

This file was downloaded from BI Brage,  
the institutional repository (open access) at BI Norwegian Business School  
<http://brage.bibsys.no/bi>

## **Better not look too nice? Employees` preferences towards (un)likeable managers**

**Benny Geys**  
BI Norwegian Business School

This is the authors' accepted, refereed and final manuscript to the article published in

***The Leadership Quarterly*, 25(2014)5: 875-884**

DOI: 10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.02.001

Copyright policy of *Elsevier*, the publisher of this journal:

Authors retain the right to publish the final author version of their article in the institutional repository of their university, without embargo, where there is not a policy or mandate.

Publisher's version available at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2014.02.001>

# Better Not Look Too Nice? Employees' Preferences Towards (Un)Likeable Managers\*

Benny Geys

Norwegian Business School BI, Department of Economics, Nydalsveien 37, N-0442 Oslo, Norway;

email: Benny.Geys@bi.no; Tel.: 0047 4641 0923

## Abstract

Recent research shows that, all else equal, most people prefer likeable colleagues. In this article, two experiments are employed to analyze preferences with respect to (un)likeable superiors. We thereby focus on *perceptions* of likeability based on appearance rather than as a behavioral characteristic, which allows us to concentrate on the impact of quick, unconscious evaluations in zero-acquaintance situations. The results indicate that, all else equal, managers of higher perceived likeability are *less* preferred than managers of lower perceived likeability. Such likeability-aversion emerges among male *and* female respondents, affects male *and* female managers, and holds both for preferences expressed from the perspective of employees (Experiment 1) or a HR department (Experiment 2).

**Keywords:** Likeability, Relational Leadership, Leader-Member Exchange, Role Incongruence, Thin-slice Impressions.

**Word count:** 8448 words

---

\* I am grateful to all respondents for their time, as well as to Jørgen Juel Andersen, Jon Fiva, Stefan Gänzle and Dag-Ingvar Jacobsen for access to their students, and to Gianmarco Daniele, Tom-Reiel Heggedal, Leif Helland, Joshua Holm, Helge Hånes, Justin Jansen, Lars Monkerud, Zuzana Murdoch, Panu Poutvaara and two anonymous referees for insightful suggestions. I also thank Panu Poutvaara for access to the second set of pictures (and the evaluations thereof). Financial assistance from FWO Vlaanderen (grant number G.0022.12) is gratefully acknowledged.

## **Introduction**

Likeability – defined as a pleasant, nice and agreeable personality (Hogan *et al.*, 1994, p. 504) – has been argued to benefit teachers, physicians, defendants in court cases, salespeople, cocktail waitresses and so on (Humphries, 2000; Sanders, 2006; Jayanti and Whipple, 2008). Based on social network surveys encompassing over 10,000 work relationships, Casciaro and Sousa Lobo (2005) recently also demonstrated that when individuals choose work partners to complete a given task, “a little extra likeability goes a longer way than a little extra competence in making someone desirable to work with” (Casciaro and Sousa Lobo, 2005, p. 3). Yet, when presenting the same trade-off to managers regarding their staff, the reverse is commonly observed: i.e., competence is seen as a key requirement, and likeability, at best, as a bonus (Casciaro and Sousa Lobo, 2005; Wojciszke and Abele, 2008). The reason is that competence and agency (‘getting ahead’; Hogan and Holland, 2003) are deemed more important than the interpersonal dimension of job performance (‘getting along’; Hogan and Holland, 2003) “when an individual’s goal achievement is entwined with the behaviour of the person they are evaluating” (Judge *et al.*, 2012, p. 391; Judge *et al.*, 2009).

In this article, we analyze whether individuals’ preferences for people in managerial positions are affected by the latter’s perceived likeability – controlling for important factors such as competence, sex, age, race and physical attractiveness. As such, we move the framework of analysis from lateral (i.e., colleagues’ preference regarding work partners; Casciaro and Sousa Lobo, 2005) and hierarchically top-down (i.e., managers’ preferences regarding employees; Casciaro and Sousa Lobo, 2005; Wojciszke and Abele, 2008; Judge *et al.*, 2012) work relations to hierarchically bottom-up ones (i.e., employees’ preferences with respect to managers). While largely ignored in the foregoing literature (see, however, Furnham *et al.*, 2012), the importance of such bottom-up perspective follows directly from relational

leadership theory (RLT; Brower *et al.*, 2000; Uhl-Bien, 2006). This theoretical framework views “leadership as a social influence process” (Uhl-Bien, 2006, p. 654) whereby “the relationship developed between leaders and followers is vastly important to follower outcomes” (Dulebohn *et al.*, 2012, p. 1739). Much of this literature thereby suggests that managers’ agreeableness is positively correlated to high-quality interpersonal relations between managers and subordinates (Bernerth *et al.*, 2007; Dulebohn *et al.*, 2012), which, in turn, has been linked to improved outcomes (Dulebohn *et al.*, 2012).

Hence, some degree of likeability in managers would appear optimal from an organization’s perspective. Yet, the above reasoning rests crucially on the implicit assumption that employees desire a close supervisor-subordinate relationship, and that they would prefer to work with an likeable manager if, all else equal, that option were open to them. While such supposition appears intuitively appealing, its empirical validity has, to the best of our knowledge, not been verified. Our study takes a first step in this direction.<sup>i</sup>

In the next section, we build on research within the leader trait paradigm as well as social and organizational psychology to assess individuals’ preferences with respect to (un)likeable managers. We then evaluate the ensuing propositions using an experimental design exploiting individuals’ perceptions of managers’ likeability. The final section summarizes the main findings, discusses their theoretical and practical implications, formulates a number of avenues for further research.

## **Theoretical Background**

The extensive literature on relational leadership theories (Brower *et al.*, 2000; Uhl-Bien, 2006) and Leader-Member Exchange (LMX; Schriesheim *et al.*, 1999) shows that the nature

and quality of the interpersonal relationship between managers and subordinates has a strong effect on outcomes such as job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and actual/intended turnover (Dulebohn *et al.*, 2012). In similar vein, Rich (1997) stresses the importance of subordinates being able to view their manager as a ‘role model’ in order to achieve optimal outcomes. Such findings lead to the obvious question which manager characteristics or traits are antecedents to a high-quality leader-member relationship, or to subordinates viewing their manager as a ‘role model’. Indeed, before one can exploit “leader characteristics as effective tools to improve (...) performance, it is important to examine the precise nature of their roles” (Tyagi, 1985, p. 76).

This subject is central to the leader trait paradigm, which concentrates on the relation between the Big Five personality factors (i.e., Extraversion, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability/Neuroticism, Openness to Experience and Agreeableness) and leadership emergence and effectiveness (Zaccaro *et al.*, 2004; Judge *et al.*, 2009). Although often severely criticized (Andersen, 2006), reviews of this literature indicate that four of the Big Five factors – i.e. all but agreeableness – are non-trivially associated with leadership emergence, while all five are robustly linked to leadership effectiveness (Hogan *et al.*, 1994; Judge *et al.*, 2002a, 2002b; Zaccaro *et al.*, 2004). The generally weak and ambiguous effect of agreeableness – which is closely linked to likeability (Hogan *et al.*, 1994) – suggests that this socially desirable (or “bright”) personality trait may also have a countervailing (or “dark”) side when it comes to leadership (Judge *et al.*, 2009, p. 864). Such countervailing effects have been largely ignored in leadership research thus far (for exceptions, see Hogan and Hogan, 2001; Judge *et al.*, 2009). Most contributions on LMX, for instance, appear to take for granted that managers’ likeability bolsters high-quality leader-subordinate relations (Bernerth *et al.*, 2007; Dulebohn *et al.*, 2012) because it tends to “de-emphasize status and power differentials” and fosters

“both feelings and actions of repayment, ultimately developing closer supervisor-subordinate relationships” (Bernerth *et al.*, 2007, p. 618).

