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ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Beliefs About Gender Discrimination in the Workplace in the Context of Affirmative Action: Effects of Gender and Ambivalent Attitudes in an Australian Sample

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Abstract This study investigated beliefs about gender discrimination in opportunities for promotion in organisations and their relation to gender and gender-focused ambivalent beliefs as measured, respectively, by the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI) and the Ambivalence toward Men Inventory (AMI) (Glick and Fiske, Ambivalent sexism. In M.P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 33: pp. 115-188, San Diego, CA: Academic, 2001a). These two inventories were administered to 225 students at Flinders University in Adelaide, Australia along with discrimination items concerning advantage, responsibility, guilt, and resentment about the advancement of men and women in the workplace. Results showed gender differences in discrimination beliefs and in the hostile and benevolent scales from the ASI and AMI. Gender differences and relations between these scales and the discrimination variables were interpreted in terms of system-justification, self and group interests, and the effects of values and beliefs about deservingness and entitlement.

Keywords Ambivalent sexism · Affirmative action · Gender discrimination

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Introduction

The research to be described in this article investigated gender differences in beliefs about gender discrimination in the workplace and relations between these beliefs and measures of hostile and benevolent sexism. We report the results of a questionnaire study that included a set of items designed to assess different beliefs about discrimination and measures of ambivalent sexism devised by Glick and Fiske (2001a, b). The study makes a new contribution by focusing on how discrimination beliefs concerning gender in the workplace may differ depending on gender and on levels of hostile sexism and more subtle and benevolent forms of sexist prejudice. It is clearly important to understand relations between beliefs about gender discrimination and prejudiced attitudes, especially in the context of employment where these beliefs and attitudes may impact on relations between employees and their opportunities for advancement.

The topic of the research relates to the considerable body of research on attitudes toward affirmative policies and how these policies are implemented by organizations (for recent reviews see Crosby et al. 2003, 2006). Affirmative action policies have been introduced by organizations with the goal of ensuring that the selection procedures that are adopted prevent discrimination on the basis of race and gender and follow the principle of equality of opportunity. People differ in their acceptance of these policies and these differences have been related to material self interest; personal and cultural values; beliefs and attitudes toward ethnicity and gender; feminist beliefs; social roles; conservative, individualistic, and egalitarian ideologies; and justice variables such as beliefs about deservingness, entitlement, and legitimacy (e.g., Bell et al. 2000; Bobocel et al. 1998; Bobo 1998; Boeckmann and Feather 2007;

Feather 2007b; Konrad and Hartmann 2001; Konrad and Spitz 2003; Kravitz and Klineberg 2000; Kravitz and Platania 1993; Sidanius et al. 1996).

Our study was conducted at an Australian university with a student sample. Most studies of gender discrimination and affirmative action have been conducted in North America. We did not expect to find strong cultural differences in our results, although it is difficult to make a comparison because studies similar to the one that we report are virtually nonexistent. However, some comments on Australian cultural values are in order. The Australian culture combines individualism with an emphasis on egalitarianism and rejection of large differences in status. Feather (1998) noted that the Australian culture "values achievement within a context of individualism but also shows collectivist concerns for equality, friendship, and group solidarity" (p.757). These concerns are allied with a distrust of status-seekers and a dislike of rank and privilege, especially if it is not earned, and a rejection of pretentiousness. Australian individualism therefore combines with a horizontal dimension that reflects egalitarianism and collectivism (Triandis 1995, p.46), and it may often be reflected in following one's own path without necessarily conforming to the dictates of others. These aspects of the Australian culture have been supported by findings from an extensive program of research on attitudes toward "tall poppies" or people who hold positions of high status (Feather 1993, 1994, 1996, 1999) and also by cross-cultural studies (Feather 1998; Feather and Adair 1999).

Research in Australia on attitudes toward affirmative action, beliefs about gender discrimination, and ambivalent sexism is relatively sparse. In relation to affirmative action programs, research with academics at an Australian university showed that gender effects on attitudes toward affirmative action programs for women were mediated by perceptions of affirmative action's impact on material self-interest, by the belief that gender discrimination exists, and by traditional attitudes toward women (Konrad and Hartmann 2001). Our focus in the present study was on beliefs about gender discrimination rather than on attitudes toward affirmative action programs. Hofstede (2001) provided evidence that the Australian culture is relatively high on his masculinity/feminity dimension that reflects the degree to which gender roles are clearly distinct or overlap within a society. His study was conducted more than 20 years ago and much social change in Australia has occurred since then. However, the residue of more traditional views about male/female relationships may continue to be influential among some segments of the Australian culture.

In relation to ambivalent sexism, a recent study with university students at an Australian university (Feather 2004) produced differences in hostile and benevolent sexism that were consistent with those reported by Glick and Fiske (2001a, b) with American samples. Men scored higher on hostile and benevolent sexism toward women and higher on benevolence toward men, and women scored higher on hostility toward men. Because these measures of sexist attitudes were a central part of the present study, we first set them in context by briefly describing relevant theory and research on ambivalent sexism.

