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Transprejudice in access to employment

Margarida Barbosa Marques

Master in Human Resources Development Policies

Supervisor:

Doctor Nelson Campos Ramalho, Associate Professor,
ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon

September, 2023

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CIÊNCIAS SOCIAIS
E HUMANAS

Department of Political Economy

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Acknowledgments

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Abstract

Following the recent LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) movements, the first three acronyms have been increasingly targeted for greater workplace inclusion, but the latter (transgender) has been mostly overlooked (Beauregard et al., 2018). According to an analysis developed by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2007), more than one in three transgender respondents felt discriminated for being transgender when looking for a job (37%). Therefore, this study targets transgender people discrimination in the labour market, namely, in having access to a job. This is a contribution to a research gap that has been putting less emphasis on transgender people and, thus has generated the least knowledge and awareness to promote their social inclusiveness.

With a sample of 151 individuals, we tested a 2x2 factorial model where the first factor is expressed as gender identity (transgender *vs.* cisgender) and the second factor is expressed as gender (male *vs.* female) to explain two decisions: ascribed qualifications relative to expected minimum to apply for the job and hiring decision as most unfavorable up to favorable in an ordinal scale. The respective results went out of the expectations, showing a higher chance of being hired for ciswomen comparing to cismen, which goes counter to the literature and a higher chance of being hired for transmen comparing to transwomen. Results call attention to the boundary conditions pertaining to population segments and positive discrimination as a personal strategy.

Keywords: Transgender, Transprejudice, Hirability, Qualifications, Discrimination

JEL Code: J16 Economics of Gender, J71 Discrimination

Resumo

Na sequência dos recentes movimentos LGBT (lésbicas, gays, bissexuais e transgêneros), os três primeiros acrónimos têm sido cada vez mais associados a uma maior inclusão no local de trabalho, à exceção do último (transgénero), que tem sido maioritariamente ignorado (Beauregard et al., 2018). De acordo com uma análise desenvolvida pela European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (2007), mais de um em cada três inquiridos transgénero sentiu-se discriminado por ser transgénero quando procurava emprego (37%). Assim, este estudo foca-se na discriminação das pessoas transgénero no mercado de trabalho, nomeadamente no acesso ao emprego. Este é um contributo para uma lacuna de investigação que tem dado menos ênfase às pessoas transgénero e, por conseguinte, tem gerado menos conhecimento e sensibilização para promover a sua inclusão social.

Com uma amostra de 151 indivíduos, testámos um modelo fatorial 2x2 em que o primeiro fator é representado como identidade de género (transgénero *vs.* cisgénero) e o segundo fator é apresentado como género (masculino *vs.* feminino) para explicar duas decisões: qualificações atribuídas relativamente ao mínimo esperado para se candidatar ao emprego e decisão de contratação, do mais desfavorável até ao mais favorável numa escala ordinal. Os respetivos resultados afastaram-se das expetativas, mostrando uma maior probabilidade de contratação para mulheres cisgénero em relação a homens cisgénero, o que contraria a literatura, e uma maior probabilidade de contratação para homens transgénero em relação a mulheres transgénero. Os resultados salientam as condições de fronteira criadas por segmentos populacionais e a discriminação positiva enquanto uma estratégia pessoal.

Palavras-chave: Transgénero, Preconceito trans, Empregabilidade, Qualificações, Discriminação

Código JEL: J16 Economia do Género, J71 Discriminação

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Chapter 1. Introduction

1.1. Research Problem and Goals

Employment is a critical dimension of social life. Paid work not only provides the means for self-subsistence as it also provides a sense of professional identity, valued role within society and a sense of belongingness (Burke & Page, 2017). It is, therefore, a topic that is always on top of the concern for governing authorities, policy makers, scholars, employers, trade unions, and civil society.

Among the many challenges that employment policies face, fairness has been a paramount value for policy makers. Fairness can be expressed (and broken) in how much compensation allows for a dignifying life, how much pay gaps are associated with specific social categories such as the gender pay gap (Devey, 1993), and how much discrimination prevents citizens from having equal opportunities in having access to the labor market. This latter is surely one of the most serious expressions of unfairness as it is wholly unrelated to any reasonable motive to assume lower performance or any disadvantage in performing work tasks. The real importance of equal opportunities in employment was addressed earlier in Kennedy's administration with an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission that aimed to combat racial discrimination. After all these years, discrimination and unequal opportunities are still a reality at the labor market, especially when mentioning minorities that are not included on the dominant pattern.

Societies that call upon themselves the value of equality are societies that cannot compromise with any form of discrimination, especially in having access to critical resources such as a paid job. The Portuguese fundamental Law (Article 13 of the Constitution) expressly bans it, and the Penal Code penalizes discrimination based on "race, skin color, ethnic or national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical or mental disability" (Código Penal, 2021, art. 240). Therefore, the topic of this study lies in the direct line of values upheld by the law makers. Likewise, by studying this topic within the context of work organizations, it trickles down the same upholding of values, and fosters a more inclusive, fair, and diverse workforce. This not only entails an intrinsic ethical value as it is also known to add to economic value (Shen et al., 2009).

It is undeniable that all forms of discrimination are intrinsically unfair, however those forms of discrimination that are given less attention are even more unfair and that is exactly why transprejudice deserves special attention. Transgender people have been the least of the studied and targeted group within LGBT (Beauregard et al., 2018) although it is most likely the group with the highest external physical expression of its nature, and thus, is the most visible among all. This is a contribution to a research gap that has been putting less emphasis on transgender people and, thus has generated the least knowledge and awareness to promote their social inclusiveness.

The investigation on workplace discrimination made by the International Labour Organization exposed that transgender people endure the highest level of employment bias (International Labour Organization, 2013), which harms their judged qualifications and hirability (Ozturk et al., 2016). The transgender numerical underrepresentation and the lack of recognition of their gender identity fail to provide them equal opportunities when accessing a job position (Baril et al., 2019). This is related with an essentialist view of gender that only considers two options, declining the identity of non-confirming parts (i.e., transgender, non-binary, gender-fluid), which results in transprejudice (Ching et al., 2020).

Beyond arguments based on anecdotal accounts or unemployment niche statistics, it is important to ascertain to which extent transprejudice occurs when hiring decisions are made regarding equivalent applications only differentiated by gender identity (i.e., trans *vs.* cisgender in our case) and gender (male *vs.* female). To explore this topic, the present thesis starts by reviewing literature pertaining to recruitment and selection processes highlighting qualifications (competencies) as a key variable to sustain hiring decisions, to stress how impression formation and stereotypes (with a focus on gender, and gender identity) play a significant role on the subjective exercise of ascribing qualifications, to further deepen the issues that gender prejudice crossed with gender identity and transgender carry to society and organizations, and finally end with an in-depth view on transgender prejudice interacting with ascribed qualifications and hiring decisions. With hypotheses formulated and integrated into a conceptual model, the thesis proceeds to show the methods deployed explaining the experimental design, stimuli, procedure, sampling, and data analysis strategy. This entails also presenting the psychometric quality of some constructs, namely its validity and reliability so to guarantee a robust measurement. Results are shown to answer the following question: To which extent is there a joint effect of gender prejudice and transprejudice in judging qualifications suitability and hirability of job candidates?

Chapter 2. Literature Review

Literature review starts by introducing recruitment and selection processes to highlight the importance of qualifications for hiring decisions. Within this context, literature on impression formation and stereotypes in recruitment and selection is developed to approach gender identity as a targeted feature of candidates. Literature then proceeds to deepen the role and expectations concerning gender identities and discrimination, namely transprejudice. The hypotheses are motivated by literature and shown in sequences along the text.

2.1. Recruitment and Selection Processes

Recruitment and Selection processes are one of the main functions of Human Resources professionals and act as the first phases into people's access to employment. Recruitment is the first step where the goal is to find qualified and appropriate candidates to fill a job position (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). The two most common sources of recruitment are internal and external and the main difference between both consists in if the candidates are already part of the organisation or not (Gardi et al., 2020).

Selection is the following step where there is a process of evaluating and interviewing the right candidate(s) for a specific job position, that could successfully perform the job (Prabhu et al. 2020). This means that the selection divides the candidates that will be chosen for the job position and the ones who will not.

These two processes should be conducted in accordance with the organisation's objectives, budget, and the necessary requirements for the job position (Rego et al., 2015). Recruiting the wrong candidates could lead to big impacts on the organisations, such as reduced performance and productivity, higher turnover rates, negative impact on team dynamics, training, and development costs and that is the real importance of specialised processes of recruitment and selection (Rego et al., 2015).

The candidates can be recruited and selected for many different reasons; however, their qualifications are the most used to evaluate a person's suitability for a job position. Qualifications are formal credentials or achievements that are often listed on a resume to demonstrate a person's knowledge, skills, or abilities in a particular area or field (Flaszyńska, 2021). These may include degrees or certifications earned through education or training

programs, as well as professional licences or certifications that are required in certain fields or industries and can determine the candidate's hirability (Watson, 2000).

Organisations are increasingly valuing the knowledge and skills of the candidates as a differentiator and for that reason aim to hire the best qualified candidates who can promote the employer branding (Santos & Pedro, 2018). This means that qualifications can determine the candidates' hirability, which refers to an individual's likelihood or perceived likelihood of being hired for a particular job or position (Hoye, 2003).

Graduates' candidates usually offer a higher level of skills and competencies that meet employer's demands in terms of professionalism, productivity, and autonomy (Haughton et al., 2012). However, it is not only the candidate's degree title that can dazzle the employer, but also their academic performance which can demonstrate an additional advantage in the candidate's value (Cuthbert and Spark, 2008).

From a purely rational viewpoint, qualifications are key to be hired. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H1: Judged qualifications are positively associated with hirability.

Nevertheless, as stated before, there are more aspects that can determinate a candidate's hirability. Factors that may impact an individual's hirability include their education, work experience, skills, and personal characteristics, as well as broader societal and cultural factors such as discrimination based on race, gender, age, or other protected characteristics (Rivera, 2012).

Following that, in the past few years, the diversity management has become a fundamental part of the labour market, following the increasing globalization and consequent discrimination. This emerges as essential for companies' survival, since it aims to transform the imminent conflict between different groups into something functional and manageable (Barbosa, 2020, quoted by Oliveira, 2021).

