

Running head: EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST IMMIGRANTS

At the doorstep to employment: Discrimination against immigrants as a function of applicant
ethnicity, job type, and raters' prejudice

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IN PRESS: *International Journal of Psychology*

Abstract

This study examined the impact of applicant ethnicity, job type, and prejudice on evaluation biases and intentions to interview in an experimental simulation. We suggest that bias and discrimination are more likely when foreign applicants belong to disliked ethnic groups who apply for jobs that require high interpersonal skills, and when raters are prejudiced against immigrants. Subjects were Swiss university students who evaluated Swiss, Spanish, and Kosovo Albanian fictitious applicants. Foreign applicants were second-generation immigrants; i.e., Swiss-born descendants of immigrants. Thus, all applicants had similar schooling and language proficiencies but differed with respect to ethnicity. As predicted, discrimination was only observed for members of the disliked ethnic group (Kosovo Albanian) and not for members of the well-accepted group (Spanish). Moreover, this discrimination was only apparent when applying for a job requiring high interpersonal skills and not when applying for a job requiring high technical skills. Symbolic prejudice toward second-generation immigrants interacted with applicant ethnicity and job type to affect evaluations of foreign applicants: Persons high in symbolic prejudice devalued foreign applicants belonging to the disliked group but only when applying for a job requiring high interpersonal skills. Overt prejudice was unrelated to evaluations and intentions to interview. These results suggest that the discrimination against immigrants is highly specific, targeting only members of certain ethnic groups who apply for certain types of jobs. Moreover, evaluation biases may be more apparent in raters who are prejudiced. Thus, our results support the notion that discrimination at employment results from a complex interaction between characteristics of the applicant, of the job and of the rater.

At the doorstep to employment: Discrimination of immigrants as a function of applicant ethnicity, job type, and prejudice

The position of ethnic and national minorities in the western European labor market is in many ways different from the one of indigenous citizens. Perhaps the most striking difference is unemployment, which is two to three times higher for foreigners than for indigenous citizens (Evers & Van der Flier, 1998). One of the causes for this difference may be discrimination. Indeed, employment discrimination of minority groups has been widely demonstrated. Most studies have focused on Blacks (e.g., Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000) and women (e.g., Heilman, Martel, & Simmon, 1988). But past decades of immigration have greatly diversified today's societies in terms of ethnic and national background (Pettigrew, 1998). In 2000, resident foreign populations ranged from 1.7 percent in Finland to 36.6 percent in Luxemburg, and more than half of those foreigners came from non-European Union countries. One important characteristic of these immigrants is the fact that they often are not citizens of their host-country. In some countries like Switzerland or Germany, even second-generation immigrants are not automatically granted citizenship. They are also often considered as not belonging to the host-country because nationality tends to have biological connotations (Pettigrew, 1998). Furthermore, ethnic groups are perceived differently by the majority. Attitudes toward immigrants coming from Eastern Europe and African countries are particularly negative in western European countries (Thalhammer, Zucha, Enzenhofer, Salfinger, & Ogris, 2001). Ethnicity and nationality are important bases for stereotypes (Madon, Guyll, Aboufadel, Montiel, Smith, Palumbo, & Jussim, 2001) and for employment discrimination (Esses, Dietz, & Bhardwaj, 2004; Fibbi, Kaya, & Piguet, 2003). Therefore, the *first goal* of our study was to study employment discrimination against immigrants belonging to ethnic groups that differ with respect to their acceptance by the indigenous population (Swiss). We compared immigrant applicants belonging to a well-accepted ethnic group with

applicants belonging to a less well-accepted ethnic group. We focused on young second-generation immigrants; i.e., a group that is rarely studied in work discrimination research (see Dietz & Pugh, 2004, for an exception). On the local labor market, second-generation immigrants are comparable to members of the indigenous population in many respects (e.g., language, schooling). Nevertheless, unemployment rates are higher in this group than among nationals (e.g., Heiniger, Moresi, & Labeau, 2003), suggesting that this group faces discrimination as other minority groups do.

The *second goal* was to examine the role of job type as a moderator of employment discrimination and applicant evaluations. Jobs differ on many dimensions (e.g., skills required, status). Research has demonstrated that, for example, job status moderates employment discrimination against Blacks (Stewart & Perlow, 2001) or that sex-typing of skills believed to be needed for a job moderates employment discrimination against women (e.g., Cohen & Bunker, 1975). We focused on another job dimension likely to affect employment discrimination; i.e., the extent to which a job is believed to require interpersonal skills.

