Natural Hair Bias Against Black Minorities: A Critical Investigation of Intersecting Identities

Janice Odijk - 386412

Erasmus University Rotterdam
1st supervisor: Dr. Marjan J. Gorgievski
2nd supervisor: Dr. Annemarie M.F. Hiemstra

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Abstract

Using an experimental study design, this study investigated whether Black identification, ethnocentric hairstyles, and sex differences led to ethnic bias in CV screening. One hundred Dutch participants rated CVs of Black applicants on job suitability and professionalism. Findings showed that mere ethnic identification positively predicted both CV ratings. Afrocentric hairstyles negatively predicted professionalism, but did not directly predict job suitability ratings. There were no direct effects of sex on both CV ratings, but there was an interaction effect of sex and ethnocentric hairstyles on job suitability; Black women with straight Eurocentric hairstyles were rated *higher* than Black men with conservative Afrocentric hairstyles, and Black women with natural Afrocentric hairstyles were rated *lower* than Black men with overt Afrocentric hairstyles. It is concluded that diversity within ethnic minority groups may critically affect hiring outcomes. Future field studies are needed to confirm the generalizability of these findings to real world hiring contexts.

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How would you cope when an appropriate, professional self-presentation at work means having to hide an integral part of yourself, like your hair? When personal and organizational norms conflict in the workplace, some employees or job seekers may feel the need to suppress personal aspects of themselves and behave in a way that is acceptable within the organization, thereby masking their authentic identity (Ellemers & Barreto, 2006). Research suggests that ethnic minorities who are afraid of experiencing hiring discrimination when applying for a job are likely to supress or conceal their ethnic identity (Kang et al., 2016). Hiring discrimination can be defined as a distinction, exclusion, or preference made on the basis of job-irrelevant characteristics (e.g., ethnicity, sex) that relates to access to employment, which has the effect of impairing equality of opportunity or treatment (Derous et al., 2009).

Unfortunately, ethnic minorities' anticipatory actions to mitigate or avoid potential hiring discrimination are not without reason. Although legislation against employment discrimination based on their social group status is established for all EU-countries (Myors et al., 2008), most Western labour markets are still less accessible for ethnic minorities than ethnic majorities (Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016). A considerable number of studies have shown that ethnic minority applicants are more likely to be selected out during the initial CV screening stage of hiring, than ethnic majority applicants (Baert, 2018). Ethnic bias in CV screening is problematic given that it is one of the most widely used tools in the area of personnel selection (Schmidt & Zimmerman, 2004).

Researchers suggest that this ethnic disparity in job access can be partially explained by applicants' expressed degree of ethnic identification, which can be signalled early on in the hiring process through ethnic cues on CVs (e.g., names, affiliations, or pictures) (Derous et al., 2017). In support of this hypothesis, Watson et al. (2011) found that sales professionals evaluated CVs of Black male applicants more favourably when CVs were marked with White-sounding names, than when CVs were marked with Black-sounding names. Some ethnic minorities have been found to use identity suppression strategies in order to anticipate hiring discrimination and improve their chances of getting a job (Shih et al., 2013). By supressing or removing ethnic identity cues, some intent to signal assimilation or conformity to the white majority and thereby to avoid triggering negative stereotypes associated with their ethnic group (Kang et al., 2016).

Black women are a prime example of people who would often find themselves in this challenge of constructing a desired professional identity, while the personal, ethnic identity is

at stake. For instance, many Black women may choose to alter their natural hair, and wear Eurocentric hairstyles (i.e., straight textured hairstyles) at workplaces, because they see it as an economic necessity for employability (Dawson & Karl, 2018; Rosette & Dumas, 2007). These women have recognized that employers may view their natural Afrocentric hair (i.e., coarse textured hairstyles) as less appropriate or less professional than Eurocentric hair (Opie & Phillips, 2015).

This phenomenon, which causes Afrocentric hairstyles to be associated with negative stereotypes and biases, is referred to as *natural Black hair bias*, or hair discrimination (Dawson et al., 2019). Some states in the United States of America have acknowledged that Black hair bias in the workplace makes it harder for Black women to obtain and keep employment, and therefore, it is in violation with their right to equal treatment. In 2019 these states have introduced legal measures against Black hair discrimination: the Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act (CROWN Act, California) and the New York City Human Rights Law (NYCHRL, New York; Donahoo & Smith, 2019). Sociologists and legal scholars have devoted considerable attention to studying the prevalence and impact of Black hair bias in the workplace (e.g., Bellinger, 2007; Donahoo & Smith, 2019; Rosette & Dumas, 2007). However, this phenomenon has only recently been introduced in the field of Industrial and Organizational Psychology (Opie & Phillips, 2015; Dawson, Karl, & Peluchette, 2019), and there is little experimental evidence on Black hair bias in the workplace.

Study goals

The present study contributes to the knowledge of hiring discrimination in two ways: First, this study addresses the call for a reconsideration of research approaches that treat members of a social group as broad homogeneous entities (Rabelo & Cortina, 2016). Traditional approaches in diversity research generally assume that once individuals are categorized into broad ethnic categories (e.g., ethnic minority women), there is homogeneity among members of those groups. As such, hiring discrimination research has been centred on the debate about whether members of ethnic minority groups (e.g., Black men) are ultimately worse or better off than members of ethnic majority group (e.g., White men; Baert, 2018; Gaddis, 2019). Some scholars have shifted away from this tradition of broad categorization, because they argue that this approach can neglect meaningful dimensions of variability *within* minority groups (Kang et al., 2016). These scholars have recognized that within ethnic group differences can leave some subgroups of minorities more vulnerable to unfair discrimination

than others. Some studies found significant differences in CV evaluations of Black applicants who downplay, compared to those who display ethnic identity cues through names, experiences, and physical attributes (e.g., Kang et al., 2016; Barron et al., 2011; Watson et al., 2011). Other studies show that initial hiring outcomes for Black applicants may be affected by differences in ethnocentric hairstyles (Opie & Phillips, 2015). However, available research on the effect of within ethnic group variables on work outcomes is still scarce. Thus, the primary aim is to critically examine the effects of ethnic identification, and ethnocentric hairstyles on CV evaluations of Black applicants.

Second, this study addresses a knowledge gap in field of Industrial and Organizational (I-O) psychology on how intersecting identities may critically affect work-related outcomes (Rabelo & Cortina, 2016). Scholars have argued that another limitation of traditional approaches in diversity research is its focus on a single axis of identity (e.g., ethnicity *or* sex) (Rabelo & Cortina, 2016). An important argument for this critique is that the single axis approach fails to provide an accurate or holistic view on organizational dynamics. For instance, studies on ethnic bias against Black individuals have focussed largely on black men, and studies on sex bias have focussed largely on White women, but the joint impact of sex *and* ethnic bias, which may specifically target Black women, is often overlooked (Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). Instead, critics suggest that *intersectionality approaches* are more appropriate for studying topics like ethnic or sex bias. Intersectionality assumes that every individual necessarily occupies multiple categories of identity (i.e., sex, ethnicity, class, etc.), and posits that the meanings of one social identity group depend on its intersections with other identity groups (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989). As mentioned previously, this study focusses on the potential role of Black hair bias in CV screening outcomes. Previous literature has defined Black hair bias in the workplace as a result of both ethnic and sex discrimination, because it appears to target Black women uniquely, and not Black men or white women (Bellinger, 2007; Dawson & Karl, 2018; Dawson et al., 2019; Donahoo & Smith, 2019; Patton, 2006; Rosette & Dumas, 2007). Some evidence supports the notion that Black hair bias disadvantages Black women in comparison to White women (Opie & Phillips, 2015). However, there is no experimental evidence indicating that hair bias disadvantages Black women, in comparison to Black men. Hence, the secondary aim of this study is to examine potential interactive effects of ethnocentric hairstyles and sex on CV evaluations of Black applicants.

Research questions

1. What is the effect of mere Black identification on CV ratings of Black applicants?
2. What are the main effects of ethnocentric hairstyles and sex on CV ratings of Black applicants?
3. What is the joint effect of ethnocentric hairstyles and sex on CV ratings of Black applicants?

Literature review and hypotheses

The following sections will outline how ethnic identification, ethnocentric hairstyles, and sex may impact initial hiring outcomes for Black applicants. First, a review of the literature on the role of ethnic identification during the initial stage of hiring will be provided. Second, the potential role of ethnocentric hairstyles on evaluations of Black individuals in the workplace will be discussed. The third section describes how the intersectionality perspective can be applied to study the present research variables. Finally, intersections of ethnicity and sex will be considered to argue how ethnocentric hairstyles may differentially impact initial hiring outcomes for Black male and female applicants. Each section will be followed by theory-driven hypotheses, which will be subsequently tested through a CV screening experiment.

How does ethnic identification impact employers' evaluations of Black applicants?

In the assessment phases of hiring, recruiters may consciously or unconsciously evaluate applicants based on their minority status and/or other job-irrelevant factors related to their ethnic background (Derous et al., 2016). Research has shown that employers can screen out CVs of job applicants whose names are associated with Black ethnic membership. In a field experiment, Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) sent fictitious CVs with Anglicized/White or Black names to job openings. The authors found that applicants with White names received 50% more call-backs than applicants with Black names. Through defining *ethnicity* or *ethnic identification* as varying between ethnic groups, its effect on hiring outcomes can only be investigated on a broad group level. However, there is reason to suspect that proneness to ethnic discrimination varies *within* ethnic groups as well.

