



# **Religious Discrimination in the Job Application Process and its Implications**

by

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of my proposed design study is to ask whether the religious affiliation of a subject and a series of job applicants causes religious discrimination in hiring practices. The social identity theory and rejection-identification models examine a person's role in a series of groups that, ultimately, makes up one's identity. When an affiliation to a group is strong, a person may tend to favor others within their group or discriminate against others who don't belong. I would research this bias using religious affiliation in the form of résumé reviews: while race, gender, sexual orientation, and political party have been studied in this format, religion has been continuously overlooked. With a résumé review and a survey question, we would see if a subject's role in his or her religious affiliation, and the extent to which one identifies with that group, would have an impact on the job application process. With this in mind, this study notes the need for diversity reform within companies. Although solutions, such as employee resource groups and diversity management programs, have diversified companies along race and gender, internal characteristics tend to be ignored. Additionally, one must pay attention to the type of company in question before he or she can make any decisions. Whether studying the beginning stages of the job application process or post-hire steps, this study raises awareness about diversity of the entire human person and how it relates to the company that he or she is working for.

## CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b>	pg 1
<b>Background</b>	pg 3
Social Identity Theory	pg 3
Rejection-Identification Model	pg 4
In-Group Favoritism and Out-Group Derogation	pg 5
Literature Review	pg 7
<b>Introduction to Résumé Study</b>	pg 10
Gender: Specific Aspects of Résumé	pg 11
Sexual Orientation: Post-Hire Steps	pg 12
Political Parties: In-Group Favoritism	pg 12
<b>Proposal</b>	pg 14
Religiosity and Categorical Variables	pg 16
Religiosity and Political Party	pg 17
<b>Methodology</b>	pg 19
Data Measures	pg 21
<b>Limitations</b>	pg 23
<b>Real-World Application</b>	pg 25
Employee Resource Groups	pg 25
Diversity Management	pg 27
Application to Secular Organizations	pg 27
Application to Faith-Based Organizations	pg 29
<b>Future Studies</b>	pg 31
<b>Conclusion</b>	pg 32
<b>Appendix</b>	pg 33
<b>References</b>	pg 38

## Introduction

As I searched for a marketing internship during the job application process, I still recall two experiences that would change the way I look at human resources. A career advisor who looked at my résumé recommended I remove an internship at St. Mary Student Parish from my experiences due to its religious implications. Additionally, when I went to a separate job interview, leaving the job on my résumé, I mentioned my faith and its importance to me to the interviewer. The interviewer mentioned we had the same faith, as well as a similar involvement with it, and we spent the rest of the interview talking about our religion. As I got an immediate call for a second-round interview, I pondered which aspects led me to the success of the interview: my potential, or my religious affiliation.

This speculation led me to my research project, which will investigate if individual in-group bias causes religious discrimination in hiring practices. Was the hiring manager biased when moving me onto the next round? What was the motivation for selecting me? I will study this using a résumé review methodology: after having students respond to demographic questions, I will hand them a job description with a group of résumés, each with similar qualifications but a different experience concerning a religious affiliation. The résumé review stage of the job application process is very easy to replicate, has significant real-world implications, and can reveal a lot about our subjects and, therefore, the human resources field.

Ultimately, the rising issue of discrimination in the workplace cannot be ignored. Although I was lucky that my religious affiliation brought me to the next round, due to the similarity of religion between me and the interviewer, there may have been other candidates who were more qualified. If discrimination against religiously-affiliated candidates does occur, this study can raise the awareness of the need to reform hiring practices. Currently, many companies

have implemented various types of diversity practices, with employee resource groups and diversity management being the most popular. However, both focus primarily on race and gender—external and visual characteristics. While race and gender diversity are essential pieces of achieving company benchmarks of varying points of view, proposing this study has called to attention the diversity of the human person. Diversity expands past what has been previously imagined, with expression of religion, political party, and sexual orientation becoming more prominent in the workplace. Therefore, if this proposed study was to be completed, there calls to mind a new call to reform hiring practices and company diversity tactics.

## **Background**

### ***Social Identity Theory***

Group dynamics were first studied with the introduction of the social identity theory by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, which “examines the relationship of the individual with the group and is an attempt to explain when and why people identify with and behave as part of a group” (Zeugner-Roth et al.). Although there is an individual piece of one’s identity, a person’s identity is largely made up of the groups that he or she is affiliated with. The unspoken call to support one’s in-groups makes up a lot of the decisions in a person’s life: for example, in Zeugner-Roth’s study, one who scored high on national identity “prefer[ed] products from their home country because of their need for a positive social identity” (Zeugner-Roth et al.). Even individuals who are cosmopolitan, or having an increasing open-mindedness to diversity (and, thereby, think the entire world is his or her “in-group”), have “strong local connections” (Zeugner-Roth et al.). Despite an open-mindedness to other cultures and backgrounds, identifications with different groups forms the base of one’s identity.

In the context of religion, the extent to which one is affiliated with their faith largely impacts the association with this specific group. People who are deeply religiously affiliated keeps this piece of their identity at the center of every action. The in-group association is so dominant because it takes up his or her thought process and decision making. Ultimately, this affiliation with the community of believers leads to bonding with other members of the in-group, solidifying a place within the group. Conversely, someone who isn’t as aligned with his or her religion may not share this bond with the group. For example, imagine a white, heterosexual, Catholic woman who strongly identifies with her religion next to a white, heterosexual, Catholic woman who does not identify as strongly with Catholicism. On paper, they are the same;

however, the affiliation with their religion or the lack thereof is what makes each of their identities. Each of these characteristics of self; namely, race, gender, religion, economic status, and other aspects, group together to make up one's identity.

### ***Rejection-Identification Model***

Intensifying the effects of the social identity theory is the rejection-identification model, or the idea that “rejection by an out-group can lead minority group members to identify more with their in-group, thereby buffering them from the negative effects of discrimination” (Ramos et. al). Many individuals within a group, particularly in groups which are largely discriminated against, grow a tighter bond to their in-group due to pushback by others. For example, if a Muslim woman is negatively stereotyped against on the street, she will identify much closer with her Islamic background than had previously thought. The affiliation and identification in the group is the most important matter in this subject: without feeling a sense of belonging in the group, an individual's mental health suffers when negatively stereotyped against. Conversely, one's self-esteem who largely affiliates with a minority group increases, even when discriminated against, due to coping mechanisms. Having a safe place of comfort in times of oppression or unfriendly treatment helps these minority groups navigate the strong reaction of counter-cultural affiliations. In the context of the job application process, individuals who are discriminated against based on their religion must have a strong support system and dedication to their faith in order for the rejection-identification model to hold precedence. Regarding the Muslim woman, and an unfortunate situation of discrimination for wearing a hijab, the rejection-identification model says she will persist in wearing this article of clothing if it's a central part of her life and support system.

