



FEP

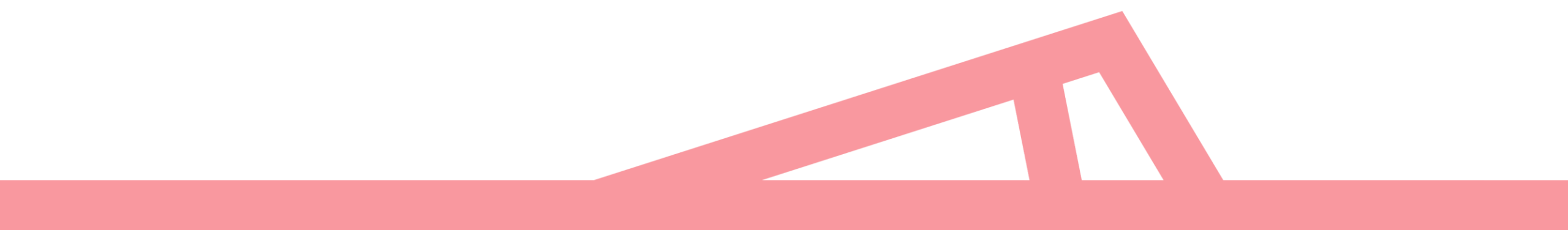
SCHOOL OF
ECONOMICS
AND MANAGEMENT
UNIVERSITY OF PORTO

THE IMPACT OF PREGNANCY AND OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION ON THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN APPLICANTS

20 JULY 2022

SOFIA FREITAS DO AMARAL EGIDO SERRANO
MASTER IN MANAGEMENT

LUÍSA HELENA FERREIRA PINTO, PhD
SUPERVISOR



INDEX



- 1** Introduction
- 2** Research Questions
- 3** Literature Review
- 4** Methodology
- 5** Research Findings
- 6** Discussion & Implications
- 7** Conclusion

There is still a long way before achieving gender equality in the workplace...



WELL- ESTABLISHED LEGAL FRAMEWORK

vs.

CONCERNING STATISTICS

- **Prohibition to discriminate** against European citizens due to their gender (European Union, 2010)
- Every worker has the right to equal opportunities and treatment in terms of **hiring, remuneration and promotion decisions** (Código do Trabalho, 2009)
- Prohibition to prejudice against any worker due to **gender, marital and family status** (Código do Trabalho, 2009)

- In 2020, **58.1%** of the Portuguese graduates in higher education were female (Direção-Geral de Estatísticas da Educação e Ciência, 2020)
- Unemployment rate was 0.6 p.p. higher for women (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2021).
- In 2021, only **31% of Board Members** and **16.3% of Executives** of the largest publicly listed companies in Portugal were women (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2021)

Research has studied **pregnancy, horizontal or vertical segregation** as possible reasons for this gender inequality

The impact of pregnancy and occupational segregation on the discrimination against women applicants

This study draws upon the Stereotype Content Model (Fiske et al., 2002) to understand **hiring discrimination** toward **pregnant women** who apply to a **middle or upper management position** of **masculine or feminine type**.

Research Questions:

- 1) Are **pregnant women discriminated** (i.e., seen as less competent and equally/more warm) vis-à-vis other **equally qualified but non-pregnant candidates**?
- 2) Is this discrimination worsened for **applications to a masculine-type position**?
- 3) Is this discrimination accentuated for **applications to an upper management position**?

When pregnancy is combined with the two dimensions of occupational segregation, the picture might change...

PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION

Women professionals who are pregnant are:

- perceived as **less dedicated to their jobs** and **excessively emotional** (Halpert et. al, 1993)
- **perceived differently** by clients, co-workers and bosses (Little et. al, 2015)
- **Penalized** in performance **appraisals** (Halpert et. al, 1993)
- Affected in terms of **psychological well-being** (Hackney et al., 2021)

+

HORIZONTAL SEGREGATION

Women applicants to masculine-type positions are:

- **more poorly evaluated** in terms of agentic behaviours and competence when they are mothers (Heilman & Okimoto, 2008)
- **treated with greater hostility** when they are pregnant (Hebl et al., 2007)

YET, the management literature remains unclear on the **impact of horizontal segregation on the discrimination against pregnant women**

When pregnancy is combined with the two dimensions of occupational segregation, the picture might change...

PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION

+

VERTICAL SEGREGATION

Women professionals who are pregnant are:

- perceived as **less dedicated to their jobs** and **excessively emotional** (Halpert et. al, 1993)
- **perceived differently** by clients, co-workers and bosses (Little et. al, 2015)
- **Penalized** in performance **appraisals** (Halpert et. al, 1993)
- Affected in terms of **psychological well-being** (Hackney et al., 2021)

Women professionals in upper management positions are:

- perceived as **less able to be leaders** (Eagly & Karau, 2002)
- **more likely** to receive **negative impressions** from their subordinates when pregnant (Corse et al., 1990)

Less is known about the impact of vertical segregation on the discrimination against pregnant women

When pregnancy is combined with the two dimensions of occupational segregation, the picture might change...

PREGNANCY DISCRIMINATION

+

OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

Women professionals who are pregnant are:

- perceived as **less dedicated to their jobs** and **excessively emotional** (Halpert et. al, 1993)
- **perceived differently** by clients, co-workers and bosses (Little et. al, 2015)
- **Penalized** in performance **appraisals** (Halpert et. al, 1993)
- Affected in terms of **psychological well-being** (Hackney et al., 2021)

- Masser and Abrams (2004) suggest that the discrimination against women who **apply to male-type jobs** can be higher, specifically when they apply to a **higher-level job** such as a managerial position

Even less is known about the impact of occupational segregation on the discrimination against pregnant women

Rational of the study

Effects of pregnancy

H1: Women's pregnancy will be (a) positively associated with candidates' perceived warmth, but (b) negatively associated with their perceived competence.

H2: Women's pregnancy will be negatively associated with candidates' perceived (a) job suitability, and (b) promotion recommendation.

Effects of pregnancy x horizontal segregation

H3: The pregnancy of women applying to a **masculine-type position** will be (a) positively associated with their perceived warmth, but (b) negatively associated with candidates' perceived competence.

H4: The pregnancy of women applying to a **masculine-type position** will be negatively associated with candidates' perceived (a) job suitability, and (b) promotion recommendation.

Rational of the study

Effects of pregnancy x vertical segregation

H5: The **pregnancy of women** applying to an **upper management position** will be (a) positively associated with their perceived warmth, but (b) negatively associated with candidates' perceived competence.

H6: The **pregnancy of women** applying to an **upper management position** will be negatively associated with candidates' perceived (a) job suitability, and (b) promotion recommendation.

Effects of pregnancy x horizontal segregation x vertical segregation

H7: **Pregnant women** applying to an **upper management position** in a **masculine-type domain** will score the (a) highest in warmth, and (b) the lowest in competence.

H8: **Pregnant women** applying to an **upper management position** in a **masculine-type domain** will score the lowest in (a) job suitability, and (b) promotion recommendation.

Methodology



- Quantitative study with an experimental design

Experimental condition	Pregnancy status	Position's gender-type	Position's hierarchical level
A	Pregnant	Masculine	Middle Management
B	Pregnant	Masculine	Upper Management
C	Pregnant	Feminine	Middle Management
D	Pregnant	Feminine	Upper Management
E	Non-Pregnant	Masculine	Middle Management
F	Non-Pregnant	Masculine	Upper Management
G	Non-Pregnant	Feminine	Middle Management
H	Non-Pregnant	Feminine	Upper Management



Joana Martins Antunes

Avenida Doutor José Mendes Coutinho, 1237, 3º Esquerdo Frente, Portugal
 jma55955@gmail.com
 (+351) 932 255 555
 26 de fevereiro de 1990
 Carta de Condução

Perfil

Profissional de Informática com 10 anos de experiência e interesse por uma função de Gestão com maior responsabilidade.

Línguas

Português | *Lingua Nativa*
 Inglês | *Avançado*
 Espanhol | *Intermédio*

Hobbies

Leitura, Música, Viagens, Fotografia e Desporto.

Experiência Profissional

Analista de Informática Desde 2016
Grupo nacional de média dimensão no setor do calçado.

Funções principais: Realização de auditorias e controle de processos para verificar a sua integridade. Participação em projetos. Resolução de problemas, testes e suporte. Reporte ao Gestor de Projetos de Informática.

Consultora de Informática 2014-2016
Empresa de consultoria no ramo da tecnologia.

Funções principais: Desenvolvimento e instalação de protótipos ou softwares personalizados, programação, resolução de problemas, testes e suporte.