Nonetheless, psychological research suggests that likeability might also have a ‘dark side’ and be an (at least partially) undesired trait in managers. First, the personality characteristics generally associated with likeability are mostly conceived of as feminine (Diekmann and Eagly, 2000; Judge *et al.*, 2012). Consequently, the persistence of ‘Think Manager, Think Male’ stereotypes in Western societies (Schein, 1973; Prime *et al.*, 2009) leads to the expectation that individuals’ likeability and their perceived potential to be a good manager are inversely related. This proposition is further supported by the persistent finding that “people tend to see warmth and competence as inversely related. If there’s an apparent surplus of one trait, they infer a deficit of the other” (Cuddy, 2009, p. 24). As argued by implicit leadership theory (Hollander and Julian, 1969), such *perception* is important as “people are seen as leaderlike to the degree that their characteristics (...) match other people’s preconceived notions about what leaders should be like” (Hogan *et al.*, 1994, p. 497).

Second, agreeableness or likeability has been linked to cooperativeness and interpersonal conflict avoidance (Graziano *et al.*, 1996; Graziano and Eisenberg, 1997). Hence, likeable individuals are often seen as primarily motivated to ‘get along’ with others, rather than ‘getting ahead’ (Barrick *et al.*, 2002). Although the former is evidently beneficial in some contexts, the latter is more easily linked to high leader effectiveness (Judge *et al.*, 2009). The reason is that getting along implies a reduced proclivity to enact ‘voice behaviors’ – which provide a “constructive challenge to the status quo with the intent of improving the situation” (LePine and van Dyne, 1998, p. 853) – and could “result in decision-making that (...) seeks the broadest level of approval” (Judge *et al.*, 2009, p. 868). Hence, likeable individuals may

be perceived as weak managers because likeability signals a lack of assertiveness, a low aptitude for achieving profitable change, and a vulnerability to “being manipulated and duped by others” (Judge *et al.*, 2009, p. 859). Whether or not such perception is warranted, its mere existence is injurious “particularly in settings where competitiveness and aggressiveness are valued” (Judge *et al.*, 2012, p. 392).

*H1: Likeable managers are less preferred by employees than less-likeable ones*

There is no reason to believe, however, that preferences towards likeability in one’s manager are independent of other characteristics of that manager. One obvious moderating factor is managers’ sex. Such differentiated effects can be expected because individuals’ sex is one of the primary means of categorizing individuals in Western societies (Brewer and Lui, 1989; Ridgeway, 1997), and we “automatically and unconsciously sex-categorize any other to whom we must relate” (Ridgeway, 1997, p. 220; Brewer and Lui, 1989). Based on such argumentation, two predictions can be made. Firstly, sex categorization easily triggers gender stereotypes (Deaux and Major, 1987). As such stereotyping can strengthen the perceived ‘lack of fit’ between feminine characteristics and the requirements for success in particular jobs (Heilman, 1983, 1995; Hoyt *et al.*, 2009; Geys and Mause, 2014), likeability may be particularly disadvantageous for female managers. Secondly, the near-automaticity of sex stereotyping might make the male/likeable combination more conspicuous and perceptible since it does not conform to expectations (Judge *et al.*, 2012). As such gender-role incongruence (Nieva and Gutek, 1981) has been found to elicit penalties including social rejection, negative evaluations and lower income levels (Costrich *et al.*, 1975; Bartol and Butterfield, 1976; Amanatullah and Tinsley, 2013), it can reinforce likeability aversion especially for male managers.

Similarly, employees' sex may play a moderating role regarding preferences for/against likeable managers. The reason is that women and men have at least partially differing opinions regarding the characteristics of the 'ideal' manager (Schein *et al.*, 1996), and they set different standards against which to judge their own or the opposite sex (Rojahn and Willemsen, 1994; Broder, 1993; Bagues and Esteve-Volart, 2010). For instance, women in leadership positions are often found to receive particularly poor evaluations – relative to male managers – “when the evaluators were men” (Eagly *et al.*, 1996, p. 3). A similar finding is also observed in college students' evaluations of their professors' teaching effectiveness (Basow and Solberg, 1987; Basow, 1995). Hence, when it comes to male sex-typed jobs, men appear to be more exacting of women than of other men. Consequently, the role of likeability may not only differ across managers of both sexes, but may also be moderated by the sex of the individuals evaluating managers.

## **Methodology**

### *Experimental design(s)*

We conducted two closely comparable experiments. In Experiment 1, subjects were asked to imagine that they were working in a large multinational company, which was in the process of hiring a new manager for their department. Since this person would be their direct superior, the Human Resources Department was indicated to be interested in their personal input into the hiring process (see Furnham *et al.*, 2012, for a similar approach). They were then provided with a detailed description of the job and the application forms of four short-listed candidates. To keep the experimental design as realistic as possible, we constructed the job description from actual job advertisements and employed the application form (consisting of detailed curriculum vitae) of a real firm. To prevent applicants' sex from influencing subjects' choices,

all short-listed candidates presented to any given subject were of the same sex (i.e., either four male or four female candidates). Moreover, as we are interested in the effects of likeability *independent* of candidates' competence, we kept competence constant by designing a set of application forms fully equivalent in terms of candidates' educational, language and IT qualifications, as well as their previous work experience. Using a set of standardized evaluation forms, subjects were asked to rank the four short-listed candidates in their order of preference, keeping in mind that the successful candidate would become their boss.

Experiment 2 had the same design, except that subjects were told that they were part of the Human Resources Department, and would have no direct contact with the recruited manager. While providing an opportunity to cross-validate our results over different samples, Experiment 2 additionally allows addressing the potential confounding influence of expected future personal involvement with the new manager. Indeed, the effects of likeability may differ when it concerns one's own direct superior or a manager beyond one's personal work-sphere. For ease of reference, we refer to Experiment 1 as the 'Employee' condition and Experiment 2 as the 'HR' condition below.

The central experimental manipulation in both experiments lies in candidates' perceived likeability. Rather than study the role of likeability as a behavioral characteristic recognized through personal contact, we thus concentrate on *perceptions* of likeability based solely on appearance in zero-acquaintance situations. Although perceptions from first impressions need not always reflect individuals' 'true' characteristics, recent evidence indicates that "observers are able to form reasonably accurate impressions for a number of traits [including likeability] simply on the basis of physical appearance" (Naumann *et al.*, 2009; Ames *et al.*, 2010). This implies that physical appearance reflects one channel manifesting individuals' personality,

and that observers can ‘read’ such signals with reasonable accuracy. Moreover, and importantly, first impressions often drive people’s behavior towards others. This is particularly true in low-information environments – such as recruitment situations where personal contact with any given candidate is generally limited – which warrants their use here.

