

**The Role of Emotions in the Relationship Between Stereotypical Job Descriptions and
Women's Application Intentions**

Marla Zoë Baisch

S4021134

Department of Psychology, University of Groningen

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Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Ernestine H. Gordijn

Second evaluator: Prof. Dr. Hedy Greijdanus

In collaboration with: Julian Ritterbach, Pia Sorli, and Alissa Müller

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Abstract

The aim of the research was to study how stereotypical wording in job advertisements influences women's application intentions. By manipulating a fictitious job description to which participants were randomly assigned and which contained either female or male stereotypical words, we examined how the two different conditions influenced women's job application intentions. First, we expected that women who read the female stereotypical job description would be more likely to apply than women who read the male stereotypical job description. Second, we expected that more positive emotions would be experienced when reading the female rather than the male-stereotyped job descriptions. Third, we hypothesized that emotions mediate the relationship between stereotypic job descriptions and application intentions. However, findings indicated no support for the hypotheses. Yet, an explorative analysis, which examined the relations between different variables suggests that when women thought that the job description contained more female rather than male stereotypes, they felt happier after reading it, which predicted their intention to apply for the job. This indicates some support for hypothesis 3. Future research should continue to examine the role of stereotypical wording in job advertisements on application intentions in women further, to help answer the question of why women apply less for jobs than men. This can have important implications for companies, for example, for the formulation of job advertisements, to attract highly qualified applicants for a job, including women.

Keywords: gender gap, workplace, job descriptions, application intentions, gender stereotypes, women

The Role of Emotions in the Relationship Between Stereotypical Job Descriptions and Women's Application Intentions

A study conducted during the coronavirus pandemic in June 2020, shows that countries led by female politicians handled the pandemic better than countries led by men, based on reported deaths due to the virus (Garikipati & Kambhampati, 2020). However, even though women can be good leaders, it is surprising that there is still gender inequality in the working world today. Despite findings such as those in the study mentioned above, and the fact that young women in Western society are often well-educated, disciplined, and ambitious, most women are unable to break through the "glass ceiling" (Babic & Hansez, 2021).

Although there are many efforts to reduce gender inequality in the workplace, women are still extremely underrepresented in management and leadership positions. In 2021, the number of women in Germany's top 160 stock exchange companies was 93 compared to 603 men (AllBright Stiftung, 2021). Although the number has increased from 2020 to 2021, there is still a need to further reduce the gender gap in the workplace to achieve gender equality. These statistics are in line with the blogpost by Ignatova (2019) who stated that less women than men apply especially for high-ranking positions. One reason for that could be the phrasing of job descriptions.

Hence, the question of why women apply less often arises. One reason could be the stereotypical phrasing of job descriptions. Indeed, previous research indicates that stereotypical wording in job descriptions influences the application intentions of women. For example, Gaucher et al. (2011) found that women have lower application intentions when reading a male stereotypical job description, as this led to feelings of less anticipated belongingness. Furthermore, Wulf (2019) found that women have higher application intentions when the job descriptions contain female rather than male stereotypical wording. The current study aims to take a closer look at women's application intentions when reading either male-

or female stereotyped job descriptions. More specifically, the focus is on examining emotions that could be evoked when reading either male- or female stereotyped job descriptions, and how these influence women's application intentions. If women read a job description with requirements that match female stereotypes, they may feel more optimistic about their chances of being selected than if the job advertisement contained mainly male stereotypical requirements. The results of the study can provide companies and human resources (HR) departments with advice on how to formulate job descriptions in order to attract highly qualified applicants for a position, including especially women.

Application Intentions of Women – Why are Women Less Likely to Apply?

The “women quota”, which was introduced amongst others in Germany and the Netherlands a few years ago for the first time, requires companies to employ a specific percentage of women (Ekin, 2018). Nevertheless, there are still less women in certain job positions, especially leadership positions, than men, which is why it can be assumed that the women-quota on its own cannot help the problem of reducing the gender gap. In addition, women are in general less likely to apply to the positions in the first place (Mohr, 2014; Nater & Sczesny, 2016).

One reason for women applying less is that they do not apply unless they feel 100% qualified, compared to men who already apply for a job when they feel 60% qualified (Mohr, 2014). These statistics are backed up by a study done with user data from LinkedIn. By analysing user's profiles, and the interaction between the job seekers and possible employers it could be assumed that women apply 20% less often for jobs than men (Ignatova, 2019), meaning women are more selective or hesitant before applying. A possible explanation for the higher application rates among men could be that they, on average, are more confident in their abilities, more competitive and resistant in the face of competition, and have a greater

willingness to take risks than women (Niederle & Vesterlund, 2007; Tabassum & Nayak, 2021).

Another reason for women applying less is discrimination (Melamed, 1995). For example, the belief that successful managers possess rather male characteristics and attitudes could result in lower application intentions among women, as they feel not 100% qualified and probably fear to be seen in this stereotype by an employer (Born & Taris, 2010; Mohr, 2014). Secondly, discrimination is reflected in the wage inequality between men and women that can still be found in today's working world (OECD, 2022).

A third reason for women applying less could be the wording of job advertisements, which influences women's application intentions (Gaucher et al., 2011). Interestingly, the wording of job advertisements influences whether women apply, but it does not influence men (Juckhoff et al., 2021). Having the feeling they fit the job means the wording of the job description is giving women the belief they can meet the expectations of the employer. However, job descriptions usually ask for skills, which are more likely to be assigned to men in terms of gender stereotypes (Johnson et al., 2008).

As can be seen above, the reasons for women applying less than men are multi-layered. Therefore, the main question is: What can be done to increase women's application intentions? In order to get closer to answering this question, we take a more in-depth look at the stereotypical wording in job advertisements that may influence women's application intention.

The Role of Stereotypical Wording in Job Descriptions for Application Intentions

Studies examining men's and women's motivation to apply for a job have found significant differences between the genders (Davies et al., 2017; Wottawa et al., 2011). Men more often reported being able to have power and influence, to work independently and compete with others, and to strive to be better than others as motivations for obtaining a job

(Davies et al., 2017; Wottawa et al., 2011). Women, on the other hand, were more likely to report a motive for recognition, connection, and collaboration at the workplace. Thus, it would seem obvious that men and women feel differently attracted to job descriptions based on the words they contain. More precisely, gender-stereotypical words influence the application intentions, especially of women (Juckhoff et al., 2021; Wille & Derous, 2018).

Gender stereotypes are socially shared expectations and mental representations of thinking about men and women (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009). The two most commonly distinguished categories are the so-called agentic traits (e.g., aggressive, ambitious, and dominant), which are often described as male-typical characteristics and the communal traits, which are often attributed to women and include characteristics such as helpful, friendly, and kind (Eagly & Sczesny, 2009). Depending on which traits are used in job descriptions (i.e., agentic, or communal traits), they can be expected to influence application intentions because either more men or more women feel attracted by them. However, given the complex nature of emotions, we have to take a closer look at the relationship between stereotypical traits in job advertisements and application intentions of women.