The *third goal* was to examine relations between prejudice toward immigrants, evaluations and discrimination against applicants. Some studies suggest that subtle forms of prejudice influence employment discrimination (e.g., Brief, Dietz, Cohen, Pugh, & Vaslow, 2000). In the following sections, job type and prejudice will be discussed as important moderators of employment discrimination and evaluations of applicants. The specific situations of the immigrant groups we studied will be briefly outlined in the last section of the introduction.

Job Type and Perceived Applicant Suitability

In a selection context, raters typically have access to two sources of information, the job; i.e., the skills and abilities required, and the applicant, encompassing qualifications,

experience, training, and demographic information. To select an applicant, the rater compares information about the applicant with information about the job. The decision depends on the fit between the perceived attributes of the applicant and the perceived job requirements (Heilman, 1983; Perry, 1997). The better the fit, the more suitable the applicant appears, and the higher the probability that he or she will be hired. However, the perception of fit or suitability may be biased by group or job stereotypes and thus, lead to discrimination. (Heilman, 1983; Perry, 1997). This notion has been supported for personnel decisions for women (Cohen & Bunker, 1975), Blacks (Stewart & Perlow, 2001) or older applicants (Perry, Kulik, & Bourhis, 1996). Labor market statistics, sociological studies (e.g., Cantanzarite, 2000) and reports on perceived discrimination (e.g., Gaudet, Clément, & Deuzeman, 2005) indicate that immigrants too, are confronted with prejudice and discrimination, suggesting that the notion of biased suitability and discrimination may also hold true for them. However, members of disliked foreign ethnic groups may be more likely to be discriminated against than members of well-liked foreign ethnic groups because of the operation of negative stereotypes and feelings associated with disliked groups. Furthermore, discrimination against immigrants may be more likely for certain types of jobs, depending on the job's skill requirements. Many jobs differ with respect to the extent to which they are believed to require so-called hard, or technical, and so-called soft, or interpersonal skills. This difference is likely to further moderate employment discrimination against immigrants as will be outlined in what follows.

Consider the example of a rater evaluating documents of applicants applying for a job requiring high technical and little interpersonal skills (e.g., electrician). The technical skills can usually be inferred from applicants' training and certificates on the resume. Thus, raters can easily evaluate applicants' qualifications by reviewing their documents. Now consider the example of a rater evaluating documents of applicants applying for a job requiring high

interpersonal skills (e.g., bank assistant). Interpersonal skills are communication skills that are important when interacting with other people. They are harder to evaluate for raters than technical skills. They are not readily visible and cannot easily be inferred from applicants' documents. They are more easily and accurately assessed during an interview, however, even then their assessment is more subjective than the assessment of technical skills (Salgado & Moscoso, 2002). Thus, when reviewing applicants in order to decide whom to invite to a job interview, assessing technical skills is more straightforward and less ambiguous than assessing interpersonal skills. This puts members of disliked ethnic groups applying for jobs requiring high interpersonal skills at risk. Stereotyping is more likely to occur in ambiguous situations (Fiske, 1998), so negative stereotypes may bias raters' perceptions of the applicant. Furthermore, being liked may play an important role for expected performance in jobs that emphasize interpersonal skills where interactions with co-workers and clients are central. Being disliked may be expected to impair the quality of social interactions and thus, of performance. Consequently, when applying for a job requiring interpersonal skills, applicants belonging to disliked ethnic groups may be perceived as less suitable than applicants belonging to well-liked groups.

Taken together, we expected job type to interact with applicant ethnicity: For jobs emphasizing interpersonal skills, applicant evaluations (evaluations of applicants, their training, application letter and resume) and intentions to interview will be less favourable for members of disliked ethnic groups than for members of well-liked ethnic group. For jobs emphasizing technical skills, applicant evaluations will be independent of applicant ethnicity (Hypothesis 1).

The Relation between Prejudice and Employment Discrimination

Raters' prejudice may influence evaluations of applicant suitability and hiring decisions. High-prejudice individuals endorse stereotypes to a greater extent than do low-

prejudice individuals (Kawakami, Dion, & Dovidio, 1998). Moreover, prejudice predicts discrimination better than stereotypes do; similarly, prejudice is closely related to evaluations of a target group (Fiske, 1998). However, organizational research has only recently started to pay attention to the impact of prejudice on employment (Brief, 1998), highlighting the importance of subtle forms of prejudice (Brief et al., 2000; Petersen & Dietz, 2005). Contrary to overt prejudice, subtle forms (called *symbolic*, *modern* or *subtle prejudice*) are neither based on beliefs about biological inferiority nor inherent personality traits of a group (McConahay, 1986; Swim, Aikin, Hall, & Hunter, 1995). Thus, people scoring high on subtle measures of prejudice do not openly endorse negative stereotypes about members of minority groups and they typically see themselves as non-prejudiced. Subtle forms of prejudice are coherent belief systems that combine negative affect with conservative ideology based on the following ideas: discrimination is no longer an obstacle to low-status groups; thus, their disadvantages are due to their own unwillingness to take responsibility and work hard (Henry & Sears, 2002). Subtle forms of prejudice have increasingly emerged over the past 30 years whereas overt prejudice has decreased (McConahay, 1986).