As in Heilman and Surawati’s (1979) and Heilman and Stopeck’s (1985) studies on the influence of physical attractiveness, our experimental manipulation was achieved via the addition of a candidate’s picture in the top-right corner of the front-page of his/her application package. These pictures were in a standardized format (i.e., black-and-white headshots), which mitigates any influence from variation in the characteristics of the pictures. The pictures themselves were extracted from a dataset of 614 pictures that had previously been evaluated by an independent sample of 13 male and 15 female respondents between 20 and 60 years old (12 of these were students). In line with previous work (e.g., Berggren *et al.*, 2010), we asked: “Based on the picture provided, what do you think of this person – compared to people living in your country – in terms of his/her likeability (i.e. how nice, pleasant and agreeable you find this person)”. Overall, 4817 evaluations were obtained on a five-point scale where 1 is ‘very positive’ and 5 is ‘very negative’, with an average of 7.5 evaluations per picture (ranging from 3 to 24 evaluations per picture).<sup>ii</sup> Following the ‘truth of consensus’ method (Banducci *et al.*, 2008; Benjamin and Shapiro, 2009; Poutvaara *et al.*, 2009), we calculated the average of the independent evaluations across raters for every picture.

We selected four pictures of females with high and low likeability (average ratings were, respectively, 2.19 and 3.52;  $p=0.001$ ), four pictures of males with high likeability and three pictures of males with low likeability (average ratings were, respectively, 2.58 and 3.74;  $p=0.001$ ) to add to the application packages. The use of several pictures in each condition

aims to mitigate the effect of (un)observed heterogeneity in the selected pictures due to people's dress, haircut, posture, wearing glasses, smiling, and so on. We only included three unlikeable-male pictures because we imposed additional constraints on the picture selection process to minimize variation in confounding factors such as age, race and perceived beauty. We control for applicants' beauty by keeping pictures within one standard deviation on the beauty evaluation obtained from the same survey (average ratings were, respectively, 2.59 and 2.48 for unlikeable and likeable females [ $p=0.63$ ], and 2.97 and 2.47 for unlikeable and likeable males [ $p=0.43$ ]),<sup>iii</sup> and for race by only selecting pictures of Caucasian individuals (the majority group where the experiment was conducted). In terms of age, we only selected pictures of individuals in the 37-52 years age bracket (the relevant age for the scenarios presented). While this may appear a relatively wide range, there was no significant correlation between age and likeability for the selected pictures ( $p=0.73$ ), and the application forms included applicants' date of birth (set between May 1971 and September 1972) to further minimize perceived age variation.

Finally, to avoid that our results are driven by an outlier among the selected pictures, or by some other explanation related to the set of pictures employed, we replicated the above procedure with a fully independent dataset of 266 additional pictures, evaluated in the same way as the original dataset of 614 pictures. That is, we selected three pictures of high/low likeability females (average ratings were, respectively, 2.36 and 3.41;  $p=0.001$ ) and three pictures of high/low likeability males (average ratings were, respectively, 2.55 and 3.53;  $p=0.003$ ) imposing similar constraints as before. We thus have two sets of independent pictures to conduct the experiments. Throughout the experiments, we employed the same pictures in Experiment 1 and 2 to keep both settings equivalent *except* for subjects' role as employee in the department where a new manager was hired or as employee in the HR

department. Moreover, to preclude order effects, all respondents received an application package with two likable and two non-likable applicants presented in a randomised order.

### *Subjects*

In total, 88 female and 120 male students in economics and political science at two Norwegian universities participated voluntarily and anonymously. They were randomly assigned to the experimental conditions, and were told that the experiment concerned the personnel decision-making process. While 105 subjects participated in Experiment 1 (43 female and 62 male), 103 subjects participated in Experiment 2 (45 female and 58 male).

### *Manipulation Check*

To verify whether the likeability manipulation was successful, the candidate evaluation forms presented to respondents included the following question: “Please rate this applicant according to the following four criteria: Decisiveness, Leadership, Likeability and Competence”. Answers were collected on a seven-point scale from ‘very negative’ to ‘very positive’. Ideally, the likeability scores collected *within* the experiment would be strongly correlated to those from the independent *pre-experimental* survey used to select the pictures in the experiment. However, simply calculating the correlation coefficient between both likeability scores would be inappropriate since “evaluative responses to personality traits are affected by the particular context of other traits ascribed to the stimulus person” (Kaplan, 1974, p. 891). Hence, the likeability score *within* the experiment would be influenced by respondents’ evaluation of the overall perceived quality of the applicant. Correcting for this confounding influence by calculating the partial correlation coefficient (i.e., after removing the effects of decisiveness, leadership, and competence), we find that individuals receiving a higher likeability score in the pre-experimental survey also obtain a higher score on the

likeability scale within the experiment ( $p=0.08$ ). Hence, the likeability manipulation achieved its intended purpose.

### *Empirical approach*

In the analysis reported below, we rely on non-parametric Mann-Whitney U tests (Wilcoxon 1945; Mann and Whitney 1947). These evaluate the null hypothesis that two samples (in our case, the ordinal preference order of likeable versus unlikeable managers) are likely to have come from a population with similar distributional characteristics. The alternative hypothesis is that the two samples derive from populations with a different distribution, which would imply that respondents express different preferences regarding likeable versus unlikeable managers. Depending on the direction of any observed shift in the distribution, we can evaluate whether likeable or unlikeable managers are preferred. Note that this test procedure does *not* impose any assumptions regarding the characteristics of the distribution from which the preference order samples are drawn. This is important because this distribution is a priori unknown, which requires a sufficiently general test procedure.

## **Empirical results**

### *Experiment 1: 'Employee'*

The main findings of Experiment 1 are summarized in Figure 1. Particularly, we present the sum of the ranks obtained by likeable (black bars) and unlikeable (grey bars) managers in the preference order evaluations of our respondents. Higher ranks indicate that managers end up *further down* the preference ordering, and are thus *less* preferred by employees. We present the data for the entire sample of male and female managers ('All'), as well as separately for male and female employees, and male and female managers. In brackets, we also report the result of the Mann-Whitney U test in terms of the probability that both rank-sums derive from

the same underlying distribution. Note that we keep the samples based on the two picture databases separated at this point, but that both samples are equivalent in size (N=104 in each case).

---

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

---

The first set of bars on the far left in both parts of Figure 1 indicates that – controlling for managers’ competence, sex, age, race, and physical attractiveness within the experimental design (see above) – individuals’ preferences for people in leadership positions are significantly affected by the latter’s perceived likeability. In effect, the higher sum of ranks of likeable managers indicates that the distribution from which this sample is drawn lies further *down* employees’ preference ordering. Consequently, likeability tends to be *detrimental* for managers. This is in line with hypothesis H1, which was based on the idea that perceived likeability may signal personality characteristics that are deemed inappropriate (possibly because they are too feminine; Diekmann and Eagly, 2000) for leadership positions in settings where competitiveness is valued (Cuddy, 2009; Judge *et al.*, 2012). When splitting the sample with regard to respondents’ sex in the next two sets of bars, there is little evidence at this point that the sex of the individuals evaluating managers plays a strong moderating role on the likeability-aversion observed above. Indeed, both female *and* male employees react negatively to managers’ perceived likeability – although the effect is somewhat more pronounced among female compared to male respondents (independent of the picture database employed). Hence, though women and men might have at least partially differing opinions regarding the characteristics of the ‘ideal’ manager (Schein *et al.*, 1996), both sexes tend to be averse to managers perceived to be overly likeable.