The *ethnic identification hypothesis* deals with within ethnic group effects by suggesting that ethnic minorities might be evaluated more negatively by employers, if they express a higher degree of identification with their in-group (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2019). Based on this hypothesis, it can be argued that the more a Black applicant appears to identify

as a typical Black person, the more likely it is that employers will evaluate him or her negatively. In line with this hypothesis, Watson et al. (2011) indicated that the employment prospect of Black male applicants may depend on the "Whiteness" of their name. Their study examined the influence of Black applicants' names (White-sounding or Black-sounding) on CV screening outcomes. Results indicated that, for outside sales jobs, Black applicants with White-sounding names were evaluated more favourably by White employers, than those with Black-sounding names. The researchers argued that White sales professionals are likely to associate White-named Black applicants with assimilation, and assimilation with competence, social status, and productivity.

While these studies indicate that ethnic identification through ethnic names negatively impacts how Black individuals are evaluated by employers, other studies have demonstrated that expressed ethnic identification may not always disadvantage Black applicants. In a field study, Black, Hispanic and Irish individuals applied for a retail job by approaching potential employers face-to-face with or without visible display of ethnic identification cues (Barron et al., 2011). Indicators of discrimination were measured by application offerings, interview scheduling, interaction length and nonverbal negativity. Results showed that store personnel interacting with Black applicants exhibited greater positivity and longer interactions when these applicants displayed ethnic identification than when they did not. This suggests that ethnic identification may just as well predict *reduced* discrimination against Black applicants in initial hiring contexts. The researchers argued that when employers interact with ethnic out-groups, and especially when these ethnic out-group members display strong ethnic identification, employers may become concerned with being perceived as prejudiced if they respond negatively. Consequently, when interacting with a strongly identified Black applicant, an employer may engage in compensatory behaviour to avoid being viewed as prejudiced (Ickes et al., 1982).

Based on the findings mentioned above, it can be argued that the effect of ethnic identification depends on context. For instance, Black applicants who show strong ethnic identification may be evaluated more negatively in the CV screening stage, because in that context there is no face-to-face interaction partner. Employers may then be less concerned with the impression they make on the Black applicant, which reduces their motivation to engage in compensatory behaviours.

Studies on the role of Black applicants' ethnic identification on initial hiring outcomes have mainly used non-phenotypical (i.e., non-physical) ethnic cues, such as names or attributes. However, some evidence suggests that phenotypic information has greater salience than other

ethnic cues (Maddox, 2004). For example, studies have examined if skin tone bias may affect CV screening outcomes (Derous et al., 2017; Harrison & Thomas, 2009). In these studies, participants were asked to evaluate CVs with attached photos of light-skinned and dark-skinned minority applicants. Results showed that participants evaluated light-skinned applicants more favourably than dark-skinned applicants, regardless of job-relevant information. This evidence indicates that skin tone may serve as a strong cue for inferring an applicant's ethnic group identity. Moreover, it shows that, during CV screening, dark-skinned minority applicants may be more disadvantaged than light-skinned counterparts.

A limitation of the above mentioned studies is that, although the effect of *differences* between ethnic identification cues (i.e., skin colour) is tested, the mere presence effect of ethnic identification cues (i.e., picture attachment) is not (Rich, 2018). Both studies did not include a control CV (i.e., no photo condition), which would have served as a neutral baseline level of ethnic identification, against which the different degrees of ethnic identification could be tested. Arguably, Black applicants might be more prone to ethnic bias in CV screening than regularly, if they include a picture of themselves where they went to a process of sun tanning. However, it cannot be concluded that mere presence of ethnic identification cues (i.e., photos revealing their ethnicity) may have negatively impacted CV evaluations of Black applicants. Thus, these studies provide some evidence in favour of the ethnic identification hypothesis, but the evidence is not conclusive. That is, it remains unknown whether Black applicants who include a photo of themselves in their CVs are worse off than Black applicants who do not include a photo of themselves, thereby removing a key ethnic identity marker.

In sum, the *ethnic identification hypothesis* suggests that ethnic identification cues negatively impact evaluations of Black applicants. Some studies suggest that ethnic cues, such as ethnic names and skin tone, negatively influence evaluations of Black applicants during CV screening (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Derous et al., 2017; Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Watson et al., 2011). In contrast, other research show that ethnic cues may positively influence initial impressions of Black applicants in face-to-face hiring contexts (Barron et al., 2011). It may be argued that the 'true' effect of ethnic identification cues on evaluations of Black applicants depends on the hiring context, such that ethnic cues negatively influence CV screening outcomes, but positively affect face-to-face interactions. However, due to limitations of the studies, causal inferences about mere presence of ethnic identification cues and its effect on CV screening outcomes cannot be drawn. Thus, to test the ethnic identification hypothesis, the present study will examine the effect of ethnic cue presence (i.e., photos attached on CVs) on CV ratings of Black male and female applicants. To examine whether ethnic cues may

indeed have a negative effect on CV ratings of Black applicants, an anonymous CV condition will be included for comparison.

Hypothesis 1: Ethnically identified CVs, that is, CVs including photos of Black men and women, will be rated lower than anonymous CVs.

How do ethnocentric hairstyles impact employers' evaluations of Black applicants?

Kang et al. (2016) argued that the decision whether or not to make ethnic identity markers visible may critically impact minority applicants' odds of being rejected during the hiring process. In their study, they found that some ethnic minority applicants anticipate hiring discrimination by 'whitening' their CV, that is, removing or suppressing explicit ethnic cues. Two third of the participants reported that they engage in whitening practices, because they seek to signal assimilation or conformity to the white majority. Participants reported that their main purpose of whitening was to avoid triggering negative stereotypes associated with their ethnic group. Moreover, Kang et al. (2016) found that ethnic minority applicants who choose not to whiten their resumes were more likely to be rejected by employers compared to those who do.

As discussed, research has shown that within ethnic group variables such as skin tone can influence how ethnic minority applicants are perceived by employers (Derous et al., 2017; Harrison & Thomas, 2009). This evidence suggests that, although any Black applicant may face ethnic hiring discrimination, there are some Black subgroups (i.e., the ones who appear strongly identified) who are more susceptible to hiring discrimination than others. Moreover, research suggests that darker skinned Black individuals are more likely to be associated with negative stereotypes and prejudices than lighter skinned Black individuals, due to the ethnic salience of their skin colour (Maddox, 2002). This *phenotypicality bias* or *Afrocentric bias* in evaluations of Black individuals may not only occur based on the darkness of skin tone, but also other Afrocentric features, such as fuller lips, a broader nose, or natural Black hair (Maddox, 2004; Blair et al, 2002).

Natural Black hair bias is a specific form of Afrocentric bias which influences how Black applicants wearing Afrocentric hairstyles are evaluated during initial hiring processes (Dawson et al., 2019). Research suggests that Black individuals wearing Afrocentric hairstyles in professional settings are often confronted with negative stereotypes and biases regarding competency, professionalism, and other work-relevant characteristics (Rosette & Dumas,

2007). Although legal publications have documented many cases of hair discrimination against Black employees (Donahoo & Smith, 2019), empirical research on the influence of Black hairstyles on evaluations of Black applicants in the hiring context is limited. Since hairstyle or –texture is readily mutable, as opposed to most studied ethnic factors in hiring discrimination studies (e.g., skin color, facial features, name), it forms an interesting phenotypical identification factor to consider. That is, Black applicants can choose whether or not to make their hair a visible or invisible ethnic identity trait during the hiring process (Bellinger, 2007; Clair, Beatty, & Maclean, 2005). Research suggests that a Black individual's choice whether or not to make their hair a visible or invisible identity trait can have serious consequences for how they are perceived in the workplace.

A recent study by the Perception Institute examined implicit and explicit attitudes related to Black hair (Johnson et al., 2016). The researchers developed an Hair Implicit Association Test (IAT) to assess implicit bias against Afrocentric hair. An IAT assesses strengths of associations between concepts by observing response latencies in computer-administered categorization tasks (Greenwald et al., 2009). The study included 4163 male and female participants who were asked to complete a Good Hair Survey and the Hair IAT, which assessed explicit- and implicit attitudes toward black women's (Eurocentric vs Afrocentric) hair, respectively. Results revealed that White women showed explicit bias against Afrocentric hair, such that coarse-textured Afrocentric hair was rated as less beautiful, less attractive and less professional than straight-textured Eurocentric hair. Moreover, the majority of participants, regardless of ethnicity, showed implicit bias against Afrocentric hair. This evidence indicates that Black hairstyles may serve as a strong cue for inferring someone's ethnic group identity. It suggests that Black women with Afrocentric hair are perceived more negatively by others than those with Eurocentric hair.