When applying for a job, women usually read many job descriptions and then apply for the jobs that they feel are the best fit for them. These jobs often give women the impression that they can meet the employer's expectations. On the other hand, when women have the feeling that the employer is looking for a candidate that they themselves do not quite match, women often become reluctant to apply. Therefore, the decision to apply or not can be influenced by meta-stereotypes: The belief about how a member of an outgroup might stereotype his or her own ingroup (Vorauer et al., 1998). In other words, how an applicant believes an employer would think and judge him or her. Since people want to maintain a positive social identity about themselves, they apply meta-stereotypes to try to predict what would happen (Klein & Azzi, 2001). Especially in situations when an evaluation is expected

by an outgroup member or a belief that the outgroup has more power than one's ingroup people rely on meta-stereotypes (Gordijn, 2010; Lammers et al., 2008). Thus, stereotypical characteristics do not increase application intentions per se, but the interpretation of how one believes one will be perceived by the employer determines application intentions. Even more, whether meta-stereotypes are applied depends on one's perception of one's position in society (i.e., whether an individual feels to belong to the minority or majority group) as well as whether an individual feels evaluated by the outgroup (which is often the majority group) (Gordijn, 2010; Vorauer et al., 2000).

As mentioned before, job descriptions often contain stereotypical words that can be either assigned to be stereotypical for women (e.g., empathetic, responsible, good communication skills) or stereotypical for men (e.g., strategic, willing to take risks, strong analytical thinking skills; see, for example, Johnson et al. (2008)). These gender stereotypes in job descriptions were examined further by Wulf (2019) and Juckhoff et al. (2021), who found that positive female stereotypic rather than male stereotypic traits in job description increase application intentions in women, as this increased their positive meta-stereotyping. For men, however, no effect was found (Juckhoff et al., 2021). One reason for this could be that men are still the majority group, especially in high-ranking positions, and are therefore less affected by meta-stereotype (Lammers et al., 2008). Furthermore, men tend to be more career-oriented than women and it does not matter as much to them whether their skills fit the job description perfectly in order to apply for a job (Mohr, 2014; Niederle & Vesterlund, 2007).

In sum, positive female rather than male stereotypical traits in job descriptions can increase application intentions in women. To understand these effects better and take a closer look at the increased application intention of women for female stereotypical job descriptions, it could be interesting to test if mediators, such as different emotions, are influencing the

relationship between stereotypical wording in job descriptions and application intentions in women.

Does the Relationship Between Stereotypical Job Descriptions and Application Intentions Always Hold?

Juckhoff et al. (2021) and Wulf (2019) investigated the role of self-confidence in the relation between job stereotypicality and application intentions. They found that self-confidence mediates the relationship between job descriptions and application intentions (Juckhoff et al., 2021; Wulf, 2019). That is, the female stereotypic wording in a job advertisement increased self-confidence as compared to the male wording. The *feeling* of confidence about oneself is likely to be related to specific emotions, as a person who feels worried, may also feel less confident and when a person is optimistic, he or she is likely to feel more confident (Briñol et al., 2007). On the other hand, emotions such as sadness and anger are less likely to be related to the feeling of confidence.

Interestingly, the studies by Juckhoff et al. (2021) and Wulf (2019) explored the role of emotions. The results show that positive emotions, such as happiness and optimism are significantly higher in women who read the female meta-stereotyped job descriptions. On the other hand, Wulf (2019) found that anxiousness was more often experienced when reading male stereotyped job-descriptions, although these results just approached significance. No effect was found for anger. To gain better insights into the mediating role of emotions, it might be useful to further investigate them. For example, emotions are thought to influence decision making (Walsh, 2016), suggesting that they also play a role when trying to make the decision whether to apply for a job or not. Therefore, it is of interest to focus on the mediating role of emotions between stereotypical job advertisements and application intentions in the current study.

The Current Study

Why exactly female stereotypical wording has led to increased application intentions has not extensively been studied yet. In particular, the influence of the possible mediating role of emotions on the relationship between stereotypical wording in job descriptions and application intentions did not receive a lot of attention. To fill in this gap, the current study will examine the mediating effect of emotions, which are suggested to be elicited by reading either female- or male-stereotypical wording on application intentions of women. Previous research has studied this topic with less attention to emotions. Therefore, this study contributes to previous research by making predictions about specific emotions.

Based on the findings by the study of Wulf (2019) and Juckhoff et al. (2021), I firstly hypothesize that women are more likely to apply for a job when reading the female rather than male stereotyped job description (H1). Secondly, I expect that women feel more positive and less negative emotions when reading the female rather than the male-stereotyped job description. More specifically, I expect that women experience less anxiety and feel more optimistic and happier when reading female stereotypical job descriptions (H2a). In addition, I expect that anger or sadness will not be experienced, amongst others because it is not related to self-confidence, and therefore less likely to be affected (H2b). Lastly, I expect that happiness and anxiety mediate the relationship between female- and male stereotyped job descriptions and application intentions (H3).

Method

Participants and Design

Before the data collection, a Monte Carlo power analysis was conducted to indicate the number of participants needed for the study. Results showed that 153 participants are needed for a power of 0.8 and a medium correlation of 0.3 to find support for Hypothesis 3.

Participants were recruited via SONA, which only includes first-year psychology students. In addition, bachelor's and master's students studying at the university or HBO and

who are not psychology students were recruited by advertising the study on social media, such as WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook. The first-year psychology students received 0.4 SONA credits for their participation, while the participants recruited via social media did not receive any incentives.

The total sample consisted of 296 participants¹, who filled out the questionnaire. However, we had to exclude 147 participants as they did not fulfill the requirements, we set prior to the data collection². Namely, 14 participants did not give informed consent. Further, 88 participants indicated “other”, “male” or nothing, as their gender, and were excluded because the population of interest were women. Seven participants from the social media recruitment method were excluded as they indicated to study psychology. Another four participants were excluded as they failed at least two of the three attention checks and twelve were excluded as they spent less than ten seconds reading the job advertisement. We also had to exclude 21 participants, because they filled in less than 50% of the questionnaire.

This resulted in a final sample of 149 participants that were included in the analysis, of which 124 were first year psychology students, who participated through the SONA first year participant pool, and 25 students who were recruited through social media. The age range was from 16 until 30 years, with the majority (61.7 %) being between 19 and 21 years old.

The study design was a between-subject's design with one factor (Job stereotypicality: male versus female stereotypes). Participants were randomly assigned to one of these conditions. Emotions and application intentions were included as dependent variables³. The study was approved by the Ethical Committee of Psychology (ECP) of the University of

¹ The study was part of a bigger project. For this paper the data collection was stopped earlier, due to the time limit of the Bachelor thesis.

² https://aspredicted.org/see_one.php

³ Note: The paper was written as a Bachelor thesis project with three other students. The focus of this paper was on application intentions and emotions in women only. Men were also assessed. Other dependent measures in the questionnaire were: meta-stereotypes, self-stereotypes, self-esteem, power perception, sexism, and self-confidence. See Appendix A for the whole questionnaire.

Groningen on 23rd of February 2022 and it was preregistered on AsPredicted (see this [link](#)) on the 24th of February 2022, thus, before the data collection.

