. With respect to their current job, 48 selection professionals were working as consultants (36%), 44 as Human Resource Managers (33%), 14 as business managers (10%), 16 as personnel officers (12%), and 13 in other functions (9%). The average age of the participants was 36.3 years ($SD = 8.2$, range = 24 to 59 years). The participants had an average experience in personnel selection of 9.4 years ($SD = 7.2$), varying between 6 months and 30 years.

Stimulus Materials

Stimulus materials consisted of a job posting and nine candidate profiles. The job posting contained the description of the company (car parts manufacturer), the job title, (Human Resource Manager), the job content, the knowledge, skills, and abilities required, and the benefits offered by the company. All participants received the same job posting. We developed the job posting on the basis of actual job postings.

A candidate profile consisted of three sections: personal data, education and professional experience, and personality. Both external and internal validity concerns guided the development of these stimulus materials. With regard to external validity, we constructed the candidate profiles on the basis of actual written reports, résumés, interview notes, and test results concerning real job candidates. These data were provided by a consultancy firm. In addition, two experienced selection professionals (2 women, mean experience = 20 years) helped us considerably in developing a set of possible candidate profiles. In terms of internal validity, we made sure that only the two independent variables varied across the different candidate profiles. All other variables were held constant, such as name, gender, nationality, and age of the hypothetical candidates.

The independent variable of candidate quality was defined as the extent to which the characteristics of the candidate met the job requirements. The manipulation involved the description of the work-related qualities and characteristics (namely education, professional experience, and personality) in the candidate profiles. Candidate quality had three levels: (a) a poor candidate or a poor match between his characteristics and the job requirements, (b) a moderate candidate or a moderate match between his characteristics and the job requirements, and (c) an excellent candidate or an excellent match between his characteristics and the job requirements. We conducted a pre-study to check whether the levels of candidate quality were adequately built into the candidate profiles that we developed with the help of the experienced selection professionals. To this end, the job posting and subsets of the candidate profiles were presented to 17 employees of a consultancy firm (11 women, 6 men; mean age = 27 years) and to 10 final-year industrial and organizational psychology students (5 women, 5 men; mean age = 22.5 years). We asked them to rate the hirability of each candidate using a 9-point rating scale (see below). On the basis of the mean ratings, the following candidate profiles were selected for inclusion in the actual study: poor ($M = 2.80$, $SD = 1.17$), moderate ($M = 5.32$, $SD = .92$) and excellent ($M = 7.53$, $SD = .64$).

The independent variable of sexual orientation of the candidate was manipulated through the description of the family situation in the candidate profiles. In addition to the two basic conditions – gay and heterosexual – a third one was added, based on the “informal 30 rule”, which claims that selection professionals sometimes “suspect” job candidates aged 30 or older, who are not married or living together, of being gay (Kirk & Madsen, 1989). Thus, the sexual orientation of the candidate had three levels: (a) gay or living together with a man, (b) heterosexual or living together with a woman, and (c) single or living alone. It was expected that social desirability bias would be less active in the single condition, so that lower scores here might be interpreted as an indirect indication of discrimination on the basis

of sexual orientation. The combination of the three levels of candidate quality with the three levels of sexual orientation resulted in nine candidate profiles.

An example of a candidate profile (translated from Dutch) is given in the Appendix. This profile describes a gay candidate whose characteristics matched the job requirements very well.

Procedure

The selection professionals received a letter that invited them to participate in the study. We asked them to read the job posting and one candidate profile, to evaluate the candidate on the answer form (rating scales, see below), and to return the answer form in the stamped and addressed envelope they had received. The participants were also asked to answer some demographical questions (i.e., gender, age, experience in personnel selection, current job and company). Selection professionals were randomly assigned to one of the nine conditions of the research design (see above).

Several precautions were taken in order to avoid demand characteristics. First, although it would have been interesting to include a question about the sexual orientation of the selection professionals or to assess their attitudes toward homosexuality and discrimination, this was not done because it would have made the purpose of the study too obvious. For the same reason, we did not check whether the selection professionals had read the information about the sexual orientation of the candidate. Second, the aim of the study was formulated rather broadly, namely “to investigate the influence of certain job candidate characteristics such as gender, age, nationality, family situation, education, professional experience, and personality on hiring decisions”. Third, it was stressed that confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed. Fourth, we used a between-subjects factorial design, so that each participant evaluated only one hypothetical job candidate.

