

Racialized Sexism: An Intersectional Examination of Women's Bodily Displays

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Theoretical Foundations

- High-power poses are perceived to be masculine.
- Black women are expected to be more masculine than White women
- A high-power pose is perceived as more incongruent with a White woman's than a Black woman's race/gender stereotypes. This may generate backlash in evaluation:
 - Become less desirable in hiring
 - Receive more hostile sexism and less benevolent sexism

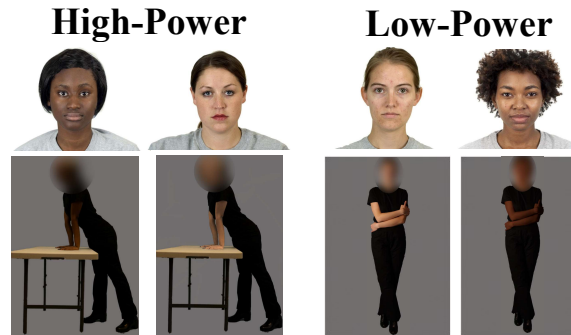
Research Questions

How do body postures and salient aspects of identity – race and gender–intersect to influence:

- Others' masculinity/femininity evaluations of women?
- Others' application of sexism to women?
- Women's hiring desirability?

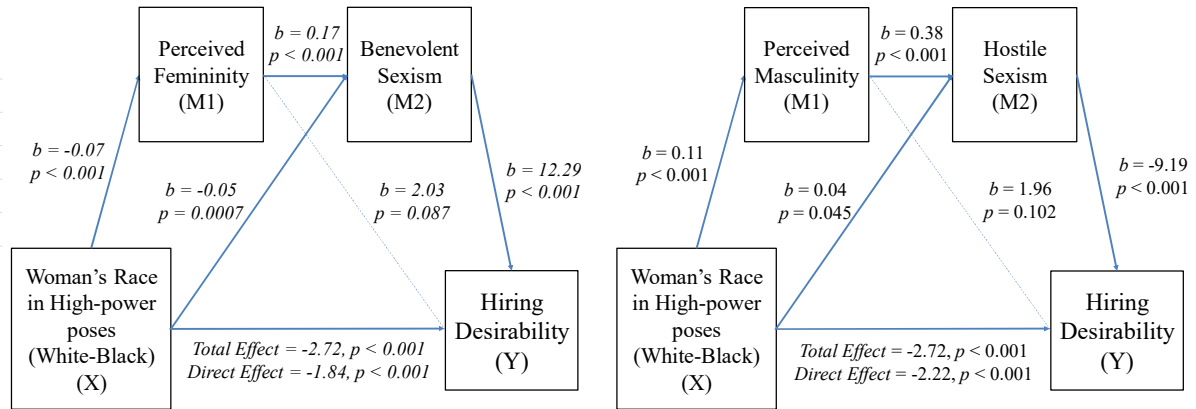
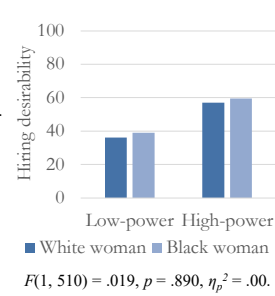
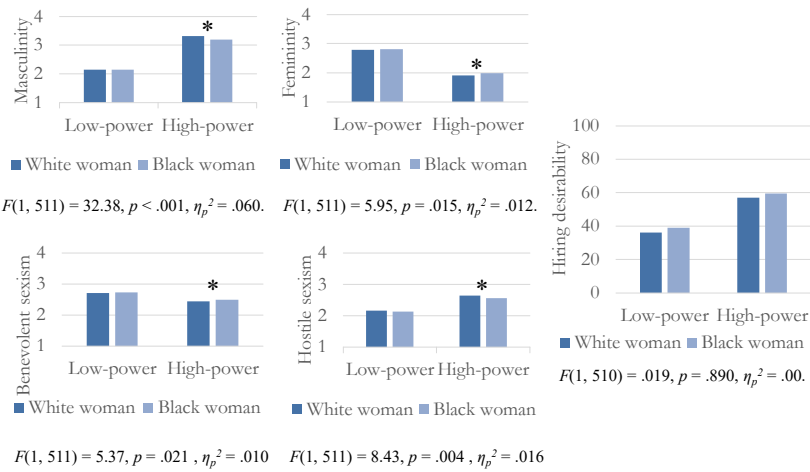
Method & Design

- Participants: 512 from CloudResearch
- 2 (race: Black/White) x 2 (high-power/low-power bodily displays) within-subjects design
- See pictures of face-body pairs, asked to imagine a corporate hiring context, and respond to various questions for each pair (see Measures)



Measures

- Bem's Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974)
 - Masculinity: e.g., assertive, independent
 - Femininity: e.g., sensitive, compassionate
 - Items rated on 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely) scales.
- Ambivalent sexism (Rollero et al., 2014)
 - Hostile sexism: e.g., "Women like Ebony seek to gain power by getting control over men."
 - Benevolent sexism: e.g., "Women like Emily should be cherished and protected by men."
 - Items rated on 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) scales.
- Hiring desirability



Key Takeaways

- White (vs. Black) women were perceived as more masculine and less feminine when engaging in high-power poses.
- People applied more hostile sexism and less benevolent sexism to White (vs. Black) women in high-power poses.
- This decreased the likelihood of hiring these women for a job.

Practical Implications

- Advice about expressing power with the body should not ignore race and gender.
- Contextual bias trainings should consider how the racial identities of women influence the ways they are socially evaluated, in addition to the sexism they are likely to experience.