THE EFFECTS OF SELECTION RISK ON SEX DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS

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By

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Effects of selection risk on sex discrimination in hiring were investigated. Ninety-six male and female educational administration graduate students rated fictitious resumes on suitability for hiring for the female-oriented position of secondary school teacher. Sex and selection risk level were varied, with sex of rater as an assigned factor. Analysis of variance yielded significant main effects for sex ($p < .01$) and selection risk level ($p < .05$). All ratings were lower in high selection-risk situations, with males preferred over females across both levels of risk. Results suggested that ratings were based on a stereotype of female inferiority in work efficiency, overriding job sex-orientation as a decision factor.
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THE EFFECTS OF SELECTION RISK ON SEX DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT DECISIONS

The decade of the 1960s led to the advent of many social changes, one of the most notable being the movement for equal employment for women. In order to realize their potential, women began to reject the traditional views of sex-role behaviors and to seek employment outside the home in fields that were previously considered reserved for men. This movement was buttressed substantially by Title VII, Section 703, of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which stated:

It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer to fail or refuse to hire any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because of such individual's race, color, sex, or national origin.

Despite the attitudinal and legislative push to obtain equal treatment of women in employment practices, discrimination by sex has been commonly found in organizations throughout America. On a national level, this unequal treatment has been shown by the consistently higher unemployment rate for women in comparison to that of men. For the ten-year period from 1967 to 1977, the unemployment rate (averaged over years) for women was 6.5% as compared to 4.7% for the men. This occurred despite the fact that women showed a higher number
of median school years completed than men during that same period (U.S. Department of Labor, 1977). This unfair treatment of women intensified as one went up the occupational prestige hierarchy. Epstein (1970) pointed out that most high-prestige positions were occupied by men, and that the opportunities for women in such positions were much less than those of their male job competitors, despite equal qualifications. This claim was supported by Fidell's (1970) finding that a fictitious male Ph.D. psychologist was offered higher starting positions with greater potential for advancement than an identical female counterpart by chairpersons of psychology departments across the United States. Further support for Epstein's claim was noted in the finding that females, even when lucky enough to obtain a position in management, were still paid markedly lower salaries than their male peers ("Women in," 1970).

The major impact of sex discrimination in employment has been that women have been kept primarily in lower-level positions and deprived of their right to unrestricted career pursuits. While the negative effect of sex discrimination on women's rights has been of paramount concern, its economic impact on industry itself must not be overlooked. In discriminating against women, organizations have deprived themselves of the services of highly qualified and capable professionals. This, in turn, may have resulted in less than optimum production and lower profits. The importance of the ethical issues
and the economic effects related to sex discrimination in employment cannot be overstated. It was clearly one of the most salient problems facing industry today. As legislative remedies for this problem have met with limited success, it has become an increasingly important responsibility of industrial psychologists to conduct research into the factors contributing to unfair sex discrimination. It was only with an understanding of the variables involved in sex-based unfair employment practices that one could have hoped to have begun to make worthwhile recommendations to alleviate the problem.