However, while diversity measures are legally imposed, inclusion is still a voluntary action that cannot be guaranteed in a diverse organisation (Winters, 2013). An inclusive organisation should involve a collective commitment towards the pre-established organisational norms and values, but always opening a safe space to all backgrounds and differences at all levels, by treating workers equally and giving them voice to recommendations (Nishii, 2013).

2.2. The role of impressions and stereotypes in Recruitment and Selection

Although the Human Resources professionals follow specific rules implemented by the organisation, the human stereotypes and impressions causes biases on the Recruitment and Selection processes. Understanding the meaning of unconscious bias and its impact on recruitment and selection processes is indispensable, since it can damage diversity demands on organisations and, of course, disadvantage gender, racial, age nonconformity candidates (Roxburgh & Hansen, 2015). Roxburgh and Hansen (2015) define the unconscious bias as a mental shortcut inherent to human cognition which can unintentionally disturb rational decision-making, resulting in biased outcomes. Even though many of our decisions are grounded in objective information, there exists another decision-making process that operates on quick associations and assumptions, drawing from our past experiences, all while eluding our conscious awareness.

In this sense, Sears and Rowe (2003) made reference to the similar-to-me-bias effect between the Human Resources professionals and the candidates that can impact largely the hirability. The more similar the candidates are from the Human Resources professionals, the higher hirability will they have, which can contribute to the prevalence of the dominant pattern in organisations. This is related with the concept of “in-group favouritism”, which concerns the hiring, promoting, and rewarding of those in the “in” group (Bell, 2021). Since this constrains diversity, working against women and other minority groups, recategorizing the “in-group”, seems to be a perfect way of shifting power and reinventing an inclusive company culture (Roxburgh & Hansen, 2015).

Koch et al. (2015) explained the gender-role congruity bias, where the biases arise due to congruence between stereotypes and expectations about the requirements for a specific job position and the stereotypes and expectations for both men and women. This means that the greater the incongruence between stereotypes is the greater the prejudice of a candidate tend to be.

Women face barriers in the Recruitment and Selection processes comparing to men (Fernandez & Campero 2017). This happens following an incongruity between women personal traits and the characteristics perceived as necessary in roles held by men, which causes negative expectations about women’s performance (Heilman & Caleo, 2018). Isaac et al. (2009) concluded in their study that when women and men have identical qualifications, it is easier for

men to be included on the recruitment and selection processes and being granted an interview and eventually being hired.

The literature has proven that the same occurs for transgender people who face many disadvantages comparing to cisgender people on Recruitment and Selection processes. Valens (2018) states there is a cisgender privilege that is caused by society's perception that identify cisgender people as the default gender identity and, therefore, as "normal" individuals. The cisgender hegemony in the workplace privilege gender-normative embodiments and gender presentation, which can cause serious harms to transgender, non-binary and other gender-nonconforming people who cannot find an opportunity in such organisations.

However, according to Schilt (2011), the cisgender privileges are often extended to undisclosed transmen in the form of masculine privileges typically associated with birth-assigned males, such as higher levels of assumed competence, authority, and productivity. Furthermore, even when the transgender identity is known, some transmen still receive men privileges. This happens because transmen transition to a "higher gender" (Schilt, 2011).

Additionally, the recruiter's impressions can also be affected by trait impressions that are activated by facial appearance. In a matter of milliseconds, individuals swiftly form judgments about a person's characteristics and abilities when they observe their facial expression. Subsequently, these initial impressions play a significant role in shaping how they evaluate and interact with that individual, which unconsciously impacts their hirability (Zebrowitz, 1996; Todorov et al., 2005). The way candidate's dress in job interviews may impact their hirability. Wearing formal, business clothes can result in applicants being perceived as more intelligent, competent, efficient, and trustworthy, according to Ruetzler et al. (2012). On the other hand, using clothes that do not belong to social normal, for example jeans, can harm the candidate's hirability (Barrick et al., 2009).

Besides that, the hiring platforms which seek to find the best eligible candidate for a specific job seem to be a better solution, since they go through numerous job profiles and only recommend the potential matches to the recruiter (Carey & Smith, 2016). However, they also face a serious challenge by predicting their decisions based on past decisions which can lead unintentionally to a constant selection of people inserted in a dominant pattern, strengthening gender and racial stereotypes (Burke et al., 2018). Thus, for example, if males were contacted more frequently in the past, the hiring platform's advertisement will tend to be shown to more males, which is called the historical bias (Bogen, 2019, quoted by Köchling & Wehner, 2020).

The algorithm eliminates highly qualified candidates who do not present the past preferences and that is why it is important to train the algorithm based on certain criteria to make sure it is including all types of people (Savage & Bales, 2016).

Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H2: There is a positive effect of gender identity in judged qualifications in such a way that cisgender candidates received higher ascribed qualification (transprejudice).

H3: There is a positive effect of gender identity in hirability in such a way that cisgender candidates have higher hirability (transprejudice).

Linking this to the rational rhetoric association with the centrality of qualifications, and assuming some subjectivity in judging them while the social norms also interfere with such judgment, we hypothesize that:

H4: Judged qualifications mediate the positive effect of gender identity on hirability.

2.3. Gender identities, roles, and expectations

First, it is important to distinguish sex and gender which according to Rouxinol (2017) sex refers to the biological condition defined at birth which is divided just into female or male, while gender corresponds to the way the person expresses her/himself in social interaction.

For each gender, there are certain stereotypes, such as role behaviours, physical characteristics, occupations, and typical traits which can be related to one another (Deaux, 1985). Thus, children learn very early what it means to be a girl or a boy since social structures dictate who we are and what roles we are expected to perform, beginning with the family, and extending to schools and workplace (West & Zimmerman, 1987, quoted by Dietert & Dentice, 2009).

Gender Identity used to be defined in a dichotomous way, since the pre-existing conceptions of feminine and masculine only focused on the system of reproduction and sustainability (Spence & Helmreich, 1978). That meaning did not allow the understanding of the new terms that are being explored by the recent LGBTQIA+ movements. This was followed by the Portuguese law n° 28/201812 of August 7th that ensured “the right to self-determination

of gender identity and gender expression and the protection of the sexual characteristics of each person”.

Rouxinol (2017) conceptualises this term - Gender Identity - as the feeling perceived by the individual in relation to their gender and regardless of their sex that admits the extension and freedom of the essence of human personality and personal dignity. Within this concept, there are several possibilities that will be presented next.

The definition of *transgender identity* postulated by the American Psychiatric Association is based on an inconsistency between the sex and the respective gender feeling. Also, in this nonconforming perspective, the term *transsexual* represents people that alter or wish to alter their physical appearance and/or bodies through different means to make their looks as congruent as possible with their gender identities. Conversely, the *cisgender identity* corresponds to a consistency between the sex and the respective gender feeling. In this study, we will use more often the *transgender* and *cisgender* identities more often since they are considered umbrella terms and for that reason can cover more identities (Whittle et al., 2007).

Within trans identity, there is a distinction between male and female which according to the American Psychiatric Association, *transsexual men* (also known as *transmen*) are individuals who were assigned female at birth based on their sex characteristics but identify themselves as male and may undergo medical intervention (such as hormone therapy, surgery, and other medical procedures) to alter their bodies to better match their gender identity. On the other hand, the corresponding opposite is known as *transsexual women* or *transwomen*. For the cis identity, *cismen* are individuals who were assigned male at birth and persist to identify themselves as male and *ciswomen* were recognized as female at birth and continue to identify themselves as female.

Also, there is a third option called *non-binary* which can also function as an umbrella term representing all identities different from “man” and “woman” like *agender* (having no gender), *genderfluid* (constant change between genders) and other notions. In this case, the individual perceives a non-identification with the expected models (feminine/masculine) that escapes to the conformity (Rouxinol, 2017). *Conformity*, on its part, is normally associated with the willingness to meet group expectations which can avoid social disapproval (Levine, 1989).

We therefore hypothesize that:

H7: There is an interaction between the indirect positive effect of candidates' gender identity on hirability with the candidates' gender such that male candidates have stronger indirect effect than female candidates.

H8: There is an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates' gender identity with the transgender attitudes and beliefs in explaining judged qualifications.

H9: There is an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates' gender identity with the transgender attitudes and beliefs in explaining hirability.

2.4. Discrimination and Transprejudice

The concept of discrimination is defined by the American Psychological Association as the act of making unjustified distinctions between individuals and/or groups based on categories to which they are perceived to belong.

Apart from that, the concept of Gender discrimination refers to the unequal treatment based on a person's gender, in which, according to Sharma (2018), women are more likely to become victims than men. The main concept explored in this study is related with sex discrimination and it is called by *transprejudice* which refers to “the negative valuing, stereotyping, and discriminatory treatment of individuals whose appearance and/or identity does not conform to the current social expectations or conventional conceptions of gender” (King et al., 2009). Underlying the transprejudice, there is an essentialist view of sex and gender which is a theory that will be explored below (Ching et al., 2020).

The *Gender Essentialism Theory* shows that an essentialism belief tends to classify both sex and gender into a binary version composed by just two different categories: male/female (Ching et al., 2020). As a male or female person, one should behave in a certain way due to their predispose “essences” acquired with their born sex. Therefore, it corresponds to the belief that gender is inborn, biologically determined, and unchangeable (Gülgöz et al., 2019). The notion of cis-normativity (Worthen, 2016) states that anything that is non-cisgender is unacceptable since it is unnatural, and it is not originated from biological factors. Thus, the gender essentialism is directly related with traditional beliefs that are jointly related with prejudice against transgender people according to the recent study of Ching and Xu (2018).

On the other hand, the *Social Dominance Theory* describes how ideologies and institutional discrimination to gender roles contribute to group-based inequality and/or dominance that are usually related with myths (Pratto et al., 2011). Hence, it presents arguments to justify the existing inequalities towards people who are inferior to the dominant group. According to hetero-cis-normativity, people who have transgender identities are considered out-groups and, therefore, should be treated inequality (Worthen, 2016).

Discriminatory practices in the workplace carry immense importance within an individual's life journey, particularly concerning job search and market entry. These practices hold social, economic, and legal consequences, necessitating an isolated examination of this occurrence (Ozturk et al., 2016).

On a global scale, transgender individuals confront vocational challenges. The International Labour Organization's investigation into workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity reveals that transgender persons endure the highest level of employment bias (ILO, 2013). Furthermore, approximately 25% of transgender workers feel compelled to change jobs due to experiences of discrimination and victimisation (Whittle et al., 2007).