Procedure and Independent Variables

Data was collected by letting the participants fill out a questionnaire, which was created with Qualtrics, a web-based program (see Appendix A for the full questionnaire), on an electronic device. When clicking on the link to the questionnaire, participants first had to give informed consent to the study and then, after agreeing to participate, answer questions about demographics. Namely, we asked about gender, age range, whether participants were studying to obtain a bachelor or master and whether they were a psychology student or not. The last two demographic questions were removed for the SONA study, as the SONA pool is only accessible for first year psychology students. Next, participants had to answer questions to assess self-esteem and their power perception, but since these are not relevant for this paper, they are not described further. The exact questions can be found in Appendix A.

After the assessment of the pre-measures, participants were introduced to the second part of the questionnaire, which included the *manipulation of job stereotypicality*. The participants were told that the researchers are working in collaboration with a company called MediaAtWork, because the company wants to know how their job advertisement for an internship they offer is perceived by students, to improve their advertisements. The company was made up by Wulf (2019) and adapted by Juckhoff et al. (2021) to cover up the real purpose of the study, which was assessing the effect of stereotypical job descriptions on application intentions. Participants were randomly assigned to the either female or male stereotypical job advertisement. We manipulated the advertisements stereotypicality by creating two versions, one version including female stereotypical words, such as *empathetic*, *communicative*, and *socially skilled*, and the other version including male stereotypical words, such as *career-minded*, *strategic*, and *willing to take risks* (see Appendix B for the

manipulated job descriptions). After being presented with one of the job descriptions, participants had to answer three random questions that were asked to make the storyline with the company MediaAtWork more believable. The questions were about the choice of colours, the structure, and the information provided in the job descriptions and were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*.

After the random questions the dependent measures were taken, which were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*. We also added three attention checks, such as "*Please click Strongly agree (this is an attention check)*", to check whether participants were reading the questions carefully and were paying attention. Additionally, we included a manipulation check to assess whether the manipulation of the stereotypical job advertisements worked. For that, participants had to indicate to which extent they agreed with the following sentences: "*I think the company and the people working in it are...*" ($M = 2.68, SD = 0.87$) and "*I think the job description is...*" ($M = 2.99, SD = 0.91$) on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *stereotypically male* to *stereotypically female*. We combined the two items into one scale ($M = 2.84, SD = 0.76, r = .47, p = < .001$).

Before the participants were debriefed about the real purpose of the study, we asked participants whether there was something language wise unclear, to make sure that participants understood the questionnaire in case they have another mother tongue than English. Secondly, participants got the opportunity to write down comments or thoughts about the study they wanted to share with us. Lastly, participants were debriefed and thanked for their participation.

Dependent Measures

After the participants have read the manipulated job advertisement and answered the random questions, the dependent measures had to be answered. For most questions

participants were asked to rate the questions on a 5-point Likert scale from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*.

The first dependent measure that was relevant for my project was about participants' *emotions*. Participants were asked to rate ten emotions on a 5-point Likert scale based on how reading the job description made them feel (i.e., "*Reading the job description of MediaAtWork made me feel...*"). Negative emotions (hopeless, angry, nervous, annoyed, depressed, worried), as well as positive emotions were included (excited, happy, optimistic, enthusiastic). We created a scale for anxiety (i.e., nervous, and worried, $M = 2.31$ ($SD = 1.10$, $r = .56$)). Further, we created a scale for anger (i.e., angry and annoyed, $M = 1.63$ ($SD = 0.82$, $r = .55$)), a scale for sadness (i.e., depressed and hopeless, $M = 1.63$ ($SD = 0.72$, $r = .39$) and lastly, a scale for happiness (i.e., happy, optimistic, enthusiastic, and excited, $M = 3.15$ ($SD = 0.87$, $\alpha = .89$)).

The second dependent measure that was relevant for my project concerned participants' intention to apply to the job advertisement. The three statements were (1) "*I can imagine sending an E-mail to MediaAtWork and ask for more information about their internship program.*", (2) "*If I saw an internship like this in an advertisement, I would consider applying for it.*" (3) and "*I would actively look for an internship like the one described.*" ($M = 2.7$, $SD = 1.15$, $\alpha = .76$). These statements were also rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*.

Results

The bivariate correlations between application intentions, the emotion measures, and the manipulation check question: "*I think the job description is stereotypically male: 1/ female: 5*" can be found in Table 1.

Table 1

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Application Intentions	2.70	1.15	1					
2 Manipulation check Question 2: <i>I think the job description is...</i>	2.99	0.91	.21*	1				
3 Sadness	1.63	0.72	-.34**	-.11	1			
4 Happiness	3.15	0.87	.73**	.19*	-.40**	1		
5 Anger	1.63	0.82	-.44**	-.09	.52**	-.46**	1	
6 Anxiety	2.31	1.10	.06	.05	.47**	.04	.27**	1

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$

Manipulation Checks

To check whether the manipulation of the job descriptions worked, we conducted a Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results showed that the manipulation was successful, meaning the main effect for job stereotypicality was significant, $F(1, 149) = 21.86, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .13$, with a large effect size. The female job description and company was rated as more stereotypical female ($M = 3.11, SD = 0.75$) than the male job description as stereotypical male ($M = 2.56, SD = 0.67$).

Job application intentions

A univariate ANOVA was conducted on application intentions and revealed a non-significant result, $F(1, 149) = 0.27, p = .61, \eta_p^2 = .002$. This means that female versus male stereotypical job descriptions did not have a different influence on application intentions in women (stereotypically male condition: $M = 2.65, SD = 1.11$; stereotypic female condition: $M = 2.75, SD = 1.20$). This means that hypothesis one, that women are more likely to apply for a job when reading the female rather than male stereotyped job description, is not supported.

Emotions

For the four emotion scales we also ran a univariate ANOVA to check whether the main effects with respect to the four different scales are significant. The four scales were: happiness (*happy, excited, enthusiastic, optimistic*), sadness (*depressed, hopeless*), anger (*angry, annoyed*) and anxiety (*worried, nervous*). The analysis did not reveal a significant

difference between the female condition ($M = 3.19, SD = 0.82$) and the male condition ($M = 3.10, SD = 0.92$) with respect to happiness, $F(1, 149) = 0.38, p = .54, \eta_p^2 = .003$, or for anxiety, $F(1, 149) = 0.25, p = .62, \eta_p^2 = .002$, (male condition: $M = 2.26, SD = 1.13$ and female condition: $M = 2.35, SD = 1.07$), meaning there is no support for H2a. Further, no significant main effect could be found for sadness, $F(1, 149) = 0.75, p = .39, \eta_p^2 = .005$, meaning there is no significant difference between the female condition ($M = 1.58, SD = 0.64$) and the male condition ($M = 1.68, SD = 0.79$), supporting H2b. Lastly, the analysis could also not reveal a significant main effect regarding the stereotypicality of the job descriptions on anger, $F(1, 149) = 2.14, p = .15, \eta_p^2 = .01$, but eta-squared shows a small effect size, suggesting that participants rated to feel slightly less anger in the female condition ($M = 1.53, SD = 0.85$) than in the male condition ($M = 1.73, SD = 0.79$), which is not in line with H2b.