Miguel Ramos, Clare Cassidy, Stephen Reicher, and Alexander Haslam strived to study this in a long-term setting, seeking to understand the underlying principles of the rejection-identification model. Using the three-factor model of identification, made famous by James E Cameron in 2004, the team measured the subjects' affiliation in regards to *centrality*, or importance of group in one's life, *in-group affect*, or the emotional reaction, and *in-group ties*, which refers to sense of belonging within the group. The team found that this relationship is, in fact, causal: discrimination of majority out-groups leads to this affiliation. Studying over this longitudinal manner allowed the team to find where one of these aspects came from, increasing the credibility of the study. However, with more fluid characteristics of one's identity, it would be curious to discover the likelihood of lessening affiliation with the minority group in order to avoid majority discrimination. With a non-categorical characteristic of one's personality, such as religion, applicants may be able to downplay the centrality of a minority affiliation to fit into the majority group. Even if the résumé reads that an applicant is an office receptionist at a parish office, one might gloss over the importance of that religious affiliation to avoid a possibly controversial conversation. This would go directly against the rejection-identification model, noting that discrimination of a majority group towards a minority may lessen the centrality and in-group ties of a job applicant.

### ***In-Group Favoritism and Out-Group Derogation***

The social identity theory and rejection-identification model are philosophies not yet put into human behavior: the identification with a specific group, and the length to which he or she associates with the group, is a fact of one's identity. However, this theory creates an urge to act in two behavioral tendencies: in-group bias or favoritism and out-group derogation. In-group bias is "when people strongly identify with their in-group and when their self-esteem is linked to



the perceived worthiness of their in-group, they will tend to favor their in-group” (Dasgupta).

The social identity theory is the starting point for this behavior: the strong affiliation to the group is what brings about potential favoritism and bias. Since people within their specific in-group are more likely to find commonalities, they will typically tend to prefer these individuals to others.

On the other hand, actions can grow hostile with out-group derogation, or hostility towards people outside of an individual’s group. Once again, the social identity theory is the original stage of the process: it is the actions that could follow when a person makes a judgment based on another person’s out-group characteristic.

Both in-group favoritism and out-group derogation exist in the job application process, thereby impacting the companies they work for. Human resources managers, particularly inexperienced ones, will choose candidates they are more comfortable with. This pertains to more trivial matters, such as a tennis hobby or a previous high school affiliation: however, it presents itself in more serious terms. A human resources manager who strongly identifies as Catholic will interact with each of a job’s applicants in one of few ways. First, if the applicant is Catholic, the manager may have a tendency (intentional or even unintentional) to find more topics of conversation with this candidate, feeling more comfortable and thus moving him or her onto the next round. Conversely, if an applicant is not Catholic—either differently religiously affiliated or a nonbeliever—there may be more effort into a conversation or more opportunity for disagreement on relevant parts of a person’s identity. It is impossible to pinpoint a person’s behavior on one characteristic; namely, it is difficult to decide whether judgment lies on solely religion or race. Ultimately, behavioral decisions during the job application process don’t fall solely on religion: the complicated dynamics of the job application process and the comfort level

of the human person make it more difficult to create diverse environments, unintentionally passing employees different than him or herself.

***Literature Review:*** “*Religiosity and Prejudice Revisited: In-Group Favoritism, Out-Group Derogation, or Both?*”

Megan Johnson, Wade Rowatt, and Jordan LaBouff completed a priming study in 2012 that studied the in-group and out-group behaviors towards Christians and what they deem “outside groups” (Muslims, atheists, and homosexual men). Their hypothesis was correctly proven that there will be more hostility to these outside groups when subjects were primed with Christian words, including “sermon”, “Messiah”, or “Christ”. With a particularly strong affiliation to their in-group affiliation, intensified through the priming of their religious membership, out-group derogation became much more present. This study did a revolutionary job of realizing the combined effects of the social identity theory, the rejection-identification model, and the actions or biases that may follow. Christians, when primed to recognize and identify with their religious affiliation, became more prone to associating themselves with the group. This in-group bias highlighted ethnocentrism within individuals, who perceived that their religion was the center of everything and that any group outside of them was a threat. Therefore, this amplified their tendency to target minority groups who generally don’t associate with this religious affiliation, both through commonly stereotyped characteristics and intergroup bias.

However, the authors address limitations of the study: the shortage of studying other religions, the fluidity of religion with the introduction of spirituality, and the lack of behavior and real-world application. Especially in the United States, Christianity is considered a “majority” religion: 70.6% of Americans identify as Christian in some capacity, with 25.4% of this group identifying as Evangelical Protestant and 20.8% of Christians identifying as Catholic

(Religious Landscape Study). If the team wanted to study the effects of the rejection-identification model deeper, which aligns closely with the social identity theory, subjects with more diverse religions and backgrounds may have revealed more about the study. Additionally, the stricter borders of religion have decreased with the introduction of simple spirituality instead of a religious hierarchy. A belief in God with an undetermined religious affiliation has permeated American culture today, particularly when practicing religion in the workplace. Many studies have explored the primarily positive effects of individual religious freedom and spirituality in the workplace. Similar articles universally agree that internal productivity increases when freedom to express individual religion is higher. The *Journal of Managerial Psychology* defines spirituality in more detail in an article titled “The ‘what,’ ‘why,’ and ‘how’ of spirituality in the workplace”, confirming researchers’ hypotheses that spiritual freedom, and signals of it, increases productivity. In the article, the drive for this freedom in the workplace is defined as either religious affiliation, internal focus of individual, or existential questions. As previously predicted, this individualism has a positive impact “in the areas of creativity, honesty and trust, personal fulfillment, and commitment, which will ultimately lead to increased organizational performance” (Krishnakumar and Neck). Since each person’s viewpoint of religion or spirituality dramatically varies, it is hard to categorize subjects based on a particular religious affiliation, thereby complicating the experiment.

Finally, although the study revealed common thought patterns, the lack of real-world application may decrease the credibility of the experiment. Experiments are regularly placed into fixed conditions, eliminating the potential of real-world interruptions. One solution to increase the likelihood of repeating this in a more realistic context is the résumé review study, which would put religious in-group bias in the context of the job application process. This research

introduces a quantitative methodology to measure qualitative measures of discrimination, using résumé reviews to determine the effects of a certain characteristic on a likelihood of being called back for a job. Similar to Johnson, Rowatt, and LaBouff's experiment, there will be priming in a résumé review version of the experiment through experiences on an applicant's résumé. For example, if an applicant worked as an intern or receptionist at a Catholic parish or Jewish temple, the recognition of that position on the résumé will set off priming effects—even if the applicant isn't religiously affiliated.