The last two sets of bars on the right-hand side of Figure 1 illustrate that there is only weak evidence for the idea that negative likeability effects are concentrated in one sex (as suggested in section 2). While perceived likeability appears to make it significantly more likely that female managers are placed lower in employees' preference ordering (in both picture databases), a similar effect is also found for male managers (although the effect is only significant at conventional levels for pictures taken from the smaller database). Overall, therefore, despite some variation in the observed *'likeability penalty'* depending on evaluators' and managers' sex, perceived likeability appears to be an unwelcome trait in one's boss.

#### *Experiment 2: 'HR'*

To cross-validate these findings over different respondent samples, and additionally evaluate the role of the expected personal work relation suggested in Experiment 1, we now turn to the results of Experiment 2. Here, subjects were told that they were part of the Human Resources Department, and would not personally be working with the recruited manager. Otherwise, no changes were made to the experimental design – such that the same managers with the same CV's and the same pictures are now evaluated from a slightly different perspective. The main findings are summarized in Figure 2.

---

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

---

The first set of bars on the far left in both parts of Figure 2 once again illustrate that likeable managers are placed *lower* down respondents' preference ordering. Consequently, independent of whether subjects are evaluating a manager as their future direct superior (in Experiment 1) or from the perspective of a Human Resources department (in Experiment 2),

perceived likeability is found to be a *detrimental* characteristic for managers. As employees did in Figure 1, female and male members of the HR department react negatively to managers' perceived likeability – although the statistical significance of these effects varies somewhat across both picture samples. As can be seen from the last two sets of bars in Figure 2, the likeability penalty again affects both male and female managers. As under Experiment 1, however, it is somewhat more pronounced among female managers.

### **Combining, and extending, the results**

Given the strong overlap between the results of both subsamples based on distinct picture databases, we can bring them together to obtain stronger inferences. Note that this not only increases the sample size, but also the number of pictures employed in the experimental design (which further mitigates worries that the results may be driven by a particular picture). Pooling the respondent samples in this way, it appears that women generally have a marginally stronger opinion against likeability in the 'ideal' manager. Indeed, we find that the likeability penalty among all 120 male subjects reaches statistical significance at the 94% confidence level in the employee setting and at the 96% confidence level in the HR setting. In the total sample of 88 female subjects, it reaches statistical significance at the 99% confidence level in the employee setting and at the 97% confidence level in the HR setting. Nevertheless, since these differences fail to reach statistical significance at conventional levels, we must conclude that there is little support for the proposition – raised in section 2 – that employees' sex plays a moderating role regarding preferences for/against likeable managers. In other words, the observed likeability-aversion in managers emerges among male *and* female respondents. We also find that male and female managers suffer in near-identical fashion from a likeability penalty: i.e., both are ranked between 0.35 (male managers) and 0.37

(female manager) places lower on the 4-point ranking in the HR setting and between 0.40 (male managers) and 0.45 (female manager) places in the employee setting.

With the increased sample size, we can also extend the analysis by evaluating whether (fe)male employees express different preferences with respect to likeability in (fe)male managers. This might be expected since women and men set different standards against which to judge their own or the opposite sex (Rojahn and Willemsen, 1994; Broder, 1993; Bagues and Esteve-Volart, 2010). Such behavior is often linked to the prevalence of in-group bias, which induces people to prefer a boss of their own gender (Hoyt *et al.*, 2009; Furnham *et al.*, 2012). This idea is evaluated in more detail in Figure 3. On the Y-axis, we present the average likeability penalty awarded to likeable versus unlikeable managers (i.e. how much further down the 4-point preference ranking a likeable manager is placed). On the X-axis, we set out the four possible combinations of (fe)male employees assessing (fe)male managers: a) Male employees evaluating managers of the same sex (the first set of bars on the far left-hand side), b) Male employees evaluating female managers (second set of bars), c) Female employees evaluating female managers (third set of bars), and d) Female employees evaluating managers of the opposite sex (final set of bars on the far right-hand side). Black bars present the results from the employee setting, while grey bars depict results from the HR setting.

---

FIGURE 3 ABOUT HERE

---

Figure 3 indicates that, in the employee setting (i.e. the black bars), the effect of likeability does not differ between evaluations of one's own or the opposite sex. That is, the two black bars on the right-hand side illustrate that female employees on average rank likeable female managers 0.68 points lower than less-likeable female managers on the 4-point preference

scale, while they rank likeable male managers 0.58 points lower than less-likeable male managers ( $p=0.01$  in both cases). A similar pattern is observed regarding for male employees (i.e. the two black bars on the left-hand side of Figure 3) with, respectively, a 0.29-point and 0.27-point likeability penalty for male and female managers ( $p>0.10$  in both cases). Interestingly, this is no longer true when turning to the HR setting (the grey bars in Figure 3). In this case, likeability is viewed as substantially more negative in the opposite sex. Looking first at the two grey bars on the left-hand side of Figure 3, we observe that male HR members on average rank likeable male managers 0.19 points lower than less-likeable male managers ( $p=0.339$ ), while they rank likeable female managers no less than 0.46 points lower than less-likeable female managers ( $p=0.036$ ). For female HR members (the two grey bars on the right-hand side of Figure 3), the pattern goes in the same direction: i.e., a 0.22-point ( $p=0.357$ ) and a 0.69-point ( $p=0.014$ ) likeability penalty for female and male managers, respectively.

As this stark contrast can only derive from the diverging information regarding future personal contacts with the manager (as all else remained equal), this suggests a particularly fascinating implication. While men have no significant preference against likeable female managers when these will become their direct superior, they do have a very strong negative opinion of likeability in *these same female managers* (i.e. the same CV's with the same pictures) when no personal work relation ensues – reflected in the stark difference between the black and grey bar in the ‘Men about Women’ section of Figure 3). Hence, for female managers, men appear very disapproving of likeability *except* in their direct superiors.

Women appear to be more consistent in their preferences regarding likeability in managers of the opposite sex. Indeed, as illustrated by the two bars on the far right-hand side of Figure 3, their aversion to likeability in male managers is equal to a 0.58-point and 0.69-point

likeability penalty in the employee (black bar) and HR (grey bar) settings, respectively. Women, however, strongly differ in their evaluation of likeability in their own sex – reflected in the stark difference between the black and grey bar in the ‘Women about Women’ section of Figure 3. This indicates that, for female managers, women do not particularly mind likeability *unless* it concerns their direct superior. A possible explanation for this result might be that women perceive stronger direct competition from each other in the employee setting, perhaps due to invisible gender quota that limit the (perceived) number of senior management positions available to them (for a similar argument in a different setting, see Zinovyeva and Bagues, 2011). In such a situation, likeability might become a particularly unwelcome trait in one’s direct superior of the same sex. Not only because it is harder to dislike a likeable boss, but also because it might complicate potential future contests with this person for more senior positions (i.e., it is easier to ruthlessly compete against someone one does not like). Clearly, this tentative explanation would require further substantiation in future research.

