Should identity management strategy use vary by intersectional identity in leadership interviews?
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Introduction

- **Purpose**: To identify which identity management strategies are effective for individuals in leadership interviews, when considering their intersectional identities
- Intersectionality Theory argues that researchers should examine multiple social categories to which an individual belongs (Cole, 2009).
- Role Congruity Theory states that women are rated more negatively in leadership interviews because the prescribed stereotypes of women do not align with expectations of a leader (Eagly & Karau, 2002).
- Backlash Effect states that women are reacted to more negatively when presenting themselves as agentic (Rudman & Glick, 2001).
- Recent empirical research suggest that the use of an agentic identity management strategy is effective for women to combat potential biases and be seen as well-suited for leadership (Wessel et al., 2014).

Research Questions

1. Do identity management strategies affect performance and emotional ratings in leadership interviews?
2. Does intersectional identity influence which identity management strategy should be utilized in leadership interviews?

Methods

**Study 1**

- **N**: 215 undergraduate students: 78.1% female; \( M_{\text{age}} = 19.64 \) (SD = 1.88); 95% had working experience; 81.5% majority ethnic group
- **Study 2**

- **N**: 252 working adults with hiring experience: 67.3% female; \( M_{\text{age}} = 37.86 \) (SD = 10.56); \( M_{\text{tenure}} = 8.6 \) yrs. (SD = 6.33 yrs.); 66.5% majority ethnic group members

**Procedure**

Participants watched interview videos and rated the applicant—of various intersectional identities—on leadership interview outcomes

**Measures**

- IVs: Identity management strategy (IMS) and intersectional identity (ISI)
- DVs: Fit, hiring score (HS), emotional reaction (ER), and personal evaluation (PE)

**Design**

- 2 (IMS) x 4 (ISI) experimental between-subjects design

Study 1: Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) Results

**Results**

- The study hypotheses were not fully supported.
- In study 1, Hypothesis 3 was partially supported.
- There were no significant mean differences between White women and Black women on interview ratings.

Implications & Future Directions

- Strategy use suggestions for leadership interviews should vary by intersectional identity.
- Findings support the backlash effect theory and intersectionality theory.
- Those who are a part of hiring procedures should be experienced and trained properly to reduce potential biases in leadership ratings and subsequent hiring or promotion decisions.
- Future researcher should recruit a diverse sample of participants to test these effects.
- The role of rater characteristics in leadership interview effects should be explored in greater detail in future studies.

Key References


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