

Understanding Labor Market Discrimination Against Transgender People: Evidence from a Double List Experiment and a Survey

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Research Objective

Even with legal protections, transgender individuals still face economic disadvantages compared to cisgender individuals. The study aimed to collect data on how employers, co-workers, and the general public view transgender people in terms of job opportunities. Specifically, the study wanted to understand attitudes towards transgender managers in the workplace and support for employment non-discrimination protection for transgender individuals. By understanding people's true attitudes, policymakers can develop better interventions. The study also discusses how public opinion can influence support for policies and voting behavior.

What Did We Do?

To get accurate responses without people feeling pressured to give socially desirable answers, the study used a technique called a double list experiment. This method helps estimate the true percentage of people who hold certain views about transgender individuals in the workplace without directly asking them, thus avoiding any biases.

What Did We Learn?

The findings suggest that support for transgender individuals in the job market is lower than what people directly state in surveys, due to people feeling pressured to give positive responses. However, **even after accounting for this bias, a significant majority still support non-discrimination protection in employment for transgender people and are comfortable having a transgender manager.**

Support for Transgender Managers: **Over two-thirds of respondents would be comfortable working with a transgender manager** and support non-discrimination protection for transgender people, even after considering social desirability bias.

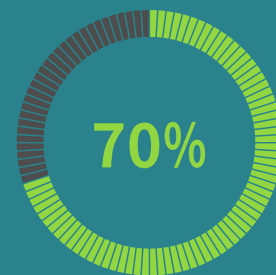
Social Desirability Bias: **Support for transgender individuals in the job market was overreported by 8 to 10 percent** due to people feeling pressured to give positive answers.

Demographic Differences: The study found that women, sexual minority individuals, and Democrats tend to have more positive views and greater support for transgender individuals in the workplace compared to other groups.

What Was Notable?

Perception vs. Reality: The respondents underestimated the level of support for transgender people in the workplace among the general population by 28 to 53 percent.

Over 70% of Americans support non-discrimination protection for transgender people in the workplace. Over 70% of Americans would be comfortable having a transgender manager.



What Does This Mean For Our Communities?

The findings of the study have important implications for creating targeted interventions to reduce discrimination and promote inclusion for transgender individuals in the workplace. Understanding the level of support from the general public is also valuable for policymakers. The study contributes to the literature by providing insights into attitudes towards transgender individuals in the workplace, highlighting the presence of social desirability bias in reporting such attitudes, and exploring demographic differences in views. It emphasizes the need for specific policy interventions to improve job market outcomes for transgender individuals.

To read the full research paper and share the study findings with your friends, family, and community, click here: <https://pubsonline.informs.org/doi/full/10.1287/mnsc.2023.02567?af=R>.