Mediational analysis

To test whether the elicited emotions from reading the job description influenced the application intentions in women (hypothesis three), we aimed to conduct a mediational analysis, but since we did not find support for the influence the stereotypical job descriptions on happiness and anxiety, the mediational analysis could not be conducted. Instead, we explored whether perceiving the job description as stereotypically female (i.e., the manipulation check, standardized) predicts happiness, and hence application intentions as these measures correlate. A regression analysis with the manipulation check as a predictor of happiness shows this effect is significant, $B = .27, t(148) = 2.59, p = .01$. It can be observed that happiness mediates the relationship between perceiving the job description as stereotypically female and application intentions, as the relation between those two measures is not significant anymore when happiness is added to the model, $B = .09, t(148) = 1.24, p = .22$. This supports hypothesis three, although it should be noted that we relied on a measure of

perceived job stereotypicality rather than on the manipulation, hence no causal conclusions can be drawn.

General discussion

In recent years, the attention of both society and research has increasingly focused on gender differences in the workplace. Women are still underrepresented in the working world today, and especially in leadership positions, less women can be found compared to men (AllBright Stiftung, 2021; United Nations Development Program., 2020). Researchers examined different reasons for the existence and maintenance of the gender gap, while politics introduced several approaches, such as the women's quota to try to reduce the gender gap (Ekin, 2018). However, the approaches were unsuccessful in reducing the gap sufficiently until today. Therefore, this paper addresses a sub-topic of this problem that has not received much attention so far, but which could have a potentially relevant impact on the issue. Namely, we were interested how stereotypical wording in job descriptions might influence women to apply for a job in the first place. In addition, we investigated whether emotions mediate the relation between stereotypical job descriptions and application intentions, in order to gain more insight into the societal problem.

The current study is a replication of the study by Wulf (2019) and Juckhoff et al. (2021), who already investigated the importance of stereotypical wording in job descriptions on application intentions and explored the influence of emotions. Their findings revealed that women are more likely to apply for a job when reading female rather than male stereotypical job descriptions. Further, they explored the role of emotions and found that reading the female-stereotypic job description led to positive emotions about the job, such as happiness, while reading the male-stereotypic job description led to negative emotions, such as anxiety. The current study tried to contribute to previous research by firstly trying to replicate the

findings about stereotypical job descriptions and application intentions, and by measuring emotions on the basis of hypotheses that were set prior to the data collection.

To begin with, results suggested that the manipulation checks worked, meaning that the female stereotypical job description was perceived as more female stereotypic and the male stereotypical job descriptions was perceived as more male stereotypic. These results are consistent with those of previous studies and confirm that the foundation for finding the predicted results is in place.

Regarding the hypotheses, we firstly expected, in line with the study by Juckhoff et al. (2021) and Wulf (2019), that women are more likely to apply for a job when reading the female rather than male stereotyped job description. However, in contrast with the studies we aimed to replicate, the results revealed no significant effects of female versus male stereotypical job descriptions on application intentions among women. Thus, no conclusions can be drawn from the results of our study about a link between stereotypically formulated job descriptions and women's intention to apply.

Secondly, we expected that women feel more positive and less negative emotions when reading the female rather than the male-stereotyped job description. We also made specific predictions about emotions, namely that women experience less anxiety and feel more optimistic and happier when reading female stereotypical job descriptions, and that anger and sadness should not play a role. Nevertheless, also with respect to anxiety and happiness we found no influence of stereotypically phrased job descriptions.

Thirdly, we expected that happiness and anxiety would mediate the relationship between female- and male stereotyped job descriptions and application intentions. But since we did not find an influence of stereotypical job descriptions on application intentions, or emotions, we could not conduct a mediational analysis. However, an explorative analysis examined the relations between emotions, perceiving the job description as stereotypically

female and application intentions. The results of this analysis suggest that when women perceived the job description as more female rather than male stereotypic, they felt happier after reading it, which predicted their intention to apply for the job. This indicates some support for hypothesis 3, namely that women feel more positive emotions when they find a job advertisement more female rather than male stereotypical, and hence are more likely to intent to apply for it.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

Based on the results of the current study, we cannot draw strong conclusions as most hypotheses were not supported, because the results were mostly non-significant. Therefore, the study should be interpreted with caution. However, there are still some aspects that can be taken away from this research.

Firstly, we could find a mediational effect of happiness on the relationship between perceived female stereotypicality in the job description and application intentions. This could implicate that with a better research design, which, for example, includes another group of participants, the mediational effect could probably also be supported on a causal level, which would be worth exploring in the future. In addition, the fact that we found a mediational effect on the correlational level suggests that stereotypical wording in job advertisements could have an effect on women. This idea is supported by previous research, which found significant effects on positive job stereotypicality and application intentions (Juckhoff et al., 2021; Wulf, 2019). Our limitations could be a reason why we were not able to replicate this effect. However, our mediational finding of happiness is also partly supported by the exploratory research by Juckhoff et al. (2021), as well as by Wulf (2019), who found that more positive emotions were experienced when reading the female stereotypic job descriptions.

A reason why women like female stereotypic job description more can be explained with findings of previous research, that has shown that female stereotypical job descriptions increase positive meta-stereotyping in women (expecting to be viewed positively by the employer) (Juckhoff et al., 2021; Wulf, 2019). Using more positive meta-stereotypes has shown to increase self-confidence in one's performance and skills, which can be the reason why women are more likely to apply after reading a female stereotypical job description (Wulf, 2019). This suggests that feelings of happiness can be important for women to apply for jobs, as positive emotions also lead to more self-confidence and vice versa (Briñol et al., 2007). This is important as the majority of women only apply if they feel they are qualified for the job (Ignatova, 2019; Mohr, 2014), and with higher self-confidence, thus more positive emotions, it is more likely that women have the perception to be able to successfully do the job and therefore apply (Juckhoff et al., 2021; Wulf, 2019).

Additionally, research has shown that male stereotypic wording in job description leads to lower feelings of belongingness among women (Gaucher et al., 2011). It is a widely accepted belief in psychology that the feeling to belong to a social group is very important for the maintenance of well-being, as well as feeling happy (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Tuomela, 2007). Therefore, reading female stereotypic job descriptions gives women an increased feeling of belongingness, which makes them happier and, in turn, increases application intentions (Gaucher et al., 2011; Juckhoff et al., 2021; Tuomela, 2007; Wulf, 2019). This suggests that, for the implementation of future strategies aiming to reduce the gender gap at the workplace, it could be useful to include positive female stereotypical requirements into a job advertisement, such requirements could be good communication- and high social skills, for example. That may lead to more women applying in the first place. This could be of particular relevance because a study by Johnson et al. (2008) shows that job descriptions are

in fact more likely to contain male stereotypical words than female stereotypical words, which could be a contributing factor to the gender gap that still exists in nowadays workplace.