Brief et al. (2000) showed that participants high on modern racism (a form of subtle prejudice) chose fewer Black applicants and evaluated them less favorably than participants low on modern racism but only when an authority figure of the organization demonstrated a preference for White applicants. Petersen and Dietz (2005) amplified these findings by showing that subtly prejudiced participants selected fewer foreign job applicants for a job interview if they were advised to maintain a homogenous workforce. Petersen and Dietz (2005) studied immigrants; however, they did not differentiate between different ethnic groups. Prejudice toward immigrants may target only specific ethnic groups; i.e., members of disliked ethnicities. In Switzerland, the term *immigrant* is mainly associated with immigrants from non European countries and thus, with members of less well-liked groups (Hoffmann-

Nowotny, Boesch, Romano, & Stolz, 1997). So prejudice toward immigrants targets mainly people from non-European countries. Consequently, subtle prejudice toward immigrants may only be related to selection decisions concerning applicants belonging to disliked ethnic groups but not those concerning applicants belonging to well-liked ethnic groups.

Brief et al. (2000) and Petersen and Dietz (2005) highlighted the role of subtle forms of prejudice for employment selection *decisions*. Those decisions are the result of a decision *process* that involves different applicant evaluations in order to determine suitability. To select someone for an interview, raters typically evaluate the applicant's qualifications, resume, and application letter. Moreover, they might evaluate the applicant on personal dimensions such as reliability or motivation. Thus, another interesting question is which evaluative processes exactly are influenced by prejudice. Models of impression formation (Fiske & Neuberg, 1990) emphasize that stereotypes and prejudice influence perceptions from very early onwards, suggesting a general impact of prejudice on different elements of the selection decision process. Furthermore, the considerations above suggest that subtle prejudice may mainly influence decision processes concerning applicants belonging to disliked ethnic groups and affect less those regarding applicants belonging to well-liked ethnic groups. Consequently, in sum, we expected the magnitude of the interaction between applicant ethnicity and job type (Hypothesis 1) to differ as a function of prejudice. It should be amplified as levels of prejudice increase. Formally stated, we expected a three-way interaction between applicant ethnicity, job type, and subtle prejudice: The tendency to accord more favourable applicant evaluations and intentions to interview to members of well-liked ethnic groups than to members of disliked ethnic groups will increase as raters' level of subtle prejudice toward immigrants increases (Hypothesis 2).

Before describing our methods and results, we will briefly outline the situation of the target groups we studied.

Immigrants in Switzerland

We studied young second-generation immigrants. As in many other European countries, Swiss born descendants of immigrants are not automatically granted Swiss citizenship. They are permanent residents and citizens of their parent's home country. Being born and raised in Switzerland, they are in close touch with Swiss culture from very early on and they complete all schooling in Switzerland. Thus, after having finished school and training, they possess the same certificates as Swiss do, they master the language as well as local cultural customs. Nevertheless, unemployment among young foreigners is four times higher than among young Swiss (Heiniger et al., 2003).

We chose to study Spanish and Kosovo Albanian second-generation immigrants, thereby contrasting one ethnic group (Spanish) that has a long tradition of emigration to Switzerland and is well accepted with another (Kosovo Albanians) that immigrated only recently and is markedly less well accepted by the indigenous population (Heiniger et al., 2003). Recent surveys (e.g., Raymann, 2003) show that people from former Yugoslavia are the least liked of all immigrants in Switzerland. Spanish are among the most well-liked immigrants. For example, in a 2002 survey, 34 percent of respondents considered Kosovo Albanians to be "out of place" in Switzerland and an additional 41 percent considered them "sometimes reason to worry about" (Raymann, 2003). Spanish, however, were predominantly seen as "no problem" or even "an enrichment".

Method

Participants and Design

Participants were 138 students of business and economics at the University of Geneva (59% women; mean age: 21.8 years, $SD = 2.7$) taking a course in human resource management. For reasons of anonymity we could not assess their ethnicity or nationality. University statistics show that students from Spain make up one percent and students from

former Yugoslavia half a percent of University students; eighty percent of students are Swiss (Heiniger et al., 2003). Given these small numbers, it seems unlikely that results were distorted by participants belonging to one of the two immigrant target groups.