To date, the most meaningful explanation for sex discrimination in employment stemmed from research into sex-role stereotyping. In general, sex-role stereotyping may be defined as the sum of socially designated behaviors that differentiated between men and women. Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, and Rosenkrantz (1972) studied the nature of general sex-role stereotypes. They had subjects of both sexes varying in age, religion, educational attainment, and marital status rate descriptive items as to the extent they typified an adult male or female. They found that males were ascribed attributes which loaded on a "competency" factor, containing such items as independent, objective, competitive, skilled in business, logical, decisive, ambitious, and possessing leadership qualities. Typical female attributes, on the other hand, loaded on a
"warmth expressiveness" cluster, consisting of such items as gentle, sensitive, tactful, religious, and emotionally expressive. The high degree of agreement found between male and female raters with such diverse backgrounds indicated the pervasiveness and commonality of general sex-role stereotypes. An outgrowth of these general sex-role stereotypes was the more job-specific concept of occupational sex-role stereotyping. This construct held that women were more or less characteristically suited for certain occupations, depending on the sex-type classification of the job. This classification depended on both the ratio of males to females in any given occupation, and how well the role demands of that particular job matched either of the previously noted general sex-role stereotypes. Accordingly, jobs that demanded leadership abilities, business skills, or a general "competency" factor were usually dominated by men, and were traditionally considered male-oriented occupations. Positions that required sensitivity, gentleness, or an overall "warmth expressiveness" were, not surprisingly, usually filled by women and classified as female-oriented occupations. Jobs which required neither, or a combination of both of the general sex-role stereotype factors, were considered neutral sex-typed occupations. Specifically, an occupation was sex-typed when the majority of the people in that occupation were of one sex and there was an associated normative expectation that this was how it should have been. The result, according to the occupational
sex-role stereotype hypothesis, was a preferential bias for male or female candidates depending on the sex-type classification of the job.

Despite profeminist claims of the counterproductiveness of occupational sex-role stereotypes (Orth & Jacobs, 1971), and the obvious ethical improbity involved in their use, an abundance of experimental evidence was found which supported the contention of widespread influence of such stereotypes on decisions made in the employment process.

Schein (1973) found that male managers rated typical males as being similar to successful middle managers on a descriptive terms index, while no such resemblance was found between ratings of typical females and successful middle managers. In a follow-up study using female managers as raters, Schein (1975) showed a similar relationship between occupational sex-role stereotypes and requisite managerial characteristics. The ratings made by the women managers showed more similarity between typical males and successful middle managers than females and managers on a descriptive terms index. These combined findings indicated a commonly held belief by both male and female managers that men had more appropriate characteristics and were, therefore, better suited to management than were women.

In a similar vein, Cecil, Paul, and Olins (1973) noted that raters weighted applicant attributes differentially, depending on the applicant's sex. Clerical skills were seen
as most important for female applicants, where management skills were rated most important for males, despite the fact that all applicants were applying for the same job. Results indicated that subjects had different images of the types of occupations usually held by males and females. The authors concluded that females may have had more difficulty than males finding employment in management, whereas males may have found it more troublesome than females obtaining clerical type employment. These results supported the hypothesis of sex discrimination on the basis of occupational sex-role stereotyping.

In a study by Bass, Krussel, and Alexander (1971), it was found that male managers perceived women as being both less dependable and less preferred by subordinates than men as managers. The scope of occupational sex-role stereotyping was seen here to affect not only personal preferences of male supervisors for male managers, but their perceptions of subordinate preferences as well. Haefner's (1977b) finding that employees in general preferred to work with males instead of females lent support to the Bass et al. study.

The reaches of occupational sex-role stereotypes were so expansive that they were even reflected in the attitudes of children. Scheresky (1976) found that male and female elementary school children viewed occupational roles for men and women similarly to the traditional occupational sex-role stereotypes. Likewise, Beuf (1974), in an investigation of
occupational stereotypes in children raised since the advent of the women's liberation movement, found that boys and girls, when asked what they wanted to be when they grew up, still chose occupations that were in keeping with the traditional occupational sex-role stereotypes of their particular gender.

The foregoing section made it highly apparent that occupational sex-role stereotypes did in fact exist. A review of the relevant literature showed how these stereotypes may have led to discrimination in the employment process.

In a study investigating the effects of occupation sex-type classification on hiring decisions, Cohen and Bunker (1975) noted that male recruiters preferred male applicants for a male-typed job and female applicants for a female-typed job. The authors stated that sex discrimination in employment was a two-edged sword effecting applicants of both sexes, with preference given to the applicant whose sex was congruent to the gender classification of the job.

Merideth and Bauske (1976) gave more support to the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis. They found that beauty shop owners preferred females over males for the traditionally feminine-typed position of hairdresser.

