

The Relation between Sexual Orientation and Employment

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Abstract. This paper explores how sexual orientation affects employment. Some studies have shown that gay men are more likely to be hired than lesbian but some said transgenders are more likely to be discriminated in workplaces. However, in this study we want to find whether discrimination in workplace is more likely to happen in gay, lesbian, transgender or other LGBT people. To find the relation between sexual orientation and employment, we compared discrimination happened in different LGBTQ group and different discriminations happen in them. We also want to find solution to solve these problems but various factors affect the results. Conceal sexual orientation or not is one feature that impacts the results, normally people who choose to conceal their sexual orientation can better adapt the environment in workplace and they have higher probability to be promoted than those who do not conceal their sexual orientation. At the end of the article, we list some solutions from different aspects (from government, individuals, company and so on).

Keywords: Discrimination; Sexual orientation; Harassment; Employment.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Discrimination that happens in workplace has diminished gradually, but this is still a problem that need to be noticed. Many researches try to find the differences in workplaces based on sexual orientation and gender. It has been reported that LGBT people are more likely to be discriminated than those who are not, the rate of unemployment of LGBT community has reached 44% which is 22% higher than non-LGBT community. Many LGBT people like gay or lesbian said they were treated so unfairly and might be marginalized by their colleagues and superiors. Considering many LGBT people choose not to conceal their sexual orientation in workplaces, some of them might also be harassed. Many studies show that people who conceal their sexual orientation can better accommodate the atmosphere in workplace than those who do not, they also have a high job satisfaction. Findings also point that the problems of transgender go much further than job satisfaction and discrimination, some people like making fun of their gender, they define their gender uncivilly. It's not easy for people who are gay, lesbian or transgender to find a job or make great achievements, even if they find a job, it's hard for them to be promoted. Therefore, the society should keep a close eye on the discrimination of sexual orientation in workplace and job market, and companies also need to find a way to solve their discrimination problems.

1.2. Related research

GLB people tends to have a higher risk for mental health disorders such as depression especially to lesbians, gays and bisexuals. Besides sexual behavior, covariates included marital status have greatly affected people's likelihood of getting depression, although whether GLB people are more likely to have mental health disorders still need to be verified through more rigorous study [1]. The relationship between sexual orientation and occupational gender typicality can not only be affected by personal willing, but also by several other factors include different kinds of discrimination. Homosexuals will probably pay more attention on jobs that are different from their gender. Generally, some sexual minorities may give up gender-typical occupations due to their concerns about gender discrimination in the workplace [2]. In many cases, special groups of sexual orientation are the targets of workplace incivility, and this will result in lower job satisfaction. Scientists came up with four hypotheses and obtained the results after a series of interviews and investigations. It shows that even

many workplaces have made rules to restrict discrimination but people's discriminatory behaviors have become covert and subtle [3]. It's quite obvious that sexual orientation will influence the unemployment rate to some extent. The discrimination in the workplace promotes the situation and unbalance of workplace mobility. However, there's a great gap between homosexual and heterosexual, the unemployment rate of homosexual people is much higher than heterosexual people. Some data also show the difference in job/labor market to find whether the unemployment probability is higher for heterosexual or homosexual people [4].

Many researches try to find the discrimination that happened in gay, lesbian and bisexual. In many samples, some gay/lesbian said they didn't get unfair treatment and they even have high salaries than heterosexual people. However, some gay/lesbian/bisexual said the laws for discrimination didn't protect their rights. Scientists try to find the differences based on sexual orientation, hiring, promotion, wages and employment status. Many gay/lesbian/bisexuals also conceal their sexual orientation to see if they can better adapt the atmosphere in workplace [5]. Sexual orientation can be one factor that led to differences in self-employment and salaries. According to the data from CPS and GSS, gay men seem to earn less than heterosexual men and married men. Also, the reasons for homosexuality to enter partnerships can be different. Even in a partnership, the effects of both in their work and income can also be affected by marriage [6]. According to the investigations of twins in Australia about their sexual orientation also to their twin siblings, their attitudes of homophobic sentiments and their jobs, researchers found that gay and lesbian prefer to work in less prejudiced occupations. Although salaries may be affected by the discrimination in the workplace, this still to be proved by more exploration and investigations [7].

Sexual orientation discrimination has become a popular stereotype and there're still some problems with it. In workplace, not only behaviors, some people use inappropriate language to make fun of their colleagues who are gay or lesbian, they took these as jokes but for gay or lesbian, they're not. Some stereotypes might affect people's thoughts toward to sexual orientation, may be this is because of their institution of family or the environment where they lived [8]. Gender, race and class are some main factors that affect society, while sexual orientation falls in between. In this world, sexual orientation has become an important part, not only in workplaces but in many aspects. However, like lesbian or women workers, they are more likely to be discriminated in workplaces and the unemployment rate of those groups are much higher than other groups. It's necessary for society to pay more attention on these problems [9]. Some researches show that men with different sexual orientations like gay are more likely to be fired and harassed than lesbian, some stereotypes make people think gay men are perceived to be highly feminine while lesbians are perceived to be masculine. Some studies said many gay men like applying jobs that are for women and some could even do better than women [10].

1.3. Objective

There is a complicated relationship between sexual orientation and unemployment. For some homosexuals, it's hard for them to back into the society after they have experienced some unfair treatments or harassment in workplace, some of them even get depression. We try to find different factors that affect peoples' views to people with different sexual orientation like gay and lesbian.

2. Situation and reasons

2.1. Sexual orientation discrimination in workplace

Sexual orientation can affect people's life in many ways and it may cause a great influence in work. In many workplaces, a gay man or a lesbian can be discriminated by their colleagues or superiors, for example, they could be harassed by others or be subjected to unfair treatment. Compared with heterosexual, homosexuals are more likely to suffer unfair treatments and it's hard for them to be promoted even if they have done better than their heterosexual co-workers.