A limitation of the study described above is that it only examined the influence of Black women's hair, and not Black men's hair. Thus, it remains unknown whether Black men's Afrocentric hairstyles might have something to do with their proneness to ethnic bias in hiring. Customary grooming practices are different for Black men, when compared to Black women (Rosette & Dumas, 2007). That is, Black women can straighten their hair and wear it in an altered Eurocentric state, or they can choose to leave it in its natural Afrocentric state. In contrast, Black men generally wear their hair in its natural Afrocentric state. While most Black men wear their hair shortly and conservatively groomed, some Black men choose to grow their hair and wear more 'overt' Afrocentric hairstyles, like braids or dreadlocks. By wearing more overt Afrocentric hairstyles Black men may simultaneously increase the salience of their hair

as ethnic feature. Based on the Afrocentric hypothesis, it is arguable that Black men who wear overt Afrocentric hairstyles may be more prone to ethnic bias in hiring, than those who wear conservative Afrocentric hairstyles. However, this argument remains speculative, because previous studies have focussed exclusively on Black women's hair (e.g., Johnson et al., 2016; Opie & Phillips, 2015), and there is no evidence suggesting that Black men may be confronted with Black hair bias in the workplace at all.

In sum, the above findings suggest that ethnic minorities who make ethnic identity cues more salient in job applications, simultaneously increase their proneness to ethnic bias in CV screening (Kang et al., 2016). Research indicates that Black applicants who appear more Afrocentric are more likely to be evaluated negatively than those who appear less Afrocentric (Johnson et al., 2016; Maddox, 2002). As such, *Black hair bias* in CV screening is expected to disadvantage Black individuals with Afrocentric hairstyles compared to those with Eurocentric hairstyles (Dawson, Karl, & Peluchette, 2019; Rosette & Dumas, 2007). Some evidence indicates that individuals hold implicit- and explicit biases against Black women's hair (Johnson et al., 2016). However, it is still unknown whether Black men with salient Afrocentric hairstyles are more disadvantaged compared to those with conservative Afrocentric hairstyles. To address this knowledge gap, the present study will examine the effect of ethnic identity cues, through ethnocentric hairstyles, on CV evaluations of both Black male and Black female applicants.

Hypothesis 2: Black male and female applicants wearing salient Afrocentric hairstyles will be rated lower than counterparts wearing Eurocentric or conservative Afrocentric hairstyles.

An intersectional approach to studying ethnic differences in workplace outcomes

The *ethnic identification* and *Afrocentric phenotypicality hypotheses* hold the underlying assumption that ethnic information is an important influential factor in decision-making. This idea is drawn from models that assume ethnicity to be the most important factor in determining hiring discrimination, due to the greater salience and threat associated with ethnicity when compared to other stigmatizing characteristics (Derous & Ryan, 2018). As discussed, various studies have indeed shown that ethnic identifiers in CVs can strongly predict the odds for rejection during initial hiring contexts (Barron et al., 2011; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Derous et al., 2017; Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Kang et al., 2016; Opie & Phillips, 2015; Watson et al., 2011).

Although the ethnic identification hypothesis offers an interesting picture of what drives recruiters' evaluation processes during CV screening, this representation is possibly incomplete (Derous & Ryan, 2018). *Intersectionality* theorists have suggested that diversity researchers should also consider if, and how, multiple categories of identity may differentially affect work outcomes for ethnic minorities (Cole, 2009; Crenshaw, 1989). An intersectional research approach accounts for the larger meanings underlying intersections of subjects' identities, and acknowledges that these meanings may be rooted in the larger social context, such as institutional practices and structural inequalities (Cole, 2009; Rabelo & Cortina, 2016).

Drawn from intersectionality theory, the *double jeopardy hypothesis* posits that people belong to multiple social groups and that those with multiple stigmatized identities (e.g., being Black and female) experience greater levels of disadvantage in the labour market, than those with just one (e.g., being Black and male; Crenshaw, 1989; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). The rationale behind this premise is that minority women possess two highly salient social identities, namely ethnicity and sex, and that their double marginalized position exposes them to both sex and ethnic discrimination, and additional unique forms of discrimination (Crenshaw, 1989). As such, Black women are expected to experience a multiplied dose of discrimination in the workplace; one based on being female, one based on being Black, and one based on being a Black women. The double jeopardy hypothesis can been interpreted in two ways; as additive or multiplicative (Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000). To illustrate, an additive double jeopardy model would predict that Black women would be evaluated more negatively in initial hiring, compared to Black men, White men, and White women. An multiplicative double jeopardy would predict the same, but adds to the prediction that these differences would become even greater when Black women make their ethnicity more salient, compared to when another one of these groups makes their ethnicity more salient. In other words, the multiplicative model suggests that gender interacts with ethnicity in predicting hiring outcomes, while the additive model does not suggest such an interaction effect.

Berdahl and Moore (2006) tested whether ethnic minority women are indeed subject to double jeopardy when it comes to harassment at work and whether this effect is additive or multiplicative. Their sample included both men and women in ethnically diverse organizations so that self-reported experiences of White men, White women, minority men, and minority women could be compared. The additive model predicted that minority women would experience more overall harassment than any other sex-ethnic group, that women would experience more sexual harassment than men, and that ethnic minorities would experience more ethnic harassment than Whites. The multiplicative model added to the previous prediction

that ethnic minorities would experience more sexual harassment than Whites, that women would experience more ethnic harassment than men, or that sex and ethnicity would interact to predict both types of harassment. In line with the additive model, results showed that women experienced more sexual harassment than men, ethnic minorities experienced more ethnic harassment than majorities (Whites), and minority women experienced more harassment overall than ethnic majority men, minority men and majority women. These results indicated that, although minority women were subject to more overall harassment than any other tested group, sex and ethnicity did not interact to predict both types of harassment. That is, ethnicity did not affect sexual harassment, and sex did not affect ethnic harassment.

Since the study of Berdahl and Moore (2006) did not yield any empirical support for the interactive model of double jeopardy, the traditional approach of ignoring sex when studying ethnic discrimination may seem justified. However, as the authors mentioned, a limitation of the study is that items unique to specific minority groups were not included for testing. The lack of unique items might have undermined the study's ability to detect experiences unique to minority women, thereby failing to accurately estimate the overall harassment against them. For example, Muslim women may be uniquely subject to harassment based on their religion, whereas Black women may be uniquely subject to harassment based on their Black hair (Greene, 2013). If these unique forms of harassment are not measured, it remains unknown whether minority women experience these more than other groups or not. The research approach of Berdahl and Moore (2006) treated female members of the ethnic minority group as a broad homogeneous entity, comprising women from various ethnic backgrounds (i.e. Asian, Caribbean, African, Arabs, Latin Americans, etc.). This broad categorization of ethnic minority women makes it hard to account for similarities and differences between *and* within these groups, which may explain more accurately to what extent, how and why these groups experience double jeopardy in the workplace (Gaddis, 2019).

In conclusion, the double jeopardy model suggests that Black women are more prone to ethnic discrimination in the workplace than Black men, because Black women have multiple stigmatizing identities (Crenshaw, 1989; Purdie-Vaughns & Eibach, 2008). The study of Berdahl and Moore (2006) yielded support for the additive double jeopardy model, but not for the interactive model. A lack of inclusion of test variables unique to specific minority groups may explain why the study failed to find an interaction of sex and ethnicity on ethnic harassment. It is arguable that double jeopardy against Black female applicants may also not be detected if aspects unique to their intersecting identities, like their choice to adopt Eurocentric or Afrocentric hairstyles, are not taken into account. Thus, it is expected that sex

differences will not affect CV ratings of Black applicants, when ethnocentric hairstyles are not taken into account.

Hypothesis 3: There will be no main effect of sex on CV ratings of Black applicants.

Are Black women more vulnerable to Black hair bias?

Critics have pointed out that a study design that compares outcomes along different demographic groups is not necessarily intersectional (Rabelo & Cortina, 2016). Again, intersectionality posits that there are particular meanings underlying intersections of social identities, and that these meanings are rooted in the larger social context, such as institutional practices and structural inequalities (Cole, 2009). In applying an intersectional approach, the present study aims to move beyond broad ethnic group difference paradigms that do not deeply or meaningfully seek to identify reasons for the disadvantaged position of Black individuals in the workplace. Natural Black hair is an interesting factor to consider from the perspective of intersectionality, because the forces that drive Black hair discrimination seem to be rooted in the larger social and institutional context. For instance, there exists a considerable amount of legal reports which show that, at least in the United States, organizational policies and appearance norms affect the hiring and work experience of Black individuals as related to their hair presentation (Collier, 2012; Donahoo & Smith, 2019; Williams, 2018). Furthermore, these reports mainly describe stories of Black women who have gone to court for issues related to their employment and their hair. This indicates that the burden of wearing natural Afrocentric hairstyles in professional contexts falls mainly on Black women, and not necessarily Black men or other marginalized groups. Black hair discrimination can thus be defined as both uniquely racialized and gendered (Rosette & Dumas, 2007). Given that Black hair discrimination particularly affects Black women, it may be one of the key factors explaining why Black women might experience double jeopardy in the workplace.

Opie and Phillips (2015) showed that Black female applicants wearing Afrocentric hairstyles were described with more negatively valued stereotypic traits, than Black female applicants wearing Eurocentric hairstyles. In one of their studies, an online experiment was conducted to examine the influence of Black woman's hairstyles on participants' ratings of the target's professionalism and estimations of the target's corporate success. Professionalism was rated for three white and two black models. All images of the white models had straight (Eurocentric) hairstyles. The images of the black females were photoshopped so they had either

straight Eurocentric (i.e., chemically processed) or natural Afrocentric hairstyles (i.e., Afro and Dreadlock hair). The aim of the study was to investigate whether professionalism ratings were due to differences between ethnic categories (i.e., white vs black) or due to a specific hairstyle (i.e., Eurocentric vs Afrocentric). Results indicated that employment candidates with Afrocentric hairstyles were rated as less professional and less likely to succeed in Corporate America than employment candidates with Eurocentric hairstyles. Strikingly, the significant effect was found on the level of hairstyle, and not on the level of ethnicity. That is, the ethnicity of the candidate was less important than the Afrocentric or Eurocentric nature of the hairstyle, as there was no difference in judgements of White candidates with straight hair and Black candidates with straight hair.

