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Differences in Managerial Perception of Performance Between Veterans and Nonveterans

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MS, University of Maryland, University College, 2008

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

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Abstract

The merits of veteran affirmative action placement and review of performance by management were the rationale of this study. The mismatch theory was applied to explain when an individual receives a favor from affirmative action but is unable to keep pace with others performing in the same role. This quantitative quasi-experimental study was used to examine what differences exist between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations. A series of hypothetical scenarios were administered to respondents using vignettes that describe the actions taken by employees regarding an unfair labor practice. A paired *t* test was conducted in this quantitative research to assess if there were differences in the scores of the hypothetical characters specifically as it pertained to their veteran designations. From a 107 person sample and an inclusion criteria of federal government managers who manage attorneys hired with and without veteran-related affirmative action assistance, an analysis included conducting a test for 24 different pairs that compared the characters' aggregate scores and specific performance measures. The test showed that there were no real differences in the ratings of the employees after disclosing their veteran status to the raters. This study indicated greater insights on whether management can identify actual differences in employee performance or if the 2 designations themselves, veteran and nonveteran, are the driving forces of their comprehension and subsequent action. Positive social change may emanate from this study because the insights revealed offer a greater context for the effectiveness of affirmative action programs like veteran preference and if greater controls and/or training needed to be implemented to fortify their effectiveness.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to those loved ones that I thought would be here to celebrate this milestone with me: Turner Wright, Oease Cook, and Earon Williams. You are loved and will be remembered forever!

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This has been a long time coming and I am so glad that this part of my educational journey has come to an end. Throughout this process, I have not only learned a great deal about scientific inquiry, but also a great deal about myself and the patience and perseverance I possess. I do not know if I would do it all over again, but I am glad that I stuck it out.

I would first like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As cliché as it may sound, I truly would not have been able to make it this far without Him. The constant revisions, rejections, and denials, both academic and personal, are enough to make anyone quit. It was my faith and the guarantee of His promise that ushered me through this process.

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And to my friends, thank you for the laughs, happy hours, texts, phone calls and brunches. You all helped me unwind during the stressful days. Thanks for believing in me!

Now get ready for Sean Cook University because Dr. Cook is finally here!

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

The focus of this study was on the merits of affirmative action and its use in recruitment and employment. Veteran affirmative action placement was evaluated to see how it is connected to organizational performance and the subsequent review of this performance by management. This study is essential to the field because it may provide insights into whether managers are capable of looking past an affirmative designation and focus on the merits of a worker's performance. The result can have implications on the benefit/detriment that affirmative action programs can have on an organization's performance and whether recipients of affirmative action benefits are at a disadvantage because of management bias. Positive social change can result from this study because it can help determine the performance outcomes for veteran affirmative action programs and assess its benefits to all stakeholders.

In this chapter, I provide explanations and analysis on the study background, explain the general and specific management problems connected to this study, elucidate the purpose of the study, as well as provide the research questions that were explored and tested in this quantitative study. Also, this section also provides a synopsis of the theoretical underpinnings that support this study, in addition to the explanations of the purpose of study, key definitions for greater understanding, limitations, and assumptions inherent within the parameters of the study. Lastly, this chapter provides an explanation of how the merits and results found can be attributed to greater positive social change.

Background of the Study

Affirmative action programs have been critical in the United States as a necessary remediation for past discrimination and prejudice (Arcidiacono, Aucejo, Fang, & Spenner, 2011). According to Hall and Woermann (2014), the institutionalized nature of discrimination created a need for educational institutions, public institutions, and private organizations to implement programming that strategically target groups of individuals that are underrepresented (p. 62). In many instances, the programs have proven to be successful and have worked to help bridge the gap of at least 30 years of underrepresentation in various areas (Paxton & Hughes, 2015).

Affirmative action policies originated in the 1940s during the era of the Civil Rights Movement (Sabbagh, 2011). The policies were centered around remediating past discrimination faced by women and minorities during the time. In this era, woman and individuals germane to certain racial groups experienced increasing trouble when trying to obtain employment and gaining acceptance into postsecondary educational institutions, with the former being especially prevalent (Pierce, 2014). After prolonged periods, the president began issuing a series of executive orders that mandated the adoption of critical equal employment opportunity measures (Parry & Finney, 2014). Many of these measures and initiatives included targeted recruitment, employee development, and employee support programs.

A gap in the literature, however, exists in the application of the policy to areas less straightforward as race and sex. There has not been as much of a concerted focus on the treatment and placement of veterans in currently affirmative action programs. Government

officials created veteran's preference policies to help provide discharged military personnel with jobs after successful service (Lewis, 2013). Congress engaged in a series of legislation that provided preferential treatment of disabled veterans in federal hiring, which subsequently expanded to honorably discharged veterans and their widows (Lewis & Emmert, 1984). During the hiring process today, applicants are granted scores from their responses to strategically designed questionnaires that gauge their qualifications and appropriateness for a federal position (Lewis, 2013).

Under veteran's preference procedures, honorably discharged veterans are able to have five extra points added to their base civil service examination scores and are placed at the top of their rating category (OPM, Category Rating, 2016). Honorably discharged disabled veterans are awarded 10 extra points and automatically float to the top of any rating category if they receive a minimum qualified ranking (FedHireVets, 2011). With these provisions, from a federal perspective, job candidates who qualify for veterans' preference are three to four times more likely to hold federal jobs than those with no military service (Lewis, 2011). Veteran employees are more likely to hold lower educational credentialing than their nonveteran counterparts (Lewis, 2011). As seen in the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) Central Personnel Data File (CPDF) survey of employees hired between May 1999 and April 2009, veterans were less educated, older, and more often male than nonveteran new hires (Lewis, 2011). The nonveteran new hires had one more year of education, on average, and 51.3% of nonveterans, as opposed to 31.9% of veterans were actual college graduates (Lewis, 2001, p. 16).

My goal with this study is to provide greater insights on whether management can identify actual differences in employee performance or if the two designations themselves, veteran and nonveteran, are the driving forces of their comprehension and subsequent action. The insights may offer a greater context for the effectiveness of affirmative action programs like veteran preference and if greater controls and/or training needed to be implemented to fortify their effectiveness. My study can help to provide context for additional studies that examine the need of such programs to provide preference to a certain group even amid a noted difference in ability and qualifications.

Problem Statement

A 2014 report by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) found that there was a need for increased affirmative action programs as evidenced by the disproportionate unemployment rates of minority workers, 10.7% Black and 7.8% Latino or Hispanic as compared to 5.3% White (EEOC, 2014). Additionally, a report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014) found that veterans who served during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars were having difficulty finding work. Scholars have found that diversity in organizations, through initiatives like affirmative action programs, such as veteran's preference, is advantageous (BLS, 2014). Between 2008 and 2010, companies with increased diversity, as seen in characteristics like race and gender, were also top financial performers **(**Barta, Kleiner, & Neumann, 2012). According to the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM) (SHRM, 2017), there is a common perception that military veterans are thought to have characteristics like a strong sense of responsibility (97% of the respondents) and ability to see a task through (96% of respondents).

However, other concerns of managers, such as the fear of future deployment, posttraumatic stress disorder, or the inability to transition military skills to civilian job duties, have created perception that military veterans are not able to perform on par with their nonveteran counterparts (SHRM, 2017). Scholars have found a general management problem exists in the perception that employees recruited under affirmative action programs underperform in comparison to their regular counterparts (Leslie, Mayer, & Kravitz, 2014). Studies by Heilman, Block, and Stathos (1997), as well as by Nakhaie (2013), have shown that association with affirmative action programs has relegated many of beneficiaries to being incompetent. Leslie et al. (2014) found that perceptions of incompetence and low warmth from coworkers can be associated with affirmative action programs and low target performance outcomes.

Over the past 10 years, there has been increased research and opinions from authorities like the United States Commission on Civil Rights on the legitimacy of affirmative action and the ineffective or mismatched placement of individuals (Sander, 2014). The specific management problem is that recipients of affirmative action programs have experienced negative performance reviews from management as a possible result of perceived incompetence from others, self-perceived incompetence, and/or stereotyping effects (see Leslie et al., 2014). In this study, I evaluated how veteran affirmative action placement is connected to organizational performance and the subsequent review of this performance by management.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to evaluate the mismatch theory and compare the differences in management's rating of performance between the military veteran employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. The independent variable, veteran designations, was generally defined as employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. The dependent variable was generally defined as managerial performance ratings that assesses employee capability and performance; vignettes framed around employee performance were crafted. While the affirmative action programs are beneficial in their ability to assist underserved demographics, both scholars and policymakers across the globe (Brown & Langer, 2015; Zom, 2001) have inquired whether or not the goal of reducing inequality has positive or negative effects on organizational performance. Data was collected using vignettes on veteran and nonveteran employees that give managers the ability to rate their performance to a specific work activity. These managers were chosen from the U.S. Census Bureau. The vignettes provided a series of hypothetical scenarios that describe the actions taken by employees regarding an unfair labor practice. With varying demographics, including veteran designation and gender, managers were asked to rate the hypothetical responses. Their responses were then evaluated to determine whether or not there is significance between the ratings of the two employee groups.

Positive social change can result from this study because the results may help determine the performance outcomes for veteran affirmative action programs and assess it benefits to all stakeholders. Affirmative action programs were intended to provide equality and level the scope of representation with a given field (Woermann, 2014). Its merits, however, are undermined when it places not only the organization at a disadvantage, but the recipient as well. I evaluated affirmative action programs and assessed the difference in performance outcomes between those employees who benefit from the program and those who do not.

Research Question and Hypotheses

In this study, a paired *t* test was used to test if the ratings for nonveteran employees is higher than their veteran counterparts by the same manager. The independent variable, veteran designations, was generally defined as employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. The dependent variable was generally defined as managerial performance rating that assesses employee capability and performance.

RQ1: What differences exist between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios?

$H_0$1: There is no difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios.

H_a1: There is a positive difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios.

H_b1: There is a negative difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios.

Theoretical Foundation

The mismatch theory, or mismatching, is thought to occur when an individual receives a position from policies connected to affirmative action, but is unable to keep pace with his or her peers performing in the same role without the benefit of affirmative action assistance (Sander, 2014). Its theorists conjecture that normally these recipients would not have placement within certain institutions because the difficult requirements and qualifications for placement are out of the recipients' reach (Williams, 2013). As seen throughout history, affirmative action has been used as a remedy to combat the effects of inequitable treatment to various classes (Sander, 2015). To correct these actions, some individuals are given larger considerations and explicit access to placement within an organization (Association for the Study of Higher Education Report, 2015). Many believe that these considerations are a small step to correct inequitable treatment and thus an attempt to diversify organizational complexion, while others, however, see it as a limitation and hindrance to maximum progress (Association for the Study of Higher

Education Report, 2015, p. 3). In predominately White institutions, affirmative action mandates those individuals in power to open channels of consideration to individuals who are not normally considered (Hawkins, 2015). The mandated consideration normally leads to admission or inclusion of neglected groups. In some instances, these newly considered individuals have proven to be successful in these roles and perform at or above satisfactory levels (Hawkins, 2015). In other instances, these individuals perform below average and are not producing at the levels of the peers who did not benefit from affirmative action policies (Fischer & Massey, 2007). These occurrences call into question the theory of mismatching, which offers explanation to the phenomenon of lower performance from affirmative action recipients. Without affirmative action, these individuals would normally seek out positions and placement at institutions and organizations where the difficulty level is not surmounting and their chances for success are reasonable (Sander, 2015). However, through the effects of affirmative action, they are placed in situations that do not adequately match their skillsets and thus places them in positions that cause underperformance or failure (Sander, 2014). This positioning is considered mismatching because the recipient is placed in a circumstance that does not match their ability to properly function. This theory is being used as the underpinning of the study as it provides explanation for the perception of management that may rank veteran employees hired through affirmative action programs lower than their nonveteran counterparts. A more detailed explanation can be found in Chapter 2 of this study.

Nature of the Study

The nature of this study was a quantitative quasi-experimental study that evaluated the differences in management's rating of performance between the veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveterans hired without veteran preference advantages. The quasi-experimental approach was used because it allows for testing of two groups to determine correlational and causal relationships without having to randomly assign groups. The variables in this study were veteran designations and performance ratings. The independent variable, veteran designations, was generally defined as employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. The dependent variable was generally defined as managerial performance rating that assesses employee capability and performance; ratings were obtained by the use of vignettes framed around employee performance.

I collected data using vignettes about veteran and nonveteran employees that give managers the ability to rate their performance to a specific work activity. The vignettes provided a series of hypothetical scenarios that describe the actions taken by employees regarding an unfair labor practice. When given the same type of job responsibility, according to a prescribed set of work standards, I examined whether managers rate employees (of both veteran and nonveteran designations) the same way. With varying demographics including veteran designation and gender, managers were asked to rate the hypothetical responses. In this study, a paired *t* test was used to test if the ratings for nonveteran employees is higher than their veteran counterparts. Their responses were

then evaluated to determine whether or not there is significance between the ratings of the two employee groups.

Definitions

Performance evaluation: Performance evaluation means evaluating employee or group performance against the elements and standards in an employee's performance plan and assigning a summary rating of record (OPM, 2017).

Veteran: A veteran is a person who served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable (28 U.S.C.).

Veteran's preference: Veteran's preferences refers makes veterans who are disabled, who served on active duty in the Armed Forces during certain specified time periods, or in military campaigns entitled to preference over others in hiring for virtually all federal government jobs (Department of Labor, 2018).

Assumptions

The assumption is made that study respondents completed their survey responses truthfully and with careful consideration for the scenario and standard practices for investigating an unfair labor practice (ULP). This assumption is necessary because it sets the premise for which performance was measured and assed for the study. It is also assumed that each respondent answered the survey according to their own merits and understanding of the position and activity asked. As each respondent was a manager to both nonveteran and veteran attorneys, it is assumed that each respondent could provide

an honest and accurate assessment independently of the hypothetical employees within the vignettes.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study, I used a quasi-experimental design to examine the differences in management's rating of performance between the veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveterans hired without veteran preference advantages. The focus of this study was to examine the veteran designation as the primary area of analysis. As my analysis of previous research revealed, veteran preference is an area of affirmative action that could benefit from further study and evaluation as it pertains to workplace performance, especially in the federal sector. The population of the study are those managers within organization of study who are a part of the larger population, which are those managers throughout the federal government who manage both veteran (recruited through affirmative action) and nonveteran (not recruited through affirmative action) employees. Managers outside of these populations are not included because they are either not held to the same mandate for hiring veterans (e.g., private sector employment) or do not have purview over both groups of employees. While the affirmative action programs are beneficial in their ability to assist underserved demographics, it must be evaluated whether or not the programs have a positive or negative effects on agency performance.

Racial considerations were left out of the study intentionally. After including veteran designations, as well as gender, evaluating yet another variable could convolute the study parameters and detract from the main focus of veteran designation.

Limitations

A possible limitation for the study is the type of performance evaluation used to rate employees. Because managers can use various forms of appraisals to assess employee behaviors, there could be drastic differences in the elements and rating scales for the study. To mitigate such an issue, vignettes were created for respondents where they are all given a uniformed performance appraisal and scale to use for each hypothetical employee. Because the study used vignettes comprised of hypothetical situations, there was a potential for the vignettes to fail to properly measure employee performance. To gauge the ability to properly rate the appropriateness of the rating tool, an expert panel study was utilized to ensure that there is enough differentiation between the high and low-performing designations within the vignettes. This helped to ensure that the vignettes do, in fact, differ and that participants can clearly delineate between the varying levels of performance. Another possible limitation was the size of the sample. Because one agency is used to survey the employees, it may be difficult to generalize the result of the survey across a larger population.

Significance of the Study

Further insights on the continued use of affirmative action programs in the United States may be developed from this research. Scholars are still exploring the impact these programs have on organizational composition, productivity, perspective, and motivation (see Sander, 2014). Prior studies have been engaged to assess various segments of underrepresented groups usually from a racial and sex perspective. Researchers have found that, in some circumstances, individuals connected to affirmative action programs

have performed differently than those who are not (Fishcer & Massey, 2007). My study may expand upon currently posited research and the impact and implications on underexamined minority groups in the workforce, examine the viability of veteran affirmative action programs, and determine whether a difference in performance exists within organizations when compared to their nonveteran counterparts.

Significance to Theory

I sought to provide further insights into the validity and understanding of theories like mismatch. The mismatch theory is thought to occur when an individual receives a position from policies connected to affirmative action, but is unable to keep pace with his or her peers performing in the same role without the benefit of affirmative action assistance (Sander, 2014). Williams (2013) conjectured that normally these recipients would not have placement within certain institutions because the difficult requirements and qualifications for placement are out of the recipients' reach (Williams, 2013). Because of such, they would normally seek out positions and placement at institutions and organizations where the difficulty level meets their skill level and their chances for success are reasonable. However, through the effects of affirmative action, these individuals are placed in situations that do not adequately match their skillsets and thus places them in positions that cause underperformance or failure. This positioning is considered mismatching because the recipient is placed in a circumstance that does not match their ability to properly function (Sander, 2014).

Sander (2004) concluded that affirmative action produces more harm than good in circumstances of mismatching. Sander suggested that originally such a concept was

proven through anecdotal accounts rather than systemic proof. However, through increased research on the matter, further study provided deeper insights on the correlation between success rates of affirmative action recipients and the skillsets and aptitude to perform in certain settings (Sander, 2014). Much of the current research centers on the academic success of minority and preference recipients in higher education and subject-matter specific areas in collegiate settings (see Arcidiacono, Espenshade, Hawkins, & Sander, 2015). Several research studies have been done on success and functionality in mathematics and scientific fields, which require a noted mastery and proficiency (Arcidiacono, Lovenheim & Zhy, 2015; Bennett, 2015). Others have been conducted on proficiency with legal studies, which require, at minimum, the same level of understanding and mastery (Barnes, 2007; Bennett, 2015). My study will help to add to the literature on how mismatching connects work performance in the public sector and how such could be perceived by managers as a deterrent in the rating of veterans and nonveteran employees

Significance to Practice

This study may help to advance the practice and policy of management in connection to affirmative action. Affirmative action was engaged at attempts to quell the policy and practice that discriminated against certain people (Hall & Woermann, 2014). Its efforts, however, were increased because the nature of discrimination was not just inherent within policy and immediate practice (Jackson, 2012). Its prevalence extended into organizational culture, disseminated oral culture, and ingrained organizational practices (Malamud, 2015). To remediate these unsaid and unofficial instances,

affirmative action initiatives like quotas were instituted to force reconciliation (Balafoutas, Davis, & Sutter, 2016). Although effective in some areas, legislative mandates garnered widespread attention. Its merits were praised, refuted, and legally challenged by individual and institution alike (Graves, 2014). The traditional application of affirmative action is not prevalent and widely used, as laws have changed to mirror the changing complexity of society (Aja & Bustillio, 2014). It has, however, been implemented in ways that are germane to the progression of societal conception and behavior. My study may help to provide insights into how managers perceive the benefits of affirmative action and whether their perception affects actual performance management.

