

Gender, appearance stereotypes and information screening efficiency

- study based on electronic resume screening experiment

Li Tao

School of economics and management ,Nanjing university
of Science and Technology
Nanjing , China
taolee @sohu.com

Hu Xinyue

School of economics and management ,Nanjing university
of Science and Technology
Nanjing , China
364832581@qq.com

Abstract—Aiming at the problem of information interference in the electronic resume screening, under the control of gender, college and major, this paper adopt a method for mixing the photos taken before and after make-up of the same person. We design a resume screening experiment that seniors from human resource management major involved in, which researches how gender difference, screening time and ways of decision-making have an impact on resume screening of recruiters in the real situation that requires a different level of the appearance and ability of applicants. The result shows that the appearance stereotypes actually have an impact on recruiter in the course of screening, the effect degree of which differs in the positions. In the face of applicants for the same position, male recruiters are more affected by appearance stereotypes than female recruiters. Time and the effect of stereotypes are negatively correlated. The group decision could reduce the impact of appearance stereotypes compared with individuals within a limited time. It is suggested that male recruiters take charge of the positions where appearance is not seen as so important, whereas female recruiters are suggested to be in charge of the positions where ability is more emphasized, and its necessary to combine individual decision with group discussion to improve the screening efficiency.

Keywords—Gender, appearance stereotypes; Electronic Resume ;Information Screening; Experimental methodology.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The issues raised

With the development of enterprises, talent introduction and recruitment procedures have constantly being improved, network recruitment service has developed rapidly, hence ,employment competition among university graduates become fierce . Delivering electronic resume and passing the selection of resume screening through the network has become the first hurdle for applicants. Resumes as the first impression to recruiters , often provide an important reference to explain the late behavior of applicants. Increasingly fierce competition

needs recruiters to browse a lot of resumes within a limited time, but in a real network recruitment process, it's difficult for recruiters to screen resumes with detailed reading under time pressure. Information of resume has an impact on the decision-making of recruiters in the screening process. Among the information on the resume, the photo is firstly noticed by recruiters on the resume (Liu Lili, Li Yan, Ji Wei, 2010). The factors make recruiters make judgments are varied, how recruiters accurately identify information within a limited time, how to improve the efficiency and accuracy of the recruitment services, which have become problems need to be solved .

B. Literature review

Network recruitment, it refers to HR department release the recruitment information through the network, preliminarily determining the required professionals after a simple screening process(Liuzheng Gui, Wang Baichun, 2006). Low recruitment cost, high recruitment speed, high efficiency, a large amount of information, recruitment space without time limit ,which are irreplaceable advantages of online recruitment (Zhaoyue Hui, 2011). However , online recruitment also have some problems, owing to some objective constraints , low fidelity and integrity of the information (Wang Qingjun, Zhan Qi, 2014; Lv Beijing, 2014), randomness of recruiters and applicants , lack of restraint ,low success rate results in much invalid information (Xiong Jun,2006). Therefore, in the context of information asymmetry, the development of network recruitment need firstly to solve the problem of information screening.

The recruitment process is an evaluation process , recruitment process issues are generally studied by experimental method while a large number of experiments shows that the existence of appearance stereotypes in a recruitment process . Appearance stereotypes belong to the stereotype, that is, a fixed social cognition to individuals or groups with one kind of appearance .Diphoye R L, Arvey R D., Terpstra D. E (1977) conducted a hiring decision experiment respectively towards the student and the professional human resources recruitment sector , and found both would be influenced by appearance stereotypes, looks better means the higher opportunities of employment. Matthijs L. van Leeuwen & C. Neil MacRae (2004) studied the beauty and positive quality related the behavior of "evaluation" have what kind of

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implied impact, research results show that the appearance of the stereotypes does have an unconscious influence on people's behavior. Zhang Junli (2004) conducted an "effect of appearance experiment", finding in the interview process, beautiful candidates could get a higher evaluation than other applicants. Zhang Zhiyong (2005) investigated implicit facial attractiveness bias is how to get the expression in the context of recruitment with the experimental method. This study shows that even in those claims to have no face prejudice and even to their own practical action to prove that he did not face prejudice, in fact, hidden preference of beauty. Liang Juan (2014) tried to simulate the real recruitment situation , the results show that appearance stereotypes affect the rank of resume , post fitness, and recruitment decision, appearance stereotypes exist in different positions, which has become one of the factors that affect recruitment decision .