Conversely, the evidence suggesting that occupational sex-role stereotyping led to discrimination against women in male-oriented occupations was considerable. In a simulated in-basket study investigating employment decisions in the
male-typed field of engineering, Terborg and Ilgen (1975) found that male raters offered lower starting pay and second-year salary increases to women, as well as assigning them to nonchallenging, routine tasks more often than men. In another in-basket type study, Rosen and Jerdee (1974b) noted that male bank supervisors discriminated against females in decisions regarding career development, promotion to branch manager (male-typed position), and showed more confidence in male managers' ability to deal with subordinate problems.

More evidence that females were discriminated against in male-typed jobs was seen in a study by Dipboye, Fromkin, and Wiback (1975). They found that male applicants were preferred over females by male student and professional interviewers for a male-oriented managerial position in a furniture department.

In another study regarding discrimination against women in male-typed occupations, Rosen and Jerdee (1974a) investigated the effects of sex stereotypes on the evaluations of candidates for managerial positions. They found that female candidates were rated lower and selected less often than their male counterparts by male raters, despite the fact that they were equally qualified. It was also noted that this discriminating effect was intensified when demanding or challenging activities were included in the management job description. The authors concluded that sex-role stereotypes had a significant influence on the selection of management personnel, with females bearing the brunt of the discrimination.
A study by Zikmund, Hitt, and Peckens (1978) provided even more evidence indicating that women were discriminated against in male-typed occupations. They noted that female resumes received both fewer and less-positive responses from personnel directors seeking accountants, than resumes that did not communicate sex of applicant to raters. The authors concluded that sex discrimination against females still occurred in traditionally male occupations.

The studies pertaining to discrimination against females in male-oriented occupations reviewed up to this point had all used male raters. However, discrimination against females was not always the work of male raters. There was ample evidence that discrimination against women occurred even when only female raters were used. Goldberg (1968), in a study directly testing the hypothesis that women were prejudiced against women, found that females rated articles written by men higher than articles written by women, even though the articles were identical in content with only the sex of author being experimentally manipulated. In a related study by Pheterson, Kiesler, and Goldberg (1971), females rated women's attempts at accomplishment lower than similar attempts by men. The authors surmised that women may have accepted a general sex-role stereotype of male superiority which reflected itself in their ratings.

It came as no surprise then, that studies investigating sex discrimination in employment which compared the ratings
of male and female judges, typically found no significant
effect for sex of rater. Contrary to the intuitive expecta-
tions of feminists, experimental evidence indicated that
males and females made comparable employment decisions. A
study which showed that male and female raters discriminated
similarly on the basis of a commonly held occupational sex-
role stereotype was done by Cash, Gillen, and Burn (1977).
They found that male and female raters agreed in their prefer-
ence for appropriately sexed applicants for male- and female-
typed jobs.

Further evidence of parallel discrimination against
women by both male and female raters in a male-oriented posi-
tion was seen in Dipboye, Arvey, and Terpstra's (1977) finding
that raters of both sexes preferred male applicants over
females for the position of sales-management trainee. The
authors pointed out that the inclusion of females in selection
positions had not alleviated sex discrimination, as the female
and male raters discriminated equally against women applicants.

More evidence for the similarity of discriminatory rat-
ings between male and female judges was derived from Haefner's
(1977a) finding that managers of both sexes recommended male
applicants over females for semi-skilled industrial positions.
This occurred even when highly competent applicants of both
sexes were available.

Similar findings by Rosen and Jerdee (1974c) showed that
managers of both sexes were biased in favor of males in
decisions involving selection, promotion, and career development. The authors noted, however, that the female sample in the study was small in comparison to the males and the results should be interpreted with caution.