### **Robustness checks**

Before concluding, we should address two remaining potential concerns. The first is whether our results really reflect a likeability effect, or would have likewise appeared using pictures based on competence or attractiveness. The second relates to our use of student respondents, which may limit the external validity of our findings. To address both issues, we extended the analysis in two ways. First, a new set of pictures was selected based on perceived attractiveness rather than likeability (while imposing constraints on individuals’ age, race and perceived likeability as in the original experiment). Second, we recruited a non-student sample consisting of (post-)doctoral researchers, university professors and administrative staff (responsible for Human Resources, Finance, Library Services and Legal Affairs) to replicate the original experiments.

The results of the ‘beauty’ replication (N=69 respondents) suggest that candidates with a *higher* perceived beauty tend to obtain a *lower* ranking, which implies that they are perceived as *more* desirable managers. This relation is observed irrespective of respondent or applicant gender in the employee setting, but fails to reach significance in the HR setting (full details upon request). While in line with a large literature documenting positive beauty effects in employment settings (Hamermesh, 2011; Geys, 2014), the importance of these results here lies in their indication that the negative likeability effects observed above cannot follow from any link between beauty and likeability. If any such link affects our findings (which we tried to mitigate by selecting only pictures of similar perceived beauty; see above), they would rather lead us to under-estimate the likeability penalty for managers.

The results of the ‘non-student’ replication (N=42 respondents) illustrate that our original findings – i.e. a negative relation between likeability and manager preference – are *not* unique to student samples. In fact, candidates with a *higher* perceived likeability tend to obtain a *higher* ranking (i.e. are *less* desirable managers) also in this non-student sample ( $p=0.05$ ). Nevertheless, this finding is concentrated in the HR setting, whereas no difference is observed in the employee setting (full details upon request). Admittedly, the sample size tends to become very small here (N=18 in employee setting and N=24 in the HR setting), and requires further confirmation in future research. Even so, these results mitigate potential concerns about the external validity of our main results obtained from student samples.

### **Practical implications and future research**

Overall, our findings indicate that a manager’s perceived likeability can have a substantial *negative* impact in terms of employees’ willingness to work under them, or of HR

departments' willingness to hire them. While such *likeability penalty* is observed across both male and female evaluators and male and female managers, the exact magnitude of the effect differs somewhat depending on evaluators' and managers' sex, and on the personal nature of the work relationship between managers and employees after recruitment. For instance, men appear particularly disapproving of likeability in female managers *except* when these become their direct superiors, whereas women do not particularly mind likeability in female managers *unless* it concerns their direct superiors.

These results put into perspective the potential meaning and role of likeability as an antecedent to high-quality Leader-Member Exchange (Schriesheim *et al.*, 1999; Bernerth *et al.*, 2007; Dulebohn *et al.*, 2012). While likeable managers may well be more liable to develop and foster "closer supervisor-subordinate relationships" (Bernerth *et al.*, 2007, p. 618), our analysis suggests that this need not necessarily reflect the most desirable state of affairs from employees' point of view. Evidently, this would add considerable ambiguity to role of likeability in the supervisor-subordinate relation.

Moreover, from a practical perspective, our findings may have implications for managerial practices. As managers' behavior is often seen as a central influence on employees' work motivation (Tyagi, 1985; and references therein), the motivational effects – both in terms of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation – from a deeper understanding of subordinates' preferences regarding the likeability of their managers may be substantial. This is obvious for managers themselves, as they can adjust their management style and behavior, if necessary, to optimize their relation with subordinates. The same holds, however, at the level of HR decisions – and leadership choices more generally. Failing to acknowledge and/or understand the preferences and expectations of subordinates towards their managers disregards critical information that

might help select those (prospective) managers able to bring out the best in (current and/or prospective) employees. This can induce “a possible mismatch between the traits of leaders and contemporary demands” (Judge *et al.*, 2009, p. 859), which may have wide-ranging implications. Indeed, incorrect leadership choices can entail that “teams lose, armies are defeated, economies dwindle and nations fail” (Hogan *et al.*, 1994, p. 493).

Still, further research would clearly be required to explore the likeability-leadership relation in more detail. First, our results were obtained employing a measure of perceived likability based on a picture, and therefore focused on *perceptions* of likeability rather a behavioral characteristic. On the one hand, this allowed us to concentrate on the impact of quick, unconscious evaluations in zero-acquaintance situations, and thus contributes to our understanding of the adaptive unconscious (recently also investigated extensively in the thin-slicing literature; e.g., Borkeanu *et al.*, 2004; Carney *et al.*, 2007). On the other hand, however, this specific set-up implies that our results should be re-evaluated in future work using likeability measures based on personal contact.

Second, from a theoretical perspective, the exact mechanism underlying the observed likeability penalty is hard to establish based on the current evidence. Although the constraints imposed during the picture selection and CV creation processes allow us to rule out a number of potential explanations (such as those linked to connections between (perceived) likeability and age, race, gender, (perceived) beauty and competence), we cannot exclude that other unobserved factors correlated with perceived likeability complicate interpreting our results as the *direct* impact of likeability.

Third, the experimental design employed here raises an interesting question about the potential role of information on our results. Indeed, even though based on official application forms employed by a real firm, it might be that respondents felt constrained by the relatively limited amount of information available about candidates, and that perceived likeability is particularly influential in such low-information settings. This is reminiscent of findings in political science that the politicians' likeability affects vote choice (and election outcomes) mostly among politically less informed, and less interested, voters (Baum, 2005). Future research should thus investigate whether, and to what extent, the effect of (perceived) likeability depends on evaluators' information.

Finally, our analysis included predominantly Norwegian respondents. Yet, from the literature studying likeability effects among politicians, we know that likeability does not influence vote choice (or election outcomes) everywhere in equal measure. Bean and Mughan (1989), for instance, find no significant likability effects in Britain and Australia (after controlling for partisanship), whereas such effects appear well-established in the highly mediatised US political environment (Sniderman *et al.* 1991). Moreover, even in the US, likeability effects depend on the overall political context (e.g., war versus peace; see Little *et al.*, 2007). In other words, context may play an important moderating role. As our robustness check on a non-student sample included a substantial share of non-Norwegian respondents, it could be inferred that our results carry over to different social and institutional environments. Future research should, however, provide further substantiation of this important point.