Significance to Social Change

Positive social change can result from this study because I determined the performance outcomes for veteran affirmative action programs and assessed it benefits to all stakeholders. Affirmative action programs were intended to provide equality and level the scope of representation with a given field. Its merits, however, are undermined when it places not only the organization at a disadvantage, but the recipient as well. I evaluated affirmative action programs and assessed whether managers can assess any difference in performance outcomes between those employees who benefit from the program and those who do not.

Summary and Transition

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to evaluate the mismatch theory and compare the differences in management's rating of performance

between the military veteran employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. Veteran's preference ensures that veterans are given reasonable opportunity to compete for positioning within the federal government at the conclusion of their service (Sander, 2014). It is conjectured, however, that beneficiaries of affirmative action programs can fall victim to mismatching (Sander, 2014). As Sander (2014) posited, mismatching is theorized to occur when individuals who are lacking in credentialing and adequate qualifications are placed in roles and positions that do not meet their qualifications. Heavily theorized in the educational sector, many argue that affirmative action should not be allowed in making selections because it places students at a disadvantage when required to perform on the pre-established benchmark levels (Stulberg & Chen, 2014). The merits of mismatching have the potential to aid in greater employee performance or the perception of aptitude and capability as viewed by management.

I sought to examine whether veterans and nonveterans perform on the same level and if mismatching can be used to identify any difference that may be found in performance between the two variables as rated and documented by management. I used a quasi-experimental design to examine the differences in management's rating of performance between the veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveterans hired without veteran preference advantages. While the affirmative action programs are beneficial in their ability to assist underserved demographics (Sander & Taylor, 2012), it must be assessed whether the quest to bridge gaps of inequality has positive or negative effects on agency performance. The independent variables in this

study were the veteran and nonveteran designations that an employee has, while the dependent variable was the managerial response to vignettes framed around employee performance. In this study, I used managers who manage both veteran and nonveteran attorneys. The organization used for this study was the U.S. Census Bureau, Administrative Directorate. The organization has approximately 107 managers with purview over employees in the 0905 attorney occupational series. Managers were provided four vignettes that vary in response, veteran status, and sex. Data was collected by using vignettes on veteran and nonveteran employees that provided managers the ability to rate their performance to a specific work activity. A series of statistical evaluations were conducted to determine whether or not there is significance between the ratings of the two employee groups.

In Chapter 2, there will be a more detailed explanation of the several premises that better account for the phenomenon in this study. Chapter 2 will have an explanation of theoretical foundation, mismatch theory, to includes its origins, past applications, and association with affirmative action initiatives. In Chapter 2, there will also be further explanations of affirmative action programs, their applications, and how it connects to the workplace and performance. Additionally, the chapter will also expound on the veteran designations and its applicability in the workforce. Lastly, there will be a detailing of performance management, with respect to the federal government, and how such is connected to workplace performance.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to evaluate the mismatch theory and compare the differences in management's rating of performance between the military veteran employees recruited through affirmative action programs and noveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. Veteran preference has been an application of great benefit and controversy. Those given preference have been granted access to positions that may or may not be best suited for their actual qualifications and experience. Moreover, premised on the mismatch theory, I sought to determine if managers are able to distinguish between performance or if an affirmative action designation can affect their judgment. The following literature review examines the merits of affirmative action programs in the U.S. workplace landscape and evaluates the positioning and tenets of veteran hiring authorities found within. The review also looks at the merits of performance evaluation and how it sets the parameters for gauging employee performance and productivity within an organization.

In this chapter, there is a detailed explanation of the several premises that better account for the phenomenon in this study. This chapter will have an explanation of theoretical foundation of mismatch theory, its origins, past applications, and association with affirmative action initiatives. There is also further explanation of affirmative action programs, their applications, and how it connects to the workplace and performance. Additionally, I expound on the veteran designations and its applicability in the workforce. Lastly, there will be a detailing of performance management, with respect to the federal government, and how such is connected to workplace performance.

Literature Search Strategy

Literature for this study was engaged by using ABI/INFORM Collection, Business Source Complete and Emerald Insight search databases. Thoreau's multidisciplinary database was also used to garner broader search results and general guidance on where more specific and relatable journals can be found. For the theoretical underpinning, search terms like *affirmative action*, *veteran's preference*, and *employee competence* were used in the databases. No date parameters were implemented as the theoretical framework has a history that predates a 5-year recency span. Within the database and journal search, I used search terms like *veteran*, *veteran's preference*, *affirmative action*, *affirmative action in the workplace*, *performance evaluation*, and *employee competence/ability*. The Walden University Dissertation Database was also used to provide context on the cannon of literature already engaged on veteran placement within the workplace.

Theoretical Foundation

Proponents of the Existence Mismatch Theory

Mismatching as a theory originated in the 1960s in contexts not particularly germane to affirmative action (Sander, 2014). As time has progressed, however, the term has been more defined and pointed more directly towards the merits of education and associated performance and matriculation (Sander, 2015). As a main proponent, Sander (2004) questioned whether affirmative action was doing more harm than good. His primary discussion was geared towards investigating whether affirmative action in law schools has greater benefits for African Americans when compared to negative outcomes

like higher attrition rates, lower bar passing rates, and poorer prospects within the job market (Jackson, 2012). Sander concluded that affirmative action produces more harm than good in these circumstances. Sander stated that originally there was little systematic proof that affirmative action had negative results. However, through increased research on the matter, further study provided deeper insights on the correlation between success rates of affirmative action recipients and the skillsets and aptitude to perform in certain settings (Stulberg & Chen, 2014). Much of the current research currently on affirmative action is focused on the academic success of minority and preference recipients in higher education and subject-matter specific areas in collegiate settings (Stulberg & Chen, 2014; Mejia, 1999). Several research studies (see Chipman & Thomas, 1987; Hinrichs, 2012) have been done on success and functionality in mathematics and scientific fields, which require a noted mastery and proficiency. Others have been conducted on proficiency with legal studies, which require, at minimum, the same level of understanding and mastery (Yagna, 2016).

Smyth and McArdle (2004) engaged research on the mismatching phenomenon when they studied educational fit for students of diverse ethnic and gender backgrounds. In their study, Smyth and McArdle looked at the data for 23 colleges and measured the attainment of science, math, or engineering (SME) degrees from White students and those of underrepresented minorities and another comparison from those between men and women. Their premise was that these underrepresented minorities gained easier access into their institutions and specialty programs because of affirmative action programs (Smyth & McArdle, 2004). As such, it was conjectured that there is positive

correlation between affirmative action placement of underrepresented groups and low scholastic achievement in SME degrees (Smyth & McArdle, 2004). Smyth and McArdle's conclusion further supported Chipman and Thomas' (1987) findings that asserted ethnic differences have consistently been present in math achievement amongst primary school students. Chipman and Thomas found that there was a noted difference in the school rankings between White and underrepresented minorities and it was one of lower college rankings for the latter. Moreover, Chipman and Thomas' study results indicated that aspiring SME students who are beneficiaries of affirmative action programming were twice as likely to remove themselves from the specialized track. The research findings from these two studies lend credence to the possibility of affirmative action being more harmful helpful. When combined with the tenets of this study, it highlights the need into the exploration of the effect of affirmative action programs.

Arcidiacono, Aucejo, and Hotz (2016) also examined at the association between racial preference beneficiaries and their success rates in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics educational tracks. The authors sought to examine whether racial preferences had a negative impact on minority success rates at higher-ranked campuses, especially on those students deemed to be less prepared when compared to their counterparts (Arcidiacono et al., 2016). For this study, Arcidiacono et al. gathered information on students' academic preparation, intended major, and minority status at the University of California. The authors conjectured that a large difference between minority and nonminority students exist in overall academic preparation between both groups (Arcidiacono et al., 2016). They found that, through explanations asserted by the

mismatch theory, minority students at top-ranked universities would have noticeably higher probabilities of matriculation rates in the sciences if they had to attended lower-ranked universities that better matched their academic preparation (Arcidiacono et al., 2016). Moreover, it was not for the same for nonminority students in the same position (Arcidiacono et al., 2016). These examples help to provide context on how education and school placement is connected to the overarching context of mismatching and incorrect fit.

Williams (2013) further expanded on Sander's research by looking at the effects of minority preference and associated performance in law schools. Williams built on Sander's work by refining the research parameters engaged and strategically accounting for bar passage statistics, avoidance of any unobservable biases by restricting research to within-race analysis, and by accounting for measurement error. Williams sought to ascertain what happens when preferential programs introduce students with credentials noticeably below the median. Such research was then connected to conjectured results of having to substantially lower the level of instruction to meet the needs of these below-average students, which could be unfair to those near the top half of the distribution (Williams, 2013). Williams also noted that if instruction was kept on par or raised to the original level of difficulty, it would be continuously detrimental for those below median individuals. Williams predicted that, under the mismatch theory, those students receiving preferences would learn less and thus have a negative effect on their ability to pass school, the bar, and find placement as lawyers after college. The negative impact of

mismatching does not only affect individual ability, but can be detracting to overall minority performance statistics as seen in the results of the Williams study.

The bar passage study (BPS) by Wightman (1998) was used as a baseline for my study. Comprised of over 27,000 participants, the study was employed to gauge the truth or severity of rumors spreading about the high difference in par passage rates between people of color and their White counterparts, and whether it was with the time and investment of resources of potential applicants of color (Wightman, 1998). The thought was that if a large difference emanated from the study, there would need to be a widespread overhaul within legal education and admission policies (Wightman, 1998). By using the BPS as a baseline, including only test-takers and correcting for measurement-error bias and selection-on-unobservables, Williams (2013) yielded evidence that supported the presence of mismatch effects in legal education. Williams conjectured that the presence of mismatch was there, even though data limitations of the BPS had inherent bias to any tests geared towards finding incidents of mismatch. The inherent bias provides critical context to how mismatching could possibly affect managerial perception of individuals that benefit from affirmative action procedures.

Hinrichs (2012) examined the effects of affirmative action on student ability and successful matriculation through 2- and 4-year postsecondary academic institutions. Many of the studies engaged on this subject have focused on success and matriculation in law programs and master's degree achievement (Yagna, 2016). One of Hinrichs's main objectives was to evaluate affirmative action bans have an effect on a student's ability to attend a certain school and attain an actual degree. Information from the current

population survey, educational attainment from the American community survey, and college racial composition from the National Center for Education Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System was used to better understand the phenomenon (Yanga, 2016). Results from the study asserted that although bans did not affect the overall amount of minorities or underrepresented groups who attended college, there was a noted effect on the type of college that was attended (Hinrichs, 2012).

The author contended that when the ban was in effect, many minority students shifted from 4-year universities to 2-year universities (Hinrichs, 2012, p. 715). This increased the amount of students who earned associate's degrees over bachelor's degrees. Ultimately, the results from the study lend credence to the notion that, when no opportunity for selectivity in institutions exists, students will choose institutions that better match their credentials and academic readiness (Hinrichs, 2012). As such, this shows the existence of the possibility of mismatch.

Arcidiacono, Aucejo, Coate, and Hotz (2014) further engaged this mismatch premise with their investigation of academic proficiency impacted by legislation banning the racial preference. Their study was an examination of the intersection of prohibitive law and progress by those directly impacted by such law (Arcidiacono et al., 2014). Proposition 209 is legislation passed in 1996 that amended California Law and prohibited the use of race, sex, and ethnicity as determinants for decision in areas of public education, contracting, and employment (Clegg & Rosenburg, 2012). Such a ruling has critical importance in matters of education and employment when these factors are used in attempts to diversify and create a representative population within institutions. As

studies have shown, the immediate effects of the passage of the amendment saw graduation rates rise (Clegg & Rosenburg, 2012). African American graduation rates, particularly at University of California, Berkley and University of California, San Diego, rose 6.5% and 26% respectively (Hadley, 2005). The passage of the amendment also noted a large drop in minority enrollment rates (Hadley, 2005). This connects to my study because it provides insights into how mismatching does may not explain increases in performance.

According to a study by the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute at the University of Southern California, there was a sharp decrease in the acceptance rates of African American and Hispanic students after the prohibition of affirmative action programs in Proposition 209 (Mejia, 1999). Universities like Berkeley, where acceptance processes are selective, saw the biggest decline with figures like 49% in 1997 to 24% in 1998 for African Americans (Mejia, 1999). These findings better support the findings from Arcidiacono et al. (2014), who asserted that the mismatch theory holds merit and that when such preferences are ruled out, students naturally apply and are accepted into institutions that better match their academic preparedness and credentials.

Supreme Court Justice Thomas' (2003) dissent in the *Grutter v. Bollinger* case also supported the position of the mismatch theory. His response was given in relation to the affirmative action case ruled in 2003 (*Grutter v. Bollinger,* 2003). In the case, the Supreme Court upheld the position that the University of Michigan was able to keep whole its admissions policies that supported the use of affirmative action (*Grutter v. Bollinger,* 2003). Such a decision was allowed because, although it used race to favor

underrepresented minorities, other qualifying factors were used to evaluate applicants on an individual basis and an unconstitutional quota system was not used (*Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003*). In his dissent, Justice Thomas argued that the University Michigan unfairly tempted unprepared students to attend the school with the hopes to achieve a degree for which they did not have the proper credentials. He further cited that such actions were acceptance of mismatch theory that was prevalent through institutions that are suited below those considered elite (*Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003*).

Opponents to the Existence Mismatch Theory

Although there are articulated arguments supporting the merits and existence of mismatch theory in education and recruitment, there are also opponents that state that such a theory is a myth. While its merits are not considered to be silly or superfluous, opponents of the mismatch theory believe that it has not proven by truth, but rather by anecdotal evidence (Kidder & Lempert, 2014). Many researchers and sociologists believe that affirmative action does not have a negative impact on the graduation and success rates of minority and preference eligibles (Fischer & Massey, 2007). The case against the existence of mismatch theory is supported by several legal cases where the Supreme Court has ruled in favor for the use of affirmative action in admissions and acceptance processes. As previously enumerated, *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) resulted in the upholding of affirmative action practices that favored the placement of underrepresented minority groups in systems and institutions that are not normally accessible to them. The Grutter case was then affirmed with the upholding of affirmative action practices seen in the *Fisher v. University of Texas* decision. In this case, the University of Texas was found

to be in constitutionally defended in its decision to utilize tenets within its admission process that allows for the diversification of its enrollment and admittance in the university's undergraduate program (*Fisher v. University of Texas, 2016*). These cases served as the constitutional basis for the use of affirmative action programs and thus gave critics of mismatching credence to refute the theory.

A Study Chambers, Clydesdale, Kidder and Lempert (2005) directly examined the work of Sander and refuted his premise of the noted negative effects of the affirmative action programs and preferential placement of preference eligible. The authors built their case on the fact that from 1970 to 2005, the amount of black lawyers grew from 4,000 to 40,000 with majority of them having been beneficiaries of affirmative action programs in nearly all-white academic institutions (p. 1856). Sander (2014) argued that if African American and other preference eligible minorities were not given preference through affirmative action policies, graduation failure rates would decline and those admitted would graduate at a much higher rate because of their adequate credentials. The authors contended, that while his claims deserved attention, his figures were overestimated and not a true representation of the trends in affirmative action and enrollment in law school (Chambers et al., 2005, p. 1860). Amidst a myriad of findings, rebuttals, and refutes, the authors presented a finding of particular interest. They found that, despite the statistical significance of grades in his graduation model, the gains noted in his analysis showed that even if affirmative action was ended, there would be negligible effects on the graduation probabilities of African American still attending law school. Their probabilities of graduating would be on par with 2005 expectation even if they chose to

attend low-tiered school and received higher grades because of lower-credentialed competition (p. 1877). Their findings and rebuttal to Sander's analysis backed their assertion that affirmative action acts a vehicle to access for underrepresented groups and does not place African Americans (as specifically studied) at a disadvantage.

Camilli, Jackson, Chiu, and Gallagher (2011) suggested that fundamental tools for analysis and modeling are incorrect and thus renders much of staunch supporter of the theory, Sander's, assessment incorrect. Sander's assessment, which is utilized as a foundation for many of the arguments in favor of the existence of mismatch, is said to be lacking multiple cautions in its regression models (p. 4). Although, standing behind his claim Sander also recognized that many other researchers and social scientists were unable to replicate the results of his famed study (Sander & Taylor, 2012). As Camilli et al. (2011) suggested, regression analyses conducted in the way engaged by Sander are not capable of producing credible estimates of causal effects and thus it could not be safely inferred that affirmative action policies are directly related to negative success rates amongst minorities. It is also conjectured that Sander's claims are less credible because the information and statistics utilized to make its assertion is based on unreliable and irrelevant data (Kidder & Onwuachi-Willig, 2014).

Sander (2014) utilized the work of Light and Strayer and Loury and Garman (p. 898). Such usage can be seen as problematic because that data is 1) based on a 1979 survey and 2) reliant on the merits of historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs) (p. 910). The data from 1979 is not reflective of the vast changes that have been made in both education and legislation within the country (Sander & Taylor, 2012).

Furthermore, using HBCUs is problematic because it is imprudent to make comparison between the traditionally strong grades of black HBCU students and black students from predominately white institutions. Using the data in such a manner is incorrect because the hypotheses are inconsistent, and it is empirically reckless to make causal inferences regarding mismatch (Kidder & Onuwuachi-Willig, 2014).

Furthermore, a 2004-2009 Beginning Postsecondary (BPS) Survey showed that mismatch was not a phenomenon that should have been considered. The study had results that showed black undergraduate students that were considered to be mismatched at selective university, with low GPAs and standardized testing score, were more than likely to earn a degree within six (6) years than their peers at less selective institutions (Simone, 2012). Camilla, Jackson, Chiu, and Gallagher (2011) also offered that it is worth knowing that such a premise, if valid, should be applicable across the board and not just in instances of race (p. 168). A negative match should apply to anyone with below average credentials. It is also questioned of theory in its pure ability to find mismatch, whether under- or over-, in an instance where an individual with adequate academic credentials learns less or fails to graduate at less selection or non-elite schools (p. 169). They made the claim that a negative match hypothesis is not germane to just race and ethnicity. A mismatch situation could manifest within white students in matters of familial legacy, residential preferences, or athletic preferences. However, the research engaged was only been connected to minority preferential treatment. Moreover, there has also been no sign that mismatch has occurred in the previously mentioned factors affecting White students (Barnes, 2007). This brings into question whether or not mismatching actually exists,

since such does not seem to occur when White students benefit from a similar form of preferential treatment.