More generally, this research shows that gender roles and stereotypes are still present in the workplace, despite many efforts to eliminate them. However, it is also interesting to question whether research into gender stereotypes might have a paradoxical effect overall, as it brings the stereotypes back into focus and draws people's attention to them, which may even contribute to the perpetuation of these stereotypes. Nevertheless, this discourse leads in a different direction, but it can be still an important thought that could be interesting to consider in future research. For now, the conclusion that can be drawn from the present research is that stereotypical wording in job descriptions is an important aspect adding to the gender gap in the workplace and should be considered when attempting to equalize gender roles in society.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

First, it is important to mention again that the manipulation check worked, meaning that female stereotypical job descriptions were perceived as more stereotypical female and vice versa for male. However, although the manipulation was successful, we could not find the predicted effects, which may be due to the following limitations.

Firstly, the participants were predominantly first-year psychology students recruited through the SONA participants' pool. This could be the reason for the non-significant effects on application intentions, as they are probably not planning to apply for an internship at this point in their life. In addition, the data collection took place in February and March, which means that the psychology students were quite advanced in their first year of study and had already acquired knowledge about social psychology, which might have influenced the results as well. Therefore, future research could try to include participants from a different field of study who, amongst others, may be at the end of their studies or are doing their master's degree, so that the application for an internship is much more appealing to them.

Secondly, the questionnaire was quite long, as it took around 15 minutes to complete, with many questions that were having similar items. This could have led to participants paying less attention. Also, the online format could have made participants feel less committed and therefore not paying much attention or being distracted by the environment they were in when filling out the questionnaire. Therefore, future research could try to keep the questionnaire shorter and include less items in one study, as well as try to control the setting of the study. A possible way to do this is conducting the survey in a controlled setting, by handing participants the survey in person, for example. This could also increase commitment and therefore lead to higher completion rates and less mistakes made by the participants.

However, Juckhoff et al., (2021) were able to find effects with a similar population of participants and with a similar questionnaire. Therefore, we believe there are other factors as well that lead to not finding the predicted results in the current study. That is, an important limitation could be that we measured self-esteem as a pre-measure. This measure was not included in the studies we replicated. This could be the reason why the previous studies found the predicted effects and our study did not. The self-esteem measure included questions such as: *"I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others"*, which could have stimulated women to think "this is me" and seeing themselves in a positive light. According to self-affirmation theory (Steele, 1988), people who are reminded of who they are, and therefore affirming their positive self-image, tend to be less influenced by the environment, such as, for example, the stereotypes in job descriptions. In future research, it might, therefore, be beneficial for the outcomes to measure self-esteem only as a post-measure, to avoid that the questions elicit self-affirmations that may influence the participants' further responses.

In short, this means that more research should be conducted in the future with regard to stereotypical wording in job advertisements and its impact on application intentions, in order to reach firmer conclusions regarding the hypotheses. Especially, since the manipulation check worked, it can be assumed that effects can be found when compensating for the limitations in the future. Then it could also be particularly interesting to further investigate the impact of stereotypical job descriptions on application intentions in higher ranking positions, because statistics show that especially in leadership positions women are still extremely underrepresented (AllBright Stiftung, 2021).

Conclusion

The aim of the study was to demonstrate that stereotypical wording of job advertisements affects application intentions in women, and to understand the relation better by looking at mediational effects of emotions. However, most of the results of the current study could not support this, which may be due to the limitations of the study. Nevertheless, since other studies found that stereotypical job descriptions influence women's job application intentions, there is still reason to believe that examining the impact of wording in job descriptions can be a crucial factor that should be considered when trying to reduce the gender gap at the workplace. The role of emotions on the relationship between stereotypical job descriptions and application intentions, continues not to be very clear. Future research should try to get more fitting participants for the study, for whom applying for an internship is attractive, as well as change the order of the questions in the questionnaire, to find out more about the relation of application intentions and the influence of emotions. For now, it can be assumed that the wording in job descriptions is an important factor when it comes to the question of why women apply less often. Therefore, raising awareness among companies could help to ensure that job advertisements are written more carefully with regard to gender stereotypes in the future.

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Appendix A

Online questionnaire created with Qualtrics

Start of Block: Information Sheet

INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH – SOCIAL MEDIA VERSION

"Would you like to apply for this internship?"

Why am I receiving this information?

- You are being invited to participate in this research because you have been granted access to the invitation link to this online study.
- The start date of the research is 02.02.2022 and the end date of the research will be 01.06.2022
- The primary investigator of this study is Ernestine Gordijn. Marla Baisch, Alissa Müller, Pia Neza Sorli and Julian Ritterbach will also be conducting this research.

Do I have to participate in this research?

- Participation in the research is voluntary. However, your consent is needed. Therefore, please read this information carefully. If you decide not to participate, you do not need to explain why, and there will be no negative consequences for you. You have this right at all times, including after you have consented to participate in the research. If there are any questions, do not hesitate to ask.

Why this research?

- We want to examine the expectations that students have about an internship and the company when they are presented with an advertisement about the internship. This information can be used to improve job advertisements.
- For this research we are looking for participants:
 - who are 16 or older
 - who are currently studying to obtain a Bachelor or Master's Degree.

What do we ask of you during the research?

- First, we will ask you for your consent to participate.
- When you agree to participate, you will be guided to the online questionnaire. In the questionnaire, you will first answer some demographic questions, such as your age and gender. After that, you will be asked questions about how you perceive yourself and others in society.
- After that, you will be presented with a job advertisement. Lastly you will be asked to answer some questions, for example, how likely you would be to apply for this job.
- The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

What are the consequences of participation?

- Advantages are limited to gaining experience regarding participation in a scientific study.

- Disadvantages are limited to the time investment of an average of 15 minutes and having to read information, which may arouse a variety of feelings or thoughts.
- We believe there are little to no risks associated with participating in this study. However, it is possible that you may find some questions difficult to answer or would prefer not to answer them. Please remember that you may always skip questions or even withdraw from the study, which does not have any negative consequences for you.

How will we treat your data?

- Your data will be used to write a Bachelor's thesis and a scientific paper.
- Your data is confidential. While no personal data is collected, some information may act as identifiers when combined (i.e., gender, age-range). Only the researchers of this study will have access to it. The data consists of your responses to the questions which will be collected using an online questionnaire. We collect this data for scientific purposes.
- If the data is published, we will anonymize information that could be used to identify individual participants.
- When the study is finished, the data will be stored on a safe University of Groningen server.

What else do you need to know?

- You may always ask questions about the research: now, during the research, and after the end of the research. You can do so by sending an email to m.baisch@student.rug.nl.

Do you have questions/concerns about your rights as a research participant or about the conduct of the research? You may also contact the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences of the University of Groningen: ec-bss@rug.nl.

Do you have questions or concerns regarding the handling of your personal data? You may also contact the University of Groningen Data Protection Officer: privacy@rug.nl.

As a research participant, you have the right to receive a copy of this research information. In case you would like a copy, we suggest you take a screenshot of this page.

Click the arrow below to proceed.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH – SONA VERSION**"Would you like to apply for this internship?"****Why am I receiving this information?**

- You are being invited to participate in this research because you have been granted access to the invitation link to this online study.
- The start date of the research is 02.02.2022 and the end date of the research will be 01.06.2022
- The primary investigator of this study is Ernestine Gordijn. Marla Baisch, Alissa Müller, Pia Neza Sorli and Julian Ritterbach will also be conducting this research.

Do I have to participate in this research?

