

Study Shows Race, Not Experience, Impacts Hiring In Sports World

July 7 2010

(PhysOrg.com) -- If you want to get your foot in the door of the sports industry, your race may mean more than your experience. That's the major result of a new study from North Carolina State University that examined hiring decisions for entry-level sports management positions.

“Previous research has shown that management positions in the [sports](#) industry continue to be dominated by white males - and that a prejudice against blacks in managerial positions exists because of a perceived ‘lack of fit’ between being black and being a manager or leader,” explains Dr. Heidi Grappendorf, assistant professor of parks, recreation and tourism management at NC State. “We wanted to find out - when all other factors were considered equal - what impact race had on hiring for entry-level sports management positions.”

In the study, researchers created one-page resumes for fictitious job applicants. The resumes all included identical work and education experience, but changed factors such as race, sex and previous participation as an athlete. The results showed resumes with traditional black names rated significantly lower than their white counterparts in terms of overall likeability, competency and likelihood of being hired.

The study showed male athletes benefit most from having an athletic background - as they have been evaluated as more competent for upper-level positions when compared to male non-athletes, female athletes and female non-athletes with identical athletic qualifications. While white male [athletes](#) did not receive significantly higher ratings than the other

applicants (i.e., both blacks and whites), they did receive the highest ratings of all groups in both hiring and competence ratings.

“Our findings indicated that for black males and females, athletic participation provided no advantage in hiring recommendations,” Grappendorf says. “Clearly, athletic participation is not ‘superseding’ race. This contradicts previous findings indicating that the athletic role could be beneficial in the [hiring](#) process.”

Grappendorf and fellow researchers Laura Burton, from the University of Connecticut, and Angela Henderson, from the University of Northern Colorado, recently presented their findings at the 2010 North American Society of Sport [Management](#) Conference.

More information: “Examining the Influence of Race, Gender, and Athletic Participation on Hiring Preferences in Sport Management”, Presented: June 3, 2010, North American Society of Sport Management Conference in Tampa, Fla.

Provided by North Carolina State University

Citation: Study Shows Race, Not Experience, Impacts Hiring In Sports World (2010, July 7) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2010-07-impacts-hiring-sports-world.html>

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