Resume screening is a vital step in the online recruitment. Zhang Junli(2005) pointed out that 97.2% of recruiters admitted" the first impression" towards applicants could or would certainly have an impact on their hiring decisions.Li Junsu (2008)in his master's thesis of "appearance affect the examiner evaluation experiment",will apply to photos using a structured scoring method, the photos were graded and through the resume screening method experiment, found that beauty is considered to be a better family condition, comprehensive ability. Liu Lili (2010) researched the influence of resume physical properties to sight attention in screening and the browse rule of the resume reading , the results show that regardless of the time pressure, photo type and location have a significant impact on attention. In the process of resume browsing , the photo is firstly noticed by recruiters on the resume. Implicit stereotypes have an important influence on the resume screening, appearance stereotypes exist in different jobs, this phenomenon is more prominent for female applicants.

Research on resume screening ,often mentioned "15 seconds effect" and "30 seconds effect", namely, regardless of how excellent resume is , The average time for recruiters browse a resume is 15 seconds or 30 seconds. This suggests that recruiters need to identify information in a short time, to ensure the efficiency.

The existing studies have shown that photo is firstly noticed by recruiters on the resume, and there is a certain degree of appearance stereotypes. A large number of experiments shows that the first impression has an important influence on resume screening , but most studies have ignored screening time and ways of decision-making have an impact on resume screening of recruiters and the screening efficiency under the influence of appearance stereotypes. The current research used the grading quantification method to study the appearance , which the deficiencies in this approach is that it is still a subjective evaluation method and need a more objective standard to measure appearance .This paper tends to adopt a more objective way to measure appearance , tangling the photos of the same person taken before and after her make-up ,study how gender difference, screening time and ways of decision-making have an impact on resume screening of recruiters .

C. Paper structure

This paper is organized as follows: the first part is the review of existing literature ; the second part is the introduction of the experimental design and methods; The third part is experimental results; the fourth part is the discussion of experimental results; the fifth part is suggestions on the effectiveness of electronic resume screening .

II. DESIGN OF EXPERIMENT

A. Experimental basis

This study is on the basis of the existing research , which suggests that the existence of appearance stereotypes, for female applicants, this phenomenon is more prominent. Therefore, this article only chooses female students as research subjects. Based on the principle of experimental design, close to the real situation of recruitment, we draw on the performance evaluation method to evaluate .

B. Subject

The subjects in the experiment are forty-one people, of which eight is male, referred as recruiters. They are the senior students from the human resources management major, who have the basic professional knowledge, and also been professional trained. They are going to practice and have the professional skills of resume screening.

C. Research hypothesis

This study discusses how gender difference, screening time and ways of decision-making have an impact on recruiters in resume information screening. Appearance requirements of different positions may be different, we select three representative positions to be measured. which have the difference in the skill and the appearance request? The requirements on the skill and appearance of each are shown in the following.

TABLE I THE LIST OF POSITION REQUIREMENT.

Position	Ability requirements	Appearance requirements
Accountant	High	Medium
File manager	Low	Low
Teachers	Medium	High

The research hypothesis can be divided into the following .

TABLE II RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS.