Norton and Herek (2013) concluded on their survey that respondents who defended a binary conception of gender, who identified themselves with higher level of authoritarianism, more conservative ideologies and religiosity were less favourably to contact with transgender people. In the same way, Flores et al. (2018) refers that traditionalism and partisanship people, when exposed to transgender people images, were disconformable with gender nonconformity and unlikely to support transgender rights.

There is a deep disparity concerning the representation of gender identity diversity within organisations. Transgender individuals frequently stand out as an exception and consequently encounter a sense of othering and marginalisation. As a result, transgender job candidates face disadvantages during recruitment and selection, and upon employment, they encounter bias and exclusions (Ozturk et al., 2016). Notably, transgender employees not only suffer from numerical underrepresentation, but their gender identity concerns also remain on the outskirts, invisible and unspoken within organisational dynamics. This absence of representation, both in terms of quantity within the internal workforce and the quality of inclusivity within organisational culture, manifests in decisions related to disclosure (Baril et al., 2019).

According to the recently growing literature on management of sexual orientation diversity, the gap in research concerning gender identity diversity management represents a critical void in our comprehension of effective management of workplace dissimilarities, ensuring inclusivity across organisations. The lack of attention towards transgender employees' workplace experiences partly stems from the tendency to group research on sexual minority employees, i.e., lesbian, gay, and bisexual, and gender identity nonconforming subgroups, i.e., transgender, despite their potentially distinct workplace challenges (Bell et al., 2021; Day & Schoenrade, 2000; Ragins et al., 2007).

Addressing this gap gains paramount importance in light of the expanding body of Human Resource Management (HRM) that fails to consider gender identity diversity.

Therefore, by integrating all previous hypotheses with transprejudice literature, we hypothesize that:

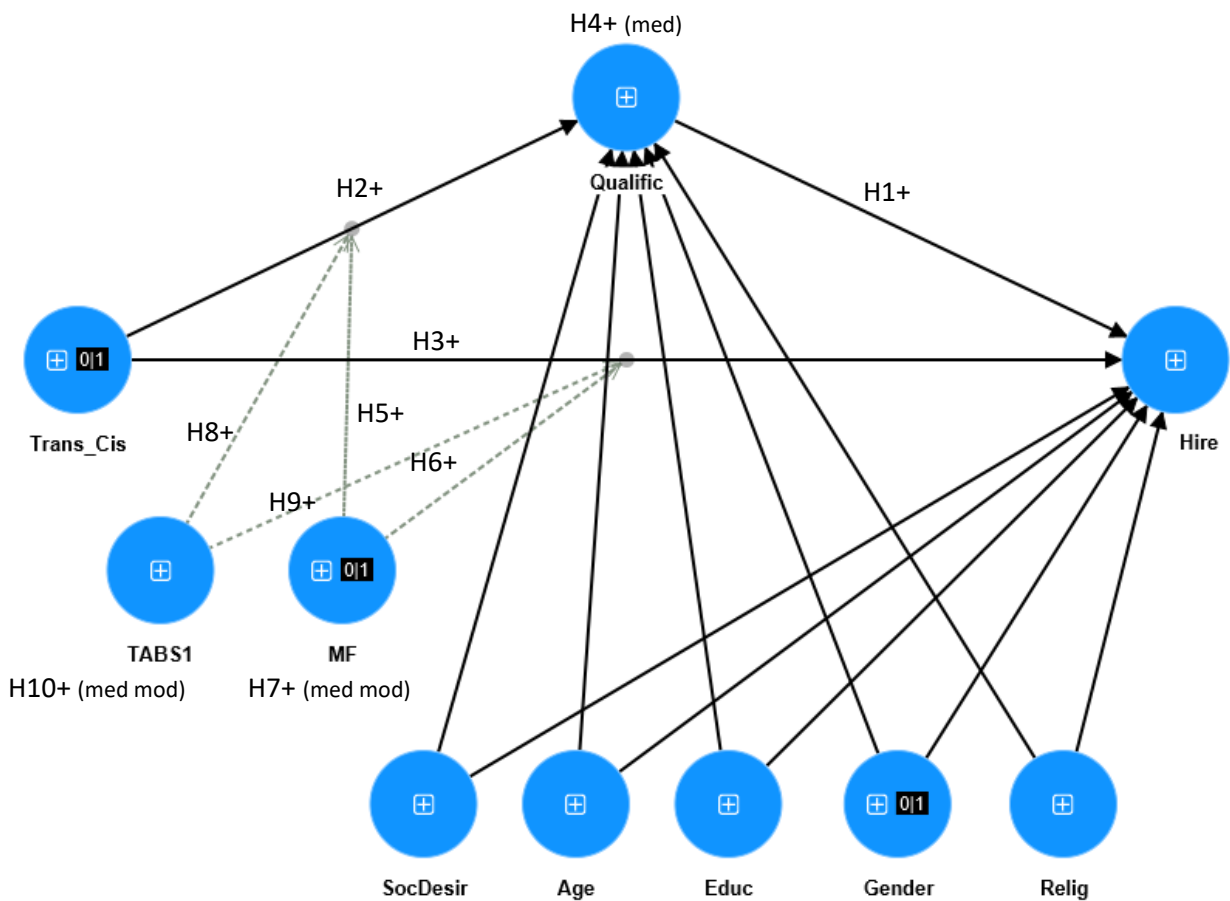
H10: There is an interaction between the indirect positive effect of candidates' gender identity on hirability with transgender attitudes and beliefs such that the indirect effect is stronger when transgender attitudes and beliefs are positive.

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Chapter 3. Conceptual model

By integrating the variables manipulated as well as the outcomes and the control variables into a single structure, the following conceptual model was designed (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 – Conceptual model and respective hypotheses



For clarity's sake, we list the respective hypotheses as follows:

H1: Judged qualifications are positively associated with hirability.

H2: There is a positive effect of gender identity in judged qualifications in such a way that cisgender candidates received higher ascribed qualification (transprejudice).

H3: There is a positive effect of gender identity in hirability in such a way that cisgender candidates have higher hirability (transprejudice).

H4: Judged qualifications mediate the positive effect of gender identity on hirability.

H5: There is an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates' gender identity with candidates' gender in explaining judged qualifications.

H5a: Cismen candidates received higher judged qualifications than ciswomen candidates.

H5b: Transwomen candidates received lower judged qualifications than transmen candidates.

H6: There is an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates' gender identity with candidates' gender in explaining hirability.

H6a: Cismen candidates have higher hirability than ciswomen candidates.

H6b: Transmen candidates have higher hirability than transwomen candidates.

SAME QUALIFICATIONS	CISGENDER	TRANSGENDER
MALE	Higher hirability	Low hirability
FEMALE	Moderate hirability	Very low hirability

Figure 3.2 – 2*2 Table for gender identity crossed with sex

H7: There is an interaction between the indirect positive effect of candidates' gender identity on hirability with the candidates' gender such that male candidates have stronger indirect effect than female candidates.

H8: There is an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates' gender identity with the transgender attitudes and beliefs in explaining judged qualifications.

H8a: Transgender candidates received higher judged qualifications when transgender attitudes and beliefs are positive.

H8b: Cisgender candidates received equivalent judged qualifications independently of transgender attitudes and beliefs.

H9: There is an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates' gender identity with the transgender attitudes and beliefs in explaining hirability.

H9a: Transgender candidates have higher hirability when transgender attitudes and beliefs are positive.

H9b: Cisgender candidates have equivalent hirability independently of transgender attitudes and beliefs.

H10: There is an interaction between the indirect positive effect of candidates' gender identity on hirability with transgender attitudes and beliefs such that the indirect effect is stronger when transgender attitudes and beliefs are positive.

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Chapter 4. Method

This chapter introduces the research design, the stimuli, the procedure, sample, data analysis strategy, and measures used in the study.

4.1. Research design

This study is empirically designed to test a 2x2 factorial model where the first factor is expressed as gender identity (transgender *vs.* cisgender) and the second factor is expressed as gender (male *vs.* female) to explain two decisions: ascribed qualifications relative to expected minimum to apply for the job, and hiring decision as most unfavorable up to favorable in an ordinal scale.

4.2. Stimuli

As an experimental study, it is necessary to produce a stimulus (or stimuli) to enact the behaviour one intends to measure (as a dependent variable). The stimuli comprise CVs that are purposively designed to depict in a text and with a face photograph, the transgender or cisgender identity of a fictitious candidate.

The photographs used on CVs to represent a woman, a man, a transwoman, and a transman were collected from “creative commons”. Among the available photographs, a couple was chosen to represent each of the four conditions (man, woman, transman, transwoman) and trying to keep choices in line with the current aesthetics that a CV would show (front facing, head and neck, regular make up) according to Fernandez et al. (2017) and Cox et al. (1986). These were subjected to a pre-test to ascertain issues regarding the stimuli.

Twenty-four individuals were exposed to the photographs (to guarantee the overall face shows gender identity as an external looks) asking them to identify if the person in the photograph was cisgender or transgender. The photographs were showed in random order to avoid order effects. Three photographs were found to be correctly associated: ciswoman (almost 92% correct answers), cisman (approximately 71% correct answers), and transwoman (around 83% correct answers). For transman, the stimuli were not working (approximately 42% and 29% hit for both photos) because the look was not sufficiently ambiguous – mixed masculine

















and feminine but with stronger signs for masculine – and for that reason a third stimulus was produced later from a real photograph modified through the “face app” (with due authorization from the original person, and after also showing the modified photo). This photograph was pretested to found it successful, meaning that nearly 92% of the respondents identified it as a transman. The mention of transgender identity was presented when the stimulus represents a transgender candidate as “transsexual” since it is the most common term used in Portuguese as the most exact translation of transgender (*transgénero*) is not popularly used.

Also, the CV produced for the study was pretested. It was showed with no gender, age or photograph associated, and asking to which extent it was a plausible good one to apply to a bank job position. The pretest showed the CV formulation was good enough to deserve credit for that job position, with 100% of the respondents affirming they would be hiring that candidate.

The stimuli comprised four variations of the same CV that correspond to the 2*2 conditions as depicted in Figure 4.1.