Dependent Variable

Participants were asked to evaluate the hirability of a hypothetical candidate on a 9-point rating scale, ranging from 1 (strongly recommend not to hire) to 9 (strongly recommend to hire). Five items were developed. An example item is “To what extent would you recommend to hire this person?”. Because of the high internal consistency of the scale – Cronbach’s alpha was .95 – we averaged the ratings on these five items to calculate a score on hirability.

Insert Table 1 about here

Results

A 3×3 between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine the effects of candidates’ sexual orientation and candidates’ quality on hirability ratings.

Table 1 presents the means and standard deviations for the hirability ratings of the hypothetical candidates broken down by the two factors.

Contrary to our hypothesis, sexual orientation did not have a significant main effect on hirability ratings, $F(2, 126) < 1$. Candidate quality, on the other hand, did significantly influence hirability ratings, $F(2, 126) = 161.43$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .72$. Results also show that the two-way interaction was not significant, $F(4, 126) < 1$. The total model explained 72.3 % of the variance in the dependent variable, which could almost exclusively be attributed to the variable candidate quality.

In order to further examine the significant main effect of candidate quality, follow-up analyses were conducted. The follow-up tests consisted of all pairwise comparisons among the three levels of quality. The Tukey HSD procedure was used to control for Type I error across the pairwise comparisons. The results of this analysis indicate that all three levels of candidate quality were significantly different from one another. The excellent candidate was

evaluated more favorably than the moderate, $p < .001$, and poor candidates, $p < .001$. The moderate candidate was evaluated more favorably than the poor candidate, $p < .001$.

An analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to examine whether the effects of candidate sexual orientation, candidate quality, and their interaction on hirability ratings would change if the gender (dummy variable coded), age, and selection experience of the selection professionals were statistically controlled for. The F -values of all covariates were smaller than 1. Gender, age, and selection experience did not influence the results.

Discussion

This study used an experimental design to investigate whether the sexual orientation of job candidates can have an influence on the evaluation of their hirability in personnel selection. Strengths of the study include the sample of actual selection professionals and the development of the stimulus materials on the basis of real job postings and candidate profiles. We found no support for our hypothesis that gay candidates with the same work-related qualities as heterosexual candidates would be judged less favorably in a selection context. The sexual orientation of job candidates did not influence their evaluation by selection professionals. Equally qualified job candidates received the same judgments, regardless of their sexual orientation. We did find an effect of candidate quality on the evaluations of hirability. An excellent candidate was evaluated more favorably than a moderate or poor candidate, and a moderate candidate was evaluated more favorably than a poor candidate, regardless of their sexual orientation. These results were not influenced by the gender, age, and selection experience of the selection professionals.

The results of this study differ from previous research, in which gay candidates did report discrimination in personnel selection (reviewed by Croteau, 1996). However, these previous studies were qualitative and descriptive, whereas the present research is quantitative and experimental. Moreover, past research was based on self-reports by gay, lesbian, and

bisexual people, whereas the participants of the present study are selection professionals. We believe that both approaches are necessary to understand the research question at hand.

Basically, it concerns two sides of the same coin: those possibly experiencing discrimination versus those possibly discriminating. It is plausible that research involving gay, lesbian, and bisexual job candidates finds a larger amount of discrimination in personnel selection than research concerning selection professionals. This may be partly due to some kind of attribution bias (Ployhart & Ryan, 1997). Perhaps sometimes gay candidates are more inclined to attribute their “failure” in a selection situation to discrimination, rather than to their own suitability for the position. In fact, Gilliland (1993) proposes that rejected job candidates who have been discriminated against in the past or who belong to frequently discriminated upon groups (e.g., gay, lesbian, and bisexual people) will perceive a negative hiring decision as more unfair than other groups. Further research will have to show whether attribution bias can possibly provide an explanation for the observed results.

The organizational justice perspective (Gilliland, 1993; Greenberg, 1990, 1993; Leventhal & Michaels, 1969) offers another explanation for the discrepancies between the present study and previous research. In the present study, the dependent variable of interest was the evaluation of hirability, which mostly relates to distributive justice. However, self-reports by gay, lesbian, and bisexual people about discrimination, as employed in previous research, could be based on aspects of both procedural (e.g., interpersonal treatment) and distributive justice.