This seemingly "turncoat" behavior on the part of women raters in employment decisions was clarified somewhat in a study by Matteson (1976). While investigating attitudes toward women in management, he concluded that it was not sex of rater, but role of rater which led to discrimination against women in managerial positions. Female executives had assumed a male role and internalized the occupational sex-role stereotyped attitudes that went along with that role. As a consequence, executives, regardless of sex, showed unfavorable attitudes towards women as managers. This conclusion was bolstered by Morrison and Sebald's (1974) finding that female executives' characteristics were more similar to those of male executives than female nonexecutives.

In the investigation of any phenomenon, conflicting results frequently arise. Discrimination due to occupational sex-role stereotyping was no exception to this generality. A slight amount of evidence was found which showed not only a lack of discrimination against, but a preference for, women in male-oriented occupations. Kryger and Shikiar (1978) found that male personnel managers chose more women than men for follow-up interviews regarding a sales-management trainee position. Female applicants were also rated as being more
responsible and having more initiative than men. The authors concluded that their findings may have been due to either a change in occupational sex-role stereotypes or a reaction to Title VII which made selection personnel more sensitive to female applicants. It must be noted, however, that the women were only chosen for follow-up interviews, not jobs, and that the research evidence pertaining to actual hiring of women in male-oriented occupations was not favorable.

In two related studies (Bigoness, 1976; Hamner, Kim, Baird, & Bigoness, 1974), females were given higher performance ratings than males in an identical work sampling task when only the sex of workers was varied. The job involved was that of a retail store stock clerk, a typically male-oriented position, and the findings went against the grain of favoritism for males in male-oriented positions noted earlier. However, this position was of fairly low prestige, and feminists may not have been encouraged by these findings. Nevertheless, these results may have been indicators of the beginnings of change in traditional occupational sex-role stereotypes.

The majority of the literature reviewed, however, indicated that a bias still existed which favored candidates whose gender was congruent to the sex-type classification of the job. The most plausible explanation for this sex discrimination was that decision makers' judgements were influenced by occupational sex-role stereotypes which viewed males
and females as differentially suited for certain positions, depending on the sex-type classification of that job. It seemed simple: men were discriminated against in female-typed jobs and women were discriminated against in male-typed jobs.

A virtually unexplored variable, however, which may have had an effect on the occupational specificity of sex discrimination was the risk involved to a rater in selecting an individual for a particular position. A theory proposed in Webster's (1964) work on decision-making in the employment interview stated that people in selection positions operated under a reward system which rarely praised them for a successful selection, as this was expected as a matter of course. This same system, however, subjected selection personnel to criticism for unsuccessful hirings. As a result, the more risk involved in hiring a candidate, the more sensitive selection personnel became to negative information. This was due to a fear of reprisal from supervisors for a bad selection. In a study directly testing this hypothesis, Shaw (1974) found male applicants were preferred over females to a greater degree for a male-typed position where the risk of a bad selection was higher, than for a position in which the risk was not so great. This finding raised the question of whether feminine gender was construed as negative information and led to discrimination against women in female-typed positions as well, when selection risk was high.
Aside from Shaw's work, previous research efforts into sex discrimination in employment have paid no attention to the possible effects of selection risk on hiring decisions, and his findings led to some notable points regarding the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis. The majority of the research literature supporting this hypothesis stemmed from discrimination against women in male-oriented occupations. It assumed this discrimination was due to an attitude, held by raters of both sexes, which considered males as being more characteristically suited to an occupation because of the male sex-type classification of that job. But a closer look at the jobs used in research dealing with discrimination in male-oriented occupations (e.g., college professors, managers, engineers) revealed an inherently present selection risk involved in choosing personnel for these positions. They were all upper-echelon positions entailing a great amount of responsibility. People who had to select personnel to fill these positions may have felt a great amount of pressure to choose the best person for the job, as a bad selection in these upper-level positions would have had more severely negative ramifications than a bad selection in a lesser position. It was possible that it was the selection risk and not the sex-type classification of the job per se which led to the preference for males in these positions. Summarizing, the selection risk inherently involved in choosing personnel for the positions usually used in sex-discrimination research.
to represent male sex-typed occupations, may have accounted for the discrimination against women, rather than the sex of applicant/sex-type classification of job incongruency proposed by the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis.