- CV1 – Text makes explicit the *transgender* identity, the photo is consistent with that gender identity, and the candidate is a *transman*.
- CV2 – Text makes explicit the *cisgender* identity, the photo is consistent with that gender identity, and the candidate is a *cisman*.
- CV3 – Text makes explicit the *transgender* identity, the photo is consistent with that gender identity, and the candidate is a *transwoman*.
- CV4 – Text makes explicit the *cisgender* identity, the photo is consistent with that gender identity, and the candidate is a *ciswoman*.

Figure 4.1 – CV stimuli

<p>Daniel Marques Gestor de Clientes, 31 anos Transsexual</p> <p>EXPERIÊNCIA PROFISSIONAL</p> <p>Estagiário Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2012 - Setembro 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente. <p>Bancário Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2013 - Junho 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente; Aconselhamento financeiro; Análise de empréstimos e vendas de produtos, como planos de capitalização, investimentos, seguros e consórcios. <p>Intermediário de Crédito Banco com sede em Portugal Julho 2017 - Atualidade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Análise contratual de créditos; Assistência nos atos preparatórios de contratos de crédito e/ou transferências de créditos; Serviços de consultoria. <p>EDUCAÇÃO</p> <p>Licenciatura em Economia Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2009 - 2012</p> <p>Mestrado em Gestão Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2015-2017</p> <p>Cambridge English Certificate Instituição: Centro de Línguas Creditado</p>	 <p>CONTACTOS</p> <p>linkedin.com/in/daniel-marques </p> <p>daniel-marques_@outlook.pt </p> <p>915 xxx 478 </p> <p>(Clique para ver mais)</p> <p>IDIOMAS</p> <p>INGLÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Avançado Escrita: Avançado Oral: Avançado <p>PORTUGUÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Nativo Escrita: Nativo Oral: Nativo <p>COMPETÊNCIAS RELEVANTES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assiduidade Atenção ao detalhe Espirito de Equipa Resiliência <p>COMPETÊNCIAS DIGITAIS</p> <p>Microsoft Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excel: avançado Powerpoint: avançado Word: avançado 	<p>Daniel Marques Gestor de Clientes, 31 anos Sexo masculino</p> <p>EXPERIÊNCIA PROFISSIONAL</p> <p>Estagiário Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2012 - Setembro 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente. <p>Bancário Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2013 - Junho 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente; Aconselhamento financeiro; Análise de empréstimos e vendas de produtos, como planos de capitalização, investimentos, seguros e consórcios. <p>Intermediário de Crédito Banco com sede em Portugal Julho 2017 - Atualidade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Análise contratual de créditos; Assistência nos atos preparatórios de contratos de crédito e/ou transferências de créditos; Serviços de consultoria. <p>EDUCAÇÃO</p> <p>Licenciatura em Economia Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2009 - 2012</p> <p>Mestrado em Gestão Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2015-2017</p> <p>Cambridge English Certificate Instituição: Centro de Línguas Creditado</p>	 <p>CONTACTOS</p> <p>linkedin.com/in/daniel-marques </p> <p>daniel-marques_@outlook.pt </p> <p>915 xxx 478 </p> <p>(Clique para ver mais)</p> <p>IDIOMAS</p> <p>INGLÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Avançado Escrita: Avançado Oral: Avançado <p>PORTUGUÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Nativo Escrita: Nativo Oral: Nativo <p>COMPETÊNCIAS RELEVANTES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assiduidade Atenção ao detalhe Espirito de Equipa Resiliência <p>COMPETÊNCIAS DIGITAIS</p> <p>Microsoft Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excel: avançado Powerpoint: avançado Word: avançado
<p>Daniela Marques Gestora de Clientes, 31 anos Transsexual</p> <p>EXPERIÊNCIA PROFISSIONAL</p> <p>Estagiária Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2012 - Setembro 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente. <p>Bancária Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2013 - Junho 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente; Aconselhamento financeiro; Análise de empréstimos e vendas de produtos, como planos de capitalização, investimentos, seguros e consórcios. <p>Intermediária de Crédito Banco com sede em Portugal Julho 2017 - Atualidade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Análise contratual de créditos; Assistência nos atos preparatórios de contratos de crédito e/ou transferências de créditos; Serviços de consultoria. <p>EDUCAÇÃO</p> <p>Licenciatura em Economia Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2009 - 2012</p> <p>Mestrado em Gestão Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2015-2017</p> <p>Cambridge English Certificate Instituição: Centro de Línguas Creditado</p>	 <p>CONTACTOS</p> <p>linkedin.com/in/daniela-marques </p> <p>daniela-marques_@outlook.pt </p> <p>915 xxx 478 </p> <p>(Clique para ver mais)</p> <p>IDIOMAS</p> <p>INGLÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Avançado Escrita: Avançado Oral: Avançado <p>PORTUGUÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Nativo Escrita: Nativo Oral: Nativo <p>COMPETÊNCIAS RELEVANTES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assiduidade Atenção ao detalhe Espirito de Equipa Resiliência <p>COMPETÊNCIAS DIGITAIS</p> <p>Microsoft Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excel: avançado Powerpoint: avançado Word: avançado 	<p>Daniela Marques Gestora de Clientes, 31 anos Sexo feminino</p> <p>EXPERIÊNCIA PROFISSIONAL</p> <p>Estagiária Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2012 - Setembro 2013</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente. <p>Bancária Banco com sede em Portugal Outubro 2013 - Junho 2017</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assistência ao cliente; Aconselhamento financeiro; Análise de empréstimos e vendas de produtos, como planos de capitalização, investimentos, seguros e consórcios. <p>Intermediária de Crédito Banco com sede em Portugal Julho 2017 - Atualidade</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Análise contratual de créditos; Assistência nos atos preparatórios de contratos de crédito e/ou transferências de créditos; Serviços de consultoria. <p>EDUCAÇÃO</p> <p>Licenciatura em Economia Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2009 - 2012</p> <p>Mestrado em Gestão Instituição: Universidade Pública em Portugal 2015-2017</p> <p>Cambridge English Certificate Instituição: Centro de Línguas Creditado</p>	 <p>CONTACTOS</p> <p>linkedin.com/in/daniela-marques </p> <p>daniela-marques_@outlook.pt </p> <p>915 xxx 478 </p> <p>(Clique para ver mais)</p> <p>IDIOMAS</p> <p>INGLÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Avançado Escrita: Avançado Oral: Avançado <p>PORTUGUÊS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leitura: Nativo Escrita: Nativo Oral: Nativo <p>COMPETÊNCIAS RELEVANTES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assiduidade Atenção ao detalhe Espirito de Equipa Resiliência <p>COMPETÊNCIAS DIGITAIS</p> <p>Microsoft Office</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excel: avançado Powerpoint: avançado Word: avançado

4.3. Procedure

A questionnaire comprising the four stimuli was designed in Qualtrics to be shown online. Individuals were invited via social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram) to freely participate by pressing a link or reading a QR code that granted access to the online questionnaire.

The entry page started by asking for informed consent. It explained what the research was and its context, that it was voluntary, anonymous, and also the expected duration of the questionnaire, and the contacts. After invitees agreed to participate by pressing an arrow below, a set of instructions were showed. Namely that the participant would be presented with a CV to fill in an account management position at a Bank, and the exact requirements such position entail. After pressing an arrow to advance, the questionnaire started by showing, randomly, one of the four CVs.

After reading the CV, the participants had to press an advance arrow to move on to another page that asked to answer if he/she would hire the candidate to the Bank position at stake based on the information provided. Following this, the participant was required to state to which extent the candidate matched the required qualifications profile (using an ordinal scale from 1-much less qualified than minimum requirements, to 5-much more qualified than minimum requirements). A set of questions then followed to measure constructs as depicted in the conceptual model, using a scale that evaluates respondents' interpersonal comfort, sex/gender and human value beliefs about transgender people. This measure will be designed below as "Transgender attitudes and beliefs" and the greater the value, the more positive these attitudes and beliefs are about transgender people.

4.4. Sample

Adult population was eligible to participate in this study and the sample comprises 151 individuals, mostly gendered feminine (58.9%) and born with the feminine sex (58.9%). The sample comprises individuals aged between 18 and 66 years old, averaging 33.4 years-old (SD=11.6) and is mostly qualified (Bachelor's degree=44.4%, Master's degree=30.5%). The sample comprises individuals from a diverse array of industries.

Table 4.1 - Sample sizes per condition

Conditions	All presentations	Read the CV but did not answer	Read CV, answered but quit before transgender scales	Stimulus	
				n	%
1 Transman	25.9%	26.2%	28.0%	41	27.2%
2 Transwoman	25.9%	26.4%	26.4%	44	29.1%
3 Cisman	23.8%	22.9%	18.7%	26	17.2%
5 Ciswoman	24.5%	24.4%	26.9%	40	26.5%

4.5. Data analysis strategy

Data was firstly checked for quality, namely all incomplete entries removed as online tools register all entries even if potential participants just clicked the link to enter and opted out without filling a single item. After this, multi-item measures were tested for construct validity and reliability. Construct validity refers to the items measuring the latent construct which can be tested with confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). CFA pitch the data structure against the expected factor structure. The degree of fit is indicated by some commonly accepted indices namely chi-square, which according to Hair et al. (2019) should not show a significant statistic (judged on a 95% confidence interval), the normed chi-square should fall below 3, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) should both attain 0.95, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) should fall below 0.07 and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) should fall below 0.08.

Additionally, factors should be able to account at least for 50% on average of the items variance which refers to convergent validity and can be measured with Fornell and Larcker's (1981) average extracted variance (AVE). Also, because there can be more than a single latent construct in the same measure (e.g. Transgender Attitudes and Beliefs comprehends three factors) the measures should have discriminant validity, i.e. the latent constructs associations should not be stronger than their inner associations with the respective items. This can be gauged with HTMT (Henseler et al., 2015) which should not overpass the 0.85. Reliability expresses the extent to which a given factor comprises items that are consistent among

themselves, which can be ascertained by Cronbach Alpha but is more suitably measured when conducting CFA with Joreskog (1971) composite reliability which also uses the same threshold of 0.70 as Cronbach alpha does.

Hypotheses testing was conducted with PLS-SEM which is suitable for conceptual models that entail some complexity (as the present one includes four interaction effects and a mediation) while supporting themselves in relatively small samples (Hair et al., 2022). Following the recommendations by these authors model validity is judged based on SRMR (which has the same thresholds as in CFA) and NFI (Normed Fit Index) which should attain 0.90. The predictive power of the model is expressed by Stone-Geisser's Q^2 (which should be positive) and R^2 that state the amount of variance accounted by the model. Multicollinearity should also be judged on variance inflation factor (VIF) that must not overpass the 5 value.