Based on the previous evidence, it is arguable that there exists level of social stigma against Afrocentric textured hair, which is perpetuated by a broader society that devalues Afrocentric hair, and which disadvantages Black women in uniquely. Historically, Black women's hair choices have been largely influenced by societal pressures to adopt Eurocentric standards of beauty which idealize long, silky, straight hair (Rosette & Dumas, 2007). Characteristics that match European features were often associated with higher status and were considered more socially acceptable. Research indicates that the aversion against Afrocentric hair still exists in Western societies (Johnson et al., 2016; Morrison, 2011; Robinson, 2011). While many Black women have naturally coarse hair, straightening their hair allows Black women to adopt hairstyles commonly associated with Whiteness. Since straight Eurocentric hairstyles make one seem more assimilated to the dominant culture, Black women may view adopting straight hair as a path for upward mobility in the social hierarchy (Rosette & Dumas, 2007). Research has shown that Black female executives are more likely to adopt Eurocentric hairstyles, as opposed to maintaining natural Afrocentric hairstyles, especially when they are dependent on the perceptions of others for promotions (Dawson & Karl, 2018). Moreover, some evidence indicates that Black women are twice as likely than White women to feel social pressure to straighten their hair (Johnson et al., 2016).

Some Black women wear weaves (i.e., extensions) or wigs, to establish a Eurocentric hairstyle. Others use products to straighten Black hair, which typically involve using a thermal or chemical process. However, altering one's natural hair to make it appear more Eurocentric can have negative consequences for Black women. Researchers have linked chemicals used to straighten and style Black hair to increased rates of breast cancer and uterine tumours (Stiel et al., 2012; Wise et al., 2012). Furthermore, the use of thermal or chemical products on hair often result in unhealthy breakage prone hair, burns and lesions to the scalp, and in some cases hair

loss, alopecia, or other hair disorders (Scott, 1988). The choice of Black women to alter their natural hair, thereby suppressing their ethnic identity, can also lead to negative psychological consequences. Researchers have linked identity suppression to cognitive deterioration, higher levels of depression, and low self-esteem (Shih et al., 2013). Moreover, research indicates that Black women who suppress aspects of their ethnic identity in order to conform to organizational standards often struggle with feelings of inauthenticity, and internal conflict (Dawson et al., 2019; Dickens & Chavez, 2018).

Black hair discrimination has been defined as a part of ethnic discrimination and a part of sex discrimination that most Black women deal with in work settings (Dawson et al., 2019). As mentioned previously, customary grooming practices are not the same for Black men and women. In fact, in professional settings, grooming expectations are the exact opposite for Black men, when compared to Black women (Rosette & Dumas, 2007). While Black men are often expected to wear their hair in its natural Afrocentric state, though shortly, conservatively groomed, Black women are often expected to wear their hair in an altered Eurocentric state. This difference in professional expectations may leave Black women in particular to encounter many obstacles to achieving a preferred professional image. Although a large body of legal and sociological studies indicate that Black hair discrimination may be particularly disadvantaging to black women, experimental studies on how Black men and women with or without Afrocentric hairstyles are perceived in work contexts are close to non-existent. The few experimental studies that did examine the effect of Afrocentric hairstyles on evaluations of Black individuals yielded support for the existence of a natural Black hair bias (Johnson et al., 2017; Opie & Phillips, 2015).

In conclusion, Black hair discrimination may be one of the factors related to double jeopardy for Black women, because it appears to mainly affect how Black women experience and navigate through the labour market (Dawson et al., 2019; Rosette & Dumas, 2007). Some research supports the hypothesis that Black women are uniquely affected by Black hair discrimination (Donahoo & Smith, 2019; Dawson & Karl, 2018; Johnson et al., 2017; Opie & Phillips, 2015). For instance, the pressure to straighten one's natural hair texture in professional contexts seems to fall exclusively on Black women, leaving them at higher risk of physical and psychological harm related to hair altering (Rosette & Dumas, 2007). However, few empirical studies have examined how both sex and ethnicity may interact in predicting Black hair bias in work-related outcomes for Black applicants. Therefore, the present study investigates whether a Black applicant's sex determines his or her proneness to Black hair bias in CV screening. Since research suggests Black hair discrimination to be uniquely disadvantaging for Black

women in professional settings, the interactive model of double jeopardy will be applied for testing (Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000):

Hypothesis 3: There will be an interaction effect of sex and ethnocentric hairstyles on CV ratings of Black applicants, such that; Black women with salient Afrocentric hair will receive lower CV ratings than Black men with salient Afrocentric hair, and Black female applicants with Eurocentric hair will receive higher CV ratings than Black male applicants with conservative Afrocentric hair.

Exploring experimenter ethnicity effects

Research indicates that individuals monitor their thoughts and behaviours during interracial interactions in order to avoid being perceived as prejudiced (Ickes et al., 1982). As a result, this may lead to more socially favourable responses during interracial interactions (Barron et al., 2011). Since the experimenters in the present study have diverse ethnic backgrounds (i.e., East-African, Native-Dutch, and Ukrainian), and the main topic of the study concerns ethnic differences, it is plausible that participants' responses will be influenced by the experimenter with whom they would interact. Although it is unclear how these experimenter differences would specifically influence the study results, it is nevertheless important to explore whether the results would differ between experimenter groups, and to control for potential experimenter bias.

Hypothesized model

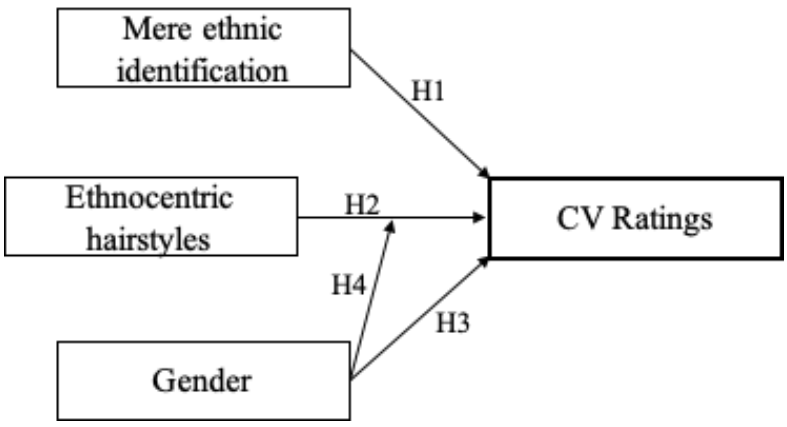

Figure 1. *Proposed research model*

Methodology

Participants

First- and second year psychology students in a public university in The Netherlands (N = 100) were recruited to participate voluntarily in this study. Participants received course credit for participation. The sample consisted of 76 female participants with a mean age of 20.51, and 24 male participants with a mean age of 22.33. The sample included students from various ethnic backgrounds (n = 68 Native-Dutch, n = 31 ethnic minorities). All participants were of Dutch nationality.

Design and procedure

An internet-based experiment was conducted to test the hypotheses. The study consisted of a managerial role-play experiment (i.e., CV screening task), and a set of questionnaires (i.e., Social Desirability Scale and demographics questionnaire). The CV screening task consisted of a 2 (sex) x 3 (ethnic identification) within-factor design. Each participant completed the study online.

The experimenter communicated with the participant via a cloud-based video conferencing program. Prior to the online experiment, participants were briefed by one of the three experimenters. The experimenter provided a general introduction of the experiment. The study was introduced as an investigation of how recruiters evaluate job applicants. The participant was asked to keep their video on display during the experiment. After the brief introduction, the experimenter turned off the video and muted the audio. This way, the experimenter was able to monitor the participant, and answer questions in case the participant had questions during the experiment, without distracting the process.

All specific instructions were provided digitally. The study was presented to participants as a study on selection and assessment. Participants were informed that they had to review and evaluate five applications for a leadership development specialist position at a multinational company. Participants were informed that the resumes of the five applicants were randomly selected from an applicant pool. There was no suggestion that the applicants were particularly strong or weak. After the task instruction, participants were presented with the job description and the first applicant's CV. The first applicant's CV included only work-related information and no photo or other cues on ethnicity or sex. Participants were subsequently presented with the job suitability and professionalism scale, and asked to rate the first applicant. The second through fifth applicant's CV included work-related information and an attached

picture of a Black male or female candidate. For each applicant, participants were asked to first evaluate the CV, and subsequently fill in the scores. All CVs were rated one-by-one, after finishing a CV, participants were not allowed to review and/or change the previous scores. After the CV task, participants were asked to fill in the questionnaires. After finishing the CV task, participants were debriefed and thanked.

Development of experimental material

Two pilot studies were conducted to develop and test the experimental materials (CVs and pictures). The pilot tests included separate testing of equivalence of relevant CV aspects. Prior to the pilot tests, we selected a high-cognitive demand job (i.e., leadership development specialist) and conducted a job analysis to determine relevant work experiences and qualifications for 10 CV templates. We consulted O*NET, an online database of occupational information, to determine relevant work experience and qualifications for a leadership development specialist position. The O*NET database includes information on skills, abilities, work activities, and interests associated with occupations.