While inherent selection risk may have accounted for the discrimination against women found in research dealing with male-oriented occupations, it was possible that the lack of such selection risk led to discrimination against males in studies dealing with female-oriented occupations. As was true of studies dealing with male-oriented occupations, no explicit indication of the degree of selection risk was given to subjects working with female-oriented occupations. The positions used in these studies showing discrimination against males in female-oriented occupations, however, (e.g., hairdresser, telephone operator, office receptionist) contained a markedly lower level of inherent selection risk than those positions used in male-oriented occupational studies. As a result, raters, feeling no selection risk, relied on occupational sex-role stereotypes in making their judgements and selected women for female-oriented positions. These ratings, however, in the absence of selection risk, could simply have reflected the normative expectations people held regarding occupational sex-role stereotypes. In order for these ratings to have been construed as proof of the causal link between such occupationa
shown to have consistently favored females over males in female-oriented occupations, even when selection risk was high.

Accordingly, the present study was designed to investigate the effects of differing levels of selection risk and sex of applicant on sex discrimination in hiring decisions for a female-typed occupation. In addition, the fact that males and females discriminated similarly in the past was considered inadequate justification for an assumption of continued comparable discrimination in the future. It was possible that the sex-role stereotypes upon which these discriminations were based may have changed at different rates for females than males. This differential rate of attitudinal change must be gauged by continually comparing the ratings of male and female judges. Not to have done so meant an implicit assumption of constant uniformity across male and female raters, which was a questionable supposition at best. Consequently, sex of rater was included as a factor in the study for informational gathering purposes.

The experimental hypothesis expected male applicants to be preferred over females when selection risk was high, even though the position being applied for was female-oriented in nature. This prediction was directly at odds with the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis which would have predicted a bias in favor of women in a female-oriented occupation, regardless of degree of selection risk. The
experimental hypothesis, however, was based on the premise that selection personnel held a general stereotype of female inferiority in employment situations which overrode occupationally specific sex-role stereotypes as a decision factor when selection risk was high, regardless of the sex-orientation of the job in question. It was clear how selection personnel who held such general sex-role stereotypes discriminated against women in a female-oriented occupation when selection risk was high, as they considered male stereotyped characteristics much more conductive to successful job performance in the demandingly competitive work world, irrespective of sex-type of occupation.

Method

Subjects

Subjects were 48 male and 48 female graduate students enrolled in educational administration classes at North Texas State University. All subjects were volunteers and received no compensation for their services. Subjects were equally and randomly assigned to the cells of the factorial design.

Procedure

The experiment was conducted to resemble a personnel selection situation. Subjects were instructed to assume the role of a school board administrator in charge of personnel selection for a school district. They were asked to evaluate an applicant's suitability for hiring for a teaching position in a local high school. As females outnumber males by more
than a 3:1 margin in this occupation in the United States (U.S. Department of Labor, 1977), it was clearly a female sex-typed position. Subjects were given a job description and a resume package upon which to base their ratings. Male and female raters were each given a resume of either a male or female applicant in either a high- or low-selection risk situation. The subjects were told the study was investigating decision-making processes in teacher selection. Each subject rated only one applicant in order to keep the study as unobtrusive as possible.

**Independent Variables**

**Sex of applicant.** Two resume packages were used, identical in every way except for the first name of the applicant, which was varied by sex. Male applicants were called Harold Warren and female applicants named Kathleen Warren. The resume materials used were the actual forms used by the NTSU Career Planning and Placement Office. They contained such information as applicant's personal history, previous education, work experience, transcript data, and standard reference letter forms. In addition to controlling for contaminating effects of factors other than sex of applicant, the use of these materials lent an aura of realism to the experimental situation.