A final explanation is provided by the possibility that biases in hirability ratings related to sexual orientation are reduced or even eliminated in the presence of a sufficient amount of job-relevant information. Such an effect has already been observed with respect to studies concerning the discrimination of women in personnel selection. A meta-analysis by Tosi and Einbender (1985) shows that the differences in the results of these studies are a function of

the amount and type of information that participants received for evaluating job candidates. Decision-makers faced with limited information about job requirements and candidate qualities tended to make biased or stereotyped evaluations; those with more job-relevant information did not. A more recent meta-analysis confirms these findings (Davison & Burke, 2000). The evaluations of selection professionals in our study were indeed based on a job posting that clearly stated the job requirements and on candidate profiles that provided the same extensive amount of job-relevant information (education, professional experience, and personality) about each candidate in the same standardized report format. Future studies should explicitly test this possibility, because it could have interesting practical implications for organizations that are trying to eliminate discrimination of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in their recruitment and selection processes. It suggests that sufficient job-relevant information should be gathered about every job candidate, preferably in a systematical, standardized manner. Moreover, this information should be provided to decision-makers in a systematical and standardized way, so that the same amount and type of information about every job candidate would be available to them.

This study has a number of limitations that should be acknowledged. First, as in all experimental studies, other factors, which were not manipulated, could also be important in real-life hirability ratings involving gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Examples include corporate culture, company-specific selection procedures, or the selection ratio. For example, Waldo (1999) reported that the perception of heterosexism was highly positively related to organizational climate, and Button (2001) finds a negative association between perceived discrimination and the prevalence of organizational policies that recognize and affirm the existence of sexual diversity.

Second, although we spent considerable effort in establishing a sample of actual selection professionals, our sample size might have been insufficient to detect a significant

effect of sexual orientation on hirability ratings. Assuming a medium effect size of .25 and an alpha of .05, we calculated that our study had a power of .73 to find a significant effect of both candidate quality and sexual orientation on hirability ratings, and a power of .61 to find a significant interaction effect.

Third, the research design did not permit to collect additional information about the participants, concerning their own sexual orientation, personality, attitudes, ... As previously discussed, this was not done to reduce the possibility of demand characteristics. Hence, it was not possible to examine the influence of these personal characteristics of selection professionals on their evaluation of candidates.

A fourth limitation of this study refers to the generalizability of the results. Although both Belgian (Vincke, Mak, & Bolton, 1991) and U.S. surveys (Croteau, 1996) indicate that considerable percentages of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people have once experienced work-related discrimination, our results need to be replicated in other cultures. Moreover, the sample consisted solely of selection professionals, so that it remains to be examined whether the evaluations of hiring managers can be prone to discriminatory bias against gay, lesbian, and bisexual job candidates. Furthermore, the job posting described a middle-level managerial job and all candidate profiles pertained to male individuals with a university degree, who were gay, heterosexual, or single. Therefore, without further research, the results of this study cannot be generalized to other kinds of candidates, positions, decision-makers, and cultures.

Finally, the selection professionals received only written information about the candidates (Gorman, Clover, & Doherty, 1978; Murphy, Herr, Lockhart, & Maguire, 1986). Although it is a common practice that selection professionals evaluate candidates on the basis of written candidate reports, they typically also conduct an employment interview with the various candidates. Perhaps, selection professionals' hiring evaluations would have been

different if they had seen videotaped employment interviews of the candidates. Also, participants were asked to rate the hirability of job candidates instead of making actual yes or no hiring decisions. Future studies are needed to extend this study's results to other stages and aspects of the selection process (Braddock & McPartland, 1987) and to specific selection instruments such as employment interviews or assessment centres.

In terms of other recommendations for future studies, we advocate in favor of a more systematic approach in studying work discrimination experienced by gay, lesbian, and bisexual people. Recently, Chung (2001) proposed an integrative conceptual model for work discrimination based on sexual orientation. In the proposed framework three dimensions are distinguished: (1) formal discrimination versus informal discrimination, (2) potential discrimination versus encountered discrimination, and (3) perceived discrimination versus real work discrimination. Ragins and Cornwell (2001a) developed and empirically tested a model of perceived workplace discrimination of gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees, focusing on possible antecedents and consequences. Antecedents include protective legislation, organizational policies and practices, and coworkers' and supervisor's sexual orientation. Consequences pertain to a variety of work attitudes and career outcomes. Using (a combination of) these models, future studies should be able to gain more fine-grained data on the work discrimination experienced by gay, lesbian, and bisexual people.