## Introduction to Résumé Study

Résumé review studies, or having subjects rank résumés controlled by various characteristics, create a real-world application to priming effects completed by Johnson, Rowatt, and LaBouff. One of the most famous studies that researched the role of discrimination in the job market was “Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination”, a 2003 study completed by Marianne Bertrand and Sendhil Mullainathan of the *Massachusetts Institute of Technology Department of Economics*. This research introduced a quantitative methodology to measure qualitative measures of discrimination, using résumé reviews to determine the effects of race on a likelihood of being called back for a job. By creating fictitious personalities with historically black and white names, the researchers could separate the difference between the success rate of each race. The researchers responded to 1,300 ads in the Boston and Chicago job markets with nearly 5,000 résumés, with each ad receiving approximately four résumés: two white applicants, with one low qualification and one high qualification, and two black applications with the same format. Their hypothesis was correctly proven that résumés with primarily black names were likely to be discriminated against; however, the numbers were much more alarming than they anticipated. The researchers were surprised to find that white applicants were 50% more likely to get called back for a job than black applicants with the same qualifications. Even “Federal contractors and employers who list “Equal Opportunity Employer” in their ad discriminate as much as other employers” (Bertrand and Mullainathan), citing a significant need for companies to revise hiring practices and avoid racial discrimination.

The study was revolutionary at the time of its release, particularly in its success to quantify variables that are primarily qualitative. Bertrand and Mullainathan’s research was very

successful in finding a clear correlation between race and likelihood of callback with a low cost: since applicants did not need to be present for interviews, the researchers could send out a high multitude of résumés. Additionally, the study was completed in a strong real-world application, with résumés sent out to real job advertisements. Finally, even though the study was completed fifteen years ago, its relevance and validity still holds. In 2016, Sonia Kang, Katherine DeCelles, András Tilcsik, and Sora Jun re-conducted the experiment with the results still holding true: diverse applicants “experience[d] disadvantage when they apply to ostensibly pro-diversity employers” (Kang et al.). In this experiment, they even had applicants “whiten their résumés” to see if this would change the outcome of the study. It was alarming that black applicants felt the need to conceal their identity in order to find a job: this, therefore, raised further awareness about the real-world implications of résumé review studies.

### ***Gender: Specific Aspects of Résumé***

Since the release of Bertrand and Mullainathan’s experiment in 2003, résumé review studies have exploded in the field of research. In November of 2004, Michael Cole, Hubert Feild, and William Giles used a résumé review study to explore the role of gender in the application process, titled “Interaction of Recruiter and Applicant Gender in Résumé Evaluation: A Field Study”. This experiment had the same format as the study completed in 2003, with the dependent variable being the likelihood of a callback for an interview and the independent variable being gender. However, this study also explored the motivations of the recruiter by choosing the subjects instead of sending out résumés to random advertisements. This helped the researchers control variables of their subjects, the human resources managers, and study how each gender reacted to callbacks of their respective gender’s résumés. Also different to the race study was the investigation of specific traits of a résumé, exploring extracurricular activities, academic

performance, and work experience to see if there's a pattern of success for each gender. Similar to the race study, the researchers found that women's job applications were much more likely to be discriminated against than men. Yet, men "perceived female applicants as having more extracurricular interests than male applicants" (Cole, Field, and Giles), while women rated both gendered applications as having approximately the same amount. Most importantly to the experiment, the researchers found that inexperienced managers were more likely to discriminate against women, once again recognizing the need for reform in the job application process.

### ***Sexual Orientation: Post-Hire Steps***

These studies soon hit international attention, as countries such as the Greek labor market studied the role of an applicant's sexual orientation in the résumé review process in 2009 (titled "Sexual orientation discrimination in the labour market"). Similar to résumé review studies before, the researchers correctly predicted that homosexual men were much more likely to be discriminated against than heterosexual men. However, this experiment added a new element by viewing next steps after applicants are hired, studying if a wage gap exists between minorities and their counterparts. Researchers were pleasantly affirmed to find that a wage gap did not exist once a minority applicant was hired. This spoke more directly to a company's outlook on diversity as opposed to the individual person: if a company was committed to embracing diversity of employees, they promoted it at every stage of the job application and company process.

### ***Political Party: In-Group Favoritism***

Finally, another résumé review study explored not just discrimination, but potential unconscious resentment towards individuals outside of their in-group. The rise of cognitive psychology studies have raised awareness of nonconscious bias toward human discrimination.

People take their perspective political party very seriously, as “when people strongly identify with their in-group and when their self-esteem is linked to the perceived worthiness of their in-group, they will tend to favor their in-group and sometimes derogate other out-groups” (Dasgupta). In-group favoritism, or when people side with individual characteristics of their identities, is very prevalent among political parties – sometimes unintentionally. A study completed in 2014, titled “Fear and Loathing across Party Lines: New Evidence on Group Polarization” by Shanto Iyengar and Sean Westwood, studies the effects of a subject’s political party on likelihood of callback. In the United States, where political affiliations are particularly hostile, subjects were much more likely to choose someone with their party’s in-group – even if the opposing candidate of the out-group was much more qualified (Iyengar and Westwood).



## **Proposal**

***Proposal Statement:*** The social identity theory and rejection-identification theory implies that religious in-group favoritism and out-group derogation, respectively, will be present during the job application process. The closer an interviewer identifies with his or her religion, the more likely both types of bias will take place.

Résumé review studies have revealed various biases on race, gender, political party, and sexual orientation; however, all studies have overlooked religion's impact on the job application process. Therefore, the purpose of the study would be to ask whether individual characteristics causes religious discrimination in hiring practices using résumé review studies. If we were to go through with the study, we believe there would be a combination of in-group bias and out-group derogation toward individuals of other religions due to the high importance of religion (or lack thereof) in one's personal life. I believe the social identity theory and rejection-identification theory will work in tandem to create in-group favoritism and out-group derogation: there will be hints of both theories in play during this study. With social identity theory and rejection-identification theory aligning closely with each other, leading to actions of in-group favoritism and out-group derogation, it could make the connection between how a person identifies with a characteristic of his or her identity (in this case, religion) and how he or she will act when it comes up in the job application process.