The design was a 3 X 2 between-subject design with two independent variables: applicant ethnicity (Kosovo Albanian, Spanish, Swiss) and job type (electrician, bank assistant). The two jobs are equal in prestige (Hutmacher, 2003) but differ with respect to their interpersonal skill requirements (see further below).

Procedure

Pretest. We conducted a pretest with 30 economics students of the University of Neuchâtel (8 women; mean age: 23.3, $SD = 2.8$) to test the assumption that bank assistants are perceived to require more interpersonal skills than electricians. Participants indicated their agreement on 6-point Likert scales (1 = *do not agree at all*, 6 = *agree totally*) with the following four statements: (1) "In general, a bank assistant needs more interpersonal than technical skills", (2) "In general, a bank assistant needs more interpersonal skills than an electrician", (3) "In general, an electrician needs more technical than interpersonal skills", and (4) "In general, an electrician needs more technical skills than a bank assistant". In order to analyze agreements, we compared means with the midpoint of the scale (3.5) for each item. Results showed that participants agreed with statements 1, 2, and 3, all M s between 4.03 and 4.48, all t s between 2.92 and 5.33, $p < .01$. Furthermore, participants neither agreed nor disagreed with statement 4, $M = 3.77$, $t(29) = 1.19$, ns . Taken together, results supported our assumption. They were further corroborated by official job descriptions of electricians and bank assistants that are published by the Swiss office of career counseling. Competencies required of electricians comprised seven technical skills (e.g., aptitude for calculating, good spatial abilities) and one interpersonal skill (aptitude for team work). Competences required of

bank clerks included five interpersonal skills (e.g., aptitude for team work, discretion) and three technical skills (e.g., interest for numbers).

Main study. The study was presented as a survey conducted by a fictitious consulting firm specialized in the professional job placement of young graduates. The second author addressed participants during a course on human resource management. He presented himself as a member of the firm, explaining that they were conducting a survey of the opinions of economics students as potential future human resource specialists. The survey's ostensible purpose was to know how application letters and resumes of young graduates were evaluated. Then, he handed out the questionnaires, assigning participants randomly to the 6 conditions. The questionnaires consisted of a booklet that contained (1) a resume and application letter of a fictitious applicant and (2) scales to evaluate applicant information and the applicant as a person as well as a control variable (interest in human resources and recruitment). Applicant ethnicity was indicated by applicant's name, citizenship, and permanent resident status on the resume. Applicants were male and had completed their entire schooling and training in Switzerland. Qualifications and professional experience were identical for all candidates and varied only according to job type. The job they were applying for was apparent by the heading and the first phrases of the application letter.

After participants had filled out the questionnaire, the experimenter collected them and asked participants for another favor. In order to disguise the true goal of the study, he explained that one of his colleagues studied psychology and that she needed participants for a questionnaire study so she could finish her Master's thesis. He emphasized that her study was not related at all to the first study. Everybody agreed to fill out the questionnaire that measured symbolic and overt prejudice towards second-generation immigrants.

In order to match responses from the first part of the study (applicant evaluations) to the second part (prejudice measures), the first and the second questionnaire showed two

different numerical codes that had been matched beforehand. After participants completed (participants took on average 20 minutes to complete the exercise), the experimenter thanked and debriefed them. When asked, none of the participants expressed suspicion about the true purpose of the study nor linked the two parts.

Measures

If not stated otherwise, for all items, agreements were indicated on 6-point Likert scales (1 = *do not agree at all*, 6 = *agree totally*).

Applicant evaluations. Participants rated the quality of applicants' documents and qualifications by indicating their agreement with ten items: five items focused on the application letter (e.g., "The application letter is well written"; $\alpha = .72$), three items on the resume (e.g., "The resume contains big gaps"; $\alpha = .42$), and two items on training and professional experience (e.g., "The applicant has good vocational training for the job"; $r = .59, p < .001$). Due to the low reliability of evaluations of resumes, this measure was dropped from analysis. Moreover, participants evaluated the applicant's personal characteristics on four items: "The applicant seems to be competent", "The applicant is very motivated", "The applicant is reliable", and "The applicant is enthusiastic and dynamic" ($\alpha = .83$).

Intentions to interview. Intentions to interview were measured by the following item: "Would you agree to invite the applicant to a job interview?". How were the answer coded?

Overt prejudice. Overt prejudice toward second-generation immigrants was measured by six items (e.g., "Foreigners of the second generation are less industrious than the Swiss" or "Foreigners of the second generation are more violent than the Swiss"; $\alpha = .79$).