- Participation in the research is voluntary. However, your consent is needed. Therefore, please read this information carefully. If you decide not to participate, you do not need to explain why, and there will be no negative consequences for you. You have this right at all times, including after you have consented to participate in the research. If there are any questions, do not hesitate to ask.

Why this research?

- We want to examine the expectations that students have about an internship and the company when they are presented with an advertisement about the internship. This information can be used to improve job advertisements.

What do we ask of you during the research?

- First, we will ask you for your consent to participate.
- When you agree to participate, you will be guided to the online questionnaire. In the questionnaire, you will first answer some demographic questions, such as your age and gender. After that, you will be asked questions about how you perceive yourself and others in society
- After that, you will be presented with a job advertisement. Lastly you will be asked to answer some questions, for example, how likely you would be to apply for this job.
- The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

What are the consequences of participation?

- Advantages are gaining experience regarding participation in a scientific study and receiving 0.4 SONA credits.
- Disadvantages are limited to the time investment of an average of 15 minutes and having to read information, which may arouse a variety of feelings or thoughts.
- We believe there are little to no risks associated with participating in this study. However, it is possible that you may find some questions difficult to answer or would prefer not to answer them. Please remember that you may always skip questions or even withdraw from the study, which does not have any negative consequences for you.

How will we treat your data?

- Your data will be used to write a Bachelor's thesis and a scientific paper.
- Your data is confidential. While no personal data is collected, some information may act as identifiers when combined (i.e., gender, age-range). Only the researchers of this study will have access to it. The data consists of your responses to the questions which will be collected using an online questionnaire. We collect this data for scientific purposes.
- If the data is published, we will anonymize information that could be used to identify individual participants.
- When the study is finished, the data will be stored on a safe University of Groningen server.

What else do you need to know?

- You may always ask questions about the research: now, during the research, and after the end of the research. You can do so by sending an email to m.baisch@student.rug.nl.

Do you have questions/concerns about your rights as a research participant or about the conduct of the research? You may also contact the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences of the University of Groningen: ec-bss@rug.nl.

Do you have questions or concerns regarding the handling of your personal data? You may also contact the University of Groningen Data Protection Officer: privacy@rug.nl.

As a research participant, you have the right to receive a copy of this research information. In case you would like a copy, we suggest you take a screenshot of this page.

Click the arrow below to proceed.

End of Block: Information Sheet

Start of Block: Informed Consent

Informed consent – SOCIAL MEDIA VERSION

"Would you like to apply for this internship?"

In this research we want to study the expectations that students have about an internship and the company when they are presented with an advertisement about the internship. We will first ask for your consent to participate in this research. If you agree to participate in our study, you will automatically be redirected to the questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. More information about this study can be found in the information sheet.

This research is carried out by a group of four bachelor students at the University of Groningen in The Netherlands under the supervision of their professor, and meets the ethical guidelines of the University of Groningen. We believe there are little to no risks associated with participating in this study.

By agreeing to participate in this study you understand the following:

1. I have the right to receive a copy of this informed consent form by taking a screenshot.
 2. **My participation is voluntary**, and I can withdraw from this study at any moment without having to give a reason and without any negative consequences.
 3. **I may refuse to answer or skip any questions** that I do not wish to answer. I do not have to provide any reason for this, and this does not have any negative consequences.
 4. My **responses are confidential** and will not be shared with anyone besides the research team.
 5. All my responses will be **securely stored and are only accessible to the researchers**.
 6. After completing the questionnaire, I will receive more information on the purpose of this research.
-

Do you agree to participate in this study (if you don't want to participate, click no and you will leave the questionnaire)?

Yes, I agree (1)

No (4)

Informed consent – SONA VERSION

"Would you like to apply for this internship?"

In this research we want to study the expectations that students have about an internship and the company when they are presented with an advertisement about the internship. We will first ask for your consent to participate in this research. If you agree to participate in our study, you will automatically be redirected to the questionnaire. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. You will earn 0.4 SONA credits. More information about this study can be found in the information sheet.

This research is carried out by a group of four bachelor students at the University of Groningen in The Netherlands under the supervision of their professor, and meets the ethical guidelines of the University of Groningen. We believe there are little to no risks associated with participating in this study.

By agreeing to participate in this study you understand the following:

1. I have the right to receive a copy of this informed consent form by taking a screenshot.
2. **My participation is voluntary**, and I can withdraw from this study at any moment without having to give a reason and without any negative consequences.
3. **I may refuse to answer or skip any questions** that I do not wish to answer. I do not have to provide any reason for this, and this does not have any negative consequences.
4. My **responses are confidential** and will not be shared with anyone besides the research team.
5. All my responses will be **securely stored and are only accessible to the researchers**.
6. After completing the questionnaire, I will receive more information on the purpose of this research.

If you do not consent or want to withdraw you can quit the questionnaire now without any consequences.

End of Block: Informed Consent

Start of Block: Demographics

Part 1: Background questions

First, please answer the general questions below. These questions will not be used to identify you as an individual, but they will help the researcher to describe the sample of participants.

Please indicate your gender:

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Other (3) _____
-

Please indicate your age:

- Under 16 (1)
- 16 - 18 (2)
- 19 - 21 (3)
- 22 - 24 (4)
- 25 - 27 (5)
- 28 - 30 (6)
- Above 30 (7)
-

(Only asked in social media version)

Are you currently studying to obtain a master or bachelor degree?

Yes (1)

No (2)

(Only asked in social media version)

Are you a Psychology Student?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Page Break

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Self-esteem pre-measure

Here we would like to know how you feel about yourself.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (2)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At times I think I am no good at all. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Self-esteem pre-measure

Start of Block: Power perception

The following statements concern gender differences in high-ranking positions in companies and organizations.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I believe that there is gender inequality in high-ranking positions. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that men hold most of high-ranking positions. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I believe that women hold most of high-ranking positions. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Power perception

Start of Block: Introduction

Part 2: Job advertisements

Thank you for taking part in this research about job application intentions of university students. We are working together with a company based in Amsterdam. This company is interested in how a job advertisement for their internship program is perceived by university students that are interested in making their first work experiences or are soon to do so after graduation.

We are particularly interested in the expectations that students have about the company. Further, we want to know about the feelings and thoughts of potential applicants when being presented with this job advertisement.

Therefore, we will present you with the job advertisement of the company and ask you several questions regarding: Your momentary feelings, whether you would consider applying for an internship like the one described, and your evaluations and expectations of the company.

The outcome of this study will be presented to the company. The resulting knowledge will be used to give the company advice on how to best develop their job advertisements in order to attract young and motivated job applicants.

End of Block: Introduction

Start of Block: First instruction

In the following you will be presented with the job advertisement of the company. Please read through this carefully and take some time to investigate the job advertisement. After this you will be asked several questions about it.

End of Block: First instruction

Start of Block: MC

TimingMC Timing

First Click (1)

Last Click (2)

Page Submit (3)

Click Count (4)

ARE YOU OUR NEW STRATEGIC AND CAREER-MINDED PROJECT MANAGEMENT INTERN?

Who are we?