Although both theories pertain to many different human characteristics, such as race, gender, or sexual orientation, religion's focus on both supernatural and hierarchical components (Johnson et. al) makes it important to study. Religion is a very important characteristic to many—even those who don't believe in a deity qualify their atheism as a piece of their identity. When religion is revealed on one's résumé, even if the religion shown on the résumé isn't

affiliated to the applicant in question, the priming effects may set off stereotypes and general unfamiliarity. Additionally, I believe that the ways that individuals evaluate political candidates will be very similar to how human resource managers evaluate job candidates. Due to the nature of non-categorical variables, meaning individual identification with certain characteristics can fall under a spectrum of affiliation, political party and religion can be very polarizing topics. Framing and priming in the news, like priming studies discussed earlier, lead to many preconceived notions about another side's point of view, negatively influencing the potential rise of stereotypes in this topic.

If the hypothesis was to be true, that religious in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination are present in the job application process, this will call to attention the presence of bias in many real-world situations. One must consider whether the world views religious background in a job as a projection of success, or if the candidate's background discounts his or her potential. For example, one could measure a public-school teacher's predicted strengths compared to a Sunday school teacher. Both require the same talents for the job in question; however, will the presence of religion change the perception of the candidate's potential? Additionally, if the human resources manager or interview is Christian, will he or she either favor this candidate for their affiliation or discriminate against the applicant?

The first part of the study involves the base action, seeing if either of these actions are even present. The second level of this proposed study relates to the person's level of religiosity and its effects on in-group favoritism and out-group derogation. We believe people who demonstrate higher levels of religiosity, according to our survey, will have a higher likelihood of bias against applicants different to them. The social identity theory shows that a deeper affiliation to one's religion means it becomes a central part of his or her identity. If someone is

strongly tied to this part of themselves, the idea that someone might disagree with these beliefs could implicitly impact the application. A subject's level of religiosity, and discovering what religion or spirituality means for the subject, has big implications for how a person will behave when it becomes time to select an applicant.

### *Religiosity and Categorical Variables*

Determining a subject's identification of religiosity is complicated due to its non-categorical measure. Many résumé review studies have researched priming and bias when it concerns categorical variables, such as race and gender, because it is easier to study. For example, when studying gender, the majority of applicants fall into "male", "female", or "other". Even though identifications of gender and sexuality are rising in number, it is easier to discover how one identifies him or herself. In our literature view, we define the term "categorical variable" as an identity characteristic that takes a binary value. Gender or race, therefore, would be categorical variables. Although race has a few more characteristics, with rising children of mixed races, these features don't fall on as much of a "spectrum" as non-categorical variables. Conversely, as talked about when studying data measures, religion may not fall into this similar mold. As data measures demonstrate, there are many different levels of worship: some adhere to religious affiliation on a cultural level, celebrating holidays and traditions without attending services, while others closely keep the rules of their specified religion. Although it is easy to identify two subjects as Christian, the levels of dedication to this piece of their identity are hard to define into one variable.

Discovering this religiosity is also complicated through lack of external factors that give away a person's affiliation. In viewing a candidate for a job, external characteristics reveal a person's race, gender, and other pieces of his or her physical appearance. Other than physical

artifacts that may reveal one's religion (such as a yarmulke in Judaism or a hijab in Muslim culture), it is much harder to distinguish a religious affiliation based on looking at a subject. Finally, religion becomes hard to measure due to the freedom in the United States to choose one's religion. Although many subjects would have a strong bias from their family members and their previous experiences (Gerber et. al), Americans can choose their religion, political party, or other non-categorical characteristics. While some are born with their race, gender, or sexual orientation, the United States's bill on religious freedom allows open fluidity and flexibility with these aspects of a person's character. Ultimately, not everything falls into perfect categories, especially when studying characteristics of the human person. It is difficult to find perfectly binary variables—especially religion when studying real-world applications.

### ***Religiosity and Political Party***

Of all the characteristics studied with résumés reviews and priming studies, religiosity falls most similarly to political party in terms of how others receive it. In culture today, there tends to be a “connection between religiosity and political conservatism because engagement with political discourse indicates characteristics go together” (Malka et al.). In other words, many of the questions people seek in religion, such as uncertainties of our place in society and how the world needs to work, can be answered by both philosophies, thereby overlapping. Unfortunately, these characteristics also tend to be the most polarizing: due to religious and political freedom in the United States, the ability to choose these characteristics of one's identity increases a person's sense of ethnocentrism (Busby et al.). Additionally, society's influence on a person's decision making due to priming and framing effects, particularly with frames in thought, impact how individuals perceive situations around them (Busby et al.). In the political sphere, individuals “consider a range of evaluative dimensions including favoring or opposing a

candidate's specific policy stances and liking or disliking particular personality characteristics” (Busby et al.).

The way information is given and framed strongly impacts the perception of a person, especially with how strongly affiliated a candidate is with his or her political party. Just the association with the political party (in the United States, either Democratic or Republican) sets off a series of preconceived notions based off their beliefs. When entering the job application process, therefore, it is important to pay attention to these preconceived notions—especially with the priming effects set on each résumé. If patterns repeat, a lot of the subject's bias will come down to stereotypes or other judgment points of a person's characteristic. Since we prime the subject with religious experience, whether Catholic or Muslim, the in-group bias or out-group favoritism may stem from previous perceptions of a group.

## Methodology

With all of this in mind, the goal of the design study is to quantify the qualitative question of religious discrimination in hiring practices. There are two distinct ways to collect data of religiosity in subjects: empirical surveys and behavioral studies, both of which will be completed in this study. Therefore, the advantages to Bertrand and Mullainathan's experiment are prevalent as I dive into a résumé review study of my own, changing the religious affiliation of the subject as our independent variable. Time and scope limitations only allow for us to focus on the bias of Catholic interviewers and their relation to in-group and out-group applicants. According to the Pew Research Center, 70.6% of Americans are Christian, with 25.4% of this group identifying as Evangelical Protestant and 20.8% of Christians identifying as Catholic (Religious Landscape Study). Although America is increasing quickly in religious diversity, Christianity remains the majority in religious affiliation. I decided to make the in-group Catholicism due to its relationship with Christianity: as a subgroup within the majority, there's a fine line of many followers but not having the number too overwhelming. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is the callback of the applicant, seeing if there is a correlation between an individual's religion and their likelihood of choosing a candidate with a similar affiliation.