Theoretical hypothesis	Test hypothesis
Hypothesis1: Appearance stereotypes interfere the judgment of recruiters on the ability of applicants .	Hypothesis1:The recruiters mainly sort according to the photos in the resume, affected by appearance stereotypes, the ones with make-up are higher than those with no make-up, and what dominate the front row are the applicants with make-up.
Hypothesis2: Increasing the resume screening time will reduce the influence of appearance stereotypes.	Hypothesis2:Screening time has an impact on stereotypes of recruiters in resume information screening, the longer the time, the lower the possibility of the recruiters affected by stereotypes.
Hypothesis3:The group decision could reduce the impact of appearance stereotypes compared with individuals within a limited time.	Hypothesis3: Under the time limited ,comparing individual decisions with group conclusions, group discussion have more efficiency .

D. Experimental design

In this study, the experimental materials are displayed in the computer. The results of the experiment are recorded by recruiters in writing. Resumes of these three positions are prepared. Each of the positions has corresponding twenty copies of resumes, including eight copies of the same person with photos taken before and after make-up, the remaining resume are for confusion. Forty-one recruiters join this experiment, and each reviews sixty copies of resume of three positions. Record the consumed time after each is required to complete screening and sorting all resumes within two hours. Paired comparison method is used in this paper. Every employee is compared with everyone else in accordance with all the factors of evaluation. After the comparison, recruiters will get the score of each employee and gather and sort it out. recruiters can get the ranking based on the candidate matching table and ranking records, thus to test the hypotheses 1 and hypothesis 2 in each position to observe if the resume with the photo after make-up is ranked above, finally to group the summary statistics by gender, and analyze the difference between group ,verifying the hypothesis 3 .

E. Experimental materials and procedures

The research tools used in this research are the self-made experimental materials, which mainly include the following parts:

1) Resume (text)

In this study, the basic experimental materials are resumes of three positions, namely the accountant, file manager , primary school teachers, each with code A 、 B 、 C. These three positions differ on the appearance requirements of candidates. For each position, there are twenty copies of resume, a total of sixty copies. Each resume includes a wide range of information, such as name, sex , age , education, graduate colleges , professional , major , the internship experience, duties and performance in school , English and computer proficiency, rewards and punishments, interest and self-evaluation. Since the main purpose of this experiment is to study appearance stereotypes, we control these variables: education, graduate colleges, major, so that all the resumes are consistent. Besides, the skill is labeled as excellent or not, and the photos of applicants are designed to make them different. In addition, in order to avoid unnecessary confusion with the names of candidates, which will affect the evaluation judgment, the name shall be represented with letters and numbers, such as A001、 B002.

2) Photos

Photos used in the experiment are 1 inch bareheaded photos. In the twenty copies of the resume of each position, ten are modified photos taken after make-up, and the rest are ordinary. The twelve groups are from the same person, The vertical line is comparison table of the same person as follows .

TABLE III COMPARISON TABLE OF THE SAME PERSON.

With make-up	A002	A003	A010	A019	B001	B014
Without make-up	A008	A013	A015	A016	B006	B004
With make-up	B010	B013	C016	C007	C004	C011
Without make-up	B007	B013	C002	C003	C009	C020

3) Record paper

a) The candidate matching record form

Each recruiter has three copies of resume, corresponding to the three positions. Each position has twenty candidates, and each professional score table includes 20 x 20 comparison table and summation, each recruiter opens resumes in order and fills out the "candidate matching records table". According to the resume category "A", "B", "C", write down the category in the first case, comparing the two applicants in horizontal and longitudinal way. The table is as follows .

TABLE IV THE CHART FOR MATCHING -EVALUATION OF APPLICANTS.

	1	2	3	sum
1	×			
2		×		
3			×	

b) The applicant sorting recording table

This table mainly includes the applicant number, score and ranking. Summarize scores of every candidate of each position by the group, getting a total of sixty candidate scores after gathering and sorting.

TABLE V THE CHART FOR SORTING THE APPLICANTS.

Reference number of applicants	Score	Ranking
A001		
A002		

F. Variables and operational definitions

1) Variables

The main goal of the experiment is to find out if the subjects will prefer make-up modified photos of the same person compared to ones which are not. So the skill of candidates is no difference, only to verify appearance variable, the variable is the rank of the make-up group is better than the non-makeup group. Make-up groups use photos which are pictures taken after make-up and modified personal appearance defects, so got better picture quality. A non-makeup group of candidates resume and the overall level is basically the same, with average photo quality.