4.6. Measures

Hiring decision was measured with a single item elaborated for this study: "Would you hire this person?" to which participants were asked to choose one among four options: "1) Yes, most certainly"; "2) Yes, but with reserves", "3) No, but I could rethink it," and "4) No, definitely not".

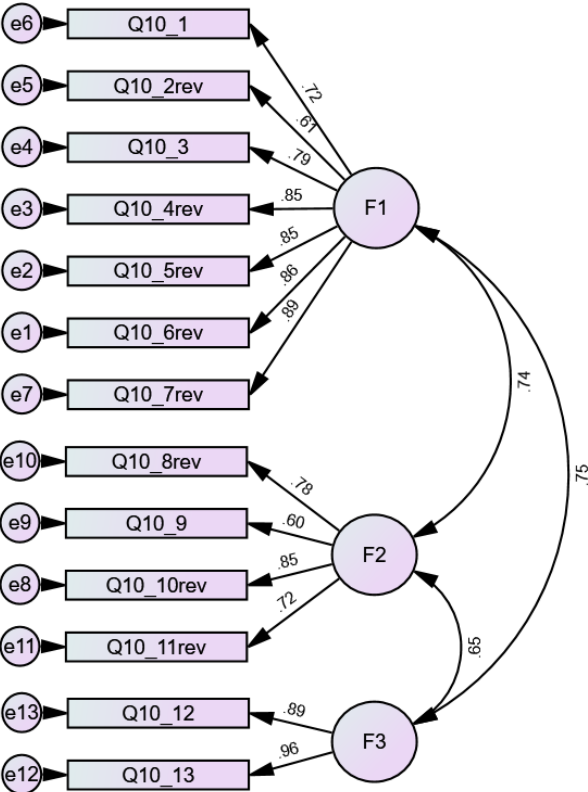
Ascribed qualifications differential was measured with a single item elaborated for this study: "Considering the overall resume, to which extent do you think this person differentiates from other candidates as regards the qualifications presented?". Participants were asked to choose one among five options: (the person is) "1) much less qualified than the minimal level for the position; "2) less qualified than the minimal level for the position", "3) has the exact level of qualification to achieve the minimal level for the position", "4) more qualified than the minimal level for the position, 5) much more qualified than the minimal level for the position".

Transgender attitudes and beliefs were measured with 13 items from TABS by Kanamori et al. (2017) that comprises three factors: 1) *interpersonal comfort* (7 items, i.e. "I would feel comfortable being in a group of trans people.", "I would feel uncomfortable if my boss was trans. (R)", "If I met someone trans, I would be open to having a friendship with that person.", "If I met someone trans, I would tend to avoid that person. (R)", "I would feel uncomfortable realising that I was alone with someone trans. (R)", "If someone revealed to me that they were trans, I would probably not be as close to that person anymore. (R)", "If I knew that my doctor was trans, I would want to find another one. (R)"); 2) *sex and gender beliefs* (4 items, i.e. "A

person who is not sure whether they are female, or male has a mental illness. (R)", "Whether someone is male, or female depends on whether they feel male or female.", "If someone is born male, nothing you can do will change that. (R)", "In humanity there is only man or woman, there is no in-between. (R)"); and 3) *human value* (2 items, "Trans people are valuable human beings, regardless of how they feel about their identity", "Trans people should be treated with respect and dignity, like anyone else"). Answers were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree).

A Confirmatory Factor Analysis showed the model has good fit ($X^2(63)=106.499, p<.001$, Normed $X^2=1.690$, CFI=.968, TLI=.961; RMSEA=.068 90% CI [.045;.090] PClose=.096, SRMR=.043) and the three factors have all acceptable convergent validity ($AVE_{comfort}=.643$; $AVE_{beliefs}=.550$; $AVE_{humanvalue}=.851$) as well as good discriminant validity (highest HTMT=.748) and reliability ($CR_{comfort}=.926$; $CR_{beliefs}=.828$; $CR_{humanvalue}=.920$).

Figure 4.2 – CFA for Transgender Attitudes and Beliefs



Social desirability was measured with the Brief Social Desirability scale by Haghghat (2007) that comprises 4 items organized into a single factor: “Would you smile at people every time you meet them?”, “Do you always practise what you preach to people?”, “ If you say

people that you will do something, do you always keep your promise no matter how inconvenient it might be?”, “Would you ever lie to people? (reversed)”. Participants were asked to answer in a dichotomic scale (Y/N) where yes adds to social desirability and its reliability was reported as sufficiently good (Haghighat, 2007).

Chapter 5. Results

This section starts by showing descriptive statistics as well as bivariate statistics, and then it shows the findings from the hypotheses testing. Table 5.1 shows the descriptive and bivariate statistics.

5.1. Descriptive and bivariate statistics

As stated, the sociodemographic variables indicate the profile of the sample where most are female participants, that tended to be younger than male participants. Also, all the participants are cisgender, since they assume the same gender as the birth sex. Older participants show higher levels of social desirability although the mean for social desirability is low ($M=1.85$, $SD=1.04$). More educated participants report being less religious ($r=-.171$, $p<.05$). No sociodemographic variable is associated to neither attributed gender nor gender identity Trans-Cis status, thus indicating there are no fundamental recognition of gender and gender identity of the stimuli dependent on participant's age, gender, education, religiosity, and social desirability. Generally, transgender attitudes and beliefs are more positive in females, younger respondents, more educated, and less religious.

Judged qualification is considered high ($M=3.32$, $SD=0.64$) thus evidencing most of the CV were deemed suitable for the open position (only 5.3% stated the qualification fell below minimum standard for the position, and 0.7% it was far less qualified). Hiring decision is mostly favourable ($M=3.5$, $SD=0.75$) with only 11.3% stating the intention not to hire (from which 2% stated it was a definitive intention). Women are more likely to hire ($r=.237$, $p<.01$). None of the other sociodemographic variables show any association with judged qualification or hiring decision. As regards the associations between attributed gender, attributed gender identity trans-cis, judged qualifications and hiring decision there is no statistically significant correlation to the exception of a positive ($r=.238$, $p<.01$) between ascribed qualifications and hirability. This pattern of association discourages the existence of discrimination based on gender and gender identity although this requires more complex data analyses that controls for the sociodemographic and possible interaction effects. Transgender attitudes and beliefs are generally favourable (means ranging from 3.88 to 4.68) with positive association to hiring decisions (r ranging from .294, $p<.01$ to .455, $p<.01$).

Table 5.1 – Descriptive and bivariate statistics

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender (MF)	58.9%Fem	-	1										
2. Age	33.4 y.o.	11.6	-.147	1									
3. Education	4.01	0.90	-.078	-.074	1								
4. Religiosity	2.41	1.39	.155	.156	-.218**	1							
5. SocDesirability -+	1.85	1.04	.116	.189*	-.012	.085	1						
6. Attributed Trans_Cis TC	56.3%trans	-	.003	-.061	-.072	.011	-.018	1					
7. Attributed gender MF	55.6%Fem	-	-.014	-.033	.058	.022	.054	.088	1				
8. TABS 1 Personal Comfort -+	4.31	1.00	.206*	-.315**	.200*	-.273**	.009	-.074	-.002	1			
9. TABS 2 Sex-Gender Beliefs -+	3.88	1.16	.195*	-.118	.072	-.230**	-.031	-.003	-.096	.637**	1		
10. TABS 3 Human Value -+	4.68	0.88	.098	-.291**	.330**	-.275**	-.019	-.070	-.011	.688**	.555**	1	
11. Judged Qualification -+	3.32	0.64	.036	-.020	-.112	.039	-.091	.000	.090	.169*	.127	.132	1
12. Hiring decision -+	3.50	0.75	.249**	-.142	-.049	-.029	-.026	.040	.094	.455**	.429**	.294**	.241**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

5.2. Hypotheses testing

As stated, the conceptual model comprises ten hypotheses. As a required step in PLS-SEM analysis, the conceptual model's quality must be measured beforehand.

The model fit has a NFI of 0.833 which falls below the threshold, which is not encouraging, but the SMRM falls clearly below the threshold (SRMR=0.041) and Stone-Geisser's Q^2 is positive for both hire decision (0.428) and qualifications (0.198) with acceptable RMSE (of 2.704 and 3.026 respectively), and acceptable MAE (with 2.235 and 2.906 respectively). The R^2 on qualifications is modest, accounting for only 10.6%, but on hire decision (which is the dependent variable in the model) the accounted variance is high (44.6%) with no indication of multicollinearity issues whatsoever (highest VIF=2.314). Thus, albeit with some shortfalls, the technical indices suggest the model is valid.

For clarity's sake, results will be presented for each hypothesis and respective sub-hypotheses where applicable. Table 5.2 shows the path coefficients and respective statistics and p-value.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that the more individuals favourably ascribed qualifications to the candidate, the more favourable their hiring decision will be. Findings show a non-significant path coefficient of .082 ($p=.180$) thus rejecting this hypothesis.

The second hypothesis stated a positive direct effect of the candidate's gender identity on judged qualification suitability, being more favourable to cisgender candidates. The path coefficient was not significant (.006, $p=.424$) thus indicating no differences in judged qualifications between cisgender and transgender candidates. This rejects hypothesis 2.

The third hypothesis stated a positive direct effect of the candidate's gender identity on hirability, being more favourable to cisgender candidates. The path coefficient was not significant (-.196, $p=.125$) thus indicating no differences in hiring decision between cisgender and transgender candidates. This rejects hypothesis 3.

The fourth hypothesis proposed judged qualifications played an intervening role in the relation between gender identity and hirability. The indirect effect found is non-significant (.002, $p=.451$) thus rejecting hypothesis 4.

The fifth hypothesis proposed an interaction between candidate's gender identity and candidate's gender in explaining judged qualifications in such a way that cismen candidates received more favourable qualification suitability than ciswomen candidates (H5a) and

transwomen candidates received less favourable qualification suitability than their transmen counterparts (H5b). Findings show no significant interaction effect (-.068, $p=.376$) which rejects hypothesis 5 and its respective sub-hypotheses.