MediaAtWork is a company specialized in assisting several organizations all over the world with their online-media representation. Our clients include ministries and municipalities, as well as companies, such as L'Oreal, Volkswagen, and Apple. The departments in MediaAtWork are specialized in different processes related to perfect online advertisement. This involves research, IT, creativity and design, customer contact, and organizational management. During the internship, you have the unique chance to be part of each of these departments.

Who are you?

You are currently enrolled in or finished a Bachelor or Master degree in any given topic. You are motivated to learn and open to new experiences. You are strategic, willing to take risks, have strong analytical thinking skills, and you are career-minded. The internship requires you to be resistant to stress, and to be able to compete in a fast-developing international environment.

What will be your tasks?

You will support our employees in working on different media-related projects in the different departments and present your work at the end of your internship. You will work on online campaigns in a diverse team and for clients from all parts of the world. We will need you to be able to be resistant to stress in an ever-changing work environment, work independently even within a team, and also have a strong sense for analytic and strategic thinking as the work is interconnected with the different departments and locations of the company. Depending on your interests and expertise, you can choose what you would like to focus on.

What do we offer?

We offer a paid internship (450€/month). Being a highly interconnected company, an internship at MediaAtWork gives you the opportunity to meet and connect to interesting people from all over the world. Once a month we organize team-building events, because a good atmosphere in the team is important for our company to excel. We put great emphasis on excellent training of our interns. Successfully completing the internship program may give you the chance to work with our company in future - either in our office or any other of our locations all around the world. The internship program is planned for a duration of 6 weeks.

How to apply?

Interested? If you are the strategic and career-minded intern we are looking for, do not hesitate to send your application documents (motivation letter, diplomas, CV, testimonials) to projectmanagement.intern@work.eu before 01st April, 2022. The internship is planned to start on June 01, 2022 - but the starting date is flexible between June and September due to different academic calendars. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Corona-Note: As we do not know how the pandemic will develop within the course of this year, we are considering a hybrid or online alternative of the internship if necessary! However, it is our aim to make it as engaging as possible in order for you to gain a realistic experience during your time with us!



MEDIA AT WORK

End of Block: MC

Start of Block: FC

TimingFC Timing

First Click (1)

Last Click (2)

Page Submit (3)

Click Count (4)

ARE YOU OUR NEW EMPATHIC AND SOCIALLY SKILLED PROJECT MANAGEMENT INTERN?

Who are we?

MediaAtWork is a company specialized in assisting several organizations all over the world with their online-media representation. Our clients include ministries and municipalities, as well as companies, such as L'Oreal, Volkswagen, and Apple. The departments in MediaAtWork are specialized in different processes related to perfect online advertisement. This involves research, IT, creativity and design, customer contact, and organizational management. During the internship, you have the unique chance to be part of each of these departments.

Who are you?

You are currently enrolled in or finished a Bachelor or Master degree in any given topic. You are motivated to learn and open to new experiences. You are empathic, responsible, and you have very strong social skills. You are able to communicate well with the other interns, our employees, as well as with our (often international) clients. The internship thus requires you to be a socially-minded team-worker and to relate easily to others in a fast-developing international work environment.

What will be your tasks?

You will support our employees in working on different media-related projects in the different departments and present your work at the end of your internship. You will work on online campaigns in a diverse team and for clients from all parts of the world. For this, as well as for the development and understanding our new online media campaigns, you need very good social and communication skills, a high level of empathy, and a sense of responsibility. Depending on your interests and expertise, you can choose what you would like to focus on.

What do we offer?

We offer a paid internship (450€/month). Being a highly interconnected company, an internship at MediaAtWork gives you the opportunity to meet and connect to interesting people from all over the world. Once a month we organize team-building events, because a good atmosphere in the team is important for our company to excel. We put great emphasis on excellent training of our interns. Successfully completing the internship program may give you the chance to work with our company in future - either in our office or any other of our locations all around the world. The internship program is planned for a duration of 6 weeks.

How to apply?

Interested? If you are the empathic and socially skilled intern we are looking for, do not hesitate to send your application documents (motivation letter, diplomas, CV, testimonials) to projectmanagement.intern@work.eu before 01st April, 2022. The internship is planned to start on June 01, 2022 - but the starting date is flexible between June and September due to different academic calendars. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Corona-Note: As we do not know how the pandemic will develop within the course of this year, we are considering a hybrid or online alternative of the internship if necessary! However, it is our aim to make it as engaging as possible in order for you to gain a realistic experience during your time with us!



End of Block: FC

Start of Block: RandomQuestion

Now, we would like you to rate the job advertisement for the internship that you just read. Here, we focus on the structure, colouring and information of the job advertisement. Please indicate to which extent you agree with the statements below.

I like the choice of colours that was used in the job advertisement.

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

The structure of the job advertisement makes sense considering the information that is presented.

- Strongly disagree (1)
 - Somewhat disagree (2)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (3)
 - Somewhat agree (4)
 - Strongly agree (5)
-

The job advertisement provides me with all the information that I need for writing an application letter.

- Strongly disagree (1)
- Somewhat disagree (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Somewhat agree (4)
- Strongly agree (5)

End of Block: RandomQuestion

Start of Block: Meta/self-stereotyping measurement

Now that you have read about this internship and the company, you may have some expectations about how people in the company would think of you if you were to apply for it.

Additionally, we would like to know how such expectations relate to how you see yourself.

On the following pages you will read through short statements that focus on these possible expectations.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements.

Page Break

If I were to submit my application documents for this internship, I think that the **recruiters of the company** would expect that I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Emotional (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bitchy (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Warm-hearted (37)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Risk-taking (39)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Illogical (40)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



I think I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Emotional (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strategic (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bitchy (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Warm-hearted (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please click Strongly agree (this is an attention check) (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Risk-taking (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Illogical (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If I were to submit my application documents for this internship, I think that the **recruiters of the company** would expect that I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Aggressive (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socially-minded (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unreasonable (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Caring (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anxious (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Likely to pick a quarrel (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



I think I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Aggressive (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socially-minded (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Unreasonable (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Caring (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Anxious (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strong (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Likely to pick a quarrel (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

If I were to submit my application documents for this internship, I think that the **recruiters of the company** would expect that I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Shy (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please click somewhat disagree (this is an attention check) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arrogant (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Power-hungry (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dependent (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compassionate (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confident (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



I think I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Shy (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arrogant (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Power-hungry (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dependent (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compassionate (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confident (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

If I were to submit my application documents for this internship, I think that the **recruiters of the company** would expect that I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Not concerned about others (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ambitious (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selfish (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Timid (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sincere (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assertive (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Submissive (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



I think I am...

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Not concerned about others (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Honest (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ambitious (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selfish (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Timid (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sincere (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Assertive (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Submissive (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Meta/self-stereotyping measurement

Start of Block: Self-confidence

Now we would like to learn more about the extent that you believe in your abilities to do this internship.

Please indicate to what extent you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I have confidence to handle the tasks mentioned in the internship description. (19)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have what it takes to successfully finish the internship. (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel like I have a number of good qualities that are needed for this internship. (22)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am confident that the company would consider me for this internship. (23)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Self-confidence

Start of Block: Emotions

In this part of the questionnaire we would like to learn more about how you felt when reading about this company and the job advertisement.