2) Start mode

Photo start: In the experiment, applicants have attached a picture in resume, leaving the recruiters on the applicant's facial impression.

3) Evaluation

The recruiters will evaluate the content and requirements of recording paper according to the resume of the candidates and summary score after comparisons.

G. Data Processing Method

This paper use SPSS 16.0 to process data. The variable is the rank of the make-up group is better than the without makeup groups, therefore , input data as follows

TABLE VI THE CHART FOR RECORDING SPSS RESULTS.

Group	Variable of appearance	SPSS input	Otherwise input
A	IFA002>A008	1	0
	IFA003>A013	1	0
	IFA010>A015	1	0
	IFA019>A016	1	0
B	IFB001>B006	1	0
	IFB014>B004	1	0
	IFB010>B007	1	0
	IFB013>B019	1	0
C	IFC016>C002	1	0
	IFC007>C003	1	0
	IFC004>C009	1	0
	IFC011>C020	1	0

In the meantime, if the first ranking is the make-up group, input 1 into SPSS, and input 0 otherwise.

After all the input, to sum up 1 times, total score is 5, as measured by each recruiter evaluation results summary. Getting more 1 times means the recruiters more inclined to make-up photos.

III. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

A. Overall performance of stereotypes

Counting the sum of the post A, post B and post C, descriptive result are as follows.

TABLE VII DESCRIPTIVES.

		N	Mean	Std.deviation	Std.error	95% confidence interval for mean		Min	Max
						Lower bound	Upper bound		
A	Female	33	2.91	1.071	0.186	2.53	3.29	0	5
	Male	8	3.38	0.518	0.183	2.94	3.81	3	4
	Total	41	3.00	1.000	0.156	2.68	3.32	0	5
B	Female	33	2.42	1.032	0.180	2.06	2.79	0	5
	Male	8	3.50	0.756	0.267	2.87	4.13	2	4
	Total	41	2.63	1.067	0.167	2.30	2.97	0	5
C	Female	33	3.03	0.770	0.134	2.76	3.30	2	5
	Male	8	3.75	1.035	0.366	2.88	4.62	2	5
	Total	41	3.17	0.863	0.135	2.90	3.44	2	5
sum	Female	33	8.39	1.456	0.254	7.88	8.91	5	11
	Male	8	10.75	1.282	0.453	9.68	11.82	9	13
	Total	41	8.85	1.696	0.265	8.32	9.39	5	13

According to the above table shows that the performance of the appearance stereotypes, the score reached more than half (i.e. average of total value more than 2.5) means the preference on modified photos. The table shows that appearance stereotypes actually have an impact on recruiters in screening, the degree of stereotypes varied towards different positions. The highest is art teacher, average values are higher than the other two positions, the lowest is the file manager. This is in accordance with hypothesis, the art teachers need to directly

face the service groups, the appearance requirements is stringent, and file manager does not need to directly face the customers, the appearance requirements is tolerant. At the same time, there is a significant difference between the effect of male and female recruiters.

TABLE VIII ONE-SAMPLE TEST.

	Test value = 2.5					
	t	df	sig. (2-tailed)	Mean difference	95% confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
A	3.202	40	0.003	0.500	0.18	0.82
B	0.805	40	0.425	0.134	-0.20	0.47
C	4.975	40	0.000	0.671	0.40	0.94

According to the table shows that, setting the test value is 2.5, the t-test value of account reached 2.302, $\text{sig}=0.003<0.05$, the teacher's t-test value reached 4.975, $\text{sig}=0.000<0.05$, said has significant difference, while the file manager $\text{sig}=0.425>0.05$, did not pass the significance test. Results are consistent with the hypothesis, the positions such as accountant and teacher, recruiters need to identify applicants with outstanding looks, and file manager don't need directly face the customers, the appearance requirement is tolerant.