First, the subject will be handed a job description with a company mission statement and three résumés to review for the job. Appendix A shows résumés for an event planning job: Résumé A.1 shows Mary Sullivan, the in-group résumé, with an event planning position at St. Mary's Parish. Résumé A.2 is the résumé of Shiya Barakat, an event planner at the Muslim Philanthropy Initiative. Finally, Résumé A.3 shows Cassidy Jacobs, the control résumé, with no religious affiliation on her job descriptions. Instead of an either/or stance on the matter, deciding whether the job application process consists of either in-group bias or out-group derogation, we

will be studying them simultaneously to discover the presence, if any, of both theories. A sample job description in event planning is shown in Appendix B, giving the requirements for the applicant and position. With this, we will give them a specific amount of time to review the résumés, choose people to interview, and write out why they chose those people to proceed to the next step of the job application process. My hypothesis will be proven correct if the subject chooses candidates who are similarly religiously affiliated, demonstrating a high in-group bias as a human resources manager.

The recognition of religion was super important in our design process due to the possibility of applicants to overlook the presence of religion in one's résumé. Résumé review studies before ours did the recognition simply by the name of the applicant, such as Lakisha and Emily in Bertrand and Mullainathan's study. The names of our applicants would be too ambiguous to guess a religious affiliation; therefore, we wanted to create a direct interaction with religious affiliation through some of the job summaries on the applicants' résumés. To find a closer correlation between our independent and dependent variable, all applicants have a few cues to one's religious affiliation: Mary, a commonly Catholic name, is used for the in-group's résumé for that reason. However, many variables within the résumé are controlled, with GPA, school status, and gender examples of variables kept the same.

The second part of the experiment is a survey, where subjects will answer a few demographic questions about themselves. In designing the experiment, we wanted to create both a behavioral and internal state of mind measure. The behavioral aspect is in the review of the résumés, explaining why the subject chose the résumés they did, while the survey understands the background of the subjects. Another layer of social identity theory involves the idea that "not all individuals in a group possess the same strength of identification" (Welbourne et al.);

therefore, there will be some individuals who, due to their lack of affiliation with a group they are a part of, will sway our data. Appendix C shows the survey, a list of questions that will be brief but revealing of the subject's level of religiosity. Having the subjects complete the survey after the behavioral portion of the experiment increases the likelihood that they will fill out the questions. Since the subject has mostly completed the study at this point, seeing the questions and their tie to individual characteristics won't skew the behavior of the subject. Even if we give away the nature of our study through the questions we ask in the survey, we've already recorded their actions in the résumé review. Nevertheless, it is helpful to get this information to see if the behavior of an applicant and his or her internal state of mind match. The survey increases the richness and accuracy of our data, demonstrating if our hypothesis is correct that a closer religious affiliation will increase the likelihood of discrimination against out-groups.

### *Data Measures*

Religion is also complex to measure and study due to limitations in examining and expressing religion. Empirically, Johnson's priming experiment asks subjects "To what extent do you consider yourself a religious person" on a scale of 1 to 7. To cover every basis, including individuals who identify with a God but not a religion, Johnson asks the same question about spirituality as well. Johnson and her team made a wise decision to ask these questions at the end of the experiment to ensure more responses and avoiding priming with religion. Additionally, by asking for these numbers on a scale, the team embraces the idea that religion is non-binary. The question "Do you identify strongly with your religion" requires more than a positive or negative response: it requires behavioral explanation for the daily impact that faith has on his or her life.

However, Johnson and her team relies too much on self-reporting of subjects, who may either downplay or increase their level of religiosity in order to impress the team. In the middle



of my job application process, many employers encouraged me to remove the experience from St. Mary Student Parish due to its Catholic affiliation. With my self-reporting, I could change the results to benefit myself, despite the false documentation of my previous experiences. Inevitably, there should be some behavioral data collection to measure religiosity of subjects. A survey by Gallup put this into practice, classifying groups of people as “very religious” if there is daily interaction and weekly services—approximately 41% of U.S. adults (Gallup). Meanwhile, nonreligious Americans, 30% of adults, rarely or never attend services. The remaining 29%, the “moderately religious” group, consider religion to be important but don’t attend services (or vice versa). Clearly, “Do you attend religious services” did not cover enough ground when studying religiosity.

Lines get blurred, however, when attempting to study the intensity of one’s religion between groups. What would the study look like for someone who is extremely Catholic versus someone who doesn’t identify as strongly with his or her religion? What would it look like for someone who is extremely Jewish versus someone who strongly identifies with his or her Muslim faith? Some articles argue that intense religious affiliation, even between two different religions, brings commonality between individuals. In the job application process, two people can bond over their close connection to their faiths—even if those two religions are not the same. However, other articles also argue for the presence of intergroup conflict between two persons strongly associated with different faiths (Ysseldyk). While a strong bond with other members of the in-group is used as solid ground and higher individual self-esteem, people with a stronger association to their faith can be more hostile to out-group members who disagree with their beliefs.

## Limitations

Due to the nature of the project, such as the limited time and resources, there are some limitations with the design of the experiment. In order to accomplish the project on a smaller scope, the bias focuses on one religion: Catholicism. Although the ideal design of the experiment would involve more religions, the original proposal needed to present a more controlled study, especially one that could be achieved within a smaller timeframe. However, we find the potential results generalizable to all religious affiliations—even with individuals who don't follow a religion. Although each religion is different in structure, the relational tie and belonging to the social group remains the same. We find that Christianity, and more specifically Catholicism, is the benchmark to other religions. Culturally, Christianity is widespread in the United States, with many individuals partaking in traditions related to this faith. Therefore, if we were to replace the religious affiliation of the interviewer to one that is less prevalent in the United States, I believe the results would be similar, if not more prominent in other religions. For example, due to the rejection-identification model, subjects with Muslim affiliations would more strongly identify with applicants to their similar religion.

Another limitation involves the interaction of different identity points to create one's identity. One does not identify simply as Christian, Jewish, or atheist: a person is affiliated with race, gender, political party, and the like. As discussed with the résumé review studies, there tends to be a societal in-group and out-group, and how these characteristics interact together is not to be ignored. Bernadette Park and a group of researchers studied this “intergroup contact” to see how different characteristics of one's identity interacted with each other. They found the presence of stereotypes hard to ignore, and many groups decreased in performance when negative stereotypes rose to prominence through priming. For example, Asian women, when

responding to both stereotypes that “Asians are smart” and “women are less superior than men”, their performance in tests decreased. Therefore, to strengthen this experiment, I want to find a way to study combinations of different characteristics to see if results change; namely, religion and gender or race.

Finally, a limitation involves the lack of religion in the field of research, arguably due to the topic’s sensitivity. As mentioned before, our survey questions were placed at the end of the study to increase the likelihood of receiving answers. However, there is still a chance of opting out of the survey questions due to discomfort with the questions. Although this proposed study attempts to break the barriers of discussing religion, particularly with increasing diversity in the workplace, our results may decrease in credibility if subjects opt out of answering sensitive, personal questions. The survey questions remain objective and nonjudgmental, which I believe will make subjects more comfortable with answering the questions honestly.