Critics of the mismatch theory also bring up the occurrence of selection bias often employed when attempting to make credible claims for the existence of theory (Chen, Grove & Hussey, 2012). The individuals with the academic credentials that traditionally meet the criteria for elite schools are already higher (Camilli et al., 2011). It has been asserted that selection bias occurs because the initial difference in qualifications between higher and lower tiered schools, prior to higher education institutions, are already off-balance. Many of the comparisons made between the preference and non-preference eligibles is believed to be skewed, which causes there to be more credence for theory than there really exists (Arcidiacono, Aucejo, Coate, & Hotz, 2014). Furthermore, Özlen (2014) made the assertion that while often deemed to be at a disadvantage coming to civilian employment from military service, that military veterans bring new skills and motivation to an organization. It was also conjectured that longer military service led to the transfer of more enhancement and skills (p. 1360).

Literature Review

Affirmative Action

Affirmative Action has been a traditioned tool utilized for the remediation of past injustices (Arcidiacono, Aucejo, Fang, & Spenner, 2011). It is a practice utilized throughout the world in efforts to correct issues primarily in matters of employment and educational institution admittance. Known as employment equity in Canada, positive discrimination in areas like the United Kingdom, or reservation in Asian territories like

India and Nepal, its premise is geared towards correcting the damaging effects of discriminatory and exclusionary mindsets and subsequent practices (Aja & Bustillo, 2014). Throughout the history of this country, there have a myriad of laws, policies, and systematic practices put in place that have caused one or more groups to be placed at a disadvantage when compared to their counterparts (Graves, 2014). These facts have often been large scale and disproportionate in the span of individuals that have been affected. The need for affirmative action policy was exacerbated from sustained prejudiced ideologies and mentalities (Parry & Finney, 2014).

The first efforts of affirmative action were centered around ending the blatant discriminatory practices engaged by institutions (Oppenheimer, 2016). Many organizations were operating from established policies that supported the active dismissal and removal of consideration for several groups. Whether ignored because of their connection to undesired traits or the perception of actual limitation coming from these groups, organizations erected entire systems that strategically eliminated certain groups from adequate consideration (Premdas, 2016). The groups were denied access, given limited purview, branded as less than capable, removed from growth opportunities and a myriad of other factors that placed them at further disadvantage when compared to counterparts who were given fluid chances and advancement opportunity (Balafoutas et al., 2016; Malamud, 2015). As such, affirmative action was engaged in attempts to quell the policy and practice that discriminated. Its efforts, however, were increased because the nature of discrimination was not just inherent within policy and immediate practice. Its prevalence extended into organizational culture, disseminated oral culture, and

ingrained organizational practices (Malamud, 2015). To remediate these unsaid and unofficial instances, affirmative action initiatives like quotas were instituted to force reconciliation. Although effective in some areas, legislative mandates garnered widespread attention. Its merits were praised, refuted, and legally challenged by individual and institution alike (Graves, 2014). As with many seasoned practices, they undergo a modern transformation that reimagines its tenets for applicability in relevance for mainstay society (Premdas, 2016). The traditional application of affirmative action is not prevalent and widely used, as laws have changed to mirror the changing complexity of society (Aja & Bustillio, 2014). It has, however, been implemented in ways that are germane to the progression of societal conception and behavior.

Origins. Affirmative action policies originated in the 1940s during the era of the Civil Rights Movement (Sabbagh, 2011). The policies were centered around remediating past discrimination faced by women and minorities during the time. In this era, woman and individuals germane to certain racial groups experienced increasing trouble when trying to obtain employment and gaining acceptance into post-secondary educational institutions, with the former being especially prevalent (Pierce, 2014). After prolonged periods, the President began issuing a series of executive orders that mandated the adoption of critical equal employment opportunity measures (Parry & Finney, 2014). Many of these measures and initiatives included targeted recruitment, employee development, and employee support programs.

Title VII. Afterwards, a series of legislation was introduced that would become landmark and set the tone for race-conscious legal mandate (Malamud, 2015). Title VII

of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was the first significant piece of legislation that addressed the inequalities. The law was strict in its attempts to limit unfair discrimination. In its power, the law prohibited employers with 15 employees or more from discriminating on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, and religion. Organizations, regardless of public and private affiliations, were not able to utilize these characteristics as determining factors of an individual's ability to adequately perform the duties of a specified position (Parry & Finney, 2014). The merits of this law applied not only to the hiring and recruitment of employees, but it was also extended to actions including promotion, transfer, training, wages, benefits, performance measurements, and a series of job-related measures (Pierce, 2014). The power of the law also extended to private and public colleges and universities, employment agencies, and labor organizations, which, of the former, has been seen prominently in cases like Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978), Johnson v. University of Georgia (2001), Grutter v. Bollinger (2003), etc.

Affirmative Action in Education. Much of the foundation and basis for affirmative action can be linked to discrepancy and discrimination in education (Stulberg & Chen, 2014). Various educational institutions incorporated affirmative action policies in their admissions processes to ensure that a diverse student body emanated (Arcidiacono, Espenshade, Hawkins, & Sander, 2015). While the programs benefitted those designated to a minority class, many of those outside of the protected class were denied admission. As such, different universities were brought to court and challenged on their inclusion and adherence to such prohibitive policies (Parry & Finney, 2014).

Johnson v. University of Georgia. The results of the Johnson v. Board of Regents of University of Georgia serve as legislative case that provides context for the facilitation of the affirmative action in the United States (Arcidiacono, Espenshade, Hawkins, & Sander, 2015). This case was connected to the application of affirmative action in educational constructs. In the case, three white females filed claims against the University of Georgia for damages and admission stating that their admission rejections violated the Civil Rights Act. The case brought interesting context to the affirmative action debate because there were conflicting interests and attitudes regarding protected classes, race and gender.

In this case, the plaintiffs alleged that the university's freshman admission policy was unconstitutional. They believed that the merits of the program favored the acceptance of non-white applicants and male applicants. The Unites States District Court ruled that the admissions policy was unconstitutional and that the program did no present a compelling case for the need of such a strict affirmative action policy. Handed down by the District Court and upheld by Eleventh Circuit Court, it was believed that the admissions policy showed no apparent noteworthy racial or gender diversity benefits and there was no clear delineation of the parameters when considering race. The females were granted admission to the school and thus their protected class was shown favor. However, the application of affirmative action on the basis of race was stripped from the university's admission policy. This case showed that affirmative action under an equal protection doctrine must be still applied fairly and equally.

Grutter v. Bollinger. The ruling in the Grutter v. Bollinger case provided precedent that also helped shape the understanding and application of affirmative action in the United States today (Bennett, 2015). In this case, a white applicant applied to the University of Michigan Law School with a 3.8 GPA and LSAT score of 161. Despite these high qualifications, the applicant was denied admission. The university stated that it utilized race as a factor when considering who would be admitted into the law program. Race was utilized as a compelling factor to bring about significant racial diversity to the program. After a myriad of appeals and contentions, the Supreme Court upheld the position that the University of Michigan was within rights to utilize race as an admissions factor and that the University could keep whole its admissions policies that supported the use of affirmative action (*Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2003). Such a decision was allowed because, although it utilized race to favor underrepresented minorities, other qualifying factors were utilized to evaluate applicants on an individual basis, and the system was not utilized in conjunction with an unconstitutional quota system. The ruling provided in this case would eventually serve as a precedent for other affirmative action-based cases in the future (Bennett, 2015).

Affirmative Action in the Workplace. Comparable to that of the affirmative action applied in education, there have been a series of legislative mandates and landmark court cases that have set precedent for how affirmative action is understood and applied in the workplace (Williams, 2015). The laws and cases established have had significant impact in employment and the facilitation of the recruitment process across industries, both private and public (Malamud, 2015).

***Revised Philadelphia Plan*.** The mandates within President Lyndon Johnson' Executive Order 11246 set the guidelines of the Philadelphia Plan; its mandates established requirements that barred discriminatory practices in hiring government contractors (Kahlenberg, 2015). From this legislation, there was a requirement for Philadelphia for government contractors to hire minority workers. Furthermore, the plan had provisions for the employment of African Americans by specific dates and numbers to ensure that enactment of the Title VII legislation. Although challenged by many organizations, with specific revisions and addendums, the plan was upheld, and its merits extended and were utilized as precedents for implementation in other states (Kahlenberg, 2015). One such case was the Contractors Association of Eastern Pennsylvania v. Secretary of Labor (1971).

In the case, the plaintiffs challenged the notions of the Philadelphia Plan which required affirmative action consideration which included a myriad of specific goals in the utilization of minority manpower in six skilled crafts: ironworkers, plumbers and pipefitters, steamfitters, sheet-metal workers, electrical workers, and elevator construction workers. The Contractors Association believed that the requirements of the plan were too restricting and were not a proper interpretation of Title VII if the Civil Rights Act. The challenge by the Contractors Association, however, was denied summary and judgment and was subsequently denied being heard by the Supreme Court of the United States. Since then, by many, this legislation is thought to be the first effective use of affirmative action in its attempts to concertedly utilize civil rights legislation in

mandating employees to enforce equal employment opportunities (Pedriana & Stryker, 1997).

Griggs v. Duke Power Company. The ruling in this case provided context and precedence of affirmative action in the workplace, as well as introduced the concept of disparate impact (Garrow, n.d). In Griggs v. Duke Power Company (1971), Duke Power Company was explicitly limiting the work opportunities of African American workers and relegating them to the labor department. Workers in the labor department were paid substantially less than those majority white employees in other departments. After the passage of the Civil Rights Act that explicitly restricts discrimination on the basis of race, Duke implemented a qualification standard that required employees to have their high school diploma or have scores on a legitimate IQ test that were on par to that of a high school student. This process, however, was discriminatory as well because it disproportionately affected African Americans and reinforced segregation in matters of hiring, promotion, and transfers. Moreover, such was done with no real analysis and justification for why this testing was a bona fide qualification for completing work outside of the labor department. The Supreme Court ruled against the Duke Power Company and asserted that their practices were against the merits of Title VII and it perpetuated racial discrimination.

In the Grutter v. Bollinger (1971) case, it was the opinion of Justice O' Connor that while utilized now, the use of racial preferences would no longer be necessary to further interests approved today. Her opinion, however, has not only been disproven amongst the category of race, but has now become relevant to issues of gender, religion,

and disability, and veteran status. These parameters and cases served as the precedents and foundation needed for the use of affirmative action in veteran activity.

Veterans

Veterans' Preference is a form of affirmative action utilized to bring hiring equity and increased opportunity to veterans who have given military service of some form to their country (Etler, 2013). Outside of mandatory military enlistment as seen in draft procedures, citizens, traditionally, make their own decision to enter into military service (Brown & Routon, 2016). During this time, service parameters can range from basic training to actual participation in a war campaign. The participation and inclusion of such then designates an individual as a veteran of the United States military. The service length, type, and specialty differ greatly for every veteran. Some veterans enlist and undergo basic training before finishing their agreed service amount and become discharged. Other veterans enlist and, after training, are placed in a reserved veteran status for the possibility of return should the need arise.

Many veterans embark on a single tour of duty that can include placements in the military and across functionalities all over the world (Ford, Gibson, Griepentrog, & Marsh, 2014). In these instances, military officials strategize various placements to ensure the adequate and efficient use of all the available talent. There are also scenarios when a veteran has been placed in active duty in war or combat-designated areas. In these situations, the veterans must engage their duties, whether combat or trade-oriented, under more dangerous elements and consequences (Rumsey & Arabian, 2014).

As a result of the services rendered, the placement within the service, and the experiences endured, veterans are subjected to varying degrees of emotional, psychological, and physical trauma. The extent of the trauma is intently connected to the aftereffects experienced by the veteran. Some veterans return from duty unscathed and are able to reintegrate into the civilian population with no noticeable impairments or difficulties (Bonar & Domenici, 2011). Others have a much harder experience as a result of difficulties like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is characterized by varying mental and emotional stress (Kukla, Bonfils, & Salyers, 2015). Additionally, for many veterans, their military experience subjects them to situations that have brought upon physical impairment. Often termed as a disabled veteran, these impairments can manifest as intermittent, prolonged, sustained, chronic, etc. (Davis et al., 2012). These manifestations have long-lasting impact and can have a large influence on an individual's ability to physically, emotionally, or psychologically operate successfully in civilian statues (Davis et al., 2012; Svikis et al., 2012).

These disabilities can also have a noted impact on civilian perceptions and their ability to effectively discern an individual's ability to serve. The physical and visible impairments are usually the most hard-hitting and impacting. Veterans are often discriminated or stereotyped when such a disability is disclosed or physically witnessed (Etler, 2013). This is especially germane to employment and recruitment, which has been seen in a number of studies where of studies have shown that depression and anxiety on veterans has had a negative impact on issues of employment status and job performance (Horton at al., 2013; Zivin et al., 2012).

Traditionally, veterans have been given certain entitlements for their dedication and service to the country and protection of civil liberties. Such can be seen in the lifelong monetary payouts for service, mortgage assistance, long-term care, tuition assistance, and a myriad of other helpful services (Employee Assistance for Veterans, 2012). Veterans are able to use these entitlements to readjust in life after their service and as a way to remediate any disadvantage that they may have been subjected to during their military tenure. When considering the history and all associated tenets of veterans, it must also be considered the nature of their capability to serve in civilian capacities post-service. For some, especially considering length and service type, their participation in military service has no impact on their knowledge and ability to perform in civilian positions after military service (Maharajan & Krishnaveni, 2016). Prior to military service, many individuals were recipients of degrees, certificates, and other training in specializations or trades that allow them to obtain employment fairly easy when reentering the workforce (Rausch, 2014). Additionally, while in the military, many individuals garner training in trades or matriculate through a degree program, which imbues them with the skills necessary to achieve employment.

Conversely, for others, the removal from a civilian capacity has an impact on their ability to effectively serve in capacities that do not require combat skill or are far removed from the responsibilities and duties that they were accustomed during their assignment (p. 90). With such a handicap, many individuals are unable to attain gainful employment. In most cases, they either do not have the required skills necessary to keep pace with the current job landscape or there is a perception of lack of qualification or

ineptitude from those civilian individuals in charge of hiring (Zivin et al., 2016). Furthermore, according to Maharajan and Krishnaveni (2016), with such a perception, many of these veterans have a hard time finding positions that allow them to utilize their knowledge and skillsets, and, in some instances, are unable to even find positions that allow them to adequately care for themselves or their families. As such, absolute veteran's preference mandates and procedures were employed to help rectify the imbalance of those affected by military service displacement (Etler, 2013).

Veteran's Preference Procedures

History of Veteran's Preference. Veteran's preference, as seen in the federal government, is an entitlement offered to military veterans to help with their placement in the workforce. While such practices are situated in workplaces throughout the country, there are no federal laws mandating congress to compel private entities to engage in practices that provide special benefits for military veterans (Etler, 2013). Veteran's preference in the law dates back to 1865 (Vet Guide, 2016). It required government organizations to give military veterans who were determined disabled during their time in service. Years later, in 1871, an amendment was made in the law to ensure that veterans had appropriate suitability for a position, which included the merits of knowledge and ability (Veteran Hiring, 2014). As time passed, the law expanded to provide veterans with preference during a reduction-in-force (RIF) and extend certain benefits and entitlements to any veteran widows or orphans. Legislation in 1888 saw the granting of absolute preference to all disabled veterans and their placement atop any qualifications lists with at least a score of 65 out of 100 (Vet Guide, 2016). By 1919, all honorably discharged

veterans were eligible to receive preference in the employment process (Veteran Employment Initiative, 2016).

The legislation passed in 1944 serves as the basis and legal foundation for veteran's preference as it is understood and administered today. Under the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt, an act was passed to broaden and strengthen the merits of veteran's preference (Veteran Employment Initiative, 2016). To date, veteran entitlements and provisions had been a combination of acts and executive orders across a series of presidential administrations. The Veteran's Preference Act of 1944 solidified many of the tenets of these provisions and it restricted the Executive Branch's ability to utilize executive orders to make temporary changes to the law. The act ensured that any changes to these provisions would have to undergo the full due process of legislative action. Additionally, the Act also extended its weight in matters of competitive examinations, reinstatements, reemployment, reductions-in-force, as well as included both permanent and temporary positions (Veteran's Preference Act, 1944). All governmental organizations and entities are subjected to the scope of this law.

***Current veteran legislation*.** Modern day laws on veteran's preference are absolute. Many laws surrounding the preferential provisions became defunct as pervasiveness of the provisions began to spread. Take for example the "Rule of Three." The rule, enacted by President Ulysses Grant, mandated that when certificates with qualified applicants were forwarded to hiring officials, only the three highest qualified individuals were to be placed on the certificate (MSPB, 1995). This was done to ensure that managers had the most qualified individuals to choose. This system became

compromised, however, at the intersection of this law and veteran's preference. According to the 1995 MSPB Study, because veterans had such high preferences and only the top three individuals could be referred, it would often limit managers' choice because the list could, at any given time, have only one veteran to refer. As such, the law has since changed to stop utilizing the rule and utilize category ranking instead, which makes concessions to purport absolute veteran's preference (Etler, 2013).

Category ranking and veteran's preference. In this current situation, category ranking involves segmenting the qualifications of candidates into groups. Usually denoted by highly qualified (90 – 100 points), well-qualified (80 – 89), and qualified (70 – 79), when a vacancy closes, applicants are divided into these groups as a result of their responses to a series of questions and task statements (Delegated Examining Handbook, 2007). There is also a separate process that goes on with respect to the designation of veterans. There are four (4) distinct categories in veteran's preference: 5 – Point Preference (TP), 10 – Point Compensable Disability Preference (CP), 10 – Point 30 Percent Compensable Disability Preference (CPS), and 10 – Point Disability Preference (XP) (Veteran Employment Initiative, 2016). Designation within each are attached to honorably discharged service during certain periods of war time, service length, commendations, or service disabilities.

With a TP designation, under President Barack Obama's Exec. Order No. 13518, an applicant is granted five (5) points on top of their passing examination score and is automatically floated to the top of the qualification group that they are initially assigned. With the other three designations, ten (10) points are added to the passing examination

score of the applicant, and, as long as they receive at least a minimally qualifying score of 70, they are automatically floated to the top of the highly qualified category (Exec. Order No. 13518, 2009).

