

The Influence of Attractiveness and Diversity on Perceived Group Performance Ratings

Jade C. Chacon, Jared B. Kenworthy
The University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, Texas

ABSTRACT

Research on attractiveness suggests that more attractive individuals are assumed to have superiority on several traits, such as happiness and extraversion. This is termed the halo effect. Additionally, within the diversity literature, although inconsistent, there is evidence supporting the importance of diversity within a team to promote better group performance, and to foster creativity and innovation. This study examined, for the first time, whether the physical attractiveness halo effect applies to groups. Particularly, overall group attractiveness, group diversity, and their interactive influence on perceived group creative performance were examined. This experiment manipulated both the attractiveness and the diversity of the groups to be rated, and although the attractiveness hypotheses were not supported, findings suggest those with negative attitudes toward diverse groups perceive homogenous groups to work better together, be more cohesive, and cooperative when compared to diverse groups.

BACKGROUND

- The physical attractiveness heuristic: more attractive individuals are assumed to possess personality traits that are more desirable when compared to unattractive individuals ¹
- Also called the halo effect
- A positive relationship is shown between team diversity and outcomes such as creativity and group performance ²

Eagly et al. (1991) meta-analysis:

Tested the strength and generalizability of the physical attractiveness heuristic ³

Practical application:

The attractiveness of a CEO influenced their compensation (more attractive, earned more compared to unattractive) ⁴

Group diversity and performance:

Both positive and negative effects are observed.

Organizations have a competitive edge with diverse teams

This enhanced creativity can lead to greater workplace commitment and job satisfaction ⁵ Groups may have more dissimilar viewpoints, which may lead to more innovation, as homogenous groups may not bring varied knowledge ⁶

HYPOTHESES

HYPOTHESIS 1

There will be a main effect of group attractiveness, such that participants will rate the creative performance of the attractive groups as higher compared to that of the unattractive groups. This prediction is an empirical extension of the individual-level attractiveness heuristic research, which has shown that more attractive individuals are assumed to have superiority on a variety of personality traits and social skills because of their physical attractiveness.

HYPOTHESIS 2

There will be a main effect of diversity, such that participants will rate the creative performance of the diverse groups as higher compared to that of the homogenous groups. This prediction takes the concepts of diversity and group performance research, which has shown that culturally diverse teams may increase creativity and problem solving, and focuses on the assumptions of the participants in an exploratory sense.

HYPOTHESIS 3

There will be an interaction between attractiveness and diversity such that the simple effect of diversity will be greater when the group is attractive than when the group is unattractive. This prediction is based on the reasoning for my diversity and halo effect hypotheses. Specifically, when groups are unattractive, their performance should be perceived as lower regardless of diversity. However, when they are attractive, they will benefit from both the attractiveness heuristic as well as the lay expectations concerning group diversity.

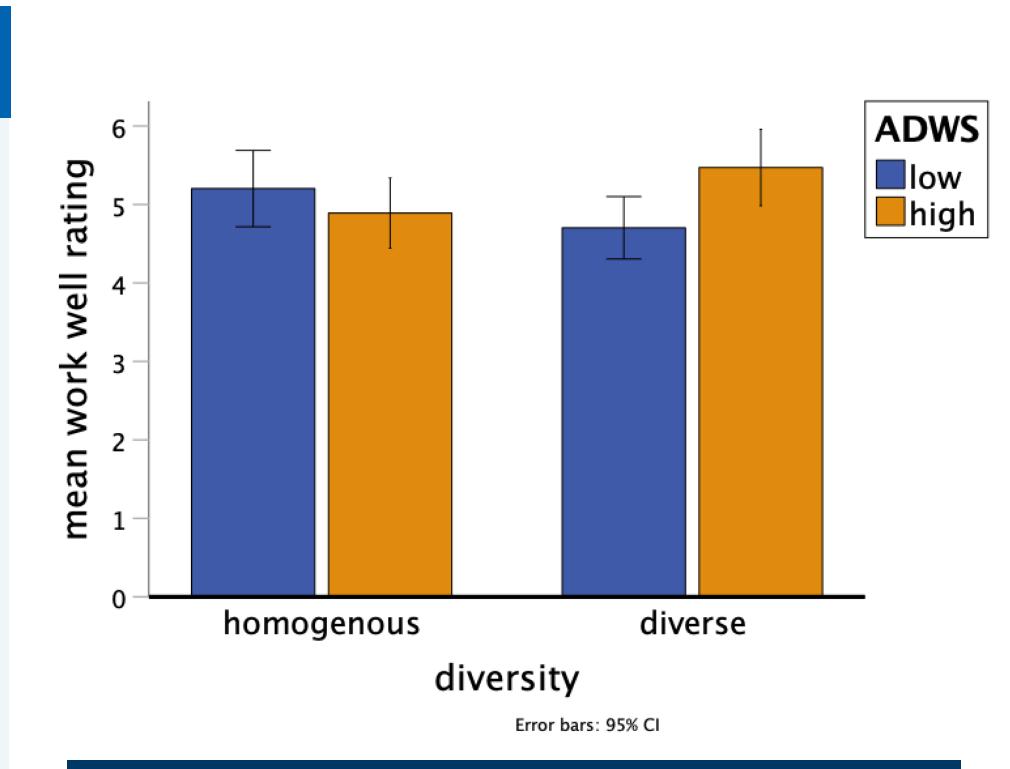


Figure 2: Post-hoc comparisons—Bonferroni correction

PARTICIPANTS AND DESIGN

- 177 participants after cleaning
- 2 (attractiveness: attractive/unattractive) x 2 (diversity: diverse/homogenous) between-subjects factorial design
- Random assignment to one of four conditions:
- 37 attractive homogenous
- 51 attractive diverse
- 45 unattractive homogenous
- 44 unattractive diverse