B. Gender difference of stereotypes

In order to know the gender difference of the effect of stereotypes and test significant difference between male and female recruiters, results are as follows.

TABLE IX ANOVA.

		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
A	Between groups	1.398	1	1.398	1.412	0.242
	Within groups	38.602	39	0.990		
	Total	40.000	40			
B	Between groups	7.452	1	7.452	7.636	0.009
	Within groups	38.061	39	0.976		
	Total	45.512	40			
C	Between groups	3.335	1	3.335	4.914	0.033
	Within groups	26.470	39	0.679		
	Total	29.805	40			
sum	Between groups	35.743	1	35.743	17.561	0.000
	Within groups	79.379	39	2.035		

According to the table above shows, applicants with attractive appearance appeal to male recruiters in resume screening, the female recruiters are influenced by stereotypes is significantly lower than that of the male. Gender difference have an impact on resume screening of recruiters, the degree of which varied towards different positions, file manager $F=7.636$, $\text{sig}=0.009<0.05$, teacher $F=4.914$, $\text{sig}=0.033<0.05$, there have significant differences between the positions of the file manager (the highest requirement) and the position of the teacher (the lowest requirement), but for accountant, $\text{sig}=0.242>0.05$, did not pass the significance test.

C. The influence of time on stereotypes

How screening time have an impact on resume screening of recruiters ,the results are as follows.

TABLE X A CORRELATIONS

		A score	A time
A score	Pearson correlation	1	-0.083
	Sig.(2-tailed)		0.612
	N	41	40
A time	Pearson correlation	-0.083	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.612	
	N	40	40

TABLE XI B CORRELATIONS

		B score	B time
B score	Pearson correlation	1	-0.146
	Sig.(2-tailed)		0.364
	N	41	41
B time	Pearson correlation	-0.146	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.364	
	N	41	41

TABLE XII C CORRELATIONS

		C score	C time
C score	Pearson correlation	1	-0.140
	Sig.(2-tailed)		0.384
	N	41	41
C time	Pearson correlation	-0.140	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)	0.384	
	N	41	41

According to the table above shows, the correlation between the time and the effect of appearance stereotypes did not pass the test of significance, suggesting that time is not the most important factors affect the results. From the correlation analysis ,time and the effect of screening are negatively correlated .With the increase of the screening time, the impact of the photos and the effect of the appearance stereotypes on the recruiters will be weakened. Especially, the position of file manager that has the lowest appearance requirements ,has the highest degree of negative correlation, show that the more time consumed by screening , the lower impact of the stereotypes on recruiters.

D. The influence of group discussion on stereotypes

After each recruiter independently conducts applicants screening, divided into eight groups to carry on the summary, of which five are all-female, two are all-male, one group are mixed, conclusions of eight groups are obtained. Comparing individual conclusions with group conclusions, Group discussion will revise individual judgment if the Group score is greater than the individuals , Getting the same score did not count, group and individual decisions are calculated respectively. the results are as follows.

TABLE XIII CONTRAST ANALYSIS

A	the Group score is greater than the individuals	14
	the Group score is lower than the individuals	16
B	the Group score is greater than the individuals	13
	the Group score is lower than the individuals	19
C	the Group score is greater than the individuals	6
	the Group score is lower than the individuals	19

According to the above table shows that the individual score is lower than the group between three kinds of positions, this difference is the most obvious among the most appearance

demanding jobs .Individuals will be affected by stereotypes in screening within a limited time , a group will consider other factors when to make decisions. It can be found that in the process of resume screening, the group decision could reduce the impact of appearance stereotypes compared with individuals within a limited time .