Another possible framework for future research is provided by the theory of organizational justice (Gilliland, 1993; Greenberg, 1990, 1993; Leventhal & Michaels, 1969). As demonstrated by Gilliland (1993), the concepts of procedural and distributive justice can be applied to personnel selection systems. Gilliland's justice rules constitute a particularly interesting area for research concerning sexual orientation in the context of personnel selection. For example, one could examine whether gay, lesbian, and bisexual candidates get

the same opportunity to perform as heterosexual candidates. Or whether both groups receive the same interpersonal treatment.

In sum, our finding that selection professionals mainly based their evaluations of written candidate profiles on candidates' quality, fits well into the philosophy of diversity management. Breaking down barriers for gay, lesbian, and bisexual people in the workplace can result in more creativity and greater productivity (Williamson, 1993). Moreover, it can give a company a competitive advantage in the area of resource acquisition and enlarge the pool of qualified job candidates from which to hire (Williams & Bauer, 1994). In a labor market that continues to diversify, recruitment and selection strategies that were once developed for a homogeneous labor force, now have to be re-evaluated. This implies that it must be ensured that they do not discriminate against particular groups of candidates. Furthermore, organizations must increasingly compete to hire employees from "non-traditional" or "minority" groups (Perkins et al., 2000; Rynes & Barber, 1990). Because gay, lesbian, and bisexual people represent a significant portion of the labor market, it is important to enhance their attraction to the organization as an employer. One way to achieve this, is by eliminating discrimination related to sexual orientation in a company's recruitment and selection procedures, and by communicating this to potential job applicants, for example in a recruitment brochure.

References

- American Psychological Association, Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns. (1991).
 Avoiding heterosexual bias in language. American Psychologist, *46*, 973-974.
- Barry, B., & Bateman, T. S. (1996). A social trap analysis of the management of diversity.
Academy of Management Review, *21*, 757-790.
- Braddock, J. H., II, & McPartland, J. M. (1987). How minorities continue to be excluded
 from equal employment opportunities: Research on labor market and institutional
 barriers. Journal of Social Issues, *43*, 5-39.
- Brown, D. C., Snedeker, C., & Sykes, B. (Eds.). (1997). Conflict and diversity. Cresskill, NJ:
 Hampton Press.
- Button, S. B. (2001). Organizational efforts to affirm sexual diversity: A cross-level
 examination. Journal of Applied Psychology, *86*, 17-28.
- Chemers, M. M., Oskamp, S., & Costanzo, M. A. (1995). Diversity in organizations: New
 perspectives for a changing workplace. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Chrobot-Mason, D., Button, S. B., & DiClementi, J. D. (2001). Sexual identity management
 strategies: An exploration of antecedents and consequences. Sex Roles, *45*, 321-336.
- Chung, Y. B. (2001). Work discrimination and coping strategies: Conceptual frameworks for
 counseling lesbian, gay, and bisexual clients. The Career Development Quarterly, *50*,
 33-44.
- Collier, C. A., & Shaffer, D. R. (1999). Activation and use of racial stereotypes in personnel
 decisions: A test of two theories. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, *29*, 2292-2307.
- Cox, T. H., & Blake, S. (1991). Managing cultural diversity : Implications for organizational
 competitiveness. Academy of Management Executive, *5*, 45-56.
- Croteau, J. M. (1996). Research on the work experiences of lesbian, gay, and bisexual people:
 An integrative review of methodology and findings. Journal of Vocational Behavior,

48, 195-209.

Croteau, J. M., & Bieschke, K. J. (1996). Beyond pioneering: An introduction to the special issue on the vocational issues of lesbian women and gay men. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 48, 119-124.

Davison, H. K., & Burke, M. J. (2000). Sex discrimination in simulated employment contexts: A meta-analytic investigation. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 56, 225-248.

Day, N. E., & Schoenrade, P. (1997). Staying in the closet versus coming out: Relationships between communication about sexual orientation and work attitudes. Personnel Psychology, 50, 147-163.

Diamant, L. (Ed.). (1993). Homosexual issues in the workplace. Washington, DC: Taylor & Francis.

Elliott, J. E. (1993). Career development with lesbian and gay clients. The Career Development Quarterly, 41, 210-226.

Ellis, A. L., & Riggle, E. D. B. (1995). The relation of job satisfaction and degree of openness about one's sexual orientation for lesbians and gay men. Journal of Homosexuality, 30, 75-85.

Gilliland, S. W. (1993). The perceived fairness of selection systems: An organizational justice perspective. Academy of Management Review, 18, 694-734.