Reading the job description of Media At Work made me feel:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Hopeless (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excited (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Angry (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Happy (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nervous (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Optimistic (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Annoyed (16)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Depressed (17)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enthusiastic (20)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worried (21)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Emotions

Start of Block: Application intentions

Page Break

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
I can imagine sending an E-mail to MediaAtWork and ask for more information about their internship program. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I saw an internship like this in an advertisement, I would consider applying for it. (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would actively look for an internship like the one described. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Please click Somewhat agree (attention check). (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Application intentions

Start of Block: Self-esteem post-measure

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements:

	Disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I feel that I have a number of good qualities. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am able to do things as well as most other people. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel I do not have much to be proud of. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wish I could have more respect for myself. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I take a positive attitude toward myself. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Self-esteem post-measure

Start of Block: check

Page Break

The following 2 statements concern the job advertisement that you just read. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Stereotypically male (1)	Somewhat more stereotypically male (2)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat more stereotypically female (4)	Stereotypically female (5)
I think the company and the people working in it are... (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I think the job description is... (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

End of Block: check

Start of Block: Sexism

Finally, we would like to know how you see relationships between men and women in our society. Please indicate to what extent you agree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women should be cherished and protected by men. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Men are incomplete without women. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Sexism

Start of Block: End

You have almost reached the end of the survey.

Before you finish the survey, we would like to ask two more questions.



Was there anything language wise unclear, if yes, what?

Five horizontal lines for text input.



Page Break

If you have any comments or thoughts about the study, which you would like to share with us, please write them in the box below. If not, please continue to the debriefing by clicking on the arrow below.

Five horizontal lines for text input.



Page Break

Debriefing

Thank you for your participation in this study!

Please read the following information about this study very carefully.

What was the aim of our study?

We are interested in how people read job advertisements. For this purpose we created a job advertisement and we varied parts of the text to see whether people find the advertisement more or less attractive and whether it influenced their application intentions.

You were informed that the present research is about job application intentions of university students and that the research team is working together with a company to help them improve their

job advertisements to target young professionals. However, this is not true. Further, please note that the company MediaAtWork and the job advertisement are fictional and do not exist. The researchers created them for the purpose of this research project. This was necessary to investigate the above-mentioned topic. It was important to hide the actual purpose of the study, otherwise it could have distorted the results.

Control questions

Additionally, as you may have noticed, we used control questions in this study. It is important for the reliability and quality of our research to use control questions. This allows us to potentially exclude responses that have been given without full attention and active consideration.

Finally

We would like to thank you again for your participation. It is very meaningful for us and possibly helps to add new findings about the job market.

Also, we ask you kindly not to share the actual purpose of the study with others who might also participate. This could affect the results.

If you are interested in the results of this research, feel free to send an email to m.baisch@student.rug.nl. Please click on the arrow below to complete and submit the questionnaire.

End of Block: End

Appendix B

Female stereotypic job advertisement

ARE YOU OUR NEW EMPATHIC AND SOCIALLY SKILLED PROJECT MANAGEMENT INTERN?

Who are we?

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Who are you?

You are currently enrolled in or finished a Bachelor or Master degree in any given topic. You are motivated to learn and open to new experiences. You are empathic, responsible, and you have very strong social skills. You are able to communicate well with the other interns, our employees, as well as with our (often international) clients. The internship thus requires you to be a socially-minded team-worker and to relate easily to others in a fast-developing international work environment.

What will be your tasks?

You will support our employees in working on different media-related projects in the different departments and present your work at the end of your internship. You will work on online campaigns in a diverse team and for clients from all parts of the world. For this, as well as for the development and understanding our new online media campaigns, you need very good social and communication skills, a high level of empathy, and a sense of responsibility. Depending on your interests and expertise, you can choose what you would like to focus on.

What do we offer?

We offer a paid internship (450€/month). Being a highly interconnected company, an internship at MediaAtWork gives you the opportunity to meet and connect to interesting people from all over the world. Once a month we organize team-building events, because a good atmosphere in the team is important for our company to excel. We put great emphasis on excellent training of our interns. Successfully completing the internship program may give you the chance to work with our company in future - either in our office or any other of our locations all around the world. The internship program is planned for a duration of 6 weeks.

How to apply?

Interested? If you are the empathic and socially skilled intern we are looking for, do not hesitate to send your application documents (motivation letter, diplomas, CV, testimonials) to projectmanagement.intern@work.eu before 01st April, 2022. The internship is planned to start on June 01, 2022 - but the starting date is flexible between June and September due to different academic calendars. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Corona-Note: As we do not know how the pandemic will develop within the course of this year, we are considering a hybrid or online alternative of the internship if necessary! However, it is our aim to make it as engaging as possible in order for you to gain a realistic experience during your time with us!

MEDIA AT WORK

Male stereotypic job advertisement

ARE YOU OUR NEW STRATEGIC AND CAREER-MINDED PROJECT MANAGEMENT INTERN?

Who are we?

MediaAtWork is a company specialized in assisting several organizations all over the world with their online-media representation. Our clients include ministries and municipalities, as well as companies, such as L'Oreal, Volkswagen, and Apple. The departments in MediaAtWork are specialized in different processes related to perfect online advertisement. This involves research, IT, creativity and design, customer contact, and organizational management. During the internship, you have the unique chance to be part of each of these departments.

Who are you?

You are currently enrolled in or finished a Bachelor or Master degree in any given topic. You are motivated to learn and open to new experiences. You are strategic, willing to take risks, have strong analytical thinking skills, and you are career-minded. The internship requires you to be resistant to stress, and to be able to compete in a fast-developing international environment.

What will be your tasks?

You will support our employees in working on different media-related projects in the different departments and present your work at the end of your internship. You will work on online campaigns in a diverse team and for clients from all parts of the world. We will need you to be able to be resistant to stress in an ever-changing work environment, work independently even within a team, and also have a strong sense for analytic and strategic thinking as the work is interconnected with the different departments and locations of the company. Depending on your interests and expertise, you can choose what you would like to focus on

What do we offer?

We offer a paid internship (450€/month). Being a highly interconnected company, an internship at MediaAtWork gives you the opportunity to meet and connect to interesting people from all over the world. Once a month we organize team-building events, because a good atmosphere in the team is important for our company to excel. We put great emphasis on excellent training of our interns. Successfully completing the internship program may give you the chance to work with our company in future - either in our office or any other of our locations all around the world. The internship program is planned for a duration of 6 weeks.

How to apply?

Interested? If you are the strategic and career-minded intern we are looking for, do not hesitate to send your application documents (motivation letter, diplomas, CV, testimonials) to projectmanagement.intern@work.eu before 01st April, 2022. The internship is planned to start on June 01, 2022 - but the starting date is flexible between June and September due to different academic calendars. We are looking forward to hearing from you!

Corona-Note: As we do not know how the pandemic will develop within the course of this year, we are considering a hybrid or online alternative of the internship if necessary! However, it is our aim to make it as engaging as possible in order for you to gain a realistic experience during your time with us!

The logo for Media At Work, featuring the text "MEDIA AT WORK" in a bold, white, sans-serif font on a blue rectangular background.