In each of these scenarios, veterans have to be considered first because organizations are mandated to send veteran-only certificates initially. Once a HQ Veteran Certificate is issued, hiring managers have to assess the merits of each applicant (Category Rating, 2016). The only way to get around passing over a veteran is when the veteran declines a position or if special permission is granted by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to dismiss the veteran from consideration. This is done under high scrutiny because it has to be justifiably linked to lack of qualification for the position. If the organization exhausts the list or no HQ veterans emerge from the initial rating, the organization is then given access to the HQ nonveteran group of applicants (Delegated Examining Handbook, 2007). This process then continues for the remaining qualification categories (i.e., WQ and Q).

These actions were put in place by a myriad of laws to allow veterans the first opportunity for job consideration. While it is not impossible to reach individuals that are nonveterans, the merits for which a hiring official can justifiably pass over minimally qualified veterans are hard-pressing (Vet Guide, 2016). In addition to recruitment through competitive examining procedures, veterans are also afforded a myriad of hiring authorities that allow them employment within an agency without open competition. The Veteran's Employment Opportunities Act of 1998 (VEOA), Veteran's Recruitment Appointment (VRA), and Disabled Veteran's Appointment (DVA) are a few appointing

authorities that allows agencies to non-competitively appoint a veteran to an agency pending their satisfactory meeting of prescribed requirements (Veteran's Employment, 2014).

Public Perception on Veteran Preference. A conversation on veteran's preference would not be complete without evaluation on the perception that such an entitlement is held by others. As with most affirmative action programs, the entitlements are often accompanied by great scrutiny and frustration from those unable to gain from its benefits or those who see its benefits as unfair. Perception can play a large role in the workforce because, for many, it can be linked to how an individual treats others. Those who view the entitlement as unfair may engage in conscious or unconscious behaviors that are unfair or negatively slanted towards the beneficiaries (Veteran Hiring, 2014). In some instances, the veteran themselves are not totally confident with the preference and such is reflected in their work product (Leslie, Mayer, & Kravitz, 2014).

The U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) conducted a study that gauged civilian perception of veteran hiring laws and practices. In a survey issued to various federal employees on workplace practices and laws, 6.5% of respondents stated that they witnessed inappropriate favoritism of veterans throughout various actions in the workplace, including recruitment (Veteran Hiring, 2014). Moreover, the study signified that the occurrence and witnessing of such preferences and the associated perception of unfairness causes employees to be less engaged and more apt to want to leave their organizations (p. 5). Additionally, it was also found in the study that 4.5% of survey respondents reported witnessing the denial of veteran's preference rights and were as

equally likely to be disengaged and expressed feelings of wanting to leave their current organization. The U.S. Department of Defense was a key participant pool in this study. Within this agency alone, it was also revealed that amongst those in a supervisory or managerial role, 8% reported seeing and deeming this behavior inappropriate (p. 9). Such numbers could also be linked to the only 27% of positions being filled through competitive examining procedures in FY 2010 (Veteran Hiring, 2014). As current laws posit, veteran's preference applies wholly to competitive examining procedures. However, there are a myriad of other hiring authorities that exist where managers are able to navigate around adherence to such strict veteran rules.

With these merits, it is worth considering if the affirmative action preference has an effect on employee performance. While the provisions of the law are meant to provide remediation, additional research must be engaged to examine the effects, if any, on organizational productivity.

Performance Evaluation

Across disciplines, industries, occupations, etc. there has always been a need to monitor and evaluate the performance of the individuals placed or employed to perform a specific set of functions. The monitoring of performance allows the employing institution to gauge the effectiveness of the resource and ensure that it is adequately meeting the needs of the organization. As Ackerley (2012) posited, performance is both a basic and vital function needed to ensure that an organization's resources are performing at a level that allows the organization to maximize its investment. When an institution places financial capital into a resource, be it human resources, equipment, contacted services,

there is an implied and explicit expectation in receiving a return that at least guarantees a breakeven financial result on the initial outlay (Hermel-Stanescu, 2015). If an organization receives a beneficial return on the resource it validates the decision to utilize it. It also serves as a justification to invest more funds into similar resources or justifies a decision to increase the merits and operability of that resource (i.e.. training, promotion, etc.) (Gesme & Wiseman, 2011). Conversely, a negative return on the investment can signify that utilizing the resource was not a prudent idea (Hermel-Stanescu, 2015). It could also signify that there are other internal practices, processes, or associated leadership that are not properly navigating or employing the optimal use of the resource.

Effectiveness and Use. Performance evaluations have negative element with in it. According to Cappelli (2018), performance evaluations are as effective as the time and research put into developing the tool (p. 92). Each organization has its own processes, productivity, and culture that create the circumstances for which productivity/performance is to be evaluated. The evaluations are subject to rater's biases, unclear/lack thereof evaluation parameters, recency and halo effects (p. 93). According to the Harvard Business Review, more than a third of U.S. companies are considering revamping the traditional performance review process and considering new ways to measure employee performance (Cappelli & Tavis, 2016). This is seen revised iterations of the tool (i.e., 360-degree feedback, critical incidence, etc.). However, performance evaluations still serve as key indicators for how an organization should move forward with both short and long term operational goals (Gravina & Siers, 2011). Monitoring employee performance gauges how an organization is effectively managing its resources

and offers up results that allow suggestions to be rendered on how to improve productivity. Performance evaluations are similar to the feedback processes seen at the end of any implementation cycle (p. 280). Once a process, product or service is employed within a setting, any efficient system utilizes an evaluation protocol that measures effectiveness (Price, 2013). Monitoring is engaged throughout the process to make adjustments for improvement and, at the end of a specified evaluation cycle, a final assessment provides an overall summary of the performance (Dahling & Whitaker, 2016). At such a point, a decision is then made to retain the process, product, or service and what improvements can be made for more effectiveness and efficiency (Ackerley, 2012). This same feedback process is utilized for the management of human capital and the assessment of their contribution and productivity within an organization.

Types of Evaluations. Throughout the various industries and specializations, performance evaluation is engaged in a number of ways. Depending on the needs of the organization and the type of work that is engaged, an organization's human resources department will develop and implement a performance management system that complements the complexion of the organization. Some of the most widely used evaluations include numerical rating, objective-based, 360-degree, and critical incident.

Numerical Rating. In the numerical-rating, managers are able to set several areas of critical work performance and then utilize a numerical rating scale to assess one's proficiency in the area (Palmer, Johnson, & Johnson, 2015). For example, an organization could decide that it is important to measure employee communication, teamwork, and reliability. For each category, the manager, together with the employee,

would lay out a series of explanations and objectives to properly define the assessment category and quantify the performance within it. By utilizing statistics and other tangible data, management could assess employee performance and attach a numerical score to provide an averaged rating of employee performance (Johnson, 2013).

Objective-Based. This form of evaluation involves setting an objective and subsequently meeting all of the tenets to complete for the rating period. In this evaluation, management and the employee meet to establish a set of objectives and goals to have completed within a specified time parameter (Johnson, 2013). During the planning period, discussion is had on what materials or resources will be available to assist with completion, details on quality and quantity, and other key tenets on product or service delivery (Price, 2013). At the end of the rating cycle, management assesses if the objectives were met and if there was effective and sufficient use of prescribed resources according to the originally established contract.

360-Degree Feedback. 360-Degree Feedback is an evaluation that looks at an employee's performance holistically and comprehensively (Nowack, 2015). In this format, performance is monitored by multiple raters from different sources. Instead of just having the immediate supervisor serve as the only source of rating, it draws from several different individuals to garner a more comprehensive evaluation (Espinilla, de Andrés, Martínez, & Martínez, 2013). If an employee deals with several other internal contacts (peers, front-line managers, etc.) or consistent external customers, information is gathered from these individuals about their interactions and experiences to provide an

evaluation that is well-informed and inclusive (Nowack, 2015). This review has a larger range and a multi-dimensional vantage point from which to view performance.

Critical Incident. This form of evaluation involves the monitoring and recording of specific events engaged by employee that had either noticeable benefit or noticeable improvement needs (David, 2013). The critical incident evaluation method looks at moments of employee performance where they engaged in an action that has noted benefit for the organization, as well as actions that either brought detriment or displayed a strong need for improvement. With proper recordkeeping, these detailed experiences are utilized to assess how well an employee performed throughout the rating period and how their performance could gain from improvement in the future (Habib, Kazmi, & Sameeni, 2016).

Performance Statistics. Because performance evaluations are largely utilized to gauge employee ability and assess the contribution to the Agency, examination of veteran performance provides context for how well they are seen to perform within organizations. To date, there have not been too many studies focused on the merits of veteran status and associated organizational productivity and performance (Schnurr, Lunny, Bovin, & Marx, 2009). Many of the studies engaged thus far on veteran performance have been focused around mental and psychological impairment, although it cannot be discounted that issues of skills mismatch have not also had an impact. A few studies engaged that examined the operability of veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) showed significant decline in their work productivity (p. 729). The results of the study showed that those veterans with the disorder were more prone to experiencing deficiencies in key work

factors like absenteeism and time management (p. 731). Additionally, the Adler et al. (2011) study on veteran performance with psychiatric disorders, like PTSD and anxiety disorder, showed a noted performance decline. The study yielded results displaying that veterans with these disorders showed greater signs of poor work performance in aspects like time management and interpersonal contact (p. 43).

A few qualitative studies have also been engaged to examine self-perception of their ability to perform in a civilian capacity after various military service types. A study conducted by Zivin et al. (2016) on veterans that reported having depression or anxiety showed that they had lower levels of work performance and lower levels of self-efficacy. While statistical analysis showed a decrease in the work productivity, they also reported feeling less capable of completing the work assigned to them. Additionally, Kukla, Rattray, and Salyers' (2015) mixed methods study found that many veterans believed that their transition from military to civilian life was challenging. They believed that the transition had an effect on their confidence, ability to reintegrate, and ability to adequately perform. Leslie, Mayer, and Kravitz (2014) also looked at employee performance from an overall affirmative action standpoint. The researchers wanted to examine if affirmative action had a negative impact on its beneficiaries. The study found the recipients of the affirmative action preference performed inadequately because of their own lack of confidence (p. 980). Their research also found that perceptions of incompetence and low warmth from co-workers were associated with affirmative action programs and low target performance outcomes. Shin and Woo Sohn (2015) noted that the perception of distributive justice within an organization can have an impact on work

productivity. Leslie et al. backed this assertion up because their study merits showed that perception of their peers not only affected the owner of the perception, but also had an impact on how others reacted to their perception.

While it is noted that a large impacting factor of the deficient work performance is mental and psychological impairment obtained from their military service, such an impairment is not uncommon amongst individuals post-military (Lang, Veazey-Morris, Berlin, & Andrasik, 2016). Organizations will be open to potential work slowdowns because of the impairments (Kukla, Bonfils, & Salyers, 2015). There is also the potential for work unproductivity to occur because of skills mismatch amongst veterans in roles they may or may not be suited to perform in. Although unrelated to work productivity, the study results were also linked to issues in their personal lives, including legal problems, unstable housing, and strained personal relationships (p. 477).

Summary and Conclusions

Affirmative Action has been a traditioned tool utilized for the remediation of past injustices (Arcidiacono, Aucejo, Fang, & Spenner, 2011). It is a practice utilized throughout the world in efforts to correct issues primarily in matters of employment and educational institution admittance. Throughout the history of this country, there have a myriad of laws, policies, and systematic practices put in place that have caused one or more groups to be placed at a disadvantage when compared to their counterparts (Graves, 2014). These facts have often been large scale and disproportionate in the span of individuals that have been affected. The need for affirmative action policy was exacerbated from sustained prejudiced ideologies and mentalities (Parry & Finney, 2014).

Much of the foundation and basis for affirmative action can be linked to discrepancy and discrimination in education (Stulberg & Chen, 2014). Various educational institutions incorporated affirmative action policies in their admissions processes to ensure that a diverse student body emanated (Arcidiacono, Espenshade, Hawkins, & Sander, 2015). While the programs benefitted those designated to a minority class, many of those outside of the protected class were denied admission. As such, different universities were brought to court and challenged on their inclusion and adherence to such prohibitive policies (Parry & Finney, 2014). Comparable to that of the affirmative action applied in education, there have been a series of legislative mandates and landmark court cases that have set precedent for how affirmative action is understood and applied in the workplace (Williams, 2015). The laws and cases established have had significant impact in employment and the facilitation of the recruitment process across industries, both private and public (Malamud, 2015).

Additionally, veterans' preference is a form of affirmative action utilized to bring hiring equity and increased opportunity to veterans who have given military service of some form to their country (Etler, 2013). During this time, service parameters can range from basic training to actual participation in a war campaign. The participation and inclusion of such then designates an individual as a veteran of the United States military. The service length, type, and specialty differ greatly for every veteran. Some veterans enlist and undergo basic training before finishing their agreed service amount and become discharged. Other veterans enlist and, after training, are placed in a reserved veteran status for the possibility of return should the need arise.

A conversation on veteran's preference would not be complete without evaluation on the perception that such an entitlement is held by others. As with most affirmative action programs, the entitlements are often accompanied by great scrutiny and frustration from those unable to gain from its benefits or those who see its benefits as unfair. Perception can play a large role in the workforce because, for many, it can be linked to how some individual treats others. Those who view the entitlement as unfair may engage in conscious or unconscious behaviors that are unfair or negatively slanted towards the beneficiaries (Veteran Hiring, 2014). In some instances, the veteran themselves are not totally confident with the preference and such is reflected in their work product (Leslie et al., 2014).

This following study seeks to examine whether veterans and nonveterans perform on the same level and if mismatching can be used to identify any difference that may be found in performance between the two (2) variables as rated and documented by management. In the upcoming Chapter 3, there will be a discussion of the methodology and design study put in place to test the merits and hypotheses of the identified problem. It defines the population, sampling procedures, procedures for recruitment and participation, as well as data collection procedures. This chapter also details the vignettes utilized, the data analysis plan, and threats to validity. Lastly, this section also details the ethical procedures of the study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to evaluate the mismatch theory and compare the differences in management's rating of performance between the military veteran employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. Veteran's preference is an affirmative action entitlement signed in law through presidential executive order (Vet Guide, 2016). It grants individuals who have served during demarked periods of military service to receive preferential treatment during the hiring process (Vet Guide, 2016). As delineated in previous chapters, affirmative action serves as a mechanism to remedy the effects of institutionalized discrimination and unfair hiring practices (Etler, 2013). Veteran's preference ensures that veterans are given reasonable opportunity to compete for positioning within the federal government at the conclusion of their service (Veteran Hiring, 2014) It is conjectured, however, that oftentimes beneficiaries of affirmative action programs can fall victim to mismatching. Mismatching is theorized to occur when individuals who are lacking in credentialing and adequate qualifications are placed in roles and positions that do not meet their qualifications (Sander, 2014). Heavily theorized in the educational sector, many scholars have argued that affirmative action should not be allowed in making selections because it places students at a disadvantage when required to perform on the pre-established benchmark levels (Stulberg & Chen, 2014). Moreover, the United States has a long history of court decisions within the workplace that have been used to establish precedence for the use of affirmative action. I sought to examine whether veterans and nonveterans perform on the

same level and if mismatching could be used to identify any difference that may be found in performance between the two variables as rated and documented by management.

Research Design and Rationale

In this study, I used a quasi-experimental design to examine the differences in management's rating (within a federal agency) of performance between the veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveterans hired without veteran preference advantages. While the affirmative action programs are beneficial in their ability to assist underserved demographics (Aja & Bustillo, 2014), it must be assessed whether it has positive or negative effects on agency performance. The independent variables in this study were the veteran and nonveteran designations that an employee has, while the dependent variable was the managerial response to vignettes framed around employee performance. I collected data using vignettes (see Appendix A) on veteran and nonveteran employees that gave managers the ability to rate their performance to a specific work activity. A series of statistical evaluations was conducted to determine whether or not there is significance between the ratings of the two employee groups.

This design is quasi-experimental because the vignettes were created to assess the responses and perception of the participant group. The vignettes were created by assembling an expert panel of attorneys from the National Labor Relations Board. With subject matter expertise on the case handling, they have the knowledge needed to establish a realistic case and an appropriate measurement tool. The study population was

a nonequivalent group design comprised of managers who have management purview over both veteran and nonveteran attorneys.

This experiment did not have any time or resource constraints that affected this design choice or the outcome of the study. The created vignettes from the expert panel are in a narrative format that allowed for presentation of a scenario and answers that could be quantitatively evaluated.

Methodology

I used quantitative measures to provide objective measurements and numerical analysis collected through the survey on Survey Monkey. As opposed to a qualitative study, the use of quantitative methods allowed for the evaluation of the relationship between the veteran status and managerial perception, as well as potential causality (see De Winter, 2013). The samples chosen from the population were run in a paired *t* test. Using a paired *t* test with an effect size of 0.5, alpha level of .0.05, and power of 0.80, I determined the study needed a sample of at least 28 participants. Research was collected through a series of vignettes. Each study participant was provided four vignettes that detail the actions that a hypothetical employee used during the investigation of an unfair labor practice. The vignettes were measured by three key elements: (a) timeliness of initial response, (b) thoroughness of claimant interview, and (c) interview follow-up action. The participants were instructed to rate the employees in the vignettes on a scale from 1 – 10 with 1 representing “not acceptable” and 10 representing “exemplary”.

Population

The general population for this study was the management contingency with purview over veteran and nonveteran employees in the federal government. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2017), there are approximately 64,500 managers in the federal government. The agency, however, does not provide a further delineation of those who have purview over employees hired with and without veteran-related affirmative action programs. These managers have the responsibility of managing and evaluating the performance of both groups of employees and thus are subject to assessing any difference that may exist in their work products. As the key parameter is the management of both groups, all other demographical factors (i.e., age, gender, and race) were inclusive.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The sampling frame for this study used managers who manage attorneys hired with and without veteran-related affirmative action assistance from the U.S. Census Bureau. Managers without the dual purview were excluded since they are not exposed to the work and subject to affected perception during the rating process. The organization has approximately 107 managers with purview over employees in the 0905 attorney occupational series. The managers within this population are varied in gender, age, and race. I used a convenience sampling amongst the sample of managers. This form of sampling allows for attainment of basic data and trends regarding this study without the complications of using a randomized sample (Brewis, 2014). Additionally, it is useful for detecting relationships among different phenomena (Brewis, 2014). As opposed to other

sampling measures (i.e., randomized sampling), the use of convenience sampling is helpful considering the study's small population sample, as well as the lack of resources to test a much larger portion of the general population (Brewis, 2014)

A power analysis was used to determine the sample size (see Erdfelder, Faul, & Buchner, 1996). Using a paired *t* test with an effect size of 0.5, alpha level of .0.05, and power of 0.80, I determined the study needed a sample of at least 28 participants. See Appendix G for a detailed output of the G*Power Analysis. An effect size of 0.5 and alpha level of 0.05 were chosen because it represents a standard in scientific research, which represents a moderate to large difference in statistical significance, as well as a level of confidence that incorrect rejection of hypotheses occurs (Cohen, 1988). A power level of 0.80 was chosen because standard scientific inquiry reasons that studies should be designed in such a way that there be an 80% probability of detecting an effect when there is an effect present (Cohen, 1988). Additionally, if alpha significance levels are set at .05, beta levels should then be set at .20 and power (which = $1 - \beta$) should be .80 (Cohen, 1988). There were 34 respondents in this study.