## **Real-World Application**

Ultimately, this experiment calls to attention the debate to increase workplace diversity, especially when concerning the entirety of the human person. The proposed study would determine if religious discrimination in the job application exists; however, the next idea to consider is whether religious preference should be present within certain organizations. Many organizations have taken diverse approaches to confront this topic; however, according to a study on diversity management, many companies focus on just one approach to equality (Shena et al.). For example, a company would prioritize racial diversity, overlooking gender, religion, sexuality, and other characteristics of one's identity. Additionally, as in the world of research, religious diversity tends to be overlooked over external diversity—or, as previously mentioned, visible characteristics such as race or gender. If our hypothesis proves to be correct, that discrimination begins at the introductory stages of the job application process (in this case, in religion), we must study best practices for handling biases. Unfortunately, the solution varies based on a number of factors regarding the organization and the company culture: namely, the type of organization, whether intrapreneurship is already present in the company, and the platforms already in place for increasing diversity.

### ***Employee Resource Groups***

The emergence of employee resource group (ERGs) is one increasingly popular method to approaching diversity that focuses primarily on one characteristic. ERGs started as an informal way for employees with similar interests to meet; however, they have turned into an integral part of many companies' diversity strategies. In most companies, human resources departments are the primary funders of ERGs (Employee Network and Affinity Groups). This extends to the very beginning of the job application process, where recruiters will promote ERGs to attract potential

diversity champions. Appendix D shows a real-world application of ERGs in the workplace: American Express has 16 ERGs, with 3 focused on religion, 4 focused on race, 2 on gender, and the rest encompassing other categories of diversity (Appendix D). Out of the many diversity solutions, this one closely relates to the nature of our study; first, primarily, by the “singular focus” (Welbourne et al.) of each group. Additionally, the social identity theory and rejection-identification model strongly predicts the success of an ERG, where “group effectiveness is dependent upon the strength of its members’ social identities” (Welbourne et al.). This has proven both benefits and drawbacks to company culture: while employees felt closer tied to their identity, it occasionally led to an increased sense of competition between ERGs. With race and gender ERGs ranking highest in popularity by wide margins, smaller affinity groups feel they may have to fight their way to funding from human resources departments. Additionally, only 2% of affinity groups are dedicated to intersectionality between groups (Glassman et al.), bringing the groups farther from each other. Therefore, while the introduction of ERGs has shown large benefits for many companies, the implementation between groups must be worked on to truly increase holistic diversity.

Despite diverse purposes of ERGs, many affinity groups have the same structure and organization. I had a personal experience with a gender-based ERG this summer at the company I worked for; yet, while it was focused on gender, I saw many applications to a potential ERG with a religious priority. With female mentorship, networking events, and inspiring leader presentations, each of these aspects of the ERG can be applied to any group within a company. Yet, out of 16 companies studied, American Express was the only company with an ERG related to religious affiliation or interfaith participation (Employee Network and Affinity Groups). With employee interest, and an increased commitment to varied ERG topics, affinity groups can

promote diversity, protect the company from legal issues concerning discrimination, and create an environment of inclusiveness within an organization.

### ***Diversity Management***

Another tactic, which research claims is less successful in tackling diversity, is through diversity training within its company. Within the new millennium, “diversity training and management development are receiving considerable attention” (Shena et al.) in the workplace. One solution in action is the introduction of the “Chief Diversity Officer” (CDO), an executive position in workplaces and college universities who works on diversity and inclusion within the workplace. This position, though rising in popularity, is inspected closely due to its intrapreneurial focus: many critics have a hard time finding the financial benefits to the position (Leon). Similar to the ERG solution, diversity management has also received pushback due to the polarizing mentality. C.W. Von Bergen cites an “us vs. them” mentality in diversity training, where sessions point out those who are “different” (Von Bergen et al.). With only one face of the company, especially in a position calling to mind the need for diversity within an organization such as a CDO, the expectation of others in that same minority may ultimately effect performance. For example, if a “token” black man in a predominantly white office is elected Chief Diversity Officer, he feels more pressure to succeed in the job on behalf of his out-group. This extends to any characteristic: gender, religion, or political party all fall prey to this mentality. Luckily, increased research on the subject has led to more effective diversity training programs, and will continue to do so by tailoring it to the specific organization in question.

### ***Application to Secular Organizations***

Paying attention to the size and mission of the organization is essential to achieving diversity measures. For example, ERGs and diversity training look very different for secular

organizations than they do for ones with a faith objective. Secular organizations, usually larger than faith-based organizations, take different approaches to reaching diversity—even diversity that expands past race and gender. Gerald Davis and Christopher White write about implementing intrapreneurial ventures, such as ERGs or diversity management, in *Changing Your Company From the Inside Out*. ERGs take a bottom-up approach, allowing lower-level employees to form enough change to make action travel upwards. Many ERGs rely on face-to-face interactions and less flashy tactics; yet, they “provide a platform for innovators and movements to launch actions toward their goals” (Davis et al.). On the other hand, diversity management takes a top-down approach, funneling from executive positions and filtering down the chain. According to Davis and White, “change at the top can be transformative for social innovation within companies” (Davis et al.), especially with the right business culture.

Usually, larger companies need lots of lower-level employee activity to attract the attention needed to raise awareness about diversity measures; for this reason, ERGs have been commonly more effective with larger companies. With more employees, and more diversity of thought, a variety of solutions tailored to the company raise important points within a specific employee characteristic. On the other hand, smaller companies are more likely to follow a Chief Diversity Officer who is either similar to them in position or easy to contact. Due to the smaller scale, diversity management may work better within startups or smaller organizations. Ultimately, whichever strategy companies decide to implement (among other solutions not previously mentioned) it is important that each has a focus on the diversity of the full human person. As previously mentioned, many initiatives take on race, gender, and other external characteristics due to their higher ease of measuring “success” in achieving a diversity landmark. It is more difficult to measure whether or not a company has religious, political, or other forms

of varied personality characteristics; therefore, they are not nearly as popular. Whether ERGs or diversity management are used for employee recruiting or to increase range of thought within the organization, companies must expand past common characteristics to achieve complete diversity in the workplace.