Gorman, C. D., Clover, W. H., & Doherty, M. E. (1978). Can we learn anything about interviewing real people from "interviews" of paper people? Two studies of the external validity of a paradigm. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 22, 165-192.

Greenberg, J. (1990). Organizational justice: Yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Journal of Management, 16, 399-342.

Greenberg, J. (1993). The social side of fairness: Interpersonal and informational classes of

- organizational justice. In R. Cropanzano (Ed.), Justice in the Workplace (pp.79-103). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Harvie, K., Marshall-McCaskey, J., & Johnston, L. (1998). Gender-based biases in occupational hiring decisions. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 28, 1698-1711.
- Herek, G. M. (1990). The context of anti-gay violence: Notes on cultural and psychological heterosexism. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 5, 316-333.
- Herek, G. M., & Berrill, K. T. (Eds.). (1990). Violence against lesbians and gay men: Issues for research, practice and policy [Special issue]. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 5 (3).
- Herek, G. M., Kimmel, D. C., Amaro, H., & Melton, G. B. (1991). Avoiding heterosexist bias in psychological research. American Psychologist, 46, 957-963.
- Hoel, H., Rayner, C., & Cooper, C. L. (1999). Workplace bullying. In C. L. Cooper & I. T. Robertson (Eds.), International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology Volume 14 (pp. 195-230). New York: John Wiley & Sons.
- Ivancevich, J. M., & Gilbert, J. A. (2000). Diversity management: Time for a new approach. Public Personnel Management, 29, 75-92.
- Jackson, S. E. (Ed.). (1992). Diversity in the workplace: Human resources initiatives. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Kirk, M., & Madsen, H. (1989). After the ball: How America will conquer its fear and hatred of gays in the 90's. New York: Doubleday.
- Kitzinger, C. (1991). Lesbians and gay men in the workplace: Psychosocial issues. In M. J. Davidson & J. Earnshaw (Eds.), Vulnerable workers: Psychosocial and legal issues (pp. 223-240). London: John Wiley & Sons.
- Kitzinger, C., Coyle, A., Wilkinson, S., & Milton, M. (1998). Towards lesbian and gay psychology. The Psychologist, 11, 529-533.

- Kohn, S. (1999). The domestic partnership organizing manual for employee benefits. New York: The Policy Institute of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.
- Kossek, E. E., & Lobel, S. A. (Eds.). (1996). Managing diversity. Oxford, England: Blackwell Business.
- Leventhal, G. S., & Michaels, J. W. (1969). Extending the equity model: Perception of inputs and allocation of reward as a function of duration and quantity of performance. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, *12*, 303-309.
- Lonborg, S. D., & Philips, J. M. (1996). Investigating the career development of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people: Methodological considerations and recommendations. Journal of Vocational Behavior, *48*, 176-194.
- Marlowe, C. M., Schneider, S. L., & Nelson, C. E. (1996). Gender and attractiveness biases in hiring decisions: Are more experienced managers less biased? Journal of Applied Psychology, *81*, 11-21.
- Martinez, M. N. (1993, June). Recognizing sexual orientation is fair and not costly. HRMagazine, *38*, 66-72.
- Milliken, F. J., & Martins, L. L. (1996). Searching for common threads: Understanding the multiple effects of diversity in organizational groups. Academy of Management Review, *21*, 402-433.
- Morin, S. F., & Rothblum, E. D. (1991). Removing the stigma. American Psychologist, *46*, 947-949.
- Murphy, K. R., Herr, B. M., Lockhart, M. C., & Maguire, E. (1986). Evaluating the performance of paper people. Journal of Applied Psychology, *71*, 654-661.
- Perkins, L. A., Thomas, K. M., & Taylor, G. A. (2000). Advertising and recruitment: Marketing to minorities. Psychology & Marketing, *17*, 235-255.
- Perry, E. L., & Bourhis, A. C. (1998). A closer look at the role of candidate age in selection