**Selection risk.** Level of selection risk experienced by raters was manipulated by the use of two differing selection ratios (number of openings divided by number of applicants).
Subjects in the low-selection-risk group were given the following instructions.

One of the responsibilities of your job is to review candidate qualifications for jobs within the school system and to make recommendations as to their suitability for hiring. Currently due to the opening of three new high schools in your district, there are 40 openings for high school English teachers. There are 100 applicants for these 40 positions and it is important that you pick the most qualified applicants for the jobs. Here is a job description of the position in question and a resume of one of the applicants. Please rate him/her accordingly.

Subjects in the high-selection-risk group were given these instructions.

One of the responsibilities of your job is to review candidates' qualifications for jobs within the school system and to make recommendations as to their suitability for hiring. Currently, due to the retirement of three teachers there are 3 openings for high school English teachers. There are 100 applicants for these 3 positions and it is important that you pick the most qualified applicants for the jobs. Here is a job description of the position in question and a resume of
One of the applicants. Please rate him/her accordingly.

It was assumed that selection risk was higher for raters operating under the lower selection ratio, as a bad selection would have been much more obvious amidst only 3 newly selected individuals than it would have been among 40 newly selected personnel.

Sex of rater. No manipulations of this variable were possible in the current experiment as this was an assigned factor.

Dependent Variable

Evaluation form. After reviewing the job description and applicant resume, each subject rated the applicant on an 8-point scale which specified suitability for hiring, with 1 indicating definitely would recommend hiring and 8 denoting definitely would not recommend hiring.

Results

A 2 X 2 X 2 randomized blocks design is used with sex of rater being an assigned independent variable and sex of applicant and level of selection risk as active independent variables. The results show that males are rated higher than females across both levels of selection risk, and that all candidates are rated lower when selection risk is high. These findings hold constant across male and female raters.

The means and standard deviations of the suitability for hiring ratings made by the subjects are shown in Table 1.
Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Applicant Ratings in High- and Low-Selection-Risk Situations

| Selection Risk | Male Raters | | | Female Raters | | |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                | Male Applicant | Female Applicant | Male Applicant | Female Applicant |
| High Risk      |             |             |             |             |
| M              | 3.42        | 4.08        | 3.33        | 4.42        |
| SD             | 1.56        | 1.67        | 1.37        | 1.88        |
| Low Risk       |             |             |             |             |
| M              | 2.58        | 3.67        | 2.75        | 3.58        |
| SD             | .79         | 1.43        | 1.35        | 1.00        |

Note: Suitability scores ranged from 1 (definitely would recommend hiring) to 8 (definitely would not recommend hiring). In each cell \( n = 12 \).

A three-way analysis of variance on the ratings yields significant main effects for sex of applicant, \( F(1, 88) = 9.96, p < .01 \), and level of selection risk, \( F(1, 88) = 5.27, p < .05 \). Sex of rater shows no significant effect, indicating agreement between male and female raters as to applicant's suitability for hiring. All interactions are nonsignificant.

Discussion
The statistical analysis provides support for the hypothesis that females would be discriminated against in a female-oriented occupation in the presence of selection risk. In addition, this discrimination against females manifests...
itself in both selection-risk levels. These results suggest that hiring discrimination against women in a female-oriented occupation may occur whenever selection risk, even at low levels, is made a salient factor to selection personnel during the hiring decision-process.