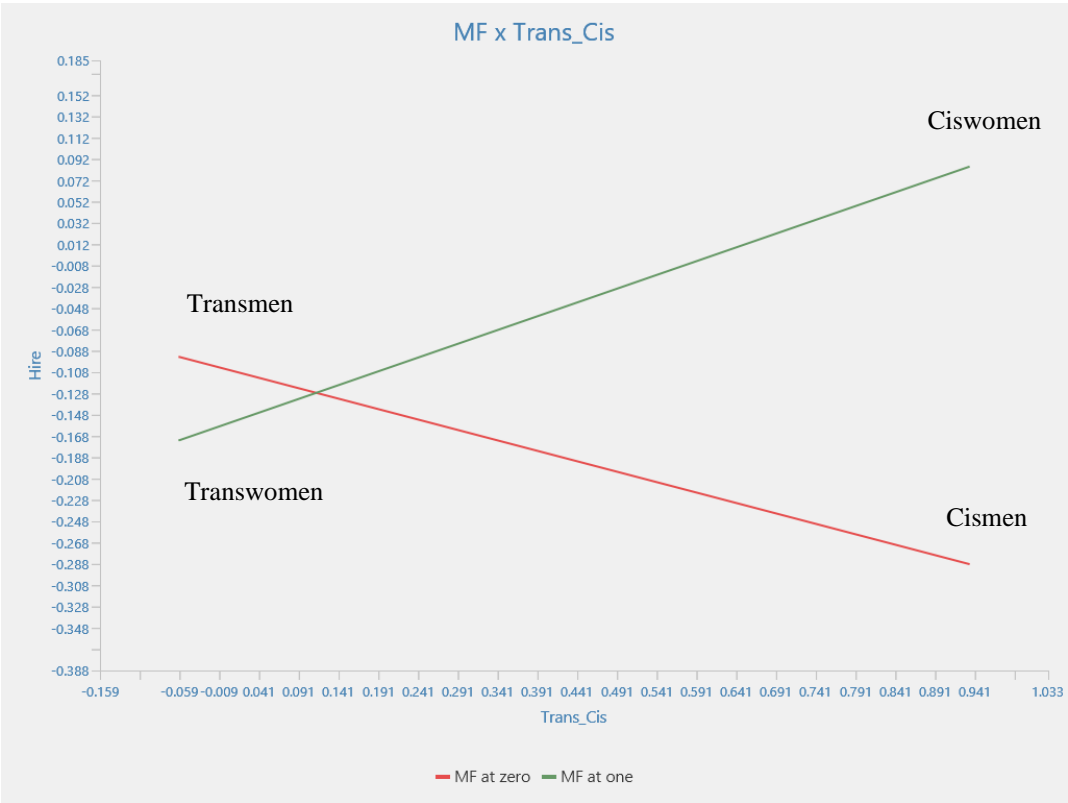
Table 5.2 – Direct, indirect and condition effects

	Ascribed qualification				Hirability			
	Coeff.	t	p-value		Coeff.	t	p-value	
<i>Direct effect</i>								
Gender	-.035	0.327	.372		.141	1.243	.107	
Age	.000	0.267	.395		-.005	1.069	.143	
Education	-.103	1.561	.059		-.104*	1.726	.042	
Religiosity	.031	0.775	.219		.001	0.035	.486	
Social Desirability	-.055	0.947	.172		.002	0.046	.482	
Candidate's Gender Identif (Trans-Cis)	.006	0.046	.424	H2 n.s.	-.196	1.153	.125	H3 n.s.
Candidate's Gender (Male-Female)	.166	1.099	.136		-.051	0.451	.326	
Transgender Attitudes & Beliefs	.290**	2.482	.007		.704**	8.176	.001	
Ascribed qualifications					.082	0.914	.180	H1 n.s.
<i>Indirect effect</i>								
TransCis -> Qualific -> Hirability					.002	0.124	.451	H4 n.s.
<i>Conditional effects</i>								
CandGender*Trans-cis->Qualific	-.068	0.317	.376	H5 n.s.				
CandGender*Trans-cis->Hirability					.454*	2.178	.015	H6 sup.
CandGender*Trans-cis->Qualific->Hirability					-.006	0.202	.420	H7 n.s.
TABS*Trans-cis->Qualific	-.239	1.486	.069	H8 n.s.				
TABS*Trans-cis->Hirability					-.642	4.561	.001	H9 sup.
TABS*Trans-cis->Qualific->Hirability					-.020	0.601	.274	H10 n.s.
	R ²	10.6%			44.6%			

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

The sixth hypothesis proposed an interaction between candidate’s gender identity and candidate’s gender in explaining hiring decision in such a way that ciswomen candidates have higher hirability than ciswomen candidates (H6a) and transmen candidates have higher hirability than transwomen counterparts (H6b). Findings show a significant interaction effect (.454, $p= .015$) which support hypothesis 6. However, the interaction graph (Figure 5.1) indicates the effect is reversed from the one expected in sub-hypothesis 6a but in line with sub-hypothesis 6b. Thus, sub-hypothesis 6a is rejected and 6b is supported. Figure 5.1 shows the exact interaction found.

Figure 5.1 – Moderation of Gender vs. Gender Identity



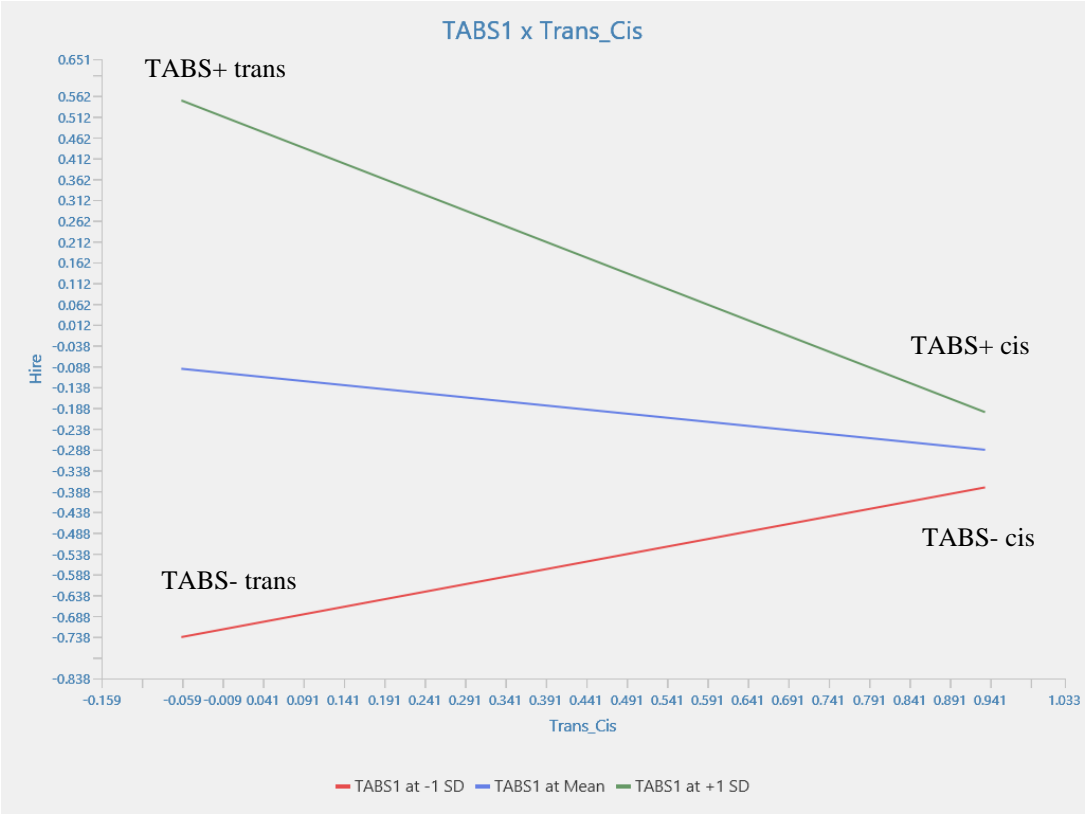
The seventh hypothesis proposed similar interaction with the indirect effects. As expected from the previous findings pertaining to hypothesis 4 and 6, no such moderated mediation was found (-.006, $p=.420$) thus rejecting hypothesis 7.

The eighth hypothesis proposed an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates’ gender identity with the transgender attitudes and beliefs in explaining judged qualifications, in such a way that transgender candidates received higher judged qualifications when transgender attitudes and beliefs were positive (H8a) and cisgender candidates received equivalent judged qualifications independently of transgender attitudes and beliefs (H8b).

Findings show no significant interaction effect (-.239, $p=.069$) which rejects hypothesis 8 and its respective sub-hypotheses.

The ninth hypothesis proposed an interaction between the direct positive effect of candidates' gender identity with the transgender attitudes and beliefs in explaining hirability, in such a way that transgender candidates have higher hirability when transgender attitudes and beliefs were positive (H9a), and cisgender candidates have equivalent hirability independently of transgender attitudes and beliefs (H9b). Findings show a significant interaction effect (-.642, $p=.001$) thus supporting hypothesis 9 and its sub-hypotheses, which is shown on Figure 5.2.