## NOTES

---

- <sup>i</sup> Our focus on the inter-relational aspect of leader-follower relations is not meant to negate the importance of *charismatic* or *transformational* leadership (House, 1977; Bass, 1985; Yukl, 1999). We merely maintain that leader's likeability is most prevalent for the social aspect of leader-follower interactions.
- <sup>ii</sup> Clearly, one might worry that three evaluations is insufficient. Still, when fewer evaluations increase the amount of 'noise' relative to the informative signal provided by the mean of the evaluations, this would be reflected in a higher coefficient of variation for pictures with fewer evaluations. Comparing the ratings distribution for pictures obtaining less than 10 evaluations with those obtaining between 10 and 19 evaluations, we find no such effect. Hence, even relatively few evaluations appear to give a fairly precise estimate (see also Berggren *et al.*, 2010).
- <sup>iii</sup> An anonymous referee rightfully pointed out that likeable faces might be seen as less competent (see also Cuddy, 2009). From this perspective, we should point out that the male individuals in the selected pictures did not significantly differ in terms of perceived competence (average ratings are, respectively, 2.73 and 2.59 for unlikeable and likeable males [ $p=0.54$ ]), whereas there was only a marginal difference for female managers (average ratings equal to 3.15 and 2.72 for unlikeable and likeable females [ $p=0.09$ ]). Furthermore, our main inferences remain valid even when likeable managers with the highest perceived competence scores *and* unlikeable managers with the lowest perceived competence scores are excluded from the sample (details upon request). This suggests that our results are not driven by any assumption of competence underlying perceived likeability.

## References

- Amanatullah, E.T. and Tinsley, C.H. (2013). 'Punishing female negotiators for asserting too much...or not enough: Exploring why advocacy moderates backlash against Assertive female negotiators'. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, **120(1)**, 110-22.
- Ames, D.R., Kammrath, L.K., Suppes, A., and Bolger, N. (2010). 'Not so fast: The (not-quite-complete) dissociation between accuracy and confidence in thin-slide impressions'. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, **36(2)**, 264-77.
- Andersen, J.A. (2006). 'Leadership, personality and effectiveness'. *Journal of Socio-Economics*, **35**, 1078-91.
- Bagues, M.F. and Esteve-Volart, B. (2010). 'Can gender parity break the glass ceiling? Evidence from a repeated randomized experiment'. *Review of Economic Studies*, **77(4)**, 1301-28.
- Banducci, S.A., Thrasher, M., Rallings, C. and Karp, J.A. (2008). 'Ballot photographs as cues in low-information elections'. *Political Psychology*, **29(6)**, 903-17.
- Barrick, M.R., Stewart, G.L. and Piotrowski, M. (2002). 'Personality and job performance: Test of the mediating effects of motivation among sales representatives'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, **87**, 43-51.
- Bartol, K.M. and Butterfield, D.A. (1976). 'Sex effects in evaluating leaders'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, **61**, 446-54.
- Basow, S.A. and Silberg, N.T. (1987). 'Student evaluations of college professors: Are female and male professors rated differently?' *Journal of Educational Psychology*, **79(3)**, 308-314.
- Basow, S.A. (1995). 'Student evaluations of college professors: When gender matters'. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, **87(4)**, 656-65.

- Bass, B.M. (1985). *Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations*. New York: Free Press.
- Baum M.A. (2005). 'Talking the vote: Why presidential candidates hit the talk show circuit'. *American Journal of Political Science*, **49(2)**, 213-34.
- Bean, C. and A. Mughan (1989). 'Leadership effects in parliamentary elections in Australia and Britain'. *American Political Science Review*, **83(4)**, 1165-79.
- Benjamin, D.J. and Shapiro, J.M. (2009). 'Thin-slice forecasts of gubernatorial Elections'. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, **91(3)**, 523-36.
- Berggren, N., Jordahl, H. and Poutvaara, P. (2010) 'The looks of a winner: Beauty and electoral success'. *Journal of Public Economics*, **94(1-2)**, 8-15.
- Bernerth, J.B., Armenakis, A.A., Feild, H.S., Giles, W.F. and Walker, H.J. (2007). 'Is personality associated with perceptions of LMX? An empirical study'. *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, **28(7)**, 613-31.
- Borkenau, P., N. Mauer, R. Riemann, F.M. Spinath and A. Angleitner (2004). 'Thin slices of behavior as cues of personality and intelligence'. *Personality Processes and Individual Differences*, **86(4)**, 599-614.
- Brewer, M. and Lui, L. (1989). 'The primacy of age and sex in the structure of person categories'. *Social Cognition*, **7**, 262-74.
- Broder, I.E. (1993). Review of NSF economics proposals: Gender and institutional patterns. *American Economic Review*, **83(4)**, 964-70.
- Brower, H.H., F.D. Schoorman and H.H. Tan (2000). 'A model of relational leadership: The integration of trust and Leader-Member Exchange'. *The Leadership Quarterly*, **11(2)**, 227-50.
- Carney, D.R., C.R. Colvin and J.A. Hall (2007). 'A thin slice perspective on the accuracy of first impressions'. *Journal of Research in Personality*, **41**, 1054-72.

- Casciaro, T. and Sousa Lobo, M. (2005). 'Competent jerks, lovable fools and the formation of social networks'. *Harvard Business Review*, **June 2005**, 1-9.
- Costrich, N., Feinstein, J., Kidder, L., Marecek, J. and Pascale, L. (1975). 'When stereotypes hurt: Three studies of penalties for sex role reversals'. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, **11**, 520-30.
- Cuddy, A.J.C. (2009). 'Just because I'm nice, don't assume I'm dumb'. *Harvard Business Review*, **87**, 24.
- Deaux, K. and Major, B. (1987). 'Putting gender into context: An interactive model of gender-related behavior'. *Psychological Review*, **94**, 369-89.
- Diekmann, A.B. and Eagly, A.H. (2000). 'Stereotypes as dynamic constructs: Women and men of the past, present, and future'. *Personality and Social Psychology*, **26(10)**, 1171-88.
- Dulebohn, J.H., W.H. Bommer, R.C. Liden, R.L. Brouer and G.R. Ferris (2012). 'A meta-analysis of antecedents and consequences of Leader-Member Exchange: Integrating the past with an eye to the future'. *Journal of Management*, **38(6)**, 1715-59.
- Eagly, A.H., Makhijani, M.G. and Klonsky, B.G. (1992). 'Gender and the evaluation of leaders: A meta-analysis'. *Psychological Bulletin*, **111(1)**, 3-22.
- Furnham, A., McClelland, A. and Mansi, A. (2012). 'Selecting your boss: Sex, age, IQ and EQ factors'. *Personality and Individual Differences*, **53(5)**, 552-6.
- Geys, B. and K. Mause (2014). 'Are female legislators different? Exploring sex differences in German MPs' outside interests'. *Parliamentary Affairs*, forthcoming.
- Geys, B. (2014). 'Looks good, you're hired? Evidence from extra-parliamentary activities of German parliamentarians'. *German Economic Review*, forthcoming.
- Graziano, W.G., Jensen-Campbell, L.A. and Hair, E.C. (1996). 'Perceiving interpersonal conflict and reacting to it: The case for agreeableness'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **70**, 820-35.