Utility analyses were performed to assess the quality of the 10 CVs (Pilot Test 1). Utility analysis refers to a multi-step process that serves as tool to determine the usefulness or desirability of applicant/CV options for a job (Cook, 2016). Two trained assessors independently attributed utility ratings to the CVs. Decisions were made based on an anchored rating scale including important job criteria, which were identified during the job analysis. The mean utility rating for all CVs was 7.87 (SD = 3.10, min = 4, max = 12.2). Inter-rater reliability (ICC) of the sets of scores were measured to test the level of agreement between the assessors. An excellent degree of agreement was found between the assessors (average measure ICC = .97), $F(9, 9) = 43$, $p < .001$, 95% CI [.906; .994]. From the 10 CV templates, five CVs were selected for the study, which were equivalent in quality (M = 6.8, SD = .31).

Ten professional pictures of Black men and women were taken from the internet using search engine Google, which represented the fictional applicants. Pilot Test 2 assessed the physical attractiveness of the Black men and women in the photos. This test was done to ensure that a significant difference in physical attractiveness between men and women would not confound the final results (Rich, 2018). Participants (N = 35) gave an overall rating for perceived attractiveness of the person on a single-item Likert-type scale (1 = very unattractive, 9 = very attractive). Four pictures were selected for the study. The selected pictures did not differ in attractiveness, $F(1, 34) = .03$, $p = .86$.

Measures and materials

Independent variables. Independent variables comprised two within-subjects variables, which were ethnic identification (Anonymous vs. Eurocentric hair vs. Afrocentric hair), and sex (male vs. female). A total of five equally qualified CVs were included in the study, of which one CV served as anonymous control condition. In each set of CVs, ethnic identification and sex were manipulated, such that CV 1 was anonymous, and CV 2 to 5 were identified. Sex and ethnic identification was visible through attached pictures of two Black male and two Black female models, each presented with two different hairstyles (Afrocentric vs. Eurocentric). The pictures of Black men and women representing the identified conditions were counterbalanced across the last four CVs to reduce possible error effects. All other CV information (work experience and educational level) was kept constant, such that all applicants were equally qualified for the job position.

Dependent variables. The dependent variables were job suitability and professionalism. The job suitability measure was adapted from existing measures on hiring discrimination and consisted of three Likert-type items measuring evaluators' overall impression of the candidate (Derous et al., 2009). The three items were: "given all information you read about this applicant, how suitable do you believe this applicant is for this job?" (1 = not suitable at all, 7 = very suitable), "how likely is it that you would invite this applicant for a job interview?" (1 = very unlikely, 7 = very likely), "wat is you general impression about the applicant's job suitability?" (1 = very negative, 7 = very positive). The job suitability measure showed good internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .85). The professionalism measure was adapted from existing measures on hiring discrimination and consisted of one Likert-type item measuring evaluators' overall impression of the candidate (Opie and Phillips, 2015). The item was: "How professional is this person?" (1 = very unprofessional, 7 = very professional). The professionalism measure showed good internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .78).

Control variables. The control variables were participant characteristics (i.e., age, sex, ethnicity, and study year), experimenters' ethnicity, and social desirability. Participants' characteristics were measured by single items. To document experimenter ethnicity, participants were asked to report the name of the experimenter by whom they were tested (single item). Social desirability was measured with the Social Desirability Scale-17 (SDS-17), which included 16 true or false statements (Stöber, 2001). A sample item is "I always admit my mistakes openly and face the potential negative consequences.". The measure showed good internal consistency (Cronbach's α = .72).

Statistical analyses

To test the first and second hypotheses Repeated Measures ANCOVAs with three levels were performed. This was appropriate, because participants were presented with each of the three identification conditions (i.e., Anonymous/Eurocentric/Afrocentric). This type of analysis controls for variations between subjects, as well as for effects of confounding variables (i.e., experimenter ethnicity), which was not of interest. To test the expected differences in mean ratings specified in Hypotheses 1 and 2, planned comparisons using Helmert contrasts were performed, with no-identification as the reference condition (significance level $\alpha = .05$, two-tailed). This reduced the number of tests to the number of hypotheses, as opposed to the total number of tests possible. Using contrasts to test Hypothesis 1 and 2 simultaneously is desirable, because it reduces the chance of Type II error, and increases the power of each individual test (Field, 2018).

To test the third and fourth hypotheses two-way Repeated Measures ANCOVAs were performed. The independent variables were each represented as within-subjects factor with two-levels (i.e., sex, male/female; ethnic identification, Afrocentric/Eurocentric). To reduce error variance due to possible between-subject differences, the no identification CV profile was included as control variable.

Results

Preliminary analyses

First, assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variances were tested. Inspection of skewness and kurtosis showed that distributions are approximately normal, which means that the assumption of normality was met for all five applicant profiles. Mauchly's test of sphericity indicated that the assumption of homogeneity was also met, $X^2 = 1.88$, $p = .391$. Secondly, the descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among variables were investigated (see Table 1). Social desirability did not relate significantly to the dependent variables (job suitability and professionalism scores), which indicates that job suitability/professionalism ratings do not reflect one's tendency to respond in a socially desirable way. Participants' sex, age and ethnicity were also not related to the dependent variables. 'Experimenter' was not related to the dependent variable job suitability. However, there was a significant relationship between experimenter and the dependent variable professionalism. Such a relationship was expected for both dependent variables, but since it was only found to relate to professionalism, experimenter was included in the analysis on professionalism to control for its effect.

Table 1.

Descriptives and intercorrelations of study variables.

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Job Suitability	5.64	.63	1									
2. Professionalism	5.74	.72	.56**	1								
3. Social desirability	9.26	3.10	-.12	-.03	1							
4. Experimenter 1	.33	.47	-.18	-.26**	.10	1						
5. Experimenter 2	.33	.47	.02	.06	-.05	-.49**	1					
6. Experimenter 3	.34	.48	.16	.21*	-.04	-.50**	-.50**	1				
7. Participant study year	1.38	.71	.13	-.01	-.02	.10	.10	-.19	1			
8. Participant sex	0.24	.43	-.01	-.12	.07	.30**	0	-.30**	.29*	1		
9. Participant age	20.95	2.75	0	-.17	-.02	.03	.03	-.06	.29**	.28**	1	
10. Participant ethnicity	.31	.47	.03	.01	.13	.03	-.15	.12	-.05	.03	.10	1

SD = standard deviation. The range for job suitability was 1-7; The range for professionalism was 1-7; Participant age was measured in years; Pearson correlations: Sex: 0 = Female, 1 = Male. Participant ethnicity: 0 = Ethnic majority, 1 = Ethnic minority; Spearman correlations: Participant study year: 1= first year bachelor, 2 = second year bachelor, 3 = third year bachelor *$p < .05$; **$p < .01$.

Exploring the effect of experimenter on professionalism ratings

Preliminary analyses revealed that 'experimenter' was related to professionalism ratings (see Table 1). In order to gain more clarity on the effect of experimenter on professionalism ratings, a one-way ANOVA with three levels (Experimenter; African-Dutch, Native-Dutch, Ukrainian-English; between-groups) was conducted. Results showed a significant effect of experimenter on professionalism ratings, $F(2, 97) = 4.04$, $p = .021$, $\eta^2 = .08$. Pairwise comparisons showed only one significant difference in group means (see Table 2), namely, participants who were tested by the African-Dutch experimenter rated the CVs significantly lower than those who were tested by the Ukrainian-English experimenter, $t(65) = -2.77$, $p = .007$.

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and Cohen's d with confidence intervals.

Experimenter	*n*	*M*	*SE*	African-Dutch	Native-Dutch
African-Dutch	33	5.47	.13		
Native-Dutch	33	5.79	.12	.46 [-0.03, 0.95]	
Ukrainian-English	34	5.94	.12	.67 [0.19, 1.17]	.22 [-0.27, 0,70]

Note. n represents sample size. *M* and *SD* represent mean and standard deviation, respectively. Cohen's *d*-values are estimates calculated by hand (Field, 2018). Values in square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each *d*-value.

The effect of mere Black identification on CV ratings

Hypotheses 1 investigated the effect of mere ethnic identification on CV ratings. To test the hypotheses that ethnic identification will affect CV ratings such that both job suitability and professionalism will be negatively related to ethnic identification strength, a repeated measures ANOVA (RMA) with planned contrasts (i.e., Helmert) was conducted. Two separate RMA's were conducted with identification type (i.e., anonymous, Eurocentric/conservative Afrocentric, overt Afrocentric) as independent variable, one with job suitability as dependent variable, and one with professionalism as dependent variable. As stated before, experimenter was included as control variable in the latter analysis. According to Hypothesis 1, ethnically identified CV's would be rated lower than anonymous CVs. Contrary to expectations, results

revealed that ethnically identified CVs received higher job suitability ratings than anonymous CVs, although the effect size was small, $F(1, 99) = 4.56$, $p = .035$, partial $\eta^2 = .04$. Also, ethnically identified CVs received higher professionalism ratings than anonymous CVs, indicated by a large effect size, $F(1, 98) = 22.07$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .16$. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was not supported (see Figure 2).