Subtle prejudice measure: Symbolic prejudice. We focused on symbolic prejudice as a form of subtle prejudice because its elements could be well applied to the situation of second-generation immigrants in Switzerland. Symbolic prejudice is a unidimensional construct encompassing four themes: "denial of continuing discrimination" of minority groups;

“undeserved advantage”, the belief that minorities have gotten more than they deserve; “work ethic and responsibility for outcomes”, the belief that the minority’s failure to progress is due to its unwillingness to work; and “excessive demands”, the sense that minorities demand too much (Henry & Sears, 2002). We adapted Henry and Sears’ (2002) Symbolic Racism 2000 scale that contains eight items. For the purpose of the present study, the number of items was broadened to 14, including also items that were candidates for inclusion in the final Symbolic Racism 2000 scale (see Table 1, p. 260, in Henry & Sears, 2002)¹. This was done because second-generation immigrants as target group of symbolic prejudice have not yet been studied. Internal consistency of the scale was satisfactory ($\alpha = .80$). This value could not be increased by deleting any items from the scale. Average item-total correlation was .42.

Control variable: Interest in human resources and recruitment. We included two items measuring participants’ interest in working in human resources and in recruitment (on 4-point scales ranging *from not at all to very much*) in order to control for its influence on evaluations of the applicants and on discrimination. Participants with great interest in human resources might examine applicant’s documents more carefully, i.e., process the information in a more systematic fashion and hence, discriminate less against foreign applicants than participants who have little interest in these domains. The two items measuring interest in human resources were highly correlated, $r = .74$, $p < .01$, and thus, averaged.

Results

Because of the necessity to conduct multiple analyses, we initially conducted two multivariate analyses of variance on the whole set of the four dependent variables, in order to control for Type I error. Both MANOVAs included applicant ethnicity and job type as between-subjects factors but one MANOVA also included symbolic prejudice and one overt prejudice as predictor. The analyses yielded a significant main effect (Hotelling’s criterion) of symbolic prejudice, $F(4, 123) = 3.36$, $p < .01$, a two-way interaction between job type and

applicant ethnicity, $F(8, 244) = 3.25, p < .01$, and a three-way interaction between job type, applicant ethnicity, and symbolic prejudice, $F(8, 244) = 3.05, p < .01$. All other effects (main effects and interactions) were not significant, all F s between 0.50 and 1.97, *ns*. As expected, job type interacted with applicant ethnicity which was further qualified by a three-way interaction between applicant ethnicity, job type, and symbolic prejudice. After having established these overall effects, we conducted multiple hierarchical regression analyses to test Hypotheses 1 and 2 on each of the dependent variables.

The regression analyses were performed in the following manner: The control variables of participant gender and interest in human resources were entered in the first block. Both control variables did not influence the dependent measures, all R^2 s between .00 and .02, *ns*, and thus, are not further reported below. In the second block, applicant ethnicity, job type and symbolic prejudice were entered. In the third block, two-way interactions were entered, and in the fourth block, three-way interactions were entered.

Prior to the regression analysis, continuous predictor variables were centered (see Aiken & West, 1991). Furthermore, to compare the three ethnicities, we conducted one regression analysis where applicant ethnicity was dummy-coded in a manner that allowed comparing the two foreign ethnicities to the Swiss (dummy-variable Albanian vs. Swiss with *Kosovo Albanian* = 1, *Spanish* = 0, *Swiss* = 0; dummy-variable Spanish vs. Swiss with *Spanish* = 1, *Kosovo Albanian* = 0, *Swiss* = 0) and one regression analysis where applicant ethnicity was dummy-coded in a way that allowed comparing the Swiss and the Spanish to the Kosovo Albanian (dummy-variable Swiss vs. Albanian with *Swiss* = 1, *Spanish* = 0, *Kosovo Albanian* = 0; dummy-variable Spanish vs. Albanian with *Spanish* = 1, *Swiss* = 0, *Kosovo Albanian* = 0). Of the second analysis, only results involving the variable Spanish vs. Albanian are reported because all other results were identical (see Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

Correlations are shown in Table 1. The following significant correlations should be noted. Participants in the electrician condition had lower levels of symbolic prejudice than those in the bank assistant condition. All applicant evaluations were positively interrelated; i.e., more positive evaluations of applicants' documents and qualification were related to more positive personal evaluations and to stronger intentions to interview.

-INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE-

Applicant Evaluations

Variables included in the second step (main effects) did not account for a significant amount of variance in *evaluations of application letters*, $\Delta R^2 = .03$, *ns*. Neither did the two-way interactions entered in the third step, $\Delta R^2 = .02$, *ns*. Even though the three-way interactions entered in the fourth step accounted for a significant increment in variance, $\Delta R^2 = .06$, $p = .02$, the overall model was not significant, $F(13, 124) = 1.34$, *ns*, so that individual predictors were not further interpreted (see Cohen et al., 2003). Thus, contrary to our expectations (Hypothesis 1), application letters were evaluated equally across conditions. As expected, symbolic prejudice had no main effect on evaluations. However, it did not amplify the interaction between applicant ethnicity and job type, thus, disconfirming Hypothesis 2 for this measure.

For *evaluations of training*, regression analysis revealed the following results: Main effects accounted for ten percent of the variance, $p < .01$, and one main effect was found. Higher levels of symbolic prejudice were related to lower rating of training, $B = -0.31$, $p = .02$. Neither two-way interactions, $\Delta R^2 = .03$, *ns*, nor three-way interactions, $\Delta R^2 = .04$, *ns*, accounted for significant increments in variance. Thus, evaluations of applicants' training did not differ depending on applicant ethnicity and job type, disconfirming Hypothesis 1 for this measure. Moreover, symbolic prejudice did not influence evaluations in the way expected, disconfirming Hypothesis 2 for this measure.

For evaluations of applicants' personal characteristics, main effects accounted for 16 percent of the variance, $p < .01$, and two significant effects were found. Higher levels of symbolic prejudice were related to lower ratings of applicants on personal dimensions, $B = -0.34$, $p < .01$. Moreover, the effect of job type was significant, $B = 0.33$, $p = .02$. Participants evaluated applicants applying for the job as electrician ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.85$) more favorably than those applying for the bank assistantship ($M = 3.70$, $SD = 0.84$), $t(136) = -2.93$, $p < .01$. The third step (two-way interactions) did not account for a significant increase in variance, $\Delta R^2 = .03$, *ns*. However, three-way interactions entered in the fourth step accounted for four percent of additional variance, $p = .03$. Two interactions were significant: one between symbolic prejudice, job type and the dummy variable comparing the Albanian to the Swiss applicant, $B = 1.18$, $p = .03$, and one between symbolic prejudice, job type and the dummy variable comparing the Spanish to the Albanian applicant, $B = -1.23$, $p = .03$. We further examined the interactions by conducting within-subgroup regression equations (Peters, O'Connor, & Wise, 1984). As Figure 1 indicates, symbolic prejudice did not greatly influence evaluations of the different candidates applying for electrician. Symbolic prejudice did influence applicant evaluations applying for bank assistant but only for evaluations of the Kosovo Albanian applicant. In other words, participants high in symbolic prejudice evaluated the Kosovo Albanian less favorably than the Swiss and Spanish applicant, but only when applying for bank assistant. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was supported for personal evaluations of applicants.

-INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE-

Intentions to interview

Main effects accounted for 17 percent, $p < .01$, of the variance. Two main effects were found, one for the dummy variable comparing the Albanian to the Swiss applicant, $B = -1.05$, $p < .01$, and one for the dummy variable comparing the Spanish to the Albanian applicant, $B =$

.73, $p < .01$. Main effect contrasts showed that participants reported lower intentions to invite the Kosovo Albanian ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.18$) than the Swiss ($M = 4.02$, $SD = 1.12$), $F(1, 135) = 17.25$, $p < .01$, or the Spanish ($M = 3.76$, $SD = 1.19$), $F(1, 135) = 9.29$, $p < .01$. There were no significant differences in intentions to interview between the Swiss and the Spanish applicant, $F(1, 135) = 1.19$, $p > .05$. Two-way interactions entered in the third step accounted for a significant increment in variance, $\Delta R^2 = .08$, $p = .02$, and a significant interaction between job type and the dummy variable comparing the Albanian to the Swiss applicant, $B = 1.62$, $p < .01$, was found. Three-way interactions entered in the fourth step accounted for one percent of additional variance, $p > .05$, and thus, were not further examined. Simple main effects analysis of the two-way interactions showed that applicant ethnicity influenced intentions to interview only when candidates applied for bank assistant, $F(2, 132) = 17.13$, $p < .01$, but not when applying for electrician, $F(2, 132) = .30$, *ns*. Pairwise comparisons using Sidak adjustment for multiple comparisons showed that when applying for bank assistant, participants reported lower intentions to invite the Kosovo Albanian ($M = 2.37$, $SD = 0.82$) than the Swiss ($M = 4.22$, $SD = 0.60$) or the Spanish ($M = 3.59$, $SD = 1.26$). Intentions to interview the Spanish or the Swiss applying for bank assistant did not differ significantly from one another. When applying for electrician, there were no differences with respect to applicant ethnicity (Kosovo Albanian: $M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.13$; Spanish: $M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.13$; Swiss: $M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.47$).