### ***Application to Faith-Based Organizations***

Yet, there remains a debate concerning companies that provide a religious product or service, who may require a deeper religious affiliation from its employees. While secular companies dominate the market, there are many organizations with faith-based missions, services, or products that have a high presence. Excluding religious organizations, such as churches, mosques, or synagogues, that fulfill a spiritual purpose, faith-based organizations are groups that provide a charitable service based on their particular religion. Faith-inspired organizations, however, do not provide a religious product or service; yet, the company's mission statement is motivated by a religious affiliation. Chick-Fil-A, a prominent restaurant of the food and beverage industry, contains a vision inspired by its Christian roots. A lot of faith-inspired organizations unintentionally filter out applicants based on the concerns of working in a company whose mission differed from their beliefs. Therefore, confronting workplace diversity looks different for a faith-inspired organization than it does for one that is more secular.

Additionally, government regulations allow increased bias for companies looking for faith-inspired individuals. The government issued in 1991 that companies can “discriminate” against other religions if the firm's purpose is religious, calling the need for employees to share similar beliefs (Ghumman). The “ministerial exception” clause allows organizations requiring a religious function for their organization to hire off that characteristic; namely, a priest or a rabbi will be hired in a church or synagogue based on their religious affiliation. The government's



involvement in allowing this behavior has been controversial, with some recognizing the business's supposed need for religious knowledge and others citing the action as inappropriate religious discrimination (Kalscheur). This critique was escalated with the charitable choice act, which allowed the government to fund faith-based organizations—particularly ones that provide social services. The debate about the role of the ministerial exception clause, especially when “Title VII at least implicates—and possibly violates—the Religion Clauses” (Dunlap), remains a topic of conversation as our civilization best brainstorms how to handle potential discrimination. This, in turn, affects the diversity of organizations: how would faith-based organizations work under a religiously-diverse set of employees? Ultimately, is there an “appropriate level of “discrimination” that may increase employee productivity, financial performance, and increased knowledge of subject matter. Many organizations put religion as a qualification—“must be a practicing Catholic”, for example—rather than a topic for discrimination. Religious school teachers, for example, may require more knowledge and experience with their focused religion in order to efficiently complete the job. If this behavior is popular, that the job application process intentionally eliminates individuals from a position, more discussion is required as to whether or not this conduct is appropriate.

## **Future Studies**

Throughout studying the role of religion in the job application process, I have realized how little religion is generally studied in research. Though there is this lack of focus on religion when conducting research, this paves the way for many opportunities in the next steps of our study. First, with more time and resources, it would be interesting to see the study expand past Catholicism and see what happens when the in-group changes (for example, a Muslim human resources manager evaluates a Jewish résumé). There are many dynamics that had to be overlooked in the original submission of the study: for example, how Catholicism works in the subgroup of Christianity or how religions of similar beliefs interacted together. Additionally, in considering the real-world corporate applications through ERGs and diversity management, studying the effectiveness of religious ERGs and why companies lack this focus would be another direction to go to. Seeing why other internal characteristics are ignored, such as political party or sexual orientation, and that relationship to religion, ties closely with studying these real-world implications. It's also important to note that the original focus of the thesis was studying faith-based organizations in respect to their secular counterparts, seeing if this religious focus affected company performance. The possibilities for a study that focuses on religion, due the lack of research in this field, seem to expand past studies of other previously looked upon characteristics.

## **Conclusion**

Since that day over a year ago that I interviewed in the marketing position, one I potentially got to the next round with based on my religion, I have since taken my career interests elsewhere. Starting in June, I will be an Apprentice for the Echo Program at Notre Dame, a faith-based service program where one earns a Master's in Theology and serves in a parish during the school year. Whether my interests shift into more of a business or theology focus, this study will have an extremely relevant application to my future. If I choose to join the corporate world, will my unconventional Master of Arts in Theology deter recruiters from hiring me? Will the MA attract recruiters, particularly Christian managers, to this background? Conversely, if I choose to work in theology, will I gain support because I am a white, Catholic woman, or because each person deserves to feel worthy and a sense of belonging in an organization? Ultimately, we want to study if companies are supporting individual pieces of identity like them during the job application process, or if it is an overall acceptance of self. The fine balance between whether or not companies are looking for diversity or a "good fit" is important in any human resources department in any industry, regardless of the job function. If the study were to be completed, and the proposal correct in expecting applicant bias, recruiters must pay attention to how, ultimately, this stage of an employee's journey within the company affects the organization as a whole.

## Appendix A: Résumés

### A.1: In-Group According to Subject (“Christian” Résumé)

#### **MARY SULLIVAN**

53 MAIN ST., ANN ARBOR, MI 48104 [MSULLIVAN@GMAIL.COM](mailto:MSULLIVAN@GMAIL.COM) 216-745-2305

#### **Education**

##### ***University of Michigan***

Bachelor of Business Administration Class of 2017, 3.7/4.0 GPA

#### **Experience**

##### ***St. Mary Student Parish***

*Event Coordinator / May 2017-present*

- Managed Events Team of 11 employees, utilizing individual strengths to assign employees to respective roles, engaging in personal development for each member of team
- Planned social and fundraising events for community, including bonfire, Christmas party, and silent auction, averaging over 150 people at events and encouraging individuals to get more involved at parish

##### ***Ann Arbor SPARK***

*Event Planning Intern / May 2016-August 2016*

- Organized "To the Stars" fundraising event in August 2016, raising \$450,000 for startup, adding 23 individuals to company newsletter, and introducing 11 new items and contacts for annual silent auction
- Coordinated Ann Arbor Spark social media, increasing number of posts by 2 per week, gaining 86 new followers, and introducing yearly giveaway on Instagram to increase user activity

#### **Additional Skills**

- Events Committee, Dance Marathon at the University of Michigan (2016-17 Year)
- Facilitated Alternative Spring Break trip to El Salvador
- Volunteer at Delonis Center

## A.2: Out-Group According to Subject (“Muslim” Résumé)

### **SHIYA BARAKAT**

8 MAIN ST., WEST LAFAYETTE, IN 47907 [SBARAKAT@GMAIL.COM](mailto:SBARAKAT@GMAIL.COM) 305-459-0684

#### **Education**

##### ***Purdue University***

Bachelor of Business Administration Class of 2017, 3.7/4.0 GPA

#### **Experience**

##### ***Muslim Philanthropy Initiative***

*Event Planner / May 2017-present*

- Organized annual October fundraising event, titled "The Society Gathering", raising \$460,000 for 6 initiatives, increasing attendees by 10%, and expanding in-event fundraising by \$30,000
- Controlled Instagram and Facebook pages, establishing partnerships with 3 companies for potential giveaways, increased follower count by 80 people, and introduced post tracking for better efficiency