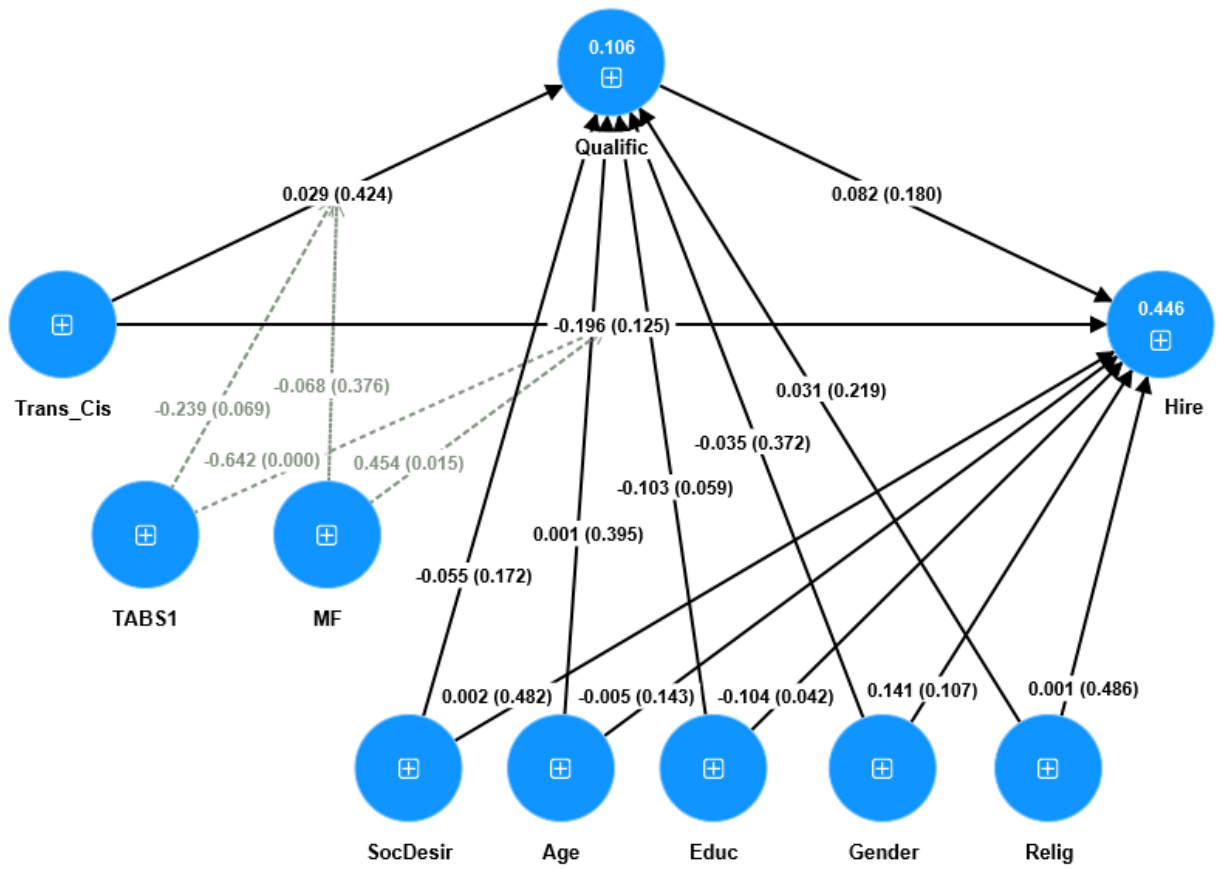
Figure 5.2 – Moderation of Transgender Attitudes and Beliefs vs. Gender Identity



Finally, the tenth hypothesis proposed an interaction between the indirect positive effect of candidates' gender identity on hirability with transgender attitudes and beliefs such that the indirect effect is stronger when transgender attitudes and beliefs are positive. Findings show no such moderated mediation was found (-.020, $p=.274$) thus rejecting hypothesis 10.

The overall findings are shown in Figure 5.3 (path coefficients) and the exact values in Table 5.2).

Figure 5.3 – Path coefficients



Chapter 6. Discussion and conclusion

6.1. Discussion and Conclusion

Recruitment and selection have been known for its efforts towards effectiveness into reaching, attracting, and selecting the most suitable candidates for a job, aiming to attain the highest performance and fit, but it has also endeavoured to take into consideration criteria of social justice. These criteria are supported on a set of ethical principles destined to ensure equal opportunities, and mostly, the primacy of reason and objectivity when judging upon candidates' qualifications and suitability to be hired. Qualifications, expressed as competencies or skills, align with this rational view of recruitment and selection but it does not suffice to take a comprehensive view of hirability. The judgment about a candidate is in its essence a social judgment and therefore, it considers social norms that tend to put aside counter-normative individuals. Thus, decisions to hire may be biased by these deeply rooted norms that often escape the conscious scrutiny of employers.

This study sets itself within the larger debate on social justice in recruitment and selection as it focuses on the case of transgender people that are conspicuously counter-normative. For this purpose, the conceptual model departs from the rational-based effect between a candidate's qualifications and his or her hirability, preceded by the direct effect of perceived gender identity both upon qualifications and hirability. This establishes a mediation model where qualifications are expected to be key to bridge gender identity with the likelihood of being hired for a job. Additionally, the conceptual model previews boundary conditions stemming from both candidate's gender (male *vs.* female) and the recruiter's attitudes and beliefs about transgender people. This produces a moderated mediation model focused on the interaction effects of both gender and transgender attitudes and beliefs. Likewise, to offer more robustness to the model, some covariates were considered, namely, the recruiter's gender, age, education, religiosity, and social desirability.

The first focus of the empirical analysis falls upon the expected positive relation between qualifications and hirability, i.e., the subjective judgment made by the recruiter about how much the candidate's qualifications match (as below, exact, or above) the minimum requirements to apply for the job and the respective hiring decision (from most unfavourable to most favourable). This was established by the first hypothesis. Findings rejected this hypothesis, which goes counter

to expectations and most of literature that states the qualifications can determine the candidates' hirability, since the best qualified candidates can offer a higher level of skills and competencies that matches employer's demands (Haughton et al., 2012). Still, albeit qualifications are generally acknowledged as important in hiring decisions, they are mostly conceived without consideration for other variables such as the ones integrating our conceptual model (either as central explanative constructs or as covariates) which would match our bivariate statistics between qualification and hirability. In such case, the positive correlation is indeed significant which would be in line with previous findings. However, such relation seems to fade when other issues are equated such as gender identity.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 concern a direct effect of gender identity upon judged qualifications and hirability where cisgender candidates were expected to receive more favourable judgement and decisions. Findings reject both these hypotheses 2 and 3 which goes counter to the literature that states there is a cisgender privilege (Valens, 2018). This means the participants do not differentiate between cisgender and transgender candidates, which is an exceptional behaviour compared to the general findings e.g., by the European Union Agency of Fundamental Rights (2007) or International Labour Organization (ILO, 2013) that show evidence of transgender people being the most subjected to employment bias. This can be explained by the non-random sampling method that originated a sample that is not representative at all of the "general population". In our case participants tend to be younger than the general population, with a slight overrepresentation of females, being more educated than the average. Judging by the correlations between these three sociodemographic variables and the most important factor of the Transgender Attitudes and Beliefs measure, one can easily infer that this population shows less personal discomfort with transgender people in the exact direction of the features found: feminine, younger, more educated. Although cautious was taken when deploying the study (precisely to avoid a strongly biased sample) the particular interest of some participants on this topic led to a chain of social network sharing that precisely attracted those that would be less uncomfortable with the topic. This occurred when a famous public person found this invitation and gave it substantial visibility by highlighting the study on his own personal social network. This created an unintended snowball dynamic that produced what is known as a self-selection effect (Bethlehem, 2010) where a specific profile of participants voluntarily opts out and we did notice that in Qualtrics records as there were many cases of drop out in the immediate contact with the stimulus. However, this does not explain

why proportionally, most cisgender resumes were those that were hit by highest number of dropouts. The most reasonable explanation might lie in the snowball diffusion having disclosed the focus on transgender in the study but then some participants being faced with a cisgender resume and opting out.

The mediation hypothesis (H4) was logically rejected since the findings pertaining the first three hypotheses suggest no relationship at all between the variables. Still, one can infer that the rational primacy that gives qualification a central role in employability and hiring decisions may be overstated as other control variables seem to be at play. Rational criteria may easily give way to emotional triggers caused by strong attitudes.

In searching to determine the modulating effect of the candidate's gender on transprejudice, the fifth hypothesis established a preference towards cismen and transmen compared with their female counterparts as regards judged qualifications. The rejection of this hypothesis suggests no main gender prejudice occurred. Findings pertaining to the next hypothesis may help throw light to the ones reported here.

As regards hirability, when searching to determine the modulating effect of the candidate's gender on transprejudice, the sixth hypothesis established a preference towards cismen and transmen compared their female counterpart. Isaac et al. (2009) concluded that women had less chances of being hired when comparing to men with identical qualifications, however this study has proven the opposite considering the cisgender identity (hypothesis 6a). This could be explained by the small sample, or even the photographs used on the stimuli (CVs) which could have influenced the decision since the decision-maker can develop trait impressions based on facial appearance, according to Zebrowitz (1996). In this specific case the resume's image that represented a cisman could be manipulating the decision of hiring, by the extremely confident appearance. The overconfidence look could lead to lower credibility and sympathy impressions according to Tenney et al. (2007). Nevertheless, hypothesis 6b was supported, which is line with Schilt (2011), who states the male privileges are often extended from cisgender to transgender identity, meaning that transmen are privileged comparing to transwomen, as it shows in figure 5.1, by having higher hirability.

As a consequence of the previously stated hypotheses, the seventh hypothesis proposed male candidates would have stronger indirect effect of gender identity on hirability through ascribed

qualifications, implying transprejudice would be more harmful for males. Considering the stated results before, it is not surprising to find this hypothesis was not supported.

Literature has shown that transprejudice could not only be ascribed a negative value, stereotype, but also limit the opportunities transgender people have in access to employment (King et al., 2009). This means that when transgender attitudes and beliefs are negative, individuals may hold a gender essentialist view that does not recognize the transgender identity and therefore bias transgender people opportunities when accessing a job position (Ching & Xu, 2018; Gülgöz et al., 2019; ILO, 2013). In this sense, our hypothesis established that transgender candidates would have higher ascribed qualifications (H8a) and obviously higher hirability (H9a) when transgender attitudes and beliefs were positive. Findings did not support hypothesis 8, meaning that there is no impact of transgender attitudes and beliefs on candidate's ascribed qualifications. Conversely, findings support hypothesis 9. However, they also show that when transgender attitudes and beliefs are positive, there is a large difference between the hirability in cisgender or transgender candidates, showing transgender have higher chances of being hired.

We think this surprising finding can be directly linked with the concept of positive discrimination that is defined by Gilhooley (2008) as treating someone more favourably based on specific characteristics such as age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation. This happens generally because that person belongs to a minority group that is frequently discriminated against, underrepresented, or treated differently. Positive discrimination is upheld by those that believe psychosocial dynamics do not naturally balance prejudice but instead perpetuates it (Weisskopf, 2006).

Although candidates' qualifications were the same, personal characteristics were not and thus, individuals are not blind to such features. Judgment on the whole CV can either: give qualification and personal features equivalent weight; consider both but with different weights; or disregard one of those based on a set of assumptions. Individuals that disregard personal characteristics and base their decision only on qualifications might be less prejudiced than those that disregard qualifications because of personal features. In this last case, the most frequent expected bias would be against transgender, even though in a special case it could be in favour. In this case, it seems clear that participants deployed psychological mechanisms to compensate for their own believe that transgender prejudice is real in society. We think the most reasonable explanation for our

results lies in this possibility that participants may well positively discriminate as a personal strategy to balance third parties' discrimination (Weisskopf, 2006).