Previous studies done on sex discrimination in female-oriented occupations which showed a preference for women in such jobs neglected to include the factor of selection risk in their investigations. As a consequence, the ratings made in these studies may only be indicators of what these raters considered the most appropriate occupational sex-role classifications for particular sexed applicants. In the present study, however, explicit selection risk put pressure on raters to look for the most qualified applicants. This more realistic representation of a typical selection situation yields a marked preference for male applicants in a female-oriented occupation. The results lend support to the hypothesis that raters operating under selection risk, in order to avoid the negative consequences associated with hiring an unacceptable candidate, prefer male applicants over females regardless of the sex orientation of the target job. These ratings, made under the duress of selection risk, are hypothesized to be based on a general work-efficiency stereotype which considers males as more likely to succeed in the world of employment than females, even if the job in question has traditionally been dominated by females. Had the earlier
studies involving female sex-typed occupations made the raters aware of a selection-risk factor, their results may have resembled those of the present study.

Both sex of applicant and level of selection risk show significant main effects, but it is the lack of an interaction which is noteworthy. While ratings of all applicants are significantly lower in the high-selection-risk situation than in the low, the ratings of females remain uniformly lower than males across both levels of selection risk. At the outset, discrimination against females was only predicted in the high-risk situation, with the females expected to fare somewhat better in the low-risk setting. This lack of interaction indicates that low-selection-risk, as well as high, leads to discrimination against females in female-oriented occupations. The data suggest that the presence of selection risk at any level suffices to induce discrimination against women in female-typed occupations.

The lack of a significant effect for sex of rater supports the findings of previous research which showed male and female ratings to be congruently discriminatory. Selection risk is shown to effect the hiring decisions of males and females equally, indicating that raters of both sexes hold the same general stereotype of female inferiority in work efficiency.

A clear implication from the results of the present study is the ineffectiveness of the occupational sex-role
stereotype hypothesis as an explanation of sex discrimination in female-oriented occupations when selection risk is introduced as a factor in the selection situation. Under such conditions, a male applicant is rated higher than a female for a female-typed position. This is a direct contradiction of what would be predicted by the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis. The effects of selection risk on sex discrimination in employment decisions in a female-oriented occupation are clearly demonstrated in this instance to be of more import than the sex-type classification of the job.

One possible explanation of the results which might sustain the credibility of the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis is that the raters do not perceive the position of secondary school teacher as a female-typed position, but rather as a male-oriented one. It must be remembered, however, that females outnumber males by a 3:1 ratio in this occupation. As educational administration graduate students are used as raters in the study, it becomes difficult to understand how subjects so familiar with the occupation in question could develop such an unrealistic perception. Accordingly, this explanation is rejected as being implausible. This point does raise the question, however, of whether selection risk would produce the same effects in other female-oriented occupations. Future research using a variety of feminine sex-typed positions as target jobs, under conditions of selection risk, would provide the answer to this question.
It is also possible that the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis is still an adequate explanation of sex discrimination in female-oriented occupations when selection risk is not a factor, but such selection situations exist primarily in the laboratory and are extremely rare in the real world of employment. Consequently, the usefulness of the occupational sex-role stereotype hypothesis as an explanation of sex discrimination in female-oriented occupations must be seriously considered.

The results also lead to the implication that the road to occupational equality for women may be a great deal longer than originally thought. The discrimination against women in male-oriented fields has been well-documented, but the present results indicate that in the face of selection risk, women may also be discriminated against in female-oriented occupations. As increasing numbers of men go into fields that were traditionally dominated by women, females may find themselves discriminated against in jobs which once were their strongholds of occupational security. It should be noted that in instances such as these, women would be left with minimal legal recourse, because men are still in the minority in traditionally feminine-typed fields. To alleviate this potential problem, it may very well be necessary that selection personnel be trained not only to avoid unfair discrimination against females in male-oriented occupations, but in female-oriented occupations as well.
The results of the present study point to the importance of selection risk in research pertaining to discrimination in hiring. The risk to selection personnel of hiring an unacceptable candidate is an integral part of every real-life selection situation. As such, this variable should be included in all research on discrimination in selection in order to increase the external validity of the investigations. It is hoped that future research which takes selection risk into account will be able to provide some answers to the many questions surrounding sex discrimination in employment.
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