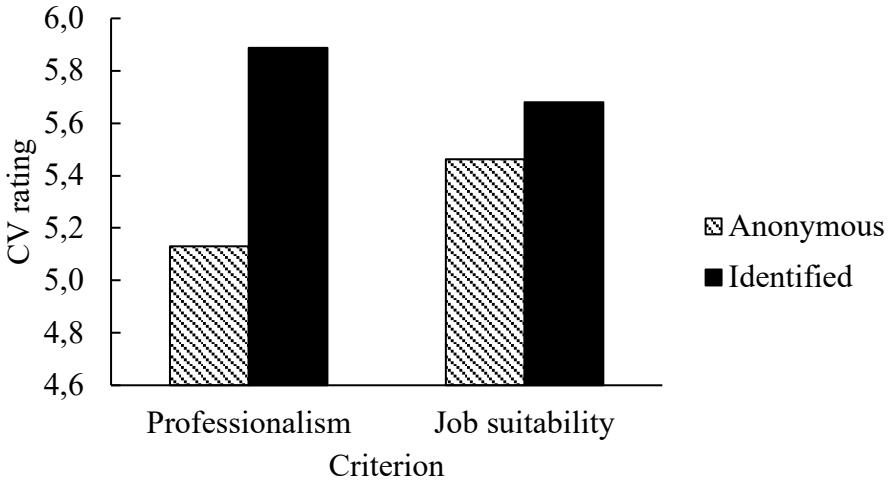

Figure 2. Mean professionalism- and job suitability ratings as function of ethnic identification.

The effect of ethnocentric hairstyles on CV ratings

Hypothesis 2 investigated the effects of ethnocentric hairstyles on CV ratings. Hypothesis 2 predicted that Black applicants with (overt) Afrocentric hairstyles would be rated lower than those with Eurocentric or conservative Afrocentric hairstyles. There was no significant difference in job suitability ratings between applicants with Eurocentric hairstyles and applicants with Afrocentric hairstyles, $F(1,99) = .02$, $p = .882$, $\eta^2 < .01$. However, a different pattern was found for professionalism ratings; After controlling for the effect of experimenter, applicants with overt Afrocentric hairstyles were rated significantly lower on professionalism, than applicants with conservative Afrocentric or Eurocentric hairstyles, $F(1,99) = 6.75$, $p = .011$, $\eta^2 = .06$. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported (see Figure 4).

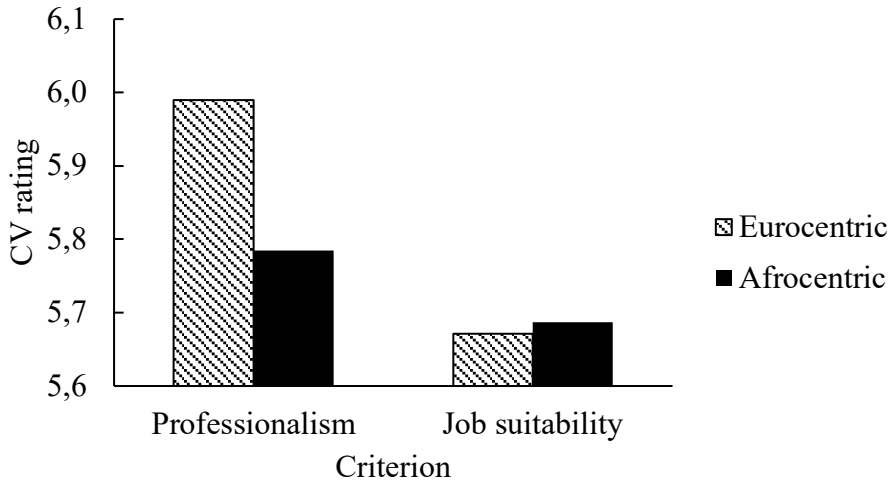

Figure 3. Mean professionalism- and job suitability ratings as function of hairstyle.

The effects of sex and ethnocentric hairstyles on CV ratings

Hypothesis 3 investigated the main effect of sex on CV ratings, and predicted that sex would not affect CV ratings, when ethnocentric hairstyles are not taken into account. In contrast, Hypothesis 4 predicted that hairstyle and sex would have an interaction effect on CV ratings. To test Hypothesis 3 and 4, two separate RM ANCOVA's were conducted, one with job suitability as dependent variable, and one with professionalism as dependent variable. Experimenter was included as control variable in the latter analysis. Because of the particular interest in the effects of sex and hairstyle, the anonymous CV ratings served as a baseline measure, and was thus included as covariate. Before inclusion, the covariates (i.e., job suitability/professionalism of the anonymous CV) were centred at zero. In line with Hypothesis 3, there was no main effect of sex on job suitability ratings, $F(1, 97) = .01$, $p = .932$, $\eta^2 < .01$. Furthermore, after controlling for the effect of experimenter, results showed no main effect of sex on professionalism ratings, $F(1, 97) = 9.13$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .09$. This indicates that within the group of Black applicants, sex difference in CV ratings are not apparent when ethnocentric hairstyles are not taken into account. Thus, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

As stated before, no main effects of sex, $F(1, 97) = .01$, $p = .932$, $\eta^2 < .01$, nor hairstyle, $F(1, 97) = .02$, $p = .883$, $\eta^2 < .01$, were found on job suitability ratings. However, in line with Hypothesis 4, results showed a significant interaction effect of sex and hairstyle on job suitability ratings, $F(1, 97) = 9.13$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .09$. This indicates that the difference in job suitability ratings given to applicants with Afrocentric and Eurocentric are not equivalent for men and women. Since there was an interaction effect of the independent variables on job

suitability ratings, follow-up analyses (i.e., Bonferroni) were conducted to investigate in which hairstyle condition male and female applicants were given different job suitability ratings. Hypothesis 4 specifically predicted that female applicants with Afrocentric hairstyles would be rated lower than male applicants with over Afrocentric hairstyles, and that female applicants with Eurocentric hairstyles would be rated higher than male applicants with conservative Afrocentric hairstyles.

Follow-up tests showed that female applicants with Afrocentric hairstyles were rated significantly lower than male applicants with overt Afrocentric hairstyles, $t(99) = 2.17$, $p = .033$, 95% CI [.024; .549]. Conversely, female applicants with Eurocentric hairstyles were rated significantly higher than male applicants with conservative Afrocentric hairstyles, $t(99) = -1.982$, $p = .050$, 95% CI [-.541; .000]. This indicates that the effect of ethnocentric hairstyles on job suitability ratings was moderated by sex. Specifically, when comparing Black women's Eurocentric hairstyles with Black men's conservative Afrocentric hairstyles, Black were rated *more* favourably than Black men. Furthermore, when comparing Black women's Afrocentric hairstyles with Black men's overt Afrocentric hairstyles, Black women were rated *less* favourably than Black men (see Figure 4).

Figure 4. Mean job suitability ratings for Black men and women as function of hairstyle.

After controlling for the effect of experimenter, results confirmed that there was no main effect of sex, $F(1, 97) = 9.13$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .09$, but a significant main effect of hairstyle, $F(1, 97) = 8.37$, $p = .005$, $\eta^2 = .08$, on professionalism ratings. However, no significant interaction effect of sex and hairstyles on professionalism ratings was found, $F(1, 97) = 2.94$, $p = .089$, $\eta^2 < .03$. This indicates that applicants with Afrocentric hairstyles are rated less favourably on professionalism, than those with Eurocentric hairstyles, and that this difference

is the same for both male and female applicants (see Figure 5). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was partially supported

Figure 5. Mean professionalism ratings for Black men and women as function of hairstyle.

Discussion

Diversity researchers in the field of Organizational Psychology often overlook the importance of diversity *within* ethnic groups when investigating hiring discrimination (Cole, 2009, Rabelo & Cortina, 2016). Therefore, the present research addressed this issue by examining the effects of ethnic identification, sex, and ethnocentric hairstyles on CV ratings (i.e., professionalism and job suitability) of exclusively Black applicants. The first research question investigated the effect of mere Black identification on CV ratings. The second research question investigated the main effects of ethnocentric hairstyles and sex on CV ratings. The thirst research question investigated the joint effect of ethnocentric hairstyles and sex on CV ratings. Findings showed that mere ethnic identification positively predicted both CV ratings. Afrocentric hairstyles negatively predicted professionalism, but did not directly predict job suitability ratings. There were no direct effects of sex on both CV ratings, but there was an interaction effect of sex and ethnocentric hairstyles on job suitability; Black women with straight Eurocentric hairstyles were rated *higher* than Black men with conservative Afrocentric hairstyles, and Black women with natural Afrocentric hairstyles were rated *lower* than Black men with overt Afrocentric hairstyles. These findings indicates that diversity within Black minority groups may critically affect hiring outcomes.

In addition, an exploratory analysis was conducted to identify possible experimenter effects. To my knowledge, there is no past literature suggesting that experimenters could influence the final CV ratings in this context. However, given that the experimenters differed

in ethnic background (i.e., African, Native-Dutch, and Ukrainian), and the main topic of the study concerns ethnic differences, it was expected that some experimenter bias would emerge in the results. For this reason, we documented which experimenter examined whom, so we were able to control for a potential bias afterward. Results showed that experimenter bias was significantly present in professionalism ratings, but not in job suitability ratings. Therefore, we controlled for experimenter effects on professionalism ratings.