Additionally, one could think that the presence of a relatively high proportion of transgender participants in our study could have biased results. This would be explained based on similar-to-me-bias effect (Koch et al., 2015). However, all the respondents were self-reported as being cisgender, which means that nobody had the same gender identity as the transgender candidates and for that reason we can rule out this explanation. Still when considering those individuals with negative transgender attitudes and beliefs (represented by the red line in figure 5.2) there is some indication that for this specific segment of the sample, cisgender candidates are preferred to the transgender. However, when transgender attitudes and beliefs are negative, transgender candidates have lower chances of being hired.

As a result of the preceding hypotheses, the tenth hypothesis proposed that positive transgender attitudes and beliefs would have stronger indirect effect of gender identity on hirability through ascribed qualifications, suggesting transprejudice would be more harmful for transgender candidates. Once more, the rejection of this hypothesis was expectable based on the previous findings and overall, it can be attributed to the same explanations.

All in all, findings seem to reflect a sample that is less prejudiced against transpeople, and more likely aware of transprejudice and therefore, may be compelled to compensate for social injustice by favouring more transgender people when their attitudes and beliefs are more positive towards transgender. The debate around transgender is not at all a matter of individual reasoning because in all cultural-based issues, the positions are emotionally charged which means those in favour and those against tend to express strong attitudes and beliefs towards counter-normative issues. This applies to findings in this study as there must be a segment of the population that, being aware of unfairness against a minority, takes a stance by acting to compensate, and positively discriminate in the hope of putting balance back to society.

6.2. Limitations and Future Research

As stated on the findings, our results have gone completely different both from what was expected at a personal level and from the literature review. This could be explained by the small sample that

is not favourable to testing moderation effects. Also, the convenience sampling triggered an unwanted snowball that provoked a strongly biased sample that is more closely able to represent open-minded groups than the conventional ones. Thus, the first and main limitation of this study is precisely the sample that does not represent at all the common population and for that reason we cannot generalize findings to state that there is not transprejudice in access to employment. Future research can explore a larger and more diverse sample that could gather different types of people, with education levels and age disparities.

Additionally, there are other aspects related with the questionnaire design that could also impact results. Using four different photographs for each gender/gender identity on the stimulus made it difficult to determine if there was any bias in ascribed qualifications and hiring decision based on facial appearance. On this topic, we believe the photograph used to represent a cisman showed an overconfidence look that may have been an explanation for having been given less hirability. In future research would be better to use the same photograph for both gender identity (cisgender *vs.* transgender), only making a distinction between gender (male *vs.* female). This option was done because we wanted to used real photographs (duly authorized in public domain) that could be interpreted as being transgender. However, the bias risk was the price to pay for this option. Still, using the same photograph may be more faithful to reality but better from the perspective of internal validity.

Chapter 7. References

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Chapter 8. Appendix

8.1. Questionnaire

O meu nome é Margarida Marques e estou a desenvolver o meu trabalho final de Mestrado em Políticas de Desenvolvimento dos Recursos Humanos no ISCTE.

Neste sentido, peço a sua colaboração num pequeno questionário sobre perfis de contratação e empregabilidade, onde será solicitada a análise de um Currículo no âmbito de uma candidatura de emprego e a resposta a algumas questões relacionadas.

Importa salientar que o questionário demora cerca de 5 minutos e é totalmente anónimo, pelo que solicito que não coloque nenhum elemento identificativo (ex: nome) em nenhum local. Da mesma forma, os dados sociodemográficos solicitados servem apenas para descrição agregada da amostra.

Note que não existem respostas certas nem erradas, pretende-se apenas perceber a sua experiência e opinião pessoal. Isto significa que, quanto mais honestas e espontâneas forem as suas respostas, mais útil será este estudo.

Caso surja alguma dúvida por favor contacte-me para mbmsa2@iscte-iul.pt.

Por último, se tem idade igual ou superior a 18 anos e deseja participar nesta investigação, por favor pressione a seta abaixo.

Agradeço antecipadamente a sua colaboração!

No primeiro grupo, será apresentado um **Curriculum de um(a) candidato(a) a uma vaga de Gestor de Clientes** de uma Instituição Bancária com sede em Espanha, cujos escritórios se localizam em Portugal.

Solicito, por favor, que leia atentamente os requisitos de candidatura definidos pelo Banco e, imagine, o melhor que possa, que é a pessoa responsável pela contratação.

Requisitos obrigatórios:

- Capacidade de adaptação;
- Elevada orientação para o Cliente;
- Espírito crítico;
- Forte espírito de equipa;
- Licenciatura em Economia / Finanças / Gestão;
- Nível avançado de inglês escrito e oral;
- Nível avançado de Microsoft Office Excel;
- Perfil consultivo com capacidade analítica (atenção ao detalhe) e identificação de soluções de negócio;
- Disponibilidade para trabalho presencial em contacto direto com clientes.

CV

(One of the four CVs is randomly shown here)

Contrataria esta pessoa?

- Sim, com segurança.
- Sim, mas com reservas.
- Não, mas poderia rever a decisão.
- Não, de certeza.

Considerando o Currículo na sua generalidade, até que ponto lhe parece que esta pessoa se diferencia de outros(as) candidatos(as) relativamente ao nível de qualificações?

- É muito menos qualificada que os mínimos para a vaga.
- É menos qualificada que os mínimos para a vaga.
- Tem o exato nível de qualificações para atingir os mínimos para a vaga.
- É mais qualificada que os mínimos para a vaga.
- É muito mais qualificada que os mínimos para a vaga.

Como reparou pode ocorrer que um(a) candidato(a) se identifique com um sexo diferente ao atribuído à nascença, o que se designa de pessoa trans ou transsexual.

Neste segundo grupo, é importante perceber a sua perspetiva perante diferentes aspetos relacionados com as pessoas trans. Lembre-se que não existem respostas certas nem erradas e, que estas são totalmente anónimas, pelo que se solicita a sua total honestidade. Para responder, utilize a seguinte escala:

1. Discordo Totalmente
2. Discordo Parcialmente
3. Não Discordo nem Concordo
4. Concordo Parcialmente
5. Concordo Totalmente

- Eu sentir-me-ia confortável em estar num grupo de pessoas trans.
- Eu sentir-me-ia desconfortável se o(a) meu(minha) chefe fosse trans.
- Se eu conhecesse alguém trans, eu estaria aberto(a) a ter uma amizade com essa pessoa.
- Se eu conhecesse alguém trans, iria ter tendência a evitar essa pessoa.
- Eu sentir-me-ia desconfortável de perceber que estava sozinho(a) com alguém trans.
- Se alguém me revelasse que era trans, provavelmente, eu não seria mais tão próximo(a) dessa pessoa.
- Se eu soubesse que o(a) meu(minha) médico(a) era trans, eu queria procurar outro(a).
- Uma pessoa que não tem a certeza se é do sexo feminino ou masculino tem uma doença mental.
- O facto de alguém ser homem ou mulher depende se ele(a) se sente homem ou mulher.
- Se alguém nascer homem, nada do que possa fazer vai mudar isso.
- Na humanidade só existe homem ou mulher, não existe meio-termo.
- As pessoas trans são seres humanos de valor, independentemente de como se sentem em relação à sua identidade.
- As pessoas trans deveriam ser tratadas com respeito e dignidade, como qualquer outra pessoa.

Agora indique, por favor, em que medida concorda ou discorda com as seguintes afirmações, utilizando a mesma escala:

- Os cidadãos deveriam receber parte da riqueza do Estado.
- Deveria existir uma lei para os ricos e uma para os pobres.
- Não existe necessidade de sindicatos para proteger os trabalhadores em termos de condições laborais e salários.
- É responsabilidade do Governo providenciar trabalho para quem o desejar.
- A privatização de empresas é a melhor forma de resolver os problemas económicos de Portugal.
- Os principais serviços e indústrias públicas deveriam ser propriedade do Estado.

- Os jovens de hoje em dia não têm respeito suficiente pelos valores tradicionais portugueses.
 - A censura de filmes e revistas é necessária para manter os padrões morais.
 - As pessoas em Portugal deveriam ser mais tolerantes perante aqueles que levam uma vida “não convencional”.
 - Relações homossexuais são erradas (sempre).
 - Os cidadãos deveriam ter a permissão de organizar eventos públicos para protestar contra o governo.
 - Mesmo os partidos políticos que desejam destruir a democracia não devem ser banidos.
-

De seguida, peço, por favor, que responda às seguintes questões com apenas “Sim” ou “Não”:

- Sorri para as pessoas de cada vez que as encontra?
 - Pratica sempre aquilo que aconselha aos outros?
 - Se disser a alguém que vai fazer algo, mantém sempre a sua promessa, independentemente de quão inconveniente seja fazê-lo?
 - Alguma vez mentiria a alguém?
-

Por último, apenas para caracterização sociodemográfica da amostra e, mantendo sempre o anonimato e confidencialidade, responda, por favor aos seguintes itens:

- Qual a sua idade?
- Qual o grau de escolaridade máximo que cumpriu?
 - ✓ Até ao 9º ano
 - ✓ 9º ano completo
 - ✓ 12º ano completo
 - ✓ Licenciatura ou equivalente
 - ✓ Mestrado

- ✓ Doutoramento
- Qual o seu género?
 - ✓ Masculino
 - ✓ Feminino
 - ✓ Não binário
 - ✓ Outro. Qual?
 - ✓ Prefiro não responder
- Qual o seu sexo à nascença?
 - ✓ Masculino
 - ✓ Feminino
- Em que medida é uma pessoa religiosa?
 - ✓ Não sou uma pessoa que se identifique com qualquer tipo de religião.
 - ✓ Não sou uma pessoa que ligue muito à religião nem pratico.
 - ✓ Não sou nem deixo de ser uma pessoa religiosa.
 - ✓ Sou uma pessoa religiosa mas não pratico regularmente.
 - ✓ Sou uma pessoa profundamente religiosa e pratico regularmente.
- Em que setor trabalha? (Se não estiver a trabalhar, indique apenas a situação.)

Terminou o questionário!

Note que o Currículo apresentado é fictício, tendo sido elaborado para representar um Currículo prototípico. Mais uma vez, lembro que as suas respostas são anónimas e confidenciais.

Grata pela sua preciosa colaboração :)