Reviewer’s report

Title: Stigmatization of obese individuals by human resource professionals: An experimental study

Version: 1 Date: 18 May 2012

Reviewer: Neil Gesundheit

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Major Compulsory Revisions:

This is an excellent study on an important topic and is well done and thoughtfully presented.

(1) The authors should comment about the potential study bias that was introduced when they presented their 12 subjects in white t-shirts. Did this exaggerate the underlying bias? Would there have been a different outcome if the subjects had been attired in business wear, where their obesity might have been masked by attractive clothing?

(2) The authors discuss the effect of subject gender, ethnicity, and BMI on the hiring decision. Did they explore the interaction of these factors? This would be important to relate. For instance, is the combination of being female, an ethnic minority, and high BMI much worse than having just 1 of these factors?

(3) The authors should explain certain technical terms that appear in the manuscript. For instance, what is meant by "equipartition"? What is an "accessible attitude"? What is "salience"?

(4) The authors should provide a clearer description of the questionnaire prompts that were given to the HR supervisors for the 3 primary endpoints. For example, "Please rate based on their appearance the desirability of nominating the candidate shown in this photograph for a promotion to supervisor?" Again, it would be informative to know the specific prompt that was used to generate the primary data.

(5) The Legends to the 2 figures needs to be improved. One must infer a lot from the current legend. What the figure shows should be explained in much more detail in the legend.

Discretionary Revisions:

(1) Please edit the "abstract", "introduction", and "methods" for readability. The "results" and "discussion" read much better.

Minor Essential Revisions:

None
Level of interest: An article of outstanding merit and interest in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I have no competing academic or financial interests.