Técnica de Informática 2013-2014
Empresa de consultoria no ramo da tecnologia.

Funções principais: Apoio aos utilizadores, manutenção de equipamentos informáticos, instalação e configuração de software.

Educação

Universidade do Porto | Faculdade de Engenharia
Mestrado Integrado em Engenharia Informática 2008-2013

Formação Complementar

Pós-graduação em Gestão de Projetos 2016
Porto Business School (PBS)

Curso de SAP 2015
Formação | 30 horas

Curso de Web Design: HTML5, CSS3 e JS 2013
Formação | 20 horas

Competências

Informática
 Excel | Utilizador Avançado
 AHRNET | Utilizador Avançado
 CentralGest | Utilizador Avançado
 Office | Utilizador Avançado

Março, 2022

- Online survey targeting Portuguese working adults

Methodology

- **Sample:** 523 Portuguese working adults
 - Mainly men (**55.5%**)
 - Average age of **32.46 years old** (standard deviation of 10.1)
 - **84.5%** of the respondents have higher education degrees
 - **45.9%** have People Management experience
 - **38.6%** have Recruiting experience
 - Slight similarity with the applicants (average of **2.21** on a scale of 1 to 5)
- **Measures**
 - **Perceived warmth:** 7 items of the original scale from Fiske et al. (2002)
 - **Perceived competence:** 8 items of the original scale from Fiske et al. (2002)
 - **Job suitability:** 5 items from McElroy et al. (2014)
 - **Promotion recommendation:** 4 items from Wayne et al. (1997)
 - **Demographics:** age, gender, education, people management experience, recruiting experience, degree of similarity with the applicant

After all, the picture did not change...

	Results
Effects of pregnancy (H1 and H2)	Not supported
Effects of pregnancy x horizontal segregation (H3 and H4)	Not supported
Effects of pregnancy x vertical segregation (H5 and H6)	Not supported
Effects of pregnancy x horizontal segregation x vertical segregation (H7 and H8)	Not supported

After all, the picture did not change...



	Results	Possible explanations
Effects of pregnancy (H1 and H2)	Not supported	→ Provision of counterstereotypic information about the applicant → Use of subjective scales and a between-subjects design
Effects of pregnancy x horizontal segregation (H3 and H4)	Not supported	
Effects of pregnancy x vertical segregation (H5 and H6)	Not supported	
Effects of pregnancy x horizontal segregation x vertical segregation (H7 and H8)	Not supported	

But all women applicants were discriminated regardless of their pregnancy status!

- **The evaluation of every applicant was less lenient when respondents were**
 - **Older** (in terms of perceived warmth)
 - **Male** (also regarding perceived warmth)
 - Had **higher education degrees** (for every criteria of evaluation)
 - Had **recruiting experience** (for every criteria of evaluation)
 - **Perceived themselves as more similar to the applicant** (in terms of perceived warmth, perceived competence and promotion recommendation)
- **Effect of horizontal segregation**
 - All women applicants to a **feminine-type position** scored **higher in perceived warmth** than **applicants to a masculine-type position**
- **Effect of vertical segregation**
 - All women applicants to **middle management positions** received **better evaluations** in terms of **job suitability and promotion recommendation** than applicants to **upper management positions**

The impact of pregnancy and occupational segregation on the discrimination against women applicants



LIMITATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experimental and between-subjects design• Specific recruitment scenario• Findings are limited to the sample
CONTRIBUTIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• When pregnant women are also highly qualified and experienced, that information combined decreases the chances of hiring discrimination<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ To improve their perceptions of employability, women applicants should invest in career planning, higher education and complementary training

(NO) impact of pregnancy and occupational segregation on the discrimination against women applicants!



- A growing body of literature shows that there is **clear discrimination against mothers (to be)** in different moments of the recruitment process
- Contrary to expectations, the results of this study show **no significant discrimination** based on the pregnancy of the applicant, even when she is applying to a male type position and/or an upper management position
- However, both pregnant and non-pregnant applicants were subjected to **horizontal segregation and vertical segregation**

Becoming a mother does not prevent women applicants from “adding value to the company in the long-term”



RUA DR. ROBERTO FRIAS • 4200-464 PORTO • PORTUGAL | T. +351 225 571 100 | GERAL@FEP.UP.PT | WWW.FEP.UP.PT