- decisions. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 28, 1670-1697.
- Ployhart, R. E., & Ryan, A. M. (1997). Toward an explanation of applicant reactions: An examination of organizational justice and attribution frameworks. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 72, 308-335.
- Polinko, N. K., & Popovich, P. M. (2001). Evil thoughts but angelic actions: Responses to overweight job candidates. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 31, 905-924.
- Powell, G. N. (1998). Reinforcing and extending today's organizations: The simultaneous pursuit of person-organization fit and diversity. Organizational Dynamics, 26, 50-61.
- Prasad, P., Mills, A. J., Elmes, M., & Prasad, A. (Eds.). (1997). Managing the organizational melting pot: Dilemmas of workplace diversity. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ragins, B. R., & Cornwell, J. M. (2001a). Pink triangles: Antecedents and consequences of perceived workplace discrimination against gay and lesbian employees. Journal of Applied Psychology, 86, 1244-1261.
- Ragins, B. R., & Cornwell, J. M. (2001b, April). We are family: The influence of gay family-friendly policies on gay employees. Paper presented at the Sixteenth Annual Conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, San Diego, CA.
- Rothblum, E. D., & Bond, L. A. (Eds.). (1996). Preventing heterosexism and homophobia. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rynes, S. L., & Barber, A. E. (1990). Applicant attraction strategies: An organizational perspective. Academy of Management Review, 15, 286-310.
- 12th state bars bias for sexual orientation (2001, July). HR Focus, 78 (7), p. 2.
- Tosi, H. L., & Einbender, S.W. (1985). The effects of the type and amount of information in sex discrimination research: A meta-analysis. Academy of Management Journal, 28, 712-723.

- Vincke, J., Mak, R., & Bolton, R. (1991). Mannen met mannen: Welzijn, relaties & seksualiteit. Gent, België: Centra voor Geboortenregeling & Seksuele Opvoeding.
- Waldo, C. R. (1999). Working in a majority context: A structural model of heterosexism as minority stress in the workplace. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 46, 218-232.
- Williams, M. L., & Bauer, T. N. (1994). The effect of a managing diversity policy on organizational attractiveness. Group and Organization Management, 19, 295-308.
- Williamson, A. D. (1993, July/August). Is this the right time to come out? Harvard Business Review, 71, 18-27.
- Woods, J. D. (with Lucas J.). (1993). The corporate closet: The professional lives of gay men in America. New York: Macmillan.

Appendix

Example of Candidate Profile

1. Personal data

Name : Peter Verschaeve
 Gender : Male
 City : Ghent
 Age : 33 years
 Nationality : Belgian
 Family situation : Living together with John Vermeulen, fashion designer

2. Education and professional experience

1983- 1987 : Ghent University – Licentiate in Applied Economic Sciences

1990- 1993 : PUC Diepenbeek – Master of Business Administration
 Majors: Marketing and Human Resources

1987- 1990 : Recruitment Officer of a manufacturer of foodstuffs (n = 200).
 Responsible for the recruitment and selection of employees, and for human resource planning.

1991-now : Human Resource Manager of a manufacturer of electronic components (n = 400). Responsible for the recruitment of employees, for the coordination of performance reviews, for training and management development, and for career management. Other tasks include chairman of the work council, negotiations with the unions, implementation of labor laws. Manages seven personnel officers.

3. Personality

Peter Verschaeve is self-assured and assertive. He interacts with others in a friendly and warm manner. He has good communication skills and enjoys influencing and convincing other people. He addresses his work tasks thoroughly and carefully. He rapidly adjusts to new people and situations, which adds to his stress resistance. If the candidate were under stress in an actual work situation, his behavioral characteristics would not fundamentally change. This implies that he can handle every situation, even under pressure. He is creative and enjoys learning. In a group, he will often assume leadership. As a leader, he is encouraging, personal, and decisive.

Footnotes

1 Although the focus of our study was on male gay job candidates, it would be equally interesting to investigate the discrimination of lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people in a selection context. However, it is recommended to conduct separate studies for this purpose, because these groups have proven to be qualitatively different (Elliott, 1993; Kitzinger et al., 1998).

Table 1**Mean Hirability Ratings as a Function of Candidate Quality and Sexual Orientation**

Quality	Sexual orientation			
	Gay	Heterosexual	Single	Total
Poor				
<u>M</u>	3.10 (14)	3.15 (17)	2.49 (15)	2.92 (46)
<u>SD</u>	.78	1.18	.72	.96
Moderate				
<u>M</u>	5.75 (17)	5.91 (14)	6.01 (15)	5.89 (46)
<u>SD</u>	1.35	1.45	1.34	1.35
Excellent				
<u>M</u>	7.05 (13)	7.28 (16)	7.16 (14)	7.17 (43)
<u>SD</u>	1.24	.86	1.11	1.05
Total				
<u>M</u>	5.29 (44)	5.38 (47)	5.18 (44)	5.28 (135)
<u>SD</u>	1.97	2.12	2.27	2.11
Note: sample sizes are in parentheses.				