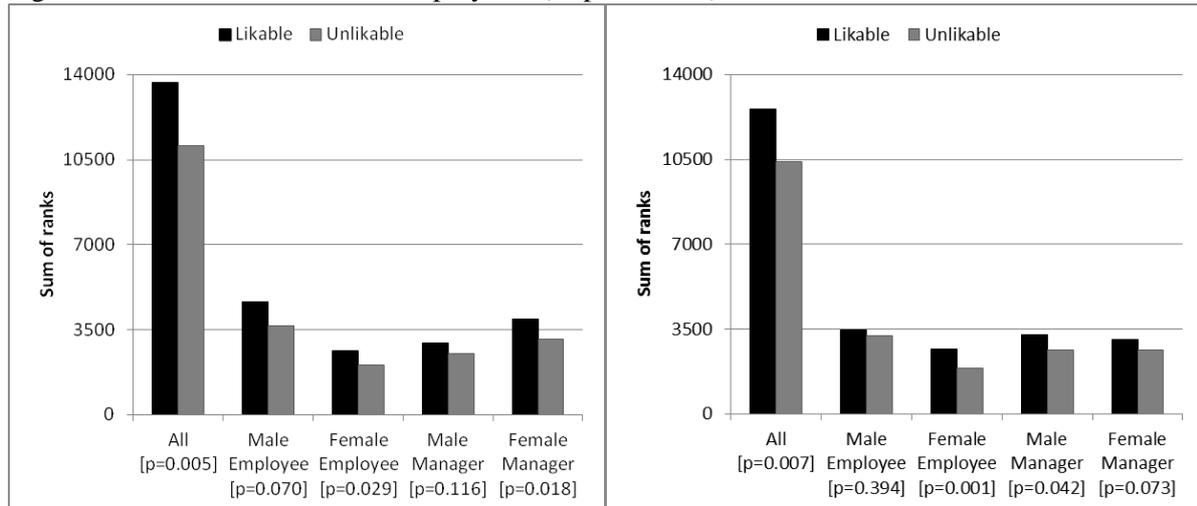
- Graziano, W.G. and Eisenberg, N.H. (1997). 'Agreeableness: A dimension of personality', in Hogan, R., Johnson, J.A. and Briggs, S.R. (Eds), *Handbook of Personality Psychology*, Academic Press: San Diego.
- Hamermesh, D.S. (2011). *Beauty Pays: Why Attractive People Are More Successful*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Heilman, M.E. (1983). 'Sex bias in work settings: The lack of fit model', in Staw B. and Cummings, L. (Eds), *Research in Organizational Behavior (Volume 5)*, JAI: Greenwich.
- Heilman, M.E. (1995). 'Sex stereotypes and their effects in the workplace: What we know and what we don't know'. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality*, **10(6)**, 3-26.
- Heilman, M.E. and Saruwatari, L.R. (1979). 'When beauty is beastly: The effects of appearance and sex on evaluations of job applicants for managerial and non-managerial jobs'. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, **23**, 360-72.
- Heilman, M.E. and Stopeck, M.H. (1985). 'Being attractive, advantage or disadvantage? performance-based evaluations and recommended personnel actions as a function of appearance, sex and job type'. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, **35**, 202-15.
- Hogan, J., and Holland, B. (2003). 'Using theory to evaluate personality and job-performance relations: A socioanalytic perspective'. *Journal of Applied Psychology* **88**, 100-12.
- Hogan, R. and Hogan, J. (2001). 'Assessing leadership: A view from the dark side'. *International Journal of Selection and Management*, **9**, 12-23.
- Hogan, R., Curphy, G.J. and Hogan, J. (1994). 'What we know about leadership: Effectiveness and personality'. *American Psychologist*, **49(6)**, 493-504.
- Hollander, E.P. and Julian, J.W. (1969). 'Contemporary trends in the analysis of leadership processes'. *Psychological Bulletin*, **71**, 387-91.

- House, R.J. (1977). 'A 1976 theory of charismatic leadership', in Hunt, J.G. and Larson, L.L. (Eds.), *Leadership: The Cutting Edge*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Hoyt, C.L., Simon, S. and Reid, L. (2009). 'Choosing the best (wo)man for the job: The effects of mortality salience, sex and gender on stereotypes of leader evaluations'. *The Leadership Quarterly*, **20**, 233-46.
- Humphries, A.C. (2000). 'Rudeness: The hidden cost of business'. *Business and Economic Review*, **47(1)**, 22-5.
- Jayanti, R.K. and Whipple, T.W. (2008). 'Like me, like me not: The role of physician likeability on service evaluations'. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, **16(3)**, 79-86.
- Judge, T.A., Bono, J.E., Ilies, R. and Gerhardt, M. (2002a). 'Personality and leadership: A qualitative and quantitative review'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, **87**, 765-80.
- Judge, T.A., Erez, A., Bono, J.E. and Thoresen, C.J. (2002b). 'Discriminant and incremental validity of four personality traits: Are measures of self-esteem, neuroticism, loss of control and generalized self-efficacy indicators of a common core construct?' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **83**, 693-710.
- Judge, T.A., Piccolo, R.F. and Kosalka, T. (2009). 'The bright and dark sides of leader traits: A review and theoretical extension of the leader trait paradigm'. *The Leadership Quarterly*, **20**, 855-75.
- Judge, T.A., Livingston, B.A. and Hurst, C. (2012). 'Do nice guys – and gals – really finish last? The joint effects of sex and agreeableness on income'. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, **102(2)**, 390-407.
- Kaplan, M.F. (1974). 'Context-induced shifts in personality trait evaluation: A comment on the evaluative halo effect and meaning change interpretations'. *Psychological Bulletin*, **81(11)**, 891-5.

- LePine, J.A. and van Dyne, L. (1998). 'Predicting voice behavior in work groups'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, **83**(6), 853-68.
- Little, A.C., R.P. Burriss, B.C. Jones and S.C. Roberts (2007). 'Facial appearance affects voting decisions'. *Evolution and Human Behavior*, **28**, 18-27.
- Mann, H.B. and Whitney, D.R. (1947). 'On a test whether one of two random variables is stochastically larger than the other'. *Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, **18**, 50-60.
- Naumann, L.P., Vazire, S., Rentfrow, P.J., and Gosling, S.D. (2009). 'Personality judgments based on physical appearance'. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, **35**(12), 1661-71.
- Nieva, V. and Gutek, B. (1981). *Women and Work*. New York: Praeger.
- Poutvaara, P., Jordahl, H., and Berggren, N. (2009). 'Faces of politicians: Babyfacedness predicts inferred competence but not electoral success'. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, **45**, 1132-5.
- Prime, J.L., N.M. Carter and T.M. Welbourne (2009). 'Women 'take care', men 'take charge': Managers' stereotypic perceptions of women and men leaders'. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, **12**(1), 25-49.
- Rich, G.A. (1997). 'The sales manager as a role model: Effects on trust, job satisfaction and performance of salespeople'. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, **25**(4), 319-28.
- Ridgeway, C.L. (1997). 'Interaction and the conservation of gender inequality: Considering employment'. *American Sociological Review*, **62**, 218-35.
- Rojahn, K. and Willemsen, T.M. (1994). 'The evaluation of effectiveness and likeability of gender-role congruent and gender-role incongruent leaders'. *Sex Roles*, **30**(1-2), 109-19.
- Sanders, T. (2006). *The Likeability Factor: How to Boost Your L-Factor and Achieve Your Life's Dreams*. New York: Crown Business.