PROCEDURE

- Informed consent
- Rate the performance of the group as a whole
- Performance and creativity of the ideas
- Cohesiveness, likeability, cooperativeness, attractiveness, diversity of the group
- Attention check
- Demographics
- Nakui et al. (2011) Attitudes toward Diverse Workgroups Scale ⁷
- Self-attractiveness rating
- Attractiveness of all of the images in the study
- Debriefing and thank you message

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e down a fork on a desk, and try to put a uarter inside one of the spaces by olling it down believe that this game would become nore competitive if played between two posing teams. Maybe we can line up 4 forks on the edges of a long rectangular able. Both teams will have their umber of quarters into the opposite eam's forks under a time of five ninutes(this will be a relay). Whichever eam get the most quarters into the other teams forks wins the game. nrow obstacles in front of the fork to ncrease difficulty! ing pong ball with a spoon but this time

go around in a course with little jumps

ere and there

RESULTS

To determine if the manipulation worked:

- Participants' attractiveness ratings were significantly higher for the attractive groups (M = 4.33, SD = 1.40) compared to the unattractive groups (M = 3.08, SD = 1.72), t(175) = -5.31, p < .001.
- Participants' diversity ratings were significantly higher for the diverse groups (M = 5.14, SD = 1.21) compared to the homogenous groups (M = 2.35, SD = 1.56), t(175) = -13.37, p < .001.
- All hypotheses were not supported, after running a 2x2 factorial ANOVA

Attractiveness, diversity, and ethnicity with dependent variables:

- Three-way between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA)
- A significant three-way interaction between attractiveness, diversity, and ethnicity on how well the group worked together, F(1, 169) = 6.03, p = .015 (see Figure 1)

ADWS as a moderator and self-attractiveness as a covariate

- Three-way analysis of covariance (ANCOVA)
- A significant interaction between diversity and ADWS on how well the group worked together, while controlling for their self-attractiveness, F(1, 168) = 5.45, p = .021, partial $\eta = .03$
- Those with more positive ADWS rated the diverse groups higher (M = 5.33, SD = .189) in working well together when compared with the homogenous groups (M = 4.78, SD = .184) (see Figure 2)

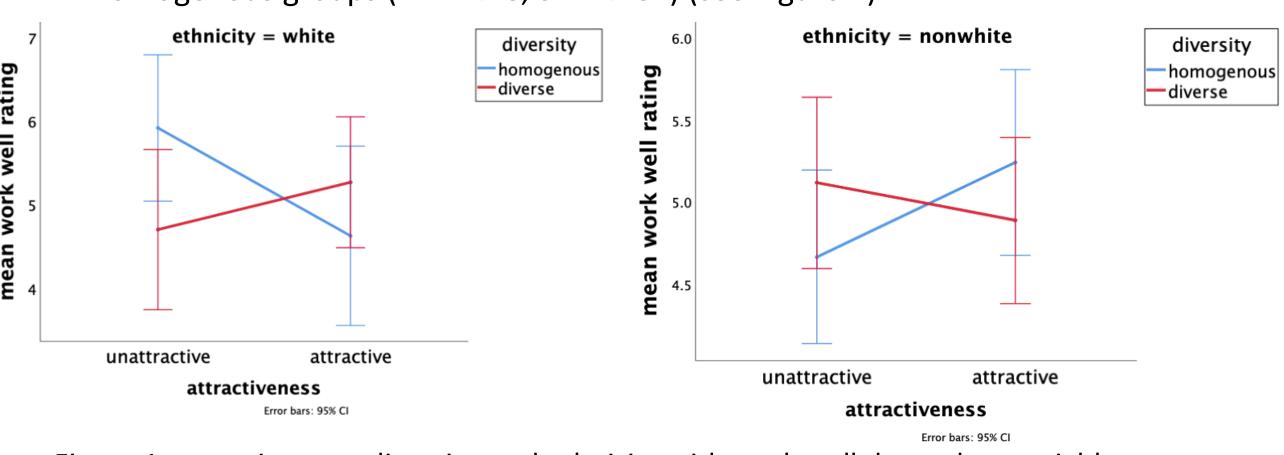


Figure 1: attractiveness, diversity, and ethnicity with work well dependent variable

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DISCUSSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- No significant results initially
- There is a pattern throughout in which nonwhite participants rated the attractive homogenous group highest
- Those with a positive attitude toward diverse groups tend to perceive diverse groups as performing better
- Modern replication

Other types of group diversity

- Socioeconomic status groups
- Disability status
- Age
- Job related diversity
- Mixed levels of attractiveness

Applied value

- Earnings boosts/increased wages
- Talent acquisition