Informed Consent

After receiving permission from the U.S. Census Bureau, administrative directorate (see Appendix B), I emailed potential participants as a briefing and informed consent. The email described the (a) purpose of the research, (b) procedures, (c) duration, (d) explain that there are no foreseeable risks involved in their participation, (e) benefits of the study, (f) an explanation of confidentiality, and (g) that participation is voluntary. Participants were asked to provide basic biographical information (sex, age, race, veteran

status, years with the organization, and regional location) and their responses were used strictly for the assessment of a hypothetical scenario. The email also specified that, upon clicking the link to Survey Monkey for the survey, they had given informed consent and agreed that their responses could be used in the study. At the conclusion of the survey, participants were given an individual identification number. Participants were advised they could contact me and use their identification to number to have themselves removed from the survey should they choose to do so at a later date.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)

Each participant was provided an email explaining that their responses to the vignette questions would be used to gauge the effectiveness of performance evaluations. Informed consent was received from each participant. It was added as the first page of the survey and the platform provided a timestamp to show respondent consent of survey agreement. The responses will be kept anonymous and would have no actual bearing on activities within the organizations. Upon providing consent, the participants were directed to a link with four vignettes and assessment questions for rating of the performance in the vignettes. The link was to Survey Monkey, which was used to administer the survey. This tool will keep the responses anonymous and provide participants with an identification number at the end to use for reference in the future.

To protect respondent data, Survey Monkey encrypts data in transit using secure TLS cryptographic protocols (Survey Monkey, 2018). SurveyMonkey's information systems and technical infrastructure are hosted within SOC 2 accredited data centers (Survey Monkey, 2018). Additionally, physical security controls are located at data

centers that include 24x7 monitoring, cameras, visitor logs, entry requirements, and dedicated cages for SurveyMonkey hardware (Survey Monkey, 2018). Respondent contact information is only used to respond to an inquiry in which the respondent sends to Survey Monkey. See Appendix D for a full description of Survey Monkey's privacy and security policy.

Respondents were given a 7-day period with which to read, complete, and send back the assessment. After returning the assessment, the participant was sent a confirmation of receipt for their email. There were no further follow-up interviews, treatments, or any further requirements after the return of the assessment. Additionally, after the study, participants were debriefed on the intent and treatments of the study. Upon completion of the survey, participants were emailed a debriefing document (see Appendix D) that detailed the study aim and explain any elements of deception utilized during their participation. They were given information on confidentiality, as well as an opportunity for withdrawal of recusal from the survey based on the information of the deception utilized.

Data Collection

Data was collected by gathering the responses of participants after they viewed a series of vignettes. Each study participant was provided four vignettes that detailed the actions that a hypothetical employee took during the investigation of an unfair labor practice. One of the vignettes was designated as a veteran and the other had a nonveteran designation. Each employee is an attorney who has the responsibility of engaging in

comprehensive investigative practices towards alleged unfair labor practices. According to the National Labor Relations Act, Section 7,

> Employees shall have the right to self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection. (National Labor Relations Act, 1935)

Under this federal protection, employees are unable to take adverse action against an employee if an employee is engaging activities that reinforce employee like fairness, benefits, or safety (NLRA, 1935). With the use of pre-established guidelines each manager rated the employees according to their response of investigating a case related to the violation of a protected concerted activity. In each scenario, the manager was also provided information on the employee's veteran status and sex.

The vignettes were measured by three key elements: (a) timeliness of initial response, (b) thoroughness of claimant interview, (c) interview follow-up action. The participants were instructed to rate the employees in the vignettes on a scale from 1 – 10 with 1 representing "not acceptable" and 10 representing "exemplary".

Participants were also asked to provide information regarding their sex, age, race, veteran status, years with the company, and location to provide further insights and context of the ratings provided in the assessment.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

To formulate the vignettes and rating criteria, an expert panel was established. The panel of experts are all GS-14 and above Supervisory Attorneys as designated and certified by the U.S. Federal Government Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in the classification standards established Classification Act of 1949 codified in chapter 51 of title 5, United States Code (OPM, 2018). As outlined in the U.S. Code Chapter 5, the Grade GS-14 applies to positions that involve leading, planning and directing programs and heading an organization. These are jobs require a mastery of managerial, technical and leadership ability (Classification Act of 1949, 5 U.S.C.). As required of the position, each panel member holds a juris doctor degree as approved by the American Bar Association (ABA)-approved law schools and at least ten (10) years of labor law advisement and litigation (NLRB Excepted Service Policy, 2010).

To assess the reliability, a tool from the National Labor Relations Board was used (See Appendix F). The tool was developed to test new manager's ability to assess differences in performance utilizing ULP guidelines (see Appendix A). To create the tool, the Agency gave five (5) attorney supervisors four (4) vignettes that consisted of two (2) different high-performing examples and two (2) different low-performing examples. The panel was then asked to read the scenario and the associated vignettes and provide a rating of their performance. Because they supervise attorneys, they are keenly aware of the nuances that exist in one's action, as well as what elements are needed according to the pre-established guidelines as written in the Federal Labor Relations Authority Unfair Labor Practice Casehandling Manual (ULP Manual). After examining the ratings, the

panel convened and made revisions to the vignettes. They provided additional comments regarding the scenario, vignettes, rating, etc. to strengthen the vignettes and their ability to accurately assess performance based on the given scenario. This helped with ensuring the appropriateness of the rating tool and ensuring that there is a large enough spread or difference between the vignettes.

After the revisions were made to the scenario and revisions, they were then given to three (3) managers who were responsible for managing nonveteran and veteran attorneys. They were not given information on the pre-determined performance levels of the employees or veteran status, but rather just provided the vignettes to validate the rating variability of the vignettes and the reliability of the performance measures. Revisions were made to adjust for their responses. Afterwards, a second trial was conducted to on another three (3) managers to test the rating variability of the vignettes and ensure that there was articulated differentiation between all four (4) vignettes.

Data Analysis Plan

Upon receipt of the data from the responses exported out of Survey Monkey, SPSS software was utilized to analyze its significance. The alpha level was set at .05. Quantitative measures were utilized as they emphasize objective measurements and numerical analysis collected through the survey on Survey Monkey. As opposed to a qualitative study, the use of quantitative methods (i.e., paired *t* test), should allow for the evaluation of the relationship between the veteran status and managerial perception, as well as potential causality. The samples chosen from the population were then run in a paired *t* test. Comparative studies seek to determine if there is co-variation between them

(Lewis-Beck, Bryman, & Futing Liao, 2004). This useful in this study because the study seeks to assess whether or not there is statistical difference not the merits of relationship between two or more variables. The two-tailed test was used to determine if there is a difference in the performance ratings of veterans and nonveterans performing the same duties. Microsoft Excel was utilized for data cleaning. Because of the relatively small sample size, the data was cleaned manually. Each entry was assessed for the accurate number of data points, which should be twelve (12) for each participant. Entries with less than the required data points were discarded from the study.

RQ 1 – What differences exist between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios?

H_{01}: There is no difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios.

$H_{a1:}$ There is a positive difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios.

$H_{b1:}$ There is a negative difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios.

Variables

In this study, a paired *t* test was used to test if the ratings for nonveteran employees is higher than their veteran counterparts. The independent variable, veteran designations, were generally defined as employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. The dependent variables were generally defined as managerial performance rating that assesses employee capability and performance; such was crafted into vignettes framed around employee performance.

Threats to Validity

A threat to construct validity may be the potential for the varying manager to only receive either veteran or nonveteran vignettes, which may limit their ability to see distinction between the hypothetical situations. In order to reduce this threat, each manager was provided four (4) vignettes to ensure that all of the scenarios are experienced.

To gauge the ability to properly rate the appropriateness of the rating tool, an expert panel study was used to ensure that there is enough differentiation between the high and low-performing designations within the vignettes. This should help to ensure that the vignettes do, in fact, differ and that participants can clearly delineate between the varying levels of performance.

External Validity

External validity speaks to the generalizability of the results across populations, time, treatments, and settings. I sought to apply its findings to a larger contingency of managers within purview of employees hired with veteran-related affirmative action

assistance and those who are not. To better ensure generalizability, there are threats to external validity within the study that must be assessed. Selection bias is a potential threat to this study because it can affect whether or not the population is representative of the desired sample. To mitigate this this threat, the participants in the sample were chosen at random to ensure there is no implied bias. Additionally, all the participants were given the same treatment (i.e., access to all four vignettes) to ensure equivalency and a decreased occurrence of differences in scores in the dependent variable.

Additionally, testing effects can also have a negative impact on study results. Experimental fatigue has the potential to make participants physically and/or mentally fatigued during the experiment process. This can lead to impaired responses to the survey questions. To mitigate the effects of experimental fatigue, vignettes were utilized that were relatively short and with a rating criterion of only three (3) parameters. A shorter requirement of time from the participant will help to curve the effects of potential fatigue.

Internal Validity

Internal validity represents a researcher's ability to say that the conclusions reached in the study accurately reflect what's being studied. Such is an important tenet because it ensures that there is alignment between the purpose and design of the study and the results received at the end. When evaluating internal validity, there are threats that can affect the ability to marry the conclusions and design intent.

Instrumentation bias is a potential threat to internal validity for this study. With instrumentation bias, there is a risk that the measuring instrument does not accurately measure the key elements of the study. The research may have questions or elements that

skew to a certain response and leave out the necessary variability. To mitigate this potential threat, the vignettes used have an equal number of nonveteran and veteran designations, as well as an equal number of high and low-performing scenarios. This ensures that the participants have an equal chance of rating both groups within the independent variable.

Additionally, both history and maturation are threats to the study. Time allows for the participants to grow, learn, and/or be exposed to elements that may influence their perception and subsequent response to survey questions. To mitigate history and maturation threats to internal validity, short vignettes with a rating criterion of only three (3) parameters were used. A shorter requirement of time from the participant will help to curve the effects of potentially influencing factors.

Construct Validity

Construct validity deals with the measurement tool in a study and whether or not the tool can adequately measure a construct within the study. In this study, the construct is perception of affirmative action. A potential threat within the facet of validity is inexact definitions, which deals with poorly developed and/or articulated definitions of the construct to be measured. To mitigate this threat, the construct has been elaborated for greater understanding. The construct has been developed to convey that the study wants to understand how a manager's perception and understanding of affirmative action—as delineated by employees hired through veteran-related assisted programming—can affect the performance rating of veteran and nonveteran employees.

Ethical Procedures

Agreement to Gain Access. Permission was obtained from the NLRB's Division of Administration to utilize the Agency's Vignette Tool in the study (See Appendix F).

Description of Treatment of Participants. After IRB approval (Approval # 04-29-19-0306162), the study was conducted according to all ethical codes detailed in American Psychological Association (APA) (Fisher, 2012). Prior to the study, participants were provided an explanation of the study's focus on performance evaluation in connection to prescribed job standards without revealing too much of the veteran designation. Each participant was given an explanation of the vignette model and how they were to utilize the provided performance evaluation to rate the hypothetical employee's response to an unfair labor practice claim. Moreover, although the vignettes represent hypothetical scenarios, each participant was assured of the confidentiality and anonymity associated with this study.

Description of Treatment of Data. The study was composed of hypothetical situations of made up characters and work instances by an expert panel of attorneys. This helped ensure that no employees, both veteran and nonveteran, will have their real information utilized in the study. Additionally, the assessment questions disseminated to the study participants was sent through an online survey system, Survey Monkey. To preserve confidentiality, the survey was created and administered with identifiable information features disabled. Study participants were not required to provide information that they are not comfortable with, but they were asked information regarding their sex, age, race, veteran status, years with the company, and location to

provide further insights and context of the ratings provided in the assessment. The survey was developed to ensure that unique and one-time responses were received from the participants.

Summary

I utilized a quasi-experimental design to examine the differences in management's rating of performance between the veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveterans hired without veteran preference advantages. While the affirmative action programs are beneficial in their ability to assist underserved demographics, it must be assessed whether or not the quest to bridge gaps of inequality has positive or negative effects on agency performance. The independent variables in this study were the veteran and nonveteran designations that an employee has, while the dependent variable was the managerial response to vignettes framed around employee performance. Data was collected using vignettes on veteran and nonveteran employees that give managers the ability to rate their performance to a specific work activity. A series of statistical evaluations was conducted to determine whether or not there is significance between the ratings of the two employee groups. In the next chapter, Chapter 4, there will be a discussion of the results of the performed study. This chapter will contain a description of the data collection process to include timeframe, discrepancies, and the representation of the sample. It will also provide the study results to include exact statistics and the post-hoc analyses.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this quantitative quasi-experimental study was to evaluate the mismatch theory and compare the differences in management's rating of performance between the military veteran employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. The independent variable, veteran designations, were generally defined as employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. The dependent variable was generally defined as managerial performance rating that assesses employee capability and performance; such was then crafted into vignettes framed around employee performance. The following research question was the focus for my study: What differences exists between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios? The null hypothesis was that there is no difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios. The alternative hypothesis was that there is a difference and the ratings for nonveteran employees are higher than their veteran counterparts. Furthermore, in this study, a paired *t* test was used to test if the ratings for nonveteran employees were higher than their veteran counterparts. This chapter will provide an overview of the data collection, to include response rates and demographics characteristics, as well as study results and statistical findings.

Data Collection

Respondents were given a 7-day period with which to read, complete, and send back the assessment which consisted of a series of hypothetical vignettes. At the conclusion of the survey window period, 34 respondents submitted responses back for the assessment. Of the respondents who chose to disclose their gender, 16 were male and 14 were female. There was also a delineation of eight veterans and 23 nonveterans, of those who chose to disclose their veteran status, as well as a racial breakdown that included White (*n*= 23), African-American (*n* = 5), Hispanic (*n* = 2), and Asian (*n* = 1). Table 1 shows a summary of the sample demographics.

Table 1

Demographics of the Sample

		Sex	Age	Race	Veteran status	Tenure
N	Valid	34	31	31	31	30
	Missing	3	3	3	3	4
Total case		34	34	34	34	34
	Subcategory 1	16		2	8	
	Subcategory 2	14		5	23	
	Subcategory 3			1		
	Subcategory 4			23		
Mean		2.15	53.84	3.45	1.74	17.73
Median		2.00	53.00	4.00	2.00	19.00
Std. Deviation		2.21	10.12	.99	.44	9.67

Note: Subcategories for sex are: 1 for men 2 for women; for race: 1 for Asian, 2 for African American, 3 for Hispanics, and 4 for White; for veteran status: 1 for veteran 2 for nonveteran.

Table 2 has the aggregate scores of the hypothetical characters (Pamela, Jonathan, Anthony, and Jennifer) were 8.75, 4.68, 7.13, and 3.94, which aligned with the expectations of the study.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Performance Measures

	Mean	Stdev
Pati	9.21	0.73
Path	8.53	0.79
Pafo	8.53	0.79
Pa	8.75	0.45
Joti	4.71	1.03
Joth	4.65	1.04
Jofo	4.71	1.24
Jo	4.68	0.53
Anti	6.76	0.92
Anth	7.71	0.80
Anfo	6.94	0.85
An	7.13	0.61
Jeti	4.76	0.70
Jeth	4.00	1.04
Jefo	3.06	0.95
Je	3.94	0.51

Note: Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

Additionally, there was an age distribution that ranged from 34 years of age to 71. The median was found to be 53 years old and it was also found to be the mode of the dataset (n = 3). A frequency and cumulative percentage of the age distribution can be found below in Table 3.

Table 3

Age Distribution

Age	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
34	1	3.2	3.2
39	1	3.2	6.5
40	1	3.2	9.7
41	1	3.2	12.9
43	2	6.5	19.4
45	2	6.5	25.8
46	2	6.5	32.3
48	1	3.2	35.5
51	1	3.2	38.7
52	1	3.2	41.9
53	3	9.7	51.6
54	1	3.2	54.8
56	2	6.5	61.3
57	2	6.5	67.7
61	1	3.2	71
62	1	3.2	74.2
63	1	3.2	77.4
64	2	6.5	83.9
66	1	3.2	87.1
68	1	3.2	90.3
69	2	6.5	96.8
71	1	3.2	100
Total	31	100	
Missing	9		
Total	40		

Study Results

The vignettes contain three key performance measures for raters to examine: (a) timeliness of response, (b) thoroughness of claimant interview, and (c) follow-up of interview. These measures provided the baseline for which performance was measured for each of the hypothetical employees in the vignettes. When the mean scores of the performance measures were assessed, the scores were found to be within the range of expectation. As referenced in Table 4, Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview. The vignettes were constructed to have an articulated difference in performance with certain characters designed to have high performance, mid- and low-level performance. This was done in the order of Pamela, Anthony, Jonathan, and Jennifer, with Pamela being the highest. The mean scores were close to expectation. Additionally, using a midpoint performance of 5, the differences were statistically different, as expected.