The effect of mere Black identification on CV ratings

In answering the first research question, it was expected that ethnically identified CVs would be rated less positively than anonymous CVs (Hypothesis 1). Contrary to this expectation, it was found that ethnically identified CVs were rated as *more* positive than anonymous CVs on all measures. As suggested by the *ethnic identification hypothesis*, members of the same ethnic minority group might be evaluated more or less favourably by employers based on the expressed degree of identification with their in-group (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009). It has been frequently hypothesized that when CVs include cues signalling membership of an ethnic minority group, the odds of being selected for an interview or the ratings given to those CV's will be significantly lower, than when not including such cues (e.g., Watson et al., 2011; Derous & Ryan, 2012; Kang et al., 2016). However, the present study found no negative effect of Black identification on job suitability or professionalism ratings. In fact, a positive effect was found, showing that identified CVs were rated more favourably than anonymous CVs. This suggests that in the context of CV screening, evaluators favour situations where at least some sort of identifying information about an applicant is provided, over situations where any sort of identifying information is lacking, albeit information revealing the applicant as a marginalized group member.

This is not the first study disconfirming the notion that ethnic identification predicts negative evaluations in the context of hiring. An earlier study already demonstrated that, paradoxically, displaying ethnic identification can sometimes lead to reduced ethnic discrimination in the hiring process (Barron et al., 2011). The finding that identified CVs were rated more favourably, as opposed to less, than non-identified CVs can be explained by multiple reasons. Firstly, the effect may be due to evaluators' motivation of not being viewed negatively (i.e., as prejudiced) by an interaction partner, causing the evaluator to engage in compensatory behaviour to be seen as more positively (Ickes et al., 1982). The result found here may thus be attributed to evaluators attempting to elicit more favourable responses,

because they are being aware that the person with whom they are interacting, in this case the experimenter, might perceive them negatively if they do not.

Secondly, the effect may be influenced by some characteristics other that ethnic identification conveyed by the pictures. A review by Rich (2018) indicated that attaching pictures to CVs in hiring discrimination studies may introduce unobserved characteristics, which are unintended by the researcher, but may still affect the assessment of a CV (e.g., attractiveness, warmth, competence, trustworthiness). Given that the Netherlands is a country where it is common to attach a photo to a CV when applying for a job, the positive effect found here may be attributed to the addition of a picture in the CVs and/or to some extent also to unobserved characteristics introduced by the picture. In conclusion, Hypothesis 1 was not supported, because there was a positive rather than negative effect of mere ethnic identification. This effect may be alternatively explained by evaluators' motivation to respond without prejudice, and/or by mere attachment of a picture to the CVs.

The effect of ethnocentric hairstyles on CV ratings of Black applicants

In answering the second research question, the effect of Black applicants' ethnocentric hairstyles on CV ratings was investigated. It was secondly expected that Black applicants with Afrocentric hairstyles would receive lower CV ratings than those with Eurocentric hairstyles (Hypothesis 2). In support of Hypothesis 2, Black applicants presented with Afrocentric hairstyles received lower professionalism ratings, than those presented with Eurocentric hairstyles. This result is consistent with previous findings showing a negative effect of applicants' Afrocentric presentation on professionalism ratings (Opie & Phillips, 2015). However, when job suitability was considered there seemed to be no differences in how suitable Black applicants with Eurocentric hairstyles were rated, compared to the ones with Afrocentric hairstyles. As researchers have argued before, the viability of the ethnic identification hypothesis depends on particular aspects within the context that is being examined (Barron et al., 2011; Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009). In considering previous studies, which found that greater salience of ethnically identifying characteristics (e.g., dark skin tone) leads to lower job suitability ratings, one might infer that this negative effect holds for all types of ethnically identifying characteristics (Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Derous & Peperman, 2017). The present findings, however, indicate that the salience of ethnically identifying characteristics may not necessarily result in less favourable job suitability ratings, because it may depend on the type of ethnically identifying characteristic examined.

In conclusion, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported. The expected effect was found on professionalism ratings, namely, applicants with Afrocentric hairstyles received lower ratings compared to those with Eurocentric hairstyles, but no effect of hairstyle was found on job suitability ratings. The effect of ethnic identification on CV ratings seems to depend on the outcome measure of interest, but may also depend on the specific ethnically relevant feature that is applied for testing. An alternative possibility is that the effect of ethnic identification depends on the applicant's sex as well. This possible interaction of ethnic identification and sex will be discussed in the next section.

The interaction effect of hairstyle and sex on CV ratings

The previously described findings showed that ethnic identification and type of hairstyle significantly impact evaluators' perceptions of an applicant's CV. Drawing from intersectionality theory, the second aim was to test whether effects of ethnically relevant hairstyles depend on other social category factors as well. In answering the third research question, the interaction effect of hairstyle type and sex on CV ratings of Black applicants was investigated. The expectation was that the effect of hairstyle on CV ratings depends on the applicant's sex (Hypothesis 4). Although there was no interaction effect of hairstyle and sex on professionalism ratings, results did show that when Black applicants were presented with Eurocentric hairstyles, women were rated *more* favourably on job suitability than men, whereas when both were presented with Afrocentric hairstyles, women were rated *less* favourably on job suitability than men.

According to the *double jeopardy model,* applicants with multiple stigmatizing identities (i.e., female *and* Black ethnicity) are expected to be more disadvantaged in the selection process than those with merely one stigmatizing identity (i.e., male and Black ethnicity). Previous studies, however, showed that minority women are often rated higher than minority men during CV screening, which suggests that the double jeopardy hypothesis does not hold for this context (e.g., Andriessen, 2012; Hosoda et al., 2003). Interestingly, in the present study, sex differences in CV ratings of Black applicants were *not* apparent when the nature of the hairstyle, Eurocentric or Afrocentric, was not taken into account. Statistically speaking, there was no main effect of sex on CV ratings. Although applicants' multiple categories of identity (i.e., being black *and* female, or being black *and* male) were expected to differentially affect how they are perceived by evaluators, intersecting two social identity

categories (i.e., sex and ethnicity) was not sufficient to reveal a potential sex bias within the group of Black applicants.

In conclusion, the present findings yielded some support for the interactive double jeopardy model. Results show that Black women may yet be subject to greater disadvantage than Black men during CV screening, albeit under specific conditions (i.e., when wearing an Afrocentric hairstyle). Moreover, given that the disadvantaging consequences of multiple stigmas was manifested under specific conditions, it indicates that the disadvantage for Black women is not simply an additive function of these multiple "burdens", but rather an interactive or conditional function (Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000).

Limitations and suggestions for future research

There are some notable limitations in the current study that must be mentioned. The first limitation concerns the presence of experimenter bias in the results. This study was conducted by three researchers with different ethnic backgrounds. We rationalized beforehand that our ethnic differences could influence the research outcomes, which indeed appeared to be the case. Although the exact reason for the experimenter bias is unclear, divers research teams should take the possibility of experimenter bias into account when conducting research on diversity topics. In most cross-cultural diversity studies, effects associated with the experimenters' ethnic backgrounds would not be of interest for answering the research question. If not properly controlled for, experimenter effects could seriously compromise the validity of the results. It is highly important to use strategies for reducing possible experimenter biases, such as rigorously training experimenters to follow a well-scripted research protocol, standardizing participants' instructions and procedures, and/or blinding when conducting empirical research (Passer, 2014). In the current study, we did apply the necessary measures to prevent experimenter bias (i.e., using protocols and standardized instructions). Blinding was not applicable, since participants were subject to all conditions. Yet, experimenter effects turned out to influence the results. Given this unusual effect, future research is encouraged to directly study the impact of experimenters' ethnic background on research outcomes. Studying and reflecting on research methods could be beneficial for advancing the quality and effectiveness of research practices within the field of cross-cultural diversity and inclusion.

Second, participants in this study were psychology undergrads who chose to participate for course credit. The fact that students played the role of a human resource manager in this study compromises the generalizability of the results to real work settings. It is arguable that the evaluations participants made in the current study might differ from those made by decision

makers in real organizations. However, though participants may lack the practical experience of human resource practitioners, most students have followed courses in organizational psychology, and were thus somewhat familiar with selection processes used in organizations. Moreover, some researchers suggest that recruitment expertise does not matter for accuracy of CV judgements (Sinclair & Agerström, 2020). Despite this, the extent to which certain ethnic identity traits, like ethnic hairstyles or other ethnic characteristics, evoke varying degrees of discrimination is often studied in lab settings using a student sample (e.g., Harrison & Thomas, 2009; Opie & Phillips, 2015). While lab studies can help to increase our understanding of the underlying processes of discrimination, additional research is needed to replicate the findings, before firm conclusions can be drawn about the effects of ethnic identification and sex on actual personnel selection decisions.

A third limitation of this study is the nature of the job considered by participants. The participants rated fictitious applicants for a highly cognitive demanding job. The results might be different for jobs requiring low cognitive demand. This potential difference is plausible, given that multiple studies have shown that job type can moderate the effect of ethnic bias in CV screening (Hosoda et al., 2003; Derous et al., 2017). Therefore, it seems reasonable to argue that the main effects of ethnic identification, and interactive effects of hairstyle and sex on CV ratings might be different for jobs requiring low cognitive demands. Also, the specific job type that was considered by participants represents third potential limitation on the generalizability of the study findings. Specifically, the job vacancy used in the experiment was defined by a single job; that is, a leadership development specialist position. Clearly, this is only one of many jobs for which highly educated job seekers may apply. Thus, future research should examine interactive effects of ethnic identification and sex on hiring outcomes for other job types in order to test the generalizability of the results.