Taken together and consistent with Hypothesis 1, participants reported lower intentions to invite the Kosovo Albanian than the Swiss or the Spanish applicant when applying for bank assistant. When applying for electrician, intentions to interview were independent of applicant ethnicity. Symbolic prejudice did not influence intentions to interview, disconfirming Hypothesis 2 for this measure.

Discussion

This study demonstrated that intentions to interview varied as a function of applicant ethnicity and type of job. As expected, when applying for a job requiring high interpersonal skills, (Swiss) raters were less willing to invite Kosovo Albanian applicants to a job interview than Swiss or Spanish applicants. Thus, discrimination was highly specific. First, it was confined to an ethnic group whose acceptance by the indigenous population is particularly low. Second, it was confined to a specific type of job. Members of the disliked group were only discriminated against when applying for a job that was believed to require high interpersonal skills. Assessment of interpersonal skills is more ambiguous than the assessment of technical skills, at least when based on applicants' documents. Consequently, assessment of interpersonal skills may be more susceptible to the influence of negative stereotypes associated with disliked ethnicities. Moreover, for jobs emphasizing interpersonal skills, social interactions and relationships with clients and co-workers play an important role for doing the job. Thus, being accepted or liked by many people becomes important for performance because it would affect the quality of social interactions within the job.

Evaluations of applicants' documents and training were equal across conditions, indicating that intentions to interview were not based on differential perceptions of applicant information. These findings support the notion that biases occur not in how qualifications are perceived but rather in how they are weighted in selection decisions (Hodson, Dovidio, & Gaertner, 2002).

Applicants belonging to the disliked ethnic minority were devalued on personal dimensions when applying for a high-interpersonal skill job but only by raters high in symbolic prejudice toward second-generation immigrants. Interestingly, high-prejudice raters did not as a consequence discriminate against disliked foreigners more than raters low in symbolic prejudice did (see above). Nevertheless, they personally devalued members of disliked ethnic minority groups and those evaluations are likely to have an impact on a

subsequent job interview. During the interview, prejudiced persons are likely to confirm their less positive first impression, which in turn limits the chances of being hired for members of disliked ethnic minorities.

Symbolic prejudice did not influence intentions to interview, seemingly contradicting previous findings (e.g., Petersen & Dietz, 2005). However, in those studies, subtly prejudiced people discriminated against minorities only in the presence of a business justification for the exclusion of minorities. In our study, participants were not presented with business justifications, suggesting that being able to consult such justifications is a necessary prerequisite for discriminatory selection decisions by subtly prejudiced persons. Interestingly, in our study, symbolic prejudice influenced applicant evaluations. This indicates that for evaluation biases, high-prejudice persons do not seem to need business justifications for disadvantaging minorities. Subtly prejudiced persons typically regard themselves as unprejudiced. They may easily notice biases in a selection decision which may cause them to discriminate against minorities only when they are able to consult a business justification in order to keep a self-image as a non-prejudiced person. Evaluation biases are less easily detectable. If they remain undetected by subtly prejudiced raters, they do not impose a threat to one's self-image as a non-prejudiced person and consequently, may not require justifications.

The present study also examined the influence of overt prejudice. Overt prejudice was unrelated to applicant evaluations and intentions to interview. Moreover, levels of overt prejudice were low ($M = 2.0$, $SD = .77$, evaluated on a 6-point scale). This supports the notion that open prejudice against minority groups has become rare in Western nations and that it diminishes in its significance for predicting certain types of discriminatory behavior such as workplace discrimination (Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000; McConahay, 1986).

Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

We assumed that the two jobs studied differed with respect to interpersonal skill requirements but we cannot rule out that they also differed on other dimensions that might be important in the present context. For example, even though both jobs are equal in prestige, bank tellers can earn up to 50 percent more than electricians. Furthermore, bank assistant is a non manual and electrician a manual job. These differences might have contributed to results found in this study and should be further explored in future research.

We based our assumptions on the fact that the two immigrant groups differed sharply with respect to their level of acceptance by the indigenous population. But the two groups differ on additional dimensions. For example, they differ in educational level and crime rate, indicating differences in societal status (Heiniger et al., 2003). They also differ in religion. Even though some of these aspects may be related to liking we cannot exclude that for example, status differences also contributed to the results. If differences in liking ultimately affect employment discrimination for jobs requiring high interpersonal skills, similar results should be obtained when comparing two groups that are similar with respect to e.g., religion and status but differ with respect to their level of acceptance by the indigenous population.