In LGBT community, they have many different sexual orientations, gay, lesbian and transgender are the three most common type in LGBTQ+. Some studies have shown that lesbians are less likely to be hired or promoted than gay men but some rejected those studies and said the unemployment rate of transgender is higher than other LGBT groups. In the past few years, the unemployment rate of LGBT is unstable, it has been reported that the retention rates of gay or lesbian is 34.2% which is 30.8% lower than transgender. Many transgenders leave their jobs because of discrimination and their fear of discrimination, some gays or lesbians leave their jobs because the work environment did not accept LGBTQ people. However, researchers have found many other different factors that affect LGBT people's unemployment rate.

Researchers have found that 46% of LGBT workers resigned their work because of unfair treatment, 9% of LGBT workers resigned their jobs because of discrimination from other people, 11% of LGBT employees didn't even be hired or might be fired with no reasons. The discrimination has become the most serious problem in workplace, many LGBT people might be harassed and some people said they harass LGBT workers because of religious beliefs. What's more, not only behavior, some verbal harassments also hurt them a lot like "Queer" and "sissy", for their colleagues, they may take it as jokes, but for LGBT people, these jokes are harmful.

However, some people argue that the rate of discrimination accidents that happen in workplace is decreasing every year and many countries have made laws to protect LGBT community, but the fact is discrimination don't need to be prescribed surface. Some people don't show their discriminatory behavior but use some words to describe their LGBT colleagues. This is still a problem that happen in many workplaces and scientists are trying to find solution.

2.2. Conceal their sexual orientation or not

Some studies show that many LGBT people choose to conceal their sexual orientation in workplace because this can make them accept the environment there better. More recent researches also present that conceal sexual orientation decreases the discrimination accidents and many LGBT people would no longer be discriminated and get the opportunity to be promoted, about 51% LGBT people choose to conceal their sexual orientation but some people choose not to conceal that. Some LGBT people who didn't conceal sexual orientation said they have a hard time at workplace, if there is a transgender, people only make fun of their gender. Moreover, nowadays many gay men try to find the career which is more suitable for women, such as nurse, and the fact is some of them can even do better than women. But in some places, this only gives people more ideas to make fun at them.

2.3. Stereotype

Sometimes stereotype gives people a wrong opinion when they first see a person. Some stereotypes of people make them think heterosexual is current and other sexual orientations are wrong, they discriminate gay, lesbian and transgender because their stereotype form them a wrong opinion. The stereotype of women is common, like woman cannot be better than man, these stereotypes can be caused by religions and family. It's hard for many people to change their stereotypes, just like it's hard to change people's discrimination to LGBTQ+ people. Some scientists said people should navigate the world, people who discriminate LGBT people need to change their opinion by thinking more and learn more. However, researchers still want to find the root of sexual orientation discrimination and this may need to cost many years to find the root cause and solution.

3. Solution

3.1. Legislation

This study has found that restrict the discrimination might be one solution to help LGBTQ community avoid getting unfair treatment or harassment from workplaces. In many countries, the government has published many new rules and laws to give LGBTQ groups their rights. For example,

in many regions in United States, the government has set different laws to protect LGBT people like gay and lesbian. In Florida, teachers are not allowed to use some inappropriate words to describe sexual orientation and gender, if they say some discriminated words they might be complained by parents and get a lawyer's letter. This is same as in Alabama and South Dakota, they all have laws to protect LGBT community and local schools are asked to teach students use appropriate words related to sexual orientation and gender.

Many places also set some new rules for transgenders, until 2022, 8 states in United States have passed the law that school should not only let heterosexual students participate in sports but also let students who are transgender to participate in sports. If the school chooses not to set rules to protect their students with different sexual orientation, these states will revoke school funding and they also have many other approaches to deal with some schools that disobey the law.

3.2. Company Protection

The other solution we find is that some companies set their own rules to avoid new employers experiencing discrimination by superiors or colleagues. For example, some companies decide to add some contents in new employer handbooks and some choose to make various LGBT-inclusive policies to protect the rights of LGBT employees. Considering the quit rate is very high in many companies, many employers choose to add some laws about sexual orientation and gender identity to their company's policies to protect their LGBT employees.

What's more, if some employee's find them have been discriminated by others, they can ask help from others like their employer or talk to the person who discriminate them. In some places, some local organizations focus on the problems of sexual orientation discrimination and gender identity, if some LGBT people experience discrimination in workplaces, they can get help from these organizations, even though some organizations can help them deal with the problems but they can find some resources and attorneys to help those people who have been discriminated.

GATE is an organization that help LGBT people with different problems, this organization wants to create a world with no discrimination, they want to help LGBT people and let them have a new life.

IRQR is the registered charity in Canada, they also want to help LGBT people to start a new life.

4. Conclusion

This study has found that the unemployment rate of LGBT community is decreasing gradually, governments and many companies all produce a great effect on it, but the problem is there are still many people use some inappropriate words but not behavior to discriminate their LGBT colleagues. The basic reason for why many people discriminate LGBT people is because of the stereotype, this might because of their parents, religions or the environment where they stay. Those people need to change their stereotypes. Traveling around the world is one way to gain a wider range of knowledge and can help people disengage them from the stereotype. To better protect the rights of LGBT people, government and court should set new laws to punish the discrimination in workplace, companies can also make some rules or changes to protect employees who are LGBTQ. In many places, local schools have enhanced the knowledge of sexual orientation, they try to teach children not to discriminate others. Even though people can choose to conceal their sexual orientation in workplace, but this is not a long-term solution, solve the root of the problem should be the main thing. However, many scientists now are still try to find the best solution, this may costs many years.

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