##### ***West Lafayette Leadership Development Office***

*Events Intern / May 2016-August 2016*

- Provided mentorship services for 11 clients, matching partnerships based on strengths and personality traits, and increasing client activity with office using weekly check-ins
- Prepared monthly professional networking events for members, including happy hour, Bi-Monthly Brunch, and bowling competition, developing relationships between members and encouraging further involvement in organization

#### **Additional Skills**

- Special Events Committee, Dodge the Dark Organization (2016-2017)
- Service Delegation Leader on trip to Nicaragua
- Volunteer at United Way

## A.1: Control Group (“Secular” Résumé)

### **CASSIDY JACOBS**

106 E MAIN ST., COLUMBUS, OH 43210 [CJACOBS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:CJACOBS@GMAIL.COM) 734-120-2038

#### **Education**

##### ***The Ohio State University***

Bachelor of Business Administration Class of 2017, 3.7/4.0 GPA

#### **Experience**

##### ***Bowlmor***

*Event Specialist / May 2017-present*

- Led "Large Group" division of parties with 30+ attendees, organizing large-scale birthday celebrations, contacting customers, and hiring 2 new staff members to foresee future growth
- Managed Bowlmor social media, increasing activity by 30%, gaining 85 new followers, and launching "We Want BowlMORE" campaign to increase customer interaction with Instagram page

##### ***Center for Campus Involvement***

*Events Intern / May 2016-August 2016*

- Facilitated summer Events Team of 11 employees, increasing efficiency through task management and inspiring personal increase in responsibilities for every member of team
- Planned social and fundraising events for students in summer classes, including study session, movie night, and bonfire, averaging over 150 people at events and fostering summer community of students

#### **Additional Skills**

- Events Committee, Relay for Life (2016-17 Year)
- Site Leader for service trip to Dominican Republic
- Volunteer at Community Soup Kitchen

## **Appendix B: Job Description – Event Coordinator**

We are currently seeking an experienced Event Coordinator. The Event Coordinator oversees all aspects of event planning and management, including internal and external events. A successful candidate will be extremely organized and be able to manage the logistics of multiple events simultaneously. Responsibilities for the Event Coordinator include meeting with clients to work out event details, plan with the client, scout and book locations, food, entertainment, staff and cleanup. The Event Coordinator also creates event proposals and presenting proposals to prospective clients.

## **Appendix C: Survey Survey Questions**

Please fill out the questions below. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** NONE of these questions are required.

Name

Age

Gender

Ethnicity (Race)

Religious Affiliation

Political Affiliation

On a scale of 1-10, how important do you think volunteering/service is to you?

To what degree do you identify with your religious affiliation?

To what degree do you identify with your political affiliation?

While creating/viewing a résumé, which pieces of information do you think are most valuable?

- a. Education
- b. Experience
- c. Additional Skills/Hobbies
- d. Other

## Appendix D: American Express ERGs

### EMPLOYEE NETWORKS AT AMERICAN EXPRESS

Since 1987, Employee Networks at American Express have brought together people with shared backgrounds and interests to engage with and learn from each other. Organically grown and employee driven, Employee Networks broaden participants' community of colleagues, as well as their knowledge of the business by driving employee engagement and promoting a culture of inclusion.

With 16 networks and nearly 100 chapters globally, our Employee Networks encompass the full spectrum of diversity at American Express including disability, ethnicity, faith, gender, gender identity, generations, sexual orientation and veteran's status.

**Asian Employee Network (ANA)** develops Asian talent through professional development activities, networking events and business innovation seminars. It also works to build cultural awareness among all company employees, and helps American Express become an employer of choice for professionals of Asian backgrounds.

**Black and Asian Employee Network (BAAN)** is the lead resource for promoting diversity, cultural awareness and inclusion of Black, Asian and ethnic minority employees at American Express in the UK.

**Black Employee Network (BEN)** is one of the largest Employee Networks at American Express. BEN aims to create a dynamic and culturally enriched work environment, and helps to attract and retain diverse talent. BEN also provides programming that supports member engagement, career advancement, and innovative thinking. BEN also has an Executive chapter to serve our most senior black executives.

**Virtual Working Employee Network (BlueEN)** serves the needs of employees who have flexible work arrangements, including employees who are transitioning to part-time or job share situations, and those who work virtually or outside the office.

**Jewish Employee Network (CHAI)**, from the Hebrew word meaning "life," hosts educational and community-oriented events to foster awareness of Jewish culture. It serves as a resource and support network for members and strives to enhance overall diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

**Disability Awareness Employee Network (DAN)** provides support, education, and personal and professional growth opportunities to people with disabilities or disability interests, promotes open acceptance and inclusion, and creates a more accessible workplace.

**Generations Employee Network (GEN)** promotes the value that generational differences and diversity bring to the workplace, and provides subject matter expertise around major life events and transitions.

**Millennial Employee Network** aims to connect and inspire a rising generation at American Express. Millennials are a key segment of American Express employees, card members and future leaders. With events and opportunities for professional development, business partnerships and community involvement, the Network is structured to benefit millennials, non-millennials and key business objectives alike.

**Hispanic Origin and Latin-American Employee Network (HOLA)** fosters an environment where its members have the opportunity to reach their maximum potential and advise the business on initiatives relevant to the Hispanic community. HOLA also has an Executive chapter to serve our most senior executives of Hispanic and Latin-American origin.

**Families at Amex Employee Network** provides programs and resources for parents and other caregivers across a wide range of topics, including pregnancy, early childhood, teens, children with special needs, fatherhood and eldercare.

**Muslim Employee Network (PEACE)** fosters an environment of awareness, understanding and education through lunch and learns, informational booths and participation in community activities to counter the stereotypes and misinformation surrounding Islam and Muslims.

**PRIDE Employee Network** fosters a work environment that is inclusive and supportive of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender employees, and is committed to advancing changes that allow all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, to be respected and valued.

**Christian Employee Network (SALT)** serves as a resource group for the Christian employee community. Its members strive to make a positive difference in the workplace by demonstrating a commitment to the values and leadership principles set forth by the company. SALT is open to all denominations.

**Veterans Employee Network (VET)** supports and honors veterans and active duty military personnel by celebrating the diverse values and skills they bring to the workplace.

**Women's Interest Employee Network (WIN)** enhances the unique diversity women bring to the workplace, elevating career satisfaction and growth among its members through professional and personal development programs, leadership engagement opportunities, and relationship-building activities. WIN also has Executive chapters to serve our most senior women.

**Women in Technologies Employee Network (WIT)** drives enhanced value for American Express and its employees by creating a gender intelligent culture that attracts, retains, and develops female Technology talent to achieve their career aspirations and goals.





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