Table 4

Means Scores of the Performance Measures

	mean	stdev	test val	diff	T	*Df*	Sig	test val	diff	T	Sig
Pati	9.21	0.73	5	4.21	33.6	33	0.00	9	0.21	1.6	0.11
Path	8.53	0.79	5	3.53	26.1	33	0.00	9	-0.47	-3.5	0.00
Pafo	8.53	0.79	5	3.53	26.1	33	0.00	9	-0.47	-3.5	0.00
Pa	8.75	0.45	5	3.75	48.5	33	0.00	9	-0.25	-3.2	0.00
Joti	4.71	1.03	5	-0.29	-1.7	33	0.11	5	-0.29	-1.7	0.11
Joth	4.65	1.04	5	-0.35	-2.0	33	0.06	5	-0.35	-2.0	0.06
Jofo	4.71	1.24	5	-0.29	-1.4	33	0.18	5	-0.29	-1.4	0.18

Jo	4.68	0.53	5	-0.32	-3.4	33	0.00	5	-0.32	-3.4	0.00
Anti	6.76	0.92	5	1.76	11.1	33	0.00	7	-0.24	-1.5	0.15
Anth	7.71	0.80	5	2.71	19.8	33	0.00	7	0.71	5.2	0.00
Anfo	6.94	0.85	5	1.94	13.3	33	0.00	7	-0.06	-0.4	0.69
An	7.13	0.61	5	2.13	20.5	33	0.00	7	0.13	1.3	0.20
Jeti	4.76	0.70	5	-0.24	-2.0	33	0.06	3	1.76	14.7	0.00
Jeth	4.00	1.04	5	-1.00	-5.6	33	0.00	3	1.00	5.6	0.00
Jefo	3.06	0.95	5	-1.94	-11.9	33	0.00	3	0.06	0.4	0.72
Je	3.94	0.51	5	-1.06	-12.1	33	0.00	3	0.94	10.8	0.00

Note: Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

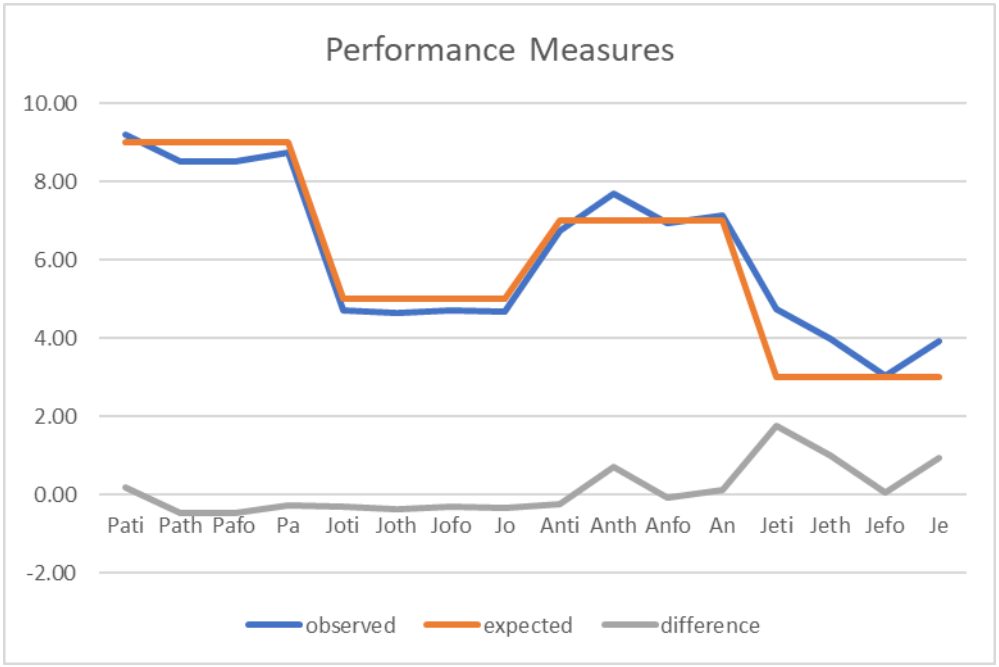

Figure 1. Performance Measures: Observed, Expected, and Difference Scores

The correlation amongst the performance measures showed that there was significant correlation between three performance measures and the aggregate score for all the hypothetical characters. For example, Patricia had a .434, .660, and .660 correlation, respectively, between her aggregate score and her three performance measures (e.g., timeliness of initial response, thoroughness of claimant interview, and

follow-up of interview). The first proved to have a correlation that was significant at the 0.05 level, while the second and third correlational values were significant at the 0.00 level. Similarly, Anthony had a .778, .687, and .659 correlation of his performance measures and aggregate score at the 0.00 level. It is also seen in the results that, while aggregate score and performance measures are highly correlated, each individual measures are not significantly correlated. This can be seen in figures like -.090 between Patricia's timeliness and thoroughness of claimant. Consistent figures like these, as evidenced in Table 5, emphasize that the performance measures are independent of each other and have varying goals.

Table 5

Correlations Among Performance Measures

	Path	Pafo	Pa	Joti	Joth	Jofo	Jo	Anti	Anth	Anfo	An	Jeti	Jeth	Jefo	Je
Pati	-.090	-.090	.434*	-.199	0.138	0.002	-.037	-.196	0.107	-.322	-.202	-.259	0.000	-.193	-.238
Path	1.000	0.218	.660**	0.048	-.098	-.455**	-.388*	0.051	-.034	0.048	0.033	-.207	0.074	-.083	-.096
Pafo		1.000	.660**	-.138	0.272	-.053	0.047	-.074	-.130	0.274	0.033	-.317	-.258	-.245	-.474**
Pa			1.000	-.160	0.176	-.294	-.218	-.118	-.038	0.014	-.070	-.444**	-.107	-.294	-.460**
Joti				1.000	-.439**	-.022	.343*	-.107	-.219	-.089	-.191	-.141	0.113	.574**	.370*
Joth					1.000	-.059	0.323	0.163	-.019	-.161	-.001	0.007	-.056	-.162	-.136
Jofo						1.000	.727**	0.017	0.063	-.103	-.012	0.232	0.210	-.011	0.243
Jo							1.000	0.051	-.105	-.243	-.133	0.094	0.200	0.257	.340*
Anti								1.000	.355*	0.252	.778**	.381*	-.251	-.122	-.073
Anth									1.000	0.152	.687**	.361*	-.254	-.176	-.118
Anfo										1.000	.659**	0.078	-.375*	-.220	-.358*
An											1.000	.387*	-.413*	-.241	-.255
Jeti												1.000	0.083	0.021	.528**
Jeth													1.000	-.152	.627**
Jefo														1.000	.529**
Je															1.000

Note: Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.00 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

After an assessment of the individual performance measures against the sample demographics, there were no statistically significant figures found in the study sample (see Table 6). Using the self-disclosed gender, age, race, veteran status, and tenure of the respondents, the majority of the responses showed no statistical significance and the figures that were significant at a 0.05 level, can be attributed to the expected randomness of the sample results using a 95% confidence interval.

Table 6

Correlations Between Performance Measures and Demographic Variables

	Gender	Age	Race	Veteran	Tenure
Pati	-0.132	0.022	-0.139	0.079	-0.005
Path	0.180	-0.028	-0.339	-0.110	0.017
Pafo	-0.237	0.073	0.17	0.161	0.124
Pa	-0.104	0.038	-0.176	0.074	0.077
Joti	-0.06	-0.189	-0.186	-0.093	-0.185
Joth	-0.108	0.187	0.017	0.030	0.098
Jofo	-0.094	0.171	0.255	0.115	0.157
Jo	-0.183	0.127	0.085	0.047	0.060
Anti	-0.116	.377*	-0.269	-0.128	.375*
Anth	0.111	0.314	-0.100	-.413*	0.105
Anfo	0.246	-0.006	0.129	-0.067	0.130
An	0.104	0.320	-0.115	-0.276	0.289
Jeti	0.121	.356*	-0.018	-0.007	0.279
Jeth	-0.039	0.142	0.031	0.282	0.128
Jefo	0.039	-.479**	-0.050	-0.209	-.447*
Je	0.053	-0.038	-0.018	0.057	-0.045

Note: Tenure refers to the number of years served for the organization. Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.00 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A paired *t* test was conducted to assess if there were differences in the scores of the hypothetical characters specifically as it pertained to their veteran designations. The analysis included conducting a test for 24 different pairs that compared the characters' aggregates scores and specific performance measures. The tests compared equivalent performance measures amongst the characters to assess valid significance. As seen in Table 7, all the tests, with the exception of one, proved to be statistically significant. This shows that there were no real differences in the ratings of the employees when their veteran status was disclosed to the raters. Additionally, the one exception (0.797) falls within the expected randomness used in a 95% confidence interval.

Table 7

Paired t test for Performance Measures

		Mean	Std dev	Diff	t	DF	Sig
Pair 1	Pa	8.75	0.45	4.07	30.86	33	0.000
	Jo	4.69	0.53				
Pair 2	Pa	8.75	0.45	1.62	12.04	33	0.000
	An	7.14	0.61				
Pair 3	Pa	8.75	0.45	4.81	34.17	33	0.000
	Je	3.94	0.51				
Pair 4	Jo	4.69	0.53	-2.45	-16.61	33	0.000
	An	7.14	0.61				
Pair 5	Jo	4.69	0.53	0.75	7.27	33	0.000
	Je	3.94	0.51				
Pair 6	An	7.14	0.61	3.20	20.99	33	0.000
	Je	3.94	0.51				
Pair 7	Pati	9.21	0.73	4.50	19.07	33	0.000
	Joti	4.71	1.03				
Pair 8	Path	8.53	0.79	3.88	16.58	33	0.000
	Joth	4.65	1.04				
Pair 9	Pafo	8.53	0.79	3.82	14.80	33	0.000
	Jofo	4.71	1.24				
Pair 10	Pati	9.21	0.73	2.44	11.09	33	0.000
	Anti	6.76	0.92				
Pair 11	Path	8.53	0.79	0.82	4.21	33	0.000
	Anth	7.71	0.80				
Pair 12	Pafo	8.53	0.79	1.59	9.37	33	0.000
	Anfo	6.94	0.85				
Pair 13	Pati	9.21	0.73	4.44	22.85	33	0.000
	Jeti	4.76	0.70				
Pair 14	Path	8.53	0.79	4.53	20.95	33	0.000
	Jeth	4	1.04				
Pair 15	Pafo	8.53	0.79	5.47	23.18	33	0.000
	Jefo	3.06	0.95				
Pair 16	Joti	4.71	1.03	-2.06	-8.25	33	0.000
	Anti	6.76	0.92				
Pair 17	Joth	4.65	1.04	-3.06	-13.47	33	0.000
	Anth	7.71	0.80				
Pair 18	Jofo	4.71	1.24	-2.24	-8.26	33	0.000
	Anfo	6.94	0.85				
Pair 19	Joti	4.71	1.03	-0.06	-0.26	33	0.797
	Jeti	4.76	0.70				
Pair 20	Joth	4.65	1.04	0.65	2.49	33	0.018
	Jeth	4	1.04				

Pair 21	Jofo	4.71	1.24	1.65	6.10	33	0.000
	Jefo	3.06	0.95				
Pair 22	Anti	6.76	0.92	2.00	12.66	33	0.000
	Jeti	4.76	0.70				
Pair 23	Anth	7.71	0.80	3.71	14.73	33	0.000
	Jeth	4	1.04				
Pair 24	Anfo	6.94	0.85	3.88	16.07	33	0.000
	Jefo	3.06	0.95				

Note: Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

Tables 8-13 and Figures 2-7 provide a descriptive and graphical representation of the comparison of performance measures, as well as the difference in scores of performance measures between the various demographics of the raters (gender, race, and veteran status). In each of the comparisons and difference in scores, the majority of the results were statistically insignificant. This shows that there was no bias or significant connection between the race, gender or veteran status of rater and the score they gave one of the hypothetical characters. Moreover, unexpectedly significant figures can be attributed the expected randomness utilized in a 95% confidence interval.

Table 8

Comparison of Performance Measures Between Genders of the Raters

	Male		Female				
	mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	diff	T	Sig
Pati	9.37	0.81	9.07	0.70	0.30	1.13	0.27
Path	8.50	0.89	8.47	0.64	0.03	0.12	0.91
Pafo	8.69	0.70	8.47	0.83	0.22	0.80	0.43
Pa	8.85	0.44	8.67	0.45	0.18	1.17	0.25
Joti	4.94	0.93	4.47	1.19	0.47	1.23	0.23
Joth	4.75	1.18	4.60	0.91	0.15	0.39	0.70
Jofo	4.75	1.07	4.73	1.49	0.02	0.04	0.97

Jo	4.81	0.40	4.60	0.67	0.21	1.08	0.29
Anti	6.69	1.08	6.93	0.70	-0.24	-0.75	0.46
Anth	7.69	0.79	7.67	0.90	0.02	0.07	0.95
Anfo	6.50	0.89	7.33	0.62	-0.83	-3.00	0.01
An	6.96	0.69	7.31	0.51	-0.35	-1.61	0.12
Jeti	4.69	0.79	4.80	0.68	-0.11	-0.42	0.68
Jeth	4.19	1.11	3.80	1.01	0.39	1.01	0.32
Jefo	3.25	0.86	2.80	1.08	0.45	1.29	0.21
Je	4.04	0.45	3.80	0.57	0.24	1.30	0.20

Note: Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

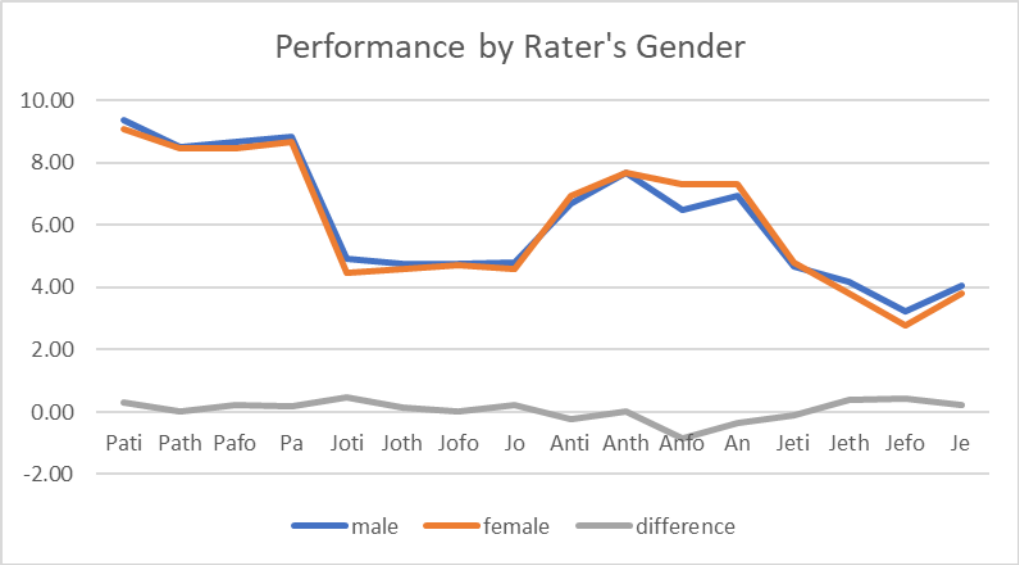

Figure 2. Comparison of Performance by Rater's Gender

Table 9

Comparison of Performance Measures Between Races of the Raters

	African-American		White				
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	Diff	t	Sig
Pati	9.20	0.45	9.22	0.80	-0.02	-0.05	0.96
Path	8.60	0.55	8.35	0.78	0.25	0.69	0.50
Pafo	8.20	0.45	8.65	0.83	-0.45	-1.17	0.25
Pa	8.67	0.24	8.74	0.48	-0.07	-0.33	0.75
Joti	4.80	0.45	4.61	1.20	0.19	0.35	0.73
Joth	5.00	1.00	4.65	1.07	0.35	0.67	0.51
Jofo	4.00	0.71	4.96	1.36	-0.96	-1.51	0.14
Jo	4.60	0.28	4.74	0.62	-0.14	-0.49	0.63
Anti	7.20	0.84	6.70	0.93	0.50	1.12	0.27
Anth	7.80	0.45	7.65	0.94	0.15	0.34	0.74
Anfo	6.80	0.84	6.96	0.93	-0.16	-0.35	0.73
An	7.27	0.43	7.10	0.69	0.17	0.51	0.62
Jeti	5.00	1.00	4.74	0.69	0.26	0.71	0.48
Jeth	4.20	0.84	4.00	1.17	0.20	0.36	0.72
Jefo	3.20	0.45	3.00	1.09	0.20	0.40	0.69
Je	4.13	0.38	3.91	0.57	0.22	0.82	0.42

Note: Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

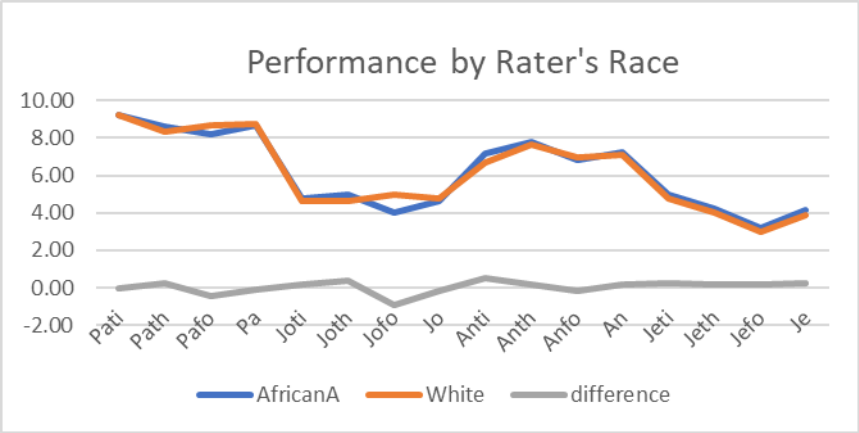

Figure 3. Comparison of Performance by Rater's Race

Table 10

Comparison of Performance by the Rater's Veteran Status

	Veteran		Non-Vet				
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	Diff	t	Sig
Pati	9.13	0.84	9.26	0.75	-0.13	-0.43	0.67
Path	8.63	0.92	8.43	0.73	0.20	0.60	0.56
Pafo	8.38	0.92	8.65	0.71	-0.27	-0.88	0.39
Pa	8.71	0.52	8.78	0.43	-0.07	-0.40	0.69
Joti	4.88	0.84	4.65	1.15	0.23	0.50	0.62
Joth	4.63	0.74	4.70	1.15	-0.07	-0.16	0.87
Jofo	4.50	0.54	4.83	1.44	-0.33	-0.62	0.54
Jo	4.67	0.40	4.72	0.60	-0.05	-0.25	0.80
Anti	7.00	0.93	6.74	0.92	0.26	0.69	0.49
Anth	8.25	0.71	7.48	0.79	0.77	2.44	0.02
Anfo	7.00	0.76	6.87	0.92	0.13	0.36	0.72
An	7.42	0.61	7.03	0.61	0.39	1.55	0.13
Jeti	4.75	0.71	4.74	0.75	0.01	0.04	0.97
Jeth	3.50	0.54	4.17	1.15	-0.67	-1.58	0.13
Jefo	3.38	0.52	2.91	1.08	0.47	1.15	0.26
Je	3.88	0.35	3.94	0.57	-0.06	-0.31	0.76

Note: Tenure refers to the number of years served for the organization. Pa- refers to Pamela, Jo- to Jonathan, An- to Anthony, and Je- to Jenifer; and ti refers to timeliness of initial response, th to thoroughness of claimant interview, and fo- to follow-up of interview.

