

Organizational Work-Family Policies and Gendered Hiring Decisions

Abstract

Gender discrimination in hiring is complex and is often shaped by the broader social and economic environment. Yet, the organizational context is often absent from our understanding of gendered hiring decisions. Professor David Pedulla will examine the relationship between supportive organizational work-family policies – such as paid parental leave – and gender discrimination in hiring. Extant theory offers competing predictions about the direction of this relationship, which we are able to empirically test with the data. Beyond the direct link between organizational work-family policies and gender discrimination, he also theorizes how this association may vary with the type of work-family policy and the broader organizational climate surrounding work and family life. To gain empirical traction on these issues, he draws on an original dataset that matches information on callbacks for men and women applicants in a field experiment with survey data about the work-family policies available at the organizations in the field experiment. The findings shows that there is limited evidence of a direct relationship between organizational work-family policies and gender discrimination in hiring, regardless of the type of policy. However, when organizations have a work-family climate that is perceived as *unsupportive*, paid parental leave and the number of work-family policies at the organization are generally associated with lower levels of discrimination against women job applicants. It will conclude by discussing the implications of these findings for scholarship on gender, work, and organizations.