

THE EVALUATION OF IMMIGRANTS' CREDENTIALS: THE ROLES OF ACCREDITATION, IMMIGRANT RACE, AND EVALUATOR BIASES*

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Abstract:

Theories of subtle prejudice imply that personnel decision makers might inadvertently discriminate against immigrant employees, in particular immigrant employees from racial minority groups. The argument is that the ambiguities that are associated with immigrant status (e.g., quality of foreign credentials) release latent biases against minorities. Hence, upon removal of these ambiguities (e.g., recognition of foreign credentials as equivalent to local credentials), discrimination against immigrant employees from minority groups should no longer occur. Experimental research largely confirmed these arguments, showing that participants evaluated the credentials of black immigrant employees less favorably only when the participants harbored latent racial biases and the foreign credentials of the applicants had not been accredited. The results suggest the importance of the official recognition of foreign credentials for the fair treatment of immigrant employees.

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