Another limitation is the possibility that the effect of mere ethnic identification can be ascribed to order effects. Since the anonymous CV was always presented first, and the order of the CV content was not randomized, the effect might also be ascribed to order effects. This may be either because the first CV was of lower quality, or because evaluators tend to be stricter in the first trial. The former explanation is less likely, because in developing the research materials, CVs were evaluated by independent raters to test and ensure equivalence of all CVs before use in the experiment. Thus, it can be confidently assumed that the CVs did not significantly differ in quality. However, the possibility that anonymous CVs were evaluated lower as a result of the tendency of evaluators to be more strict on the first trial cannot be excluded. It is relevant to mention that, although we did randomize the order in which CVs

were presented, we did randomized the order of picture attachment to ensure that the effect of sex and/or hairstyle could by no means be attributed to order effects. Moreover, both hairstyle conditions were represented by the same men and women, which was accomplished by photoshopping the images of Black men and women, so that there were versions of the four models with each of the two hairstyle types. This enabled us to ensure that rating differences between hairstyle conditions were due to the hairstyle, and not to other characteristics of the models in the pictures (e.g., attractiveness, facial expressions etc.).

A final limitation of the study's findings is that all job applicants were well qualified for the jobs for which they had applied. Had this not been the case, there might have been a different result pattern as a consequence of the applicants' ethnic identification and sex. Previous research suggests that CV quality moderates biased screening outcomes (Betrand & Mullainathan, 2004). Thus, research is needed that varies not only the ethnic identification and sex of the hypothetical job applicants, but also the job-related qualifications of such applicants.

Theoretical implications

Despite the potential limitations, the current findings suggest several theoretical implications for the literature on cross-cultural diversity and ethnic bias in hiring. Firstly, in contrast to the *ethnic identification hypothesis,* which suggests that the presence of ethnic identifiers negatively impacts evaluations of marginalized ethnic applicants (Kaiser & Pratt-Hyatt, 2009), the present findings indicate that CV's without any identifying information received worse CV ratings compared to CV's with a picture signalling Black identification. In line with previous notions, the presence or manifestation of ethnic identification seemed to make a positive contribution to evaluators perceptions of the applicant, resulting in more favourable CV ratings (Barron et al., 2011). As mentioned previously, evaluators may exhibit greater positivity to ethnic minority applicants who display ethnic identification, than to those who do not, out of concerns that they may otherwise be called out as prejudiced. This explanation is plausible given the context of the present study, where participants interacted with the experimenters before and after the CV task, and where participants were aware that their ratings would be recorded for research purposes. Alternatively, it is arguable that the positive effect of ethnic identification may be due to the attachment of a picture. Follow up research is needed to determine to what extent a positive effect of ethnic identification may be explained by the above mentioned factors.

A third theoretical implication is that signals of ethnic assimilation and conformity to Eurocentric standards may be critical variables in explaining labor market inequalities. While the difference between strongly and weakly identified ethnic minorities may impact the way they manage self-presentation in the work context, as well as the way they are perceived by employers (Kang et al., 2016), these distinctions are often excluded from analyses of workplace discrimination, where the typical comparison concerns a white applicants and an otherwise equivalent ethnic minority applicants (Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016; Baert, 2017). While a large body of research on hiring discrimination has studied the disadvantage of ethnic minorities, compared to ethnic majorities in the hiring context, understanding concerning when and why particular ethnic minority groups are more disadvantaged than others is still scarce (Gaddis, 2019). What this study suggests is that equally qualified ethnic minority job seekers might be differentially judged by evaluators, depending on how strongly their ethnic identity is expressed. In the context of CV screening, ethnic bias may occur due to ethnic identification in CV content, as well as to applicants' ethnic hairstyle choices. The study results suggest that future research should look beyond traditional ethnicity-based dichotomies (i.e., ethnic minority versus ethnic majority) when addressing issues in employment diversity, in order to capture these potential within ethnic group effects.

Another important theoretical implication concerns the interactive effects of ethnic identification and sex on job suitability ratings. The present findings suggest that ethnic bias against Black applicants might differ as a function of the applicant's sex, but particularly when Afrocentric/Eurocentric hairstyles are taken into account. The results on Black applicants presented with Eurocentric hairstyles were consistent with the *double-advantage model* of ethnicity and sex (Hosoda et al., 2003), suggesting that highly educated Black women are perceived as more suitable than Black men for jobs requiring high levels of cognitive ability. In contrast, the results on Black applicants presented with Afrocentric hairstyles were consistent with the *double-jeopardy model* (Berdahl & Moore, 2006), indicating that Black women presented with Eurocentric hairstyles are perceived as less suitable than Black men for these jobs. Given this finding, the double-jeopardy effect appears to be interactive or conditional in nature rather than additive (Sidanius & Veniegas, 2000). To increase our understanding of both ethnic and sex discrimination in hiring it is probably valuable to shift the research focus away from questions about *if* and *to what extent* ethnic minority groups are more or less disadvantaged compared to other ethnic groups (e.g., Veenstra, 2013; Andriessen et al., 2012), and to focus more on *when* and *why* particular ethnic groups are more or less disadvantaged compared to others (e.g., Derous et al., 2011; Gaddis, 2019).

Practical implications

Building on previous notions, the present research suggests that, as organizations aim to diversify their workforces, they may also need to consider the challenges confronting ethnic minority applicants who choose to express or downplay marginalized identity traits. Unfortunately, organizations that signal a commitment to diversity seem to be just as likely to engage in discriminatory practices as those who did not adopt pro-diversity statements (Kang et al., 2016). These organizations may encourage diversity, yet be unaware that applicants who display marginalized identity traits may find themselves at a disadvantage, compared to applicants who suppress these traits. Thus, it's important to note that the disadvantage of ethnic minority groups within the labour market may not be limited to their position relative to ethnic majority groups, but may additionally extend to their position relative to other ethnic minority groups. Though tentatively, several practical implications for hiring practitioners and job seekers are suggested based on the present findings:

Firstly, employers who advocate pro-diversity might benefit if they aim to increase awareness of subtle factors that can lead to biased decision making in CV screening, such as ethnic identifiers in CV content (Derous & Ryan, 2012). As suggested by the present study, the presence or absence of pictures and/or the salience of ethnic identification might negatively affect screening outcomes for marginalized groups, as well as its interactions with other applicant characteristics on CVs. For this reason, organizations should attempt to educate those involved in any type of applicant screening on potential biases that may occur not only when comparing ethnic majority against minority groups, but also when comparing ethnic minorities against one another. Training those who are involved in the hiring process by bringing awareness of the more subtle factors behind ethnic bias in CV screening, may increase the effectiveness of organizations' pro-diversity initiatives (for a review see Derous & Ryan, 2018).

Secondly, organizations who claim to value diversity and inclusion may also need to encourage development of standards of professionalism that discourage the suppression of identity. Consistent with previous studies, the present study found that Black applicants with Afrocentric hairstyles are rated lower on professionalism, than those wearing conventional Eurocentric hairstyles (Opie & Phillips, 2015). This is important to consider, because, while many Blacks workers may choose to wear their hair in a chemically altered state (i.e., Eurocentric) in order to conform to dominant organizational norms (Dawson & Karl, 2018),

an increasing number of others chooses to leave it in its natural state (i.e., Afrocentric), supposedly as a way to express their authentic ethnic identity (Rosette & Dumas, 2007; Hervey et al., 2016). Although suppressing ethnic identity traits may seem advantageous for ethnic minority workers, allowing or even encouraging them to do so might have undesirable effects for organizations. For instance, employees' identity suppression at work may lead to lower job satisfaction, higher turnover rates, and reduced work performance (Madera et al., 2012; Shih et al., 2013). It may thus be useful for organizations to examine what purpose is served by the current culturally determined standards of appearance and how such standards relate to upheld definitions of professionalism.

While the practical implications for organizations have been discussed, there are also practical implications for ethnic minority job seekers which can be drawn from the present study. Ethnic minorities who are aware of their disadvantage in the labour market might anticipate ethnic discrimination in CV screening by intentionally concealing or downplaying their ethnic minority status, for example, by leaving out identifying information in their CVs, such as names, affiliations or pictures (Dawson & Karl, 2018; Kang et al., 2016). While reducing the display of these signals could help some ethnic minorities at gaining a higher chance at passing the first "hurdle" of applying for a job, it is not recommended, because doing so may come at a significant cost (Shih et al., 2013). Concealing one's ethnic minority status sometimes also means having to conceal aspects which may actually contribute in eliciting a positive impression. The present study showed that unidentified CVs were rated less favourably than those identified by pictures of Black applicants. It can thus be argued that, even though adding a picture automatically means revealing one's ethnic identity traits, doing so in CV's may still be beneficial for leaving a more positive impression to employers. It is suggested that the positive effect of expressing ethnic identification might even extend to face-to-face interactions with employers (Berdahl & Moore, 2006). Moreover, the use of identity suppression strategies has been found to be associated with poor psychological well-being (Shih et al., 2013). Using identity suppression strategies to mitigate negative effects of workplace discrimination may thus not always be as effective, and may even be detrimental for the individual's psychological health.

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