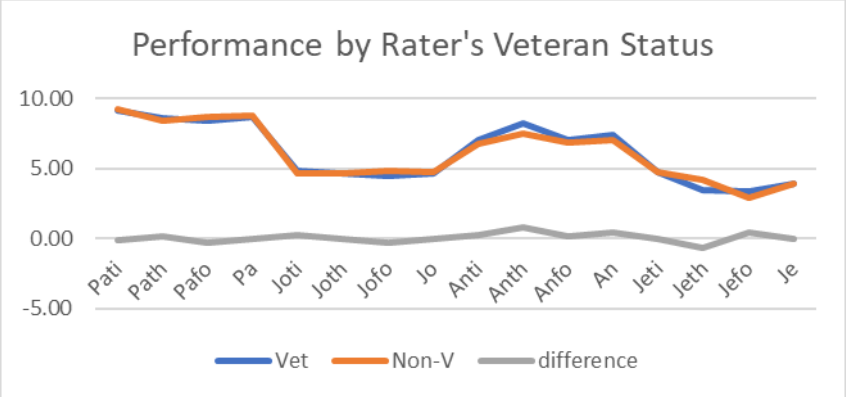

Figure 4. Comparison of Performance by Rater's Veteran Status

Table 11

Difference in Scores of Performance Ratings by Raters' Gender

	Male		Female				
	mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	diff	t	Sig
PaJo	4.04	0.48	4.07	1.03	-0.03	-0.09	0.93
PaAn	1.90	0.81	1.36	0.64	0.54	2.05	0.05
PaJe	4.81	0.77	4.87	0.95	-0.06	-0.18	0.86
JoAn	-2.15	0.89	-2.71	0.82	0.56	1.84	0.08
JoJe	0.77	0.62	0.80	0.59	-0.03	-0.13	0.89
AnJe	2.92	0.90	3.51	0.83	-0.59	-1.91	0.07
PatiJoti	4.44	1.26	4.60	1.64	-0.16	-0.31	0.76
PatiAnti	4.04	1.54	4.07	0.99	-0.03	1.18	0.25
PatiJeti	1.90	1.25	1.36	1.10	0.54	0.99	0.33
JotiAnti	4.81	1.44	4.87	1.46	-0.06	1.38	0.18
JotiJeti	-2.15	1.44	-2.71	1.29	0.56	1.19	0.25
AntiJeti	0.77	1.15	0.80	0.52	-0.03	-0.41	0.69
PathJoth	2.92	1.53	3.51	1.19	-0.59	-0.24	0.82
PathAnth	4.44	1.11	4.60	1.26	-0.16	0.03	0.98
PathJeth	4.31	1.54	4.67	0.98	-0.36	-0.76	0.45
JothAnth	-2.94	1.57	-3.07	1.10	0.13	0.26	0.79
JothJeth	0.56	1.36	0.80	1.66	-0.24	-0.44	0.67
AnthJeth	3.50	1.26	3.87	1.77	-0.37	-0.67	0.51
PafoJofo	3.94	1.29	3.73	1.71	0.21	0.38	0.71
PafoAnfo	2.19	0.83	1.13	0.74	1.06	3.71	0.00
PafoJefo	5.44	1.15	5.67	1.68	-0.23	-0.45	0.66
JofoAnfo	-1.75	1.61	-2.60	1.55	0.85	1.50	0.15
JofoJefo	1.50	1.67	1.93	1.49	-0.43	-0.76	0.45
AnfoJefo	3.25	1.24	4.53	1.41	-1.28	-2.70	0.01

Note: Pa refers to Pamela Jo to Jonathan, An to Anthony, Je to Jennifer, PaJo to difference score between Pamela and Jonathan; ti refers to timeliness, th to thoroughness, fo to follow-up; PatiJoti refers to difference score between Pamela timelessness and Jonathan timeless, and so on.

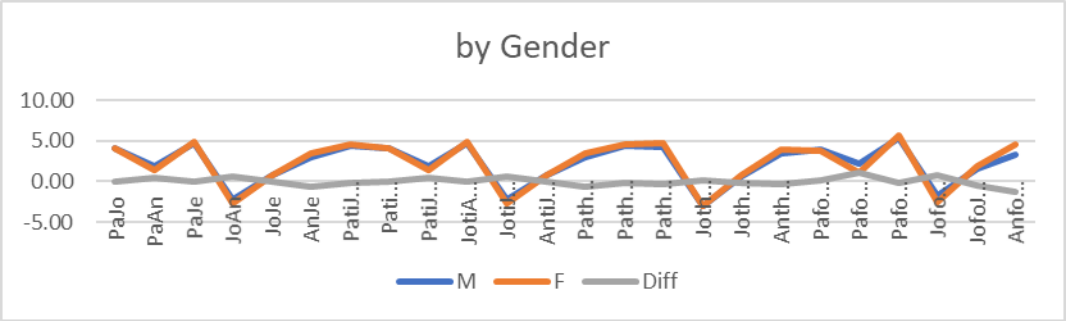

Figure 5. Graphic Presentation of Difference in Scores of Performance Ratings by Rater's Gender

Table 12

Difference in Scores of Performance Ratings by Raters' Race

	Black		White				
	Mean	Std dev	Mean	Std dev	diff	t	sig
PaJo	4.07	0.15	4.00	0.89	0.07	0.17	0.87
PaAn	1.40	0.49	1.64	0.86	-0.24	-0.59	0.56
PaJe	4.53	0.51	4.83	0.92	-0.30	-0.68	0.50
JoAn	-2.67	0.41	-2.36	1.00	-0.31	-0.66	0.52
JoJe	0.47	0.51	0.83	0.63	-0.36	-1.20	0.24
AnJe	3.13	0.65	3.19	1.01	-0.06	-0.12	0.91
PatiJoti	4.40	0.55	4.61	1.62	-0.21	-0.28	0.78
PatiAnti	2.00	1.00	2.52	1.44	-0.52	-0.76	0.45
PatiJeti	4.20	0.84	4.48	1.27	-0.28	-0.46	0.65
JotiAnti	-2.40	0.89	-2.09	1.65	-0.31	-0.41	0.69
JotiJeti	-0.20	1.10	-0.13	1.46	-0.07	-0.10	0.92
AntiJeti	2.20	1.10	1.96	0.82	0.24	0.57	0.58
PathJoth	3.60	0.89	3.70	1.43	-0.10	-0.14	0.89
PathAnth	0.80	0.84	0.70	1.26	0.10	0.18	0.86
PathJeth	4.40	0.89	4.35	1.34	0.05	0.08	0.94
JothAnth	-2.80	0.84	-3.00	1.45	0.20	0.30	0.77
JothJeth	0.80	1.48	0.65	1.56	0.15	0.19	0.85
AnthJeth	3.60	1.14	3.65	1.67	-0.05	-0.07	0.95
PafoJofo	4.20	0.84	3.70	1.66	0.50	0.65	0.52
PafoAnfo	1.40	0.89	1.70	1.02	-0.30	-0.60	0.56
PafoJefo	5.00	0.00	5.65	1.56	-0.65	-0.92	0.36
JofoAnfo	-2.80	0.45	-2.00	1.83	-0.80	-0.96	0.35
JofoJefo	0.80	0.84	1.96	1.66	-1.16	-1.50	0.15
AnfoJefo	3.60	0.89	3.96	1.58	-0.36	-0.48	0.63

Note: Pa refers to Pamela Jo to Jonathan, An to Anthony, Je to Jennifer, PaJo to difference score between Pamela and Jonathan; ti refers to timeliness, th to thoroughness, fo to follow-up; PatiJoti refers to difference score between Pamela timelessness and Jonathan timeless, and so on.

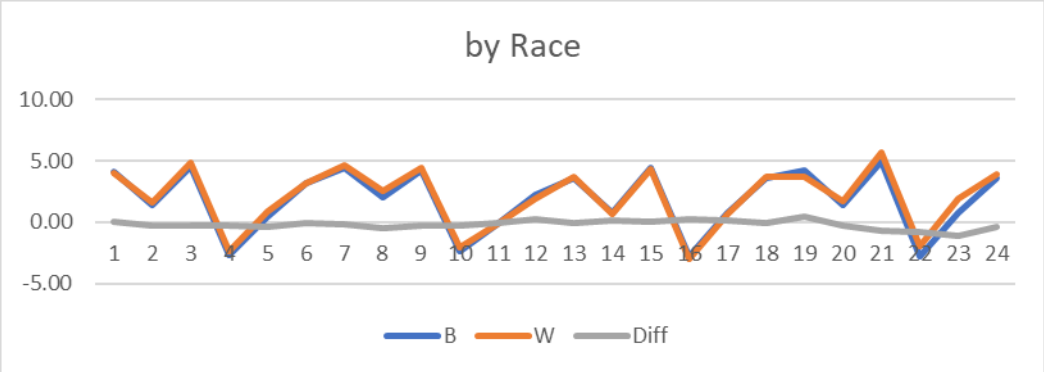

Figure 6. Graphic presentation of Difference Scores in Performance Ratings by Rater's Race

Table 13

Difference in Scores of Performance Ratings by Raters' Veteran Status

	Veteran		Non-Vet				
	mean	Std dev	mean	Std dev	Diff	t	sig
PaJo	4.04	0.21	4.06	0.91	-0.02	-0.05	0.96
PaAn	1.29	0.84	1.75	0.73	-0.46	-1.49	0.15
PaJe	4.83	0.76	4.84	0.89	-0.01	-0.02	0.98
JoAn	-2.75	0.79	-2.30	0.91	-0.45	-1.23	0.23
JoJe	0.79	0.69	0.78	0.57	0.01	0.04	0.97
AnJe	3.54	0.67	3.09	0.96	0.45	1.23	0.23
PatiJoti	4.25	1.04	4.61	1.56	-0.36	-0.60	0.55
PatiAnti	2.13	1.36	2.52	1.31	-0.39	-0.73	0.47
PatiJeti	4.38	1.41	4.52	1.12	-0.14	-0.30	0.77
JotiAnti	-2.13	1.13	-2.09	1.59	-0.04	-0.06	0.95
JotiJeti	0.13	1.36	-0.09	1.41	0.22	0.37	0.72
AntiJeti	2.25	1.16	2.00	0.80	0.25	0.68	0.50
PathJoth	4.00	1.07	3.74	1.45	0.26	0.46	0.65
PathAnth	0.38	1.06	0.96	1.19	-0.58	-1.22	0.23
PathJeth	5.13	1.13	4.26	1.29	0.87	1.68	0.10
JothAnth	-3.63	1.19	-2.78	1.35	-0.85	-1.57	0.13
JothJeth	1.13	1.13	0.52	1.59	0.61	0.99	0.33
AnthJeth	4.75	1.04	3.30	1.49	1.45	2.53	0.02
PafoJofo	3.88	0.83	3.83	1.67	0.05	0.08	0.94
PafoAnfo	1.38	1.06	1.78	0.90	-0.40	-1.05	0.30
PafoJefo	5.00	1.07	5.74	1.48	-0.74	-1.29	0.21
JofoAnfo	-2.50	0.99	-2.04	1.70	-0.46	-0.68	0.50
JofoJefo	1.13	1.06	1.91	1.58	-0.78	-1.23	0.23
AnfoJefo	3.63	0.21	3.96	0.91	-0.33	-0.55	0.59

Note: Pa refers to Pamela Jo to Jonathan, An to Anthony, Je to Jennifer, PaJo to difference score between Pamela and Jonathan; ti refers to timeliness, th to thoroughness, fo to follow-up; PatiJoti refers to difference score between Pamela timelessness and Jonathan timeless, and so on.

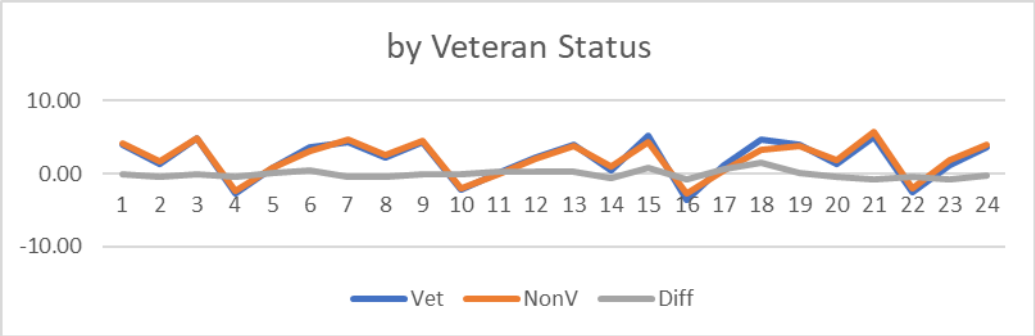

Figure 7. Graphic Presentation of Difference in Performance Ratings by Rater's Veteran Status

Summary

Using these results to answer the research question, it can be assessed that there is no difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios. As such, the null hypothesis is not to be rejected. It was shown in the study results that the aggregate scores of the hypothetical characters (Pamela, Jonathan, Anthony, and Jennifer) were 8.75, 4.68, 7.13, and 3.94, which aligned with the expectations of the study. Upon conducting a paired *t* test to assess if there were differences in the scores of the hypothetical characters specifically as it pertained to their veteran designations, the majority of the tests proved to be statistically significant, which showed that there were no real differences in the ratings of the employees when their veteran status was disclosed to the raters. Furthermore, the comparison of performance measures, as well as the difference in scores of performance measures between the various demographics of the raters (gender, race, and veteran status). In each of the comparisons and difference in scores, the majority of the results were statistically insignificant. This shows that there was no bias or significant

connection between the race, gender or veteran status of rater and the score they gave one of the hypothetical characters.

In Chapter 5 of this study, there will be a discussion on the interpretation of the findings, recommendations for further study, and the implications that these findings could have on practice, human resources management, and social positive change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the mismatch theory and compare the differences in management's rating of performance between the military veteran employees recruited through affirmative action programs and nonveteran employees hired without veteran preference advantages. This nature of this study was quasi-experimental. The quasi-experimental approach was used because it allows for testing of two groups to determine correlational and causal relationships without having to randomly assign (see Flannelly & Jankowski, 2014). I used hypothetical scenarios through a series of vignettes. Upon conducting a paired *t* test to assess if there were differences in the scores of the hypothetical characters as it pertained to their veteran designations, the majority of the tests proved to be statistically significant, which showed that there were no real differences in the ratings of the employees when their veteran status was disclosed to the raters. Using these results to answer the research question, it can be assessed that there is no difference between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations (nonveteran and those veterans hired through affirmative action programs) when provided with hypothetical performance scenarios.

Interpretation of Findings

In the results of this study, it is shown that there are no significant relationships between veteran status and managerial perception of competency and ability. With a research question that seeks the differences that exist between managerial perceptions of job-related performance and employee designations, the findings show that veteran status does not wholly inhibit a manager from assessing efficient work behaviors. At least,

under the context of hypothetical scenarios and three-item rating systems, managers were able to assess employee ability despite affirmative action status.

Literature around this study regards the mismatch theory as a phenomenon where an individual receives a position from policies connected to affirmative action but is unable to keep pace with his or her peers performing in the same role without the benefit of affirmative action assistance (Sander, 2014). The theories conjectured that normally these recipients would not have placement within certain institutions because the difficulty of its tenets and qualifications for placement are out of the recipients reach (Williams, 2013). Moreover, it has been found that those who view the entitlement as unfair may engage in conscious or unconscious behaviors that are unfair or negatively slanted towards the beneficiaries (Veteran Hiring, 2014). The U.S. MSPB (2014) conducted a study that gauged civilian perception of veteran hiring laws and practices. It was found that, amongst those in a supervisory or managerial role, 8% reported deeming absolute veteran preference rights inappropriate (MSPB, 2014). Such numbers could also be linked to the only 27% of positions being filled through competitive examining procedures in FY 2010 (Veteran Hiring, 2014). Based on many of the findings in the studies enumerated, whether based on perception or experiment, affirmative action places its beneficiaries at a disadvantage. As such, my study was geared toward examining these results from the veteran's preference perspective and whether the results are applicable.

The results of my study, however, serve as evidence that the perception of mismatching and the issue of affirmative action programs (i.e., veteran's preference) do not always act as a deterrent or inhibition of proper performance evaluation. It was shown

in the study results that the aggregate scores of the hypothetical characters (Pamela, Jonathan, Anthony, and Jennifer) were 8.75, 4.68, 7.13, and 3.94, which aligned with the expectations of the study. The study parameters were designed with the intent to assess perception. The scenarios presented were strategically delineated to show a difference in performance and response to a situation. Each of the vignettes were designed with varying response variables, as well as a mixture of veteran designations. The scenarios paired high performance with a veteran designation and low performance with a nonveteran designation, as well as a mixture of other combinations. When presented with the hypothetical situations, managers in the study were able to rate individuals consistently with the predetermined levels of performance proficiency. It should be noted, however, that the use of affirmative action measures can affect employee content and motivation. The study engaged by the U.S. MSPB regarding civilian perception of veteran hiring laws and practices showed that the occurrence and witnessing of such preferences and the associated perception of unfairness causes employees to be less engaged and more apt to want to leave their organizations (MSPB, 2014). Although the results of my study showed that performance evaluation was not affected by the perception of the designation, it does not negate the effects of civilian perception nor does it explain merits like demotivation, disengagement, and resignation.

Additionally, respondents were asked to self-identify several key demographics like gender, age, and veteran status that would provide further insights, especially should there have been a significant connection between managerial perception and veteran designation. After an assessment of the individual performance measures against the

sample demographics, there were also no statistically significant figures found in the study sample. Using the self-disclosed demographics, most of the responses showed no statistical significance and the figures that were significant at a 0.05 level, can be attributed to the expected randomness of the sample results using a 95% confidence interval. These results show that there are no differences between gender when assessing performance and such can also be adequately done irrespective of age.

Limitations of the Study

Although this study provides key insights into perception and the application of such towards performance management, there are also limitations to the overall generalizability to the larger population. For example, the type of performance evaluation used could potentially have a great impact in generalizability. Because managers can use various forms of appraisals to assess employee behaviors, there could be drastic differences in the elements and rating scales for the study. Instrumentation bias is a potential limitation to internal validity for this study. With instrumentation bias, there is a risk that the measuring instrument does not accurately measure the key elements of the study (Flannelly & Jankowski, 2014). There were minimal performance measures used in these vignettes and they do not fully exhaust the elements to which an employee may be evaluated. The appraisal scale and number of elements assessed could affect the applicability across a bigger sample or even the overall population. Additionally, another possible limitation is the size of the sample. Because one agency is used to survey the employees, it may be difficult to generalize the result of the survey across a larger population. Furthermore, both history and maturation can prove to be limitations to the

study. Time allows for the participants to grow, learn, and/or be exposed to elements that may influence their perception and subsequent response to survey questions. This can then lead to a decreased confidence that the results can be readily applied elsewhere.