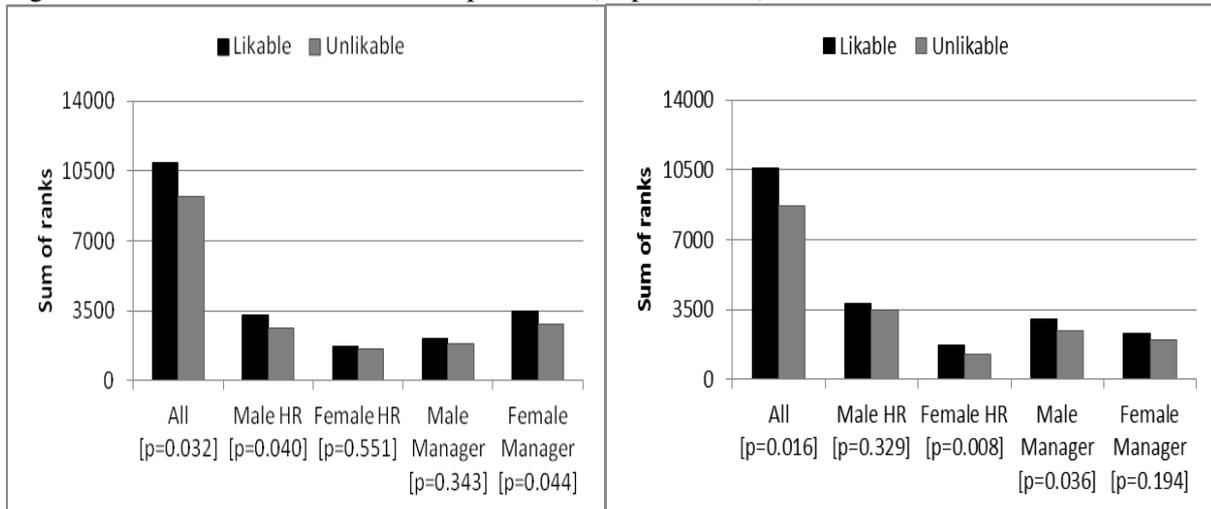
- Schein, V.E. (1973). 'The relationship between sex role stereotypes and requisite management characteristics', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, **57(2)**, 95-100.
- Schein, V.E., Mueller, R., Lituchy, T. and Liu, J. (1996). 'Think manager – think male: A global phenomenon?' *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, **17(1)**, 33-41.
- Schriesheim, C.A., Castro, S.L. and Cogliser C.C. (1999). 'Leader-member exchange (LMX) research: A comprehensive review of theory, measurement, and data-analytic practices.' *The Leadership Quarterly*, **10(1)**, 63-113.
- Sniderman, P.M., R.A. Brody and P.E. Tetlock (1991). *Reasoning and Choice: Explorations in Political Psychology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tyagi, P.K. (1985). 'Relative importance of key job dimensions and leadership behaviors in motivating salesperson work performance'. *Journal of Marketing*, **49**, 76-86.
- Uhl-Bien, M. (2006). 'Relational Leadership Theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing'. *The Leadership Quarterly*, **17(6)**, 654-76.
- Yukl, G. (1999). 'An evaluation of conceptual weaknesses in transformational and charismatic leadership theories.' *The Leadership Quarterly*, **10(2)**, 285-305.
- Wilcoxon, F. (1945). 'Individual comparisons by ranking methods'. *Biometrics*, **1**, 80-3.
- Wojciszke, B. and Abele, A.E. (2008). 'The primacy of communion over agency, and its reversals in evaluations'. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, **38**, 1139-47.
- Zaccaro, S.J., Kemp, C. and Bader, P. (2004) 'Leader traits and attributes', in Antonakis, J., Cianciolo, A.T. and Sternberg, R.J. (Eds.), *The Nature of Leadership*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Zinovyeva, N. and Bagues, M. (2011). Does gender matter for academic promotion? Evidence from a randomized natural experiment. *IZA Discussion Paper*, no. 5537.

Figure 1: Rank-sum test results ‘Employees’ (Experiment 1)



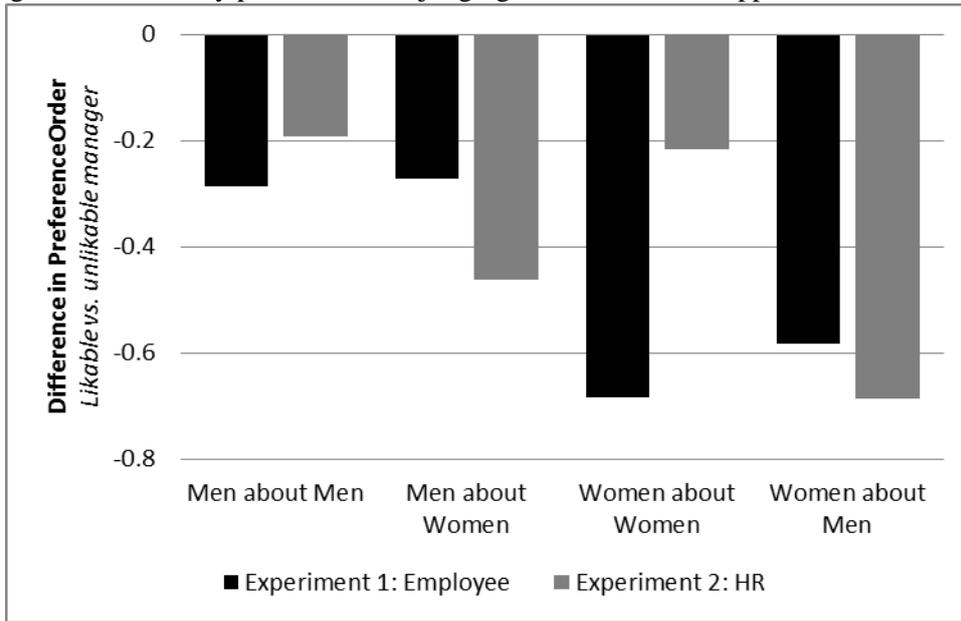
Note: The figures present the sum of the ranks obtained by likeable (black bars) and unlikeable (grey bars) managers in the preference order evaluations of respondents (with higher ranks indicating that managers end up *further down* the preference ordering). P-values derive from a non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test. The figure on the left-hand side is based on the experiment using pictures from a database containing 614 pictures of non-Norwegian individuals. The figure on the right-hand side instead relies on the alternative database containing 266 pictures of non-Norwegian individuals.

Figure 2: Rank-sum test results ‘HR department’ (Experiment 2)



Note: The figures present the sum of the ranks obtained by likeable (black bars) and unlikeable (grey bars) managers in the preference order evaluations of respondents (with higher ranks indicating that managers end up *further down* the preference ordering). P-values derive from a non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test. The figure on the left-hand side is based on the experiment using pictures from a database containing 614 pictures of non-Norwegian individuals. The figure on the right-hand side instead relies on the alternative database containing 266 pictures of non-Norwegian individuals.

Figure 3: Likeability penalties when judging one's own or the opposite sex



Note: The figure presents the average likeability penalty awarded to managers (i.e. how much further down the 4-point preference ranking a likeable manager is placed relative to an unlikable one) in four situations: i.e. male/female respondents evaluating managers of the same/different sex. The data employed here are pooled across both picture databases.