We administered all questionnaires in one session so that material and responses of the first part of the study (evaluations of applicants and applicants' documents and qualifications) may have influenced responses in the second part (prejudice questionnaire). We tried to limit this influence by representing both parts as independent studies. Nevertheless, results should be replicated in a study where levels of prejudice are determined first and participants then assigned to the experimental conditions based on their prejudice score.

Finally, for reasons of anonymity, we were unable to assess participants' ethnic origin. University statistics suggest that roughly 20 percent may have been of a foreign ethnic origin other than the two foreign ethnicities studied. It is possible that these participants responded differently to foreign applicants. However, the direction of this potential bias is not clear. For

example, some may have responded more favorably to foreign applicants in general, showing solidarity with all immigrants. Other may have responded more negatively to the applicant belonging to the disliked group, driven by the need to distance oneself from a negatively stereotyped group. It seems plausible that the direction of this effect ultimately depends on the identification of the rater with his or her own ethnic group. This suggests that ingroup-identification may be another moderator of employment discrimination, opening a potentially fruitful domain for future theorizing and empirical work.

Conclusions

Our results complement other studies demonstrating employment discrimination (e.g., Perry et al., 1996; Stewart & Perlow, 2001) and contribute to the literature in several ways: First, we demonstrated employment discrimination against second-generation immigrants, a topic that has received little attention to date. For this group, lack of language abilities, approved certificates, or familiarity with local customs cannot be consulted to justify their exclusion. Discrimination against second-generation immigrants can only be attributed to the fact that they are not citizens of their host country but members of a foreign ethnic group. Only immigrants belonging to disliked ethnic groups were discriminated against, suggesting that acceptance and liking play an important role in workplace discrimination. Second, we demonstrated that discrimination at interview is moderated by a job requirement that has not been studied yet; i.e., interpersonal skill requirements. The invitation to a job interview typically represents only the first step to employment. Thus, for jobs emphasizing interpersonal skills, some applicants may not even be given the chance to present themselves. This is particularly disquieting because interpersonal skills may be more accurately assessed during an interview than based on applicants' documents (Salgado & Moscoso, 2002), denying some applicants a fair chance to prove themselves. Third, results suggested that discrimination at interview is not necessarily based on differential perceptions of applicant

information. It may be primarily based on an unwillingness to interact with this person (or to have this person interact with others on the job) and not on the belief that he or she is not qualified. Fourth, we demonstrated that the influence of subtle prejudice in an employment context is not only confined to selection decisions but extends to evaluations of applicants. Biases in evaluations may be less easily detectable and thus, for subtly prejudiced persons, they may depend less on the possibility to consult business justifications for disadvantaging members of minority groups.

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We gratefully acknowledge comments by Adrian Bangerter, Franziska Tschan, Achim Elfering, and Steven Worchel.

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Footnote

¹ For the sake of brevity, we have not listed the 14 items. However, they can be obtained from the first author.

Table 1

Intercorrelations between Independent and Dependent Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Job type	-								
2. Albanian vs. Swiss (dummy)	.00	-							
3. Spanish vs. Swiss (dummy)	.02	-.50**	-						
4. Spanish vs. Albanian (dummy)	.02	-.50**	1.0**	-					
5. Symbolic prejudice	-.19*	-.00	-.03	-.03	-				
6. Evaluation application letter	.09	.01	.10	.10	-.10	-			
7. Evaluation training	.19*	-.15	.05	.05	-.23**	.36**	-		
8. Personal evaluation	.24**	-.18*	.09	.09	-.29**	.37**	.93**	-	
9. Intention to interview	.17*	-.34**	.10	.10	-.09	.43**	.50**	.53**	-

Note. $N = 138$. Job type was coded as 1 = *bank assistant*, 2 = *electrician*. Albanian vs. Swiss was coded as 1 = *Kosovo Albanian*, 0 = *Spanish*, 0 = *Swiss*. Spanish vs. Swiss was coded as 1 = *Spanish*, 0 = *Kosovo Albanian*, 0 = *Swiss*. Spanish vs. Albanian was coded 1 = *Spanish*, 0 = *Swiss*, 0 = *Kosovo Albanian*. All ratings were indicated on 6–point scales, with 6 indicating higher levels of prejudice and for evaluations, more positive evaluations.

Table 1 (continued)

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

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Interaction between applicant ethnicity, job type, and symbolic prejudice for evaluations of applicants on personal dimensions (within-subgroup regression lines).

Figure 1