IV. DISCUSSION

The appearance stereotypes actually have an impact on recruiters in the course of screening, the effect degree of which differs in the positions. In the face of the same positions, male recruiters are more affected by facial attractiveness stereotypes than female recruiters. The file manager, which do not require directly facing the customers, the position has low requirement of appearance , the impact of appearance stereotypes on recruiters is not so obvious .In terms of the art teacher, such jobs represent most of the students majored in art, from admission to employment, the appearance and temperament requirements for art students are higher than ordinary majors, the impact of appearance stereotypes on recruiters is more obvious. Attractive appearance has a great impact on male recruiters, the female recruiters are influenced by stereotypes is significantly lower than that of the male. This difference is the most obvious among the two jobs which respectively has the highest and lowest appearance requirements. This result reflects the gender differences of aesthetic requirements, they have different standards of beauty.

Screening time has an impact on stereotypes of recruiters in resume information screening, within the time limit, the photo is firstly noticed by recruiters on the resume. With the increase of the screening time, the effect of the appearance stereotypes on the recruiters will be weakened. Therefore, in a real network recruitment process, for the appearance demanding positions , recruiters can according to the pictures to make decisions in a short time,especially, male recruiters. But for the position that has low appearance requirement , should increase the screening time.

The group decision could reduce the impact of appearance stereotypes on individual within a limited time. Screening for some positions in appearance demanding , influenced by the stereotypes, individual decisions are more efficient, but for the position that has low appearance requirement , group discussion will consider other matching factors for the position .

V. SUGGESTIONS AND MEASURES

In the context of asymmetric information, the problem of information interference affects electronic resume screening efficiency. As for companies, the influence of appearance stereotypes also has both advantages and disadvantages. Screening for some positions in appearance demanding, influenced by the stereotypes, the higher screening efficiency is. However, for other jobs, appearance stereotype will affect resume screening accuracy, individual screening inevitably influenced by subconscious stereotypes, it will reduce the effectiveness of the resume screening. Recruitment is a game playing , companies must be fully prepared to win in this game.

It's necessary to improve the quality of online recruitment services, promote network recruitment to an intelligent level. The network intelligent identification system can match the qualification of the applicants with the job requirements automatically to avoid stereotypes of artificial screening . Zhang zhiyong(2008) have suggested that photos can be used as the last pop-up information in online recruitment. Appearance is not the competence characteristics of applicants, does not need to be attached a picture in a resume.

According to the experimental conclusions , it is suggested that male recruiters take charge of the positions where appearance is not seen as so important , whereas female recruiters are suggested to be in charge of the positions where ability is more emphasized. Companies should combine individual decision with group discussion to improve the screening efficiency.

Resume screening is the first crux for companies to obtain talent, quality and professional ability of recruiters determines the preliminary victory of the game, the resumes recognition ability of recruiters based on the experience and cognition . Companies should strengthen individual training, performance evaluation and selection of recruiters.

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APPENDIX

Operation Declaration

Thank you very much for joining us in this research on the resume screening, please complete resume screening in two hours, the operating instructions are informed as follows:

- The name of different 3 positions are "A. accountant", "B." file manager "and "C. primary school teachers". Three files each includes 20 resumes corresponding to the position of the candidate, the number is the corresponding files name.
- Each recruiter fills in "the chart for matching-evaluation of applicants" according to the order of the candidates resume. The rules are as follows:

According to the resume category "A", "B", "C", records the category in the first case and compare two candidates in horizontal item and vertical item respectively. If the candidate is better, 1 point for him and 0 points for the other. One by one, when comparison is completed, sum each candidate's score according to the lateral statistics and fill in the chart.

For example: In terms of position "A. accountant", applicant 1 is better than applicant 2 while candidates 3 excels another 2 candidates. Results are as follows:

The chart for matching -evaluation of applicants

A	1	2	3	Sum
1	×	1	0	1
2	0	×	0	0
3	1	1	×	2

- After each recruiter independently conducts the matching-screening process of applicants, we rank candidates according to group summary. According to the personal records of the matching-evaluation results, add up the candidates score, rank it out in accordance with the scores from highest to lowest, then fill in the table of applicant screening results summary.
- After the completion of the operation, repeat the steps, and start resume screening of the second candidates.