Recommendations

The results of this study can be used to provide insights on how managers perceive employees with veteran designations and whether they can delineate between the designation and actual performance. The premise of this study focused on managerial perception, but it does not account for civilian perception and reaction to veteran designation. For future research, there is the possibility of evaluation on civilians and how they view the veteran preferences. The use of a qualitative study could be used to descriptively gauge employee sentiments towards employees with a veteran designation. Future research could be used to provide insights on how the perception of a veteran designation affects employee behavior, especially those employees who were not afforded the opportunity to benefit from the designation themselves. Additionally, research could also be extended to investigate how the use of affirmative action tools, specifically veteran preference, can have a possible effect on tenets like employee engagement, workplace morale, perception of organizational fairness and employee confidence.

Another source for future resource could be the potential to extend the theory of mismatching and veteran designation during the hiring process. The merits of this study are used to explore mismatching from the standpoint of lower performance from affirmative action recipients when the employee is already employed. However, the

theory finds its origins in the examination of an individual receiving a position from policies connected to affirmative action, but is unable to keep pace with his or her peers performing in the same role without the benefit of affirmative action assistance (Sander, 2014). Within the theory, it is conjectured that normally these recipients would not have placement within certain institutions because the difficulty of its tenets and qualifications for placement are out of the recipients reach (Williams, 2013). Because of such, they would normally seek out positions and placement at institutions and organizations where the difficulty level is not surmounting and their chances for success are reasonable. However, through the effects of affirmative action, they are placed in situations that do not adequately match their skillsets and thus places them in positions that cause underperformance or failure. This positioning is considered mismatching because the recipient is placed in a circumstance that does not match their ability to properly function.

Further studies could be engaged to assess managerial perception during the initial recruitment process. Where hypothetical situations from an individual already employed were used in this study, future studies could ne used to examine if there is a connection between management and veteran designation during the hiring process. Utilizing hypothetical resumes with varying qualifications and various designations, additional studies could be used assess perception during a pre-employment period. Such could be used to assess why the federal government has the existing amount of veteran employees that are currently present and if there is a potential bias during selection.

Additional extensions of this research could also include hypothetical behaviors for positions that are not as regimented or procedural. This study was created to reflect

the actions that an individual should utilize according to a manual of standardized procedures. Future research could be engaged to include more subjective and descriptive hypothetical reactions, which could be useful as a measure to assess managerial perception of veteran designations.

Implications

Positive social change can result from this study because it helped to determine the performance outcomes for veteran affirmative action programs and assess it benefits to all stakeholders. Affirmative action programs were intended to provide equality and level the scope of representation with a given field. Its merits, however, are undermined when it places not only the organization at a disadvantage, but the recipient as well. The results of this study have provided evidence that employees are able to assess the difference in performance outcomes between those employees who benefit from the program and those who do not. Additionally, this study provides further insights on the continued use of affirmative action programs in modern day America. Scholars are still exploring the impact these programs have organizational composition, productivity, perspective, and motivation. Prior studies have been engaged to assess various segments of underrepresented groups usually from a racial and sex perspective. Researchers have found that in some circumstances individual connected to affirmative action programs have performed differently than those who are not. This study expands upon currently posited research and the impact and implications on under-examined minority groups in the workforce by examining the viability of veteran affirmative action programs and

whether a difference in performance exists within organizations when compared to their nonveteran counterparts.

Additionally, social change is engaged by furthering insights into the validity and understanding of theories like mismatch by approaching it from a veteran standpoint. Much of the research on mismatching examines the academic success of minority and preference recipients in higher education and subject-matter specific areas in collegiate settings. Several research studies have been done on success and functionality in mathematics and scientific fields, which require a noted mastery and proficiency. Others have been conducted on proficiency with legal studies, which require, at minimum, the same level of understanding and mastery. This study adds to the cannon of literature on how mismatching connects work performance in the public sector and how such could be perceived by managers as a deterrent in the rating of veterans and nonveteran employees

This study will also help to advance the practice and policy of management in connection to affirmative action. Affirmative action was engaged at attempts to quell the policy and practice that discriminated. Its efforts, however, were increased because the nature of discrimination was not just inherent within policy and immediate practice. Its prevalence extended into organizational culture, disseminated oral culture, and ingrained organizational practices (Malamud, 2015). To remediate these unsaid and unofficial instances, affirmative action initiatives like quotas were instituted to force reconciliation. Although effective in some areas, legislative mandates garnered widespread attention. Its merits were praised, refuted, and legally challenged by individual and institution alike (Graves, 2014). As with many seasoned practices, they undergo a modern transformation

that reimagines its tenets for applicability in relevance for mainstay society (Premdas, 2016). The traditional application of affirmative action is not prevalent and widely used, as laws have changed to mirror the changing complexity of society (Aja & Bustillio, 2014). It has, however, been implemented in ways that are germane to the progression of societal conception and behavior. This study could help to provide insights into how managers perceive the benefits of affirmative action and whether or not their perception affects actual performance management.

Conclusions

The focus of this study was on the merits of affirmative action and its use in recruitment and employment. Veteran affirmative action placement was evaluated and how it was connected to organizational performance and the subsequent review of this performance by management. This study was necessary because it can be used to provide insights into whether managers are capable of looking pass an affirmative designation and focus on the merits of their work performance. A gap literature existed in the application of veteran preference to issues like veteran preference. Of the many affirmative action programs, there has not been as much of a concerted focus on the treatment and placement of veterans. The merits of this study have shown there is not a significant relationship between managerial perception and veteran designation. Such can be used in future application to assess organizational performance and whether recipients of affirmative action benefits are at a disadvantage because of management bias. Positive social change can result from this study because it can help to determine the performance

outcomes for veteran affirmative action programs and assess its benefits to all stakeholders.

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Appendix A: Vignettes

Scenario

A set of employees were concerned with workplace safety at their place of employment. They noticed a pattern of conditions that they believed were not conducive to effective and efficient work practices. On their lunch break, the employees met in the employee break room to discuss the conditions and take them to one of the managers to discuss how to mitigate these suspected problems. As they began to brainstorm their concerns, another employee entered the break room and overheard their conversation. After staying briefly, the employee left and reported the conversation to a manager. The next week, all of the employees involved in the conversation received notices from Human Resources that they would be placed on administrative leave pending investigation for producing deficient work products and not following all of the guidelines in the organization's safety manual.

The employees were outraged at the accusation and filed an unfair labor practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board as they felt that their employee rights were violated. The employees stated that they had been conducting their work activities the same way for the past three (3) years and had never received any guidance or caution of their work activities before engaging a conversation on their break about workplace safety.

Please rate the performance of these each employee based on their actions to the investigating the claim of an unfair labor practice. Your answers should be on a scale from 1-10. During the process, assume (1) all the agents have a clear schedule and an identical workload and that no one agent is more able to start work on the case any earlier than another and (2) the charged party employer gave the agent permission to take a statement from a manager or a supervisor.

Pamela – Attorney – Veteran – Female (High Performing)

Employee takes an affidavit from the individual filing the charge on day five of receiving the information. The employee takes a detailed account of the charging party's claim and all circumstances surrounding the involuntary placement on leave. During the interview, the employee also asks the charging party a series of questions including: are the

employees represented by a union and if so, have you been an advocate for the union; who organized the meeting; did you receive appraisals over the past three (3) years and if so, how were you rated; have you had any disciplinary issues; can you describe your work conditions; can you describe your usual process for creating a product; are there production process manuals and do all employees have access to the these manual; have you been trained on production and workplace safety and if so when and by whom: how long have you been supervised by your supervisor; were there any other witnesses to this meeting; other than the current situation, are you aware of any other individual placed on administrative leave for deficient work products or not following all of the guidelines in the safety manual; is there any other information you have to support your claims?

After taking the affidavit, the employee schedules interviews to talk with all other witnesses of interests that can help flesh out the situation and better explain the events that have taken place, including the other employees involved and employees who were not involved. The employee then sends a request for evidence letter that sets clear deadlines, requests to interview specific witness and provides a list of all documents requested.

Jonathan – Attorney - Nonveteran – Male (Low Performing)

Employee takes an affidavit from the individual filing the charge on day 24 of receiving the information. The employee takes an account of the charging party's claim and all circumstances surrounding the involuntary placement on leave. During the interview, the employee also asks the charging party a series of questions including: are the employees represented by a union and if so, have you been an advocate for the union; can you describe your work conditions; can you describe your usual process for creating a product; do you know if other employees create products in the same manner you; have employees been trained properly on production; did you receive appraisals over the past three (3) years and if so, how were you rated; has your manager approached you on you production protocol in the past; how long have you been managed by your supervisor; were there any other witnesses to this meeting; what types of evidence do you have to support your claims?

After taking the affidavit, the employee schedules interviews to talk the other employees in the meeting and the manager, etc. The employee then sends a request for evidence letter for all documents supporting the accused party's actions and understanding of the case.

Anthony – Attorney – Nonveteran – Male (High Performing)

Employee takes an affidavit from the individual filing the charge on day 14 of receiving the information. The employee takes a detailed account of the charging party's claim and all circumstances surrounding the involuntary placement on leave. During the interview, the employee also asks the charging party a series of questions including: have you been an advocate for the union; who organized the meeting; did you receive appraisals over the past three (3) years and if so, how were you rated; have you had any disciplinary issues; do all employees have access to the production process manual; when was the last time the company offered training on production and workplace safety; how long have you been supervised by your supervisor; have previous complaints or concerns been raised to management regarding workplace safety; who organized the meeting and who were the other witnesses to this meeting; other than the current situation, are you aware of any other individual placed on administrative leave for deficient work products or not following all of the guidelines in the safety manual?

After taking the affidavit, the employee schedules interviews to talk with all the other witnesses to understand the situation and better explain the events that have taken place, including the other employees involved. The employee then sends a request for evidence letter that sets clear deadlines and provides a list of all documents requested.

Jennifer – Attorney – Nonveteran – Female (Low Performing)

Employee takes an affidavit from the individual filing the charge on day 17 of receiving the information. The employee takes an account of the charging party's claim. During the interview, the employee also asks the charging party a series of questions including: were you organizing a union; can you describe your usual process for creating a product; do

you know if other employees create products in the same manner you; does your organization offer training; has your manager approached you regarding production protocol in the past; do you and your supervisor have a good relationship; were there any other witnesses to this meeting; do you have any evidence to support your claim?

After taking the affidavit, the employee schedules interviews to talk the supervisor and manager. The employee then contacts the charged party and schedules a meeting to obtain the charged party's evidence in support of its position.

Element	Pamela	Jonathan	Anthony	Jennifer
Timeliness of Initial Response				
Thoroughness of Claimant Interview				
Interview Follow-Up				

Rate the employees in each category on a scale from 1 – 10, with 1 representing "not acceptable" and 10 representing "exemplary".

Demographic Assessment

Sex _____

Age _____

Race _____

Veteran Status _____

Years with the Agency _____

Appendix B: Survey Participation Permission

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. Census Bureau
[redacted]

June 27, 2018

Sean Cook
[redacted]

Dear Mr. Sean Cook:

I have reviewed your research proposal entitled, A Quasi-Experimental Study on the Difference in Performance Between Veterans and Non-Veterans, and grant permission for you to submit your survey to managers at the U.S. Census Bureau. It is understood that your study aims at evaluating the differences in management's rating of performance between the veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and non-veterans hired without veteran preference advantages. It is further understood that:

- Participation is completely voluntary and the participant at the U.S. Census Bureau may withdraw from the study at any time throughout the research process without consequence.
- There are no foreseeable risks for participants of the study.
- Confidentiality of data will be maintained by using a secure and monitored email address for the responses.

Sincerely,

David R. Ziaya

David R. Ziaya
Chief Administrative Officer

Appendix C: Debriefing Form

Debriefing Information

RESEARCHER

Sean Cook

____ weeks ago, you were invited to complete a research survey. This subsequent research debriefing is being disseminated to all invitees since the researcher doesn't know which invitees consented to provide data. The purpose of this debriefing is to provide more information about the study that was not initially able to be disclosed when the invitation was disseminated.

The study is geared towards comparing the differences in managers' rating of performance between hypothetical veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and hypothetical nonveterans hired without veteran preference advantages. While the affirmative action programs are beneficial in their ability to assist underserved demographics, it must be assessed whether or not the quest to bridge gaps of inequality has positive or negative effects on agency performance.

You were asked to provide responses to the vignette questions that would be used to gauge the effectiveness of performance evaluations. Each of the vignettes were written using intentional variations of high and low performance and participants were exposed to the exact same scenarios. Veteran designations were assigned to each to test whether or not the rating would be affected despite the vignette being intentionally written with a high or low performance level. Systematic manipulation of veteran versus nonveteran status was utilized to assess perception and the weight of affirmative action on managerial assessment for further significance.

The intent is that the information obtained from this study may expand upon currently posited theories of managerial perception and examine the viability of veteran affirmative action programs.

If you have questions at any time about this study, you may contact the researcher whose contact information is provided at the beginning of this document. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, or if problems arise which you do not feel you can discuss with the primary investigator, please contact the Institutional Review Board.

RESULTS

The results of this study will be posted in approximately 3 months.

Appendix D: Survey Monkey Privacy Policy

Introduction

This privacy policy applies to all the products, services, websites and apps offered by SurveyMonkey Inc., SurveyMonkey Europe UC, SurveyMonkey Brasil Internet Ltda. and their affiliates (collectively “SurveyMonkey”), except where otherwise noted. We refer to those products, services, websites and apps collectively as the “services” in this policy. Unless otherwise noted, our services are provided by SurveyMonkey Inc. inside of the United States, by SurveyMonkey Brasil Internet Ltda. inside of Brazil, and by SurveyMonkey Europe UC everywhere else.

References to "data" in this Privacy Policy will refer to whatever data you use our services to collect, whether it be survey responses, data collected in a form, or data inserted on a site hosted by us – it’s all your data! Reference to personal information or just information, means information about you personally that we collect or for which we act as custodian.
If you want to identify your data controller please see the “Who is my data controller” section below.

2. Information we collect

2.1 Who are “you”?

We refer to “you” a lot in this Privacy Policy. To better understand what information is most relevant to you, see the following useful definitions.

Creators
You hold an account within a SurveyMonkey service and you either directly create surveys, forms, applications, or questionnaires or you are collaborating on, commenting on, or reviewing surveys, forms, applications, or questionnaires within an account.

Respondents
You have received a survey, form, application, or questionnaire powered by a SurveyMonkey service.

Panelists
You have signed up and agreed to take surveys sent to you by SurveyMonkey on behalf of creators. We deal with panelists in an entirely separate section of our Privacy Policy, which you can read here.

Website Visitor
You are just visiting one of our websites because you are Curious!

2.2 Information we collect about you.

Contact Information (for example an email address).
You might provide us with your contact information, whether through use of our services, a form on our website, an interaction with our sales or customer support team, or a response to one of SurveyMonkey's own surveys.

Usage information.
We collect usage information about you whenever you interact with our websites and services. This includes which webpages you visit, what you click on, when you perform those actions, what language preference you have, and so on.

Device and browser data.
We collect information from the device and application you use to access our services. Device data mainly means your IP address, operating system version, device type, system and performance information, and browser type. If you are on a mobile device, we also collect the UUID for that device.

Information from page tags.

We use third party tracking services that employ cookies and page tags (also known as web beacons) to collect data about visitors to our websites. This data includes usage and user statistics. Emails sent by SurveyMonkey or by users through our services include page tags that allow the sender to collect information about who opened those emails and clicked on links in them. We provide more information on cookies below and in our Cookies Policy.

Log Data.
Like most websites today, our web servers keep log files that record data each time a device accesses those servers. The log files contain data about the nature of each access including originating IP addresses, internet service providers, the files viewed on our site (e.g., HTML pages, graphics, etc.), operating system versions, device type and timestamps.

Referral information.
If you arrive at a SurveyMonkey website from an external source (such as a link on another website or in an email), we record information about the source that referred you to us.
Information from third parties and integration partners.
We collect your personal information or data from third parties if you give permission to those third parties to share your information with us or where you have made that information publicly available online.

If you are a Creator, we will also collect:

Account Information

Registration information.
You need a SurveyMonkey account before you can use SurveyMonkey services. When you register for an account, we collect your first and last name, username, password and email address. If you choose to register by using a third-party account (such as your Google or Facebook account), please see “Information from third parties” below.

Billing information.
If you make a payment to SurveyMonkey, we require you to provide your billing details, a name, address, email address and financial information corresponding to your selected method of payment (e.g., a credit card number and expiration date or a bank account number). If you provide a billing address, we will regard that as the location of the account holder to determine which SurveyMonkey entity with whom you contract.

Account settings.

You can set various preferences and personal details on pages like your account settings page. For example, your default language, time zone and communication preferences (e.g., opting in or out of receiving marketing communications from SurveyMonkey).

Use of some of our services will also result in us collecting the following data on your behalf:

Address book information.
We allow you to import email addresses into an Address Book, so you can easily invite people to take your surveys or fill in your form via email. We don’t use these email addresses for our own purposes or email them except at your direction.

Survey/form/application data.

We store your survey/form/application data (questions and responses) for you and provide analysis tools for you to use with respect to this data.
Profile data.

Full text can be accessed at https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/legal/privacy-policy/

Appendix E: Vignette Permission

United States Government

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD

[redacted]

May 13, 2018

Sean Cook

[redacted]

Dear Mr. Sean Cook:

I have reviewed your research proposal entitled, A Quasi-Experimental Study on the Difference in Performance Between Veterans and Non-Veterans, and grant permission for you to utilize the National Labor Relation Board's Performance Management Vignette Analysis for your study. It is understood that your study aims at evaluate the differences in management's rating of performance between the veterans recruited through affirmative action programs and non-veterans hired without veteran preference advantages.

Sincerely,

Lasharn Hamilton
Director of Administration

Appendix F: G*Power Analysis

t tests - Means: Wilcoxon signed-rank test (matched pairs)

Options:	A.R.E. method		
Analysis:	A priori: Compute required sample size		
Input:	Tail(s)	=	One
	Parent distribution	=	Normal
	Effect size dz	=	0.5
	α err prob	=	0.05
	Power (1-β err prob)	=	0.80
Output:	Noncentrality parameter δ	=	2.5854415
	Critical t	=	1.7062592
	Df	=	25.7380304
	Total sample size	=	28
	Actual power	=	0.8083058