Ambivalent Sexism

In their discussion of gender relations Glick and Fiske (2001a, b) propose that the common definition of prejudice as beliefs that involve antipathy (Allport 1954) should be widened so as to include more subtle and benevolent beliefs about gender that, together with hostile beliefs, function to justify the structure of gender relations that exist in society. Attitudes toward women and men are assumed to involve both hostile and benevolent components, reflecting prejudice that expresses both antipathy and a more positive form of prejudice.

The ideologies that these ambivalent attitudes are assumed to justify or legitimize refer to patriarchy or paternalism (power differences in society), gender differentiation (roles and stereotypes), and heterosexual relations. Glick and Fiske (2001a) argue that "at the heart of gender relations lies a curious combination of power difference and intimate interdependence" (p.115). They draw upon system justification theory (Jost and Banaji 1994) and socio-cultural theories of sexism (e.g., Eagly 1987; Eagly and Wood 1999; Jackman 1994; Sidanius et al. 1994) to support their analysis of how ambivalent beliefs about men and women develop.

The ideologies discussed by Glick and Fiske are reflected in the scales that they designed to measure ambivalent sexism. The items of the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI) and the Ambivalence Toward Men Inventory (AMI) assess hostile and benevolent attitudes towards women and men, respectively, and they refer to patriarchy, role differentiation, and heterosexual relationships. For example, in the ASI, hostile and benevolent attitudes toward women would be reflected in agreement that feminists' attempts to gain power over men should be resisted (hostile sexism) and in agreement that men have the role of cherishing and protecting women (benevolent sexism). In the AMI, hostile and benevolent attitudes toward men would be reflected in agreement that men act like babies when they are sick (hostility toward men) and in agreement that women ought to take care of their men at home because men would fall apart if they had to fend for themselves (benevolence toward men).

Glick and Fiske (2001a, b) reported an extensive body of research involving the ASI and AMI. The earlier and

subsequent research included validation and cross-cultural studies (Glick et al. 2000, 2004). For example, both hostile sexism (HS) and benevolent sexism (BS) scores from the ASI correlated positively with scores on the Attitudes toward Women Scale (AWS; Spence and Helmreich 1972) but the correlation was weaker for BS. Men scored higher than women on both HS and BS but the gap was less for BS, supporting the idea that women are more prone to reject HS than BS. Women scored higher than men on the hostility toward men scale (HM) from the AMI but lower on the benevolence toward men scale (BM).

A recent study by Feather (2004) found that the measures of ambivalent sexism from the ASI and AMI were positively related to the importance of power values for self and negatively related to the importance of universalism and benevolence values for self. Thus, those individuals who evinced more prejudice were those who assigned more importance to values concerned with status, prestige, and control; less importance to universalistic prosocial values such as equality and social justice; and less importance to interpersonal values concerned with preserving and enhancing the welfare of close others. There was also evidence that benevolent sexism scores from the ASI and the AMI were positively related to the importance of tradition values for self, and negatively related to the importance of self-direction values. Tradition values are values that are concerned with respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs provided by the traditional culture or religion; self-direction values are values that are concerned with independent thought and choice and with creativity and exploration. Value importance was assessed in this study by the Schwartz Value Survey (SVS; Schwartz 1992). As noted previously, gender differences in ASI and AMI scores were consistent with those reported by Glick and Fiske (2001a, b). Most of these findings were replicated in a subsequent study of values and prejudice that also included the ASI and the AMI along with other prejudice measures (Feather and McKee 2006), and they are consistent with ambivalent sexism theory.

Missing in the research literature are studies that relate measures of ambivalent sexism to beliefs about discrimination in the workplace. The present study was designed to fill this gap at least in part.

Theory and Hypotheses

The workplace is an important forum in which status and power concerns, as well as concerns about competition and working relations, become focal. Company policies about promotion and affirmative action may also elicit justice concerns about deservingness, entitlement, and legitimacy among male and female employees as they strive to move up to higher status positions within the organization (Feather and Boeckmann 2005, unpublished manuscript; Boeckmann and Feather 2007). Justice concerns about deservingness and entitlement have been extensively discussed by Feather (1999, 2002, 2006).

High status positions in organizations in Australia are predominantly filled by men, especially in the business area. Attempts to reduce this imbalance have involved the introduction of affirmative action policies that have been legislated by Federal and State governments to ensure equal opportunity for men and women in the workplace. Equal opportunity commissioners are appointed to ensure that laws and regulations about equal opportunity are followed.

Ambivalent Sexism, Discrimination Beliefs, and Emotions

We expected that reactions to the gender imbalance in organizations, where men tend to occupy many of the high status positions, would vary according to a person's gender-related attitudes. On the assumption that ambivalent sexist beliefs function to justify, promote, and maintain gender inequality (Glick and Fiske 2001a, b), we expected that hostile and benevolent prejudice as measured by the ASI and AMI would predict beliefs about gender advantage or disadvantage as well as specific emotions. Specifically, we expected that beliefs that women now have an advantage in the workplace and are responsible for that advantage would be positively related to hostile sexism (HS) toward women. This positive relation would reflect a tendency for those who are higher in HS to react against outcomes that upset existing arrangements. In contrast, HS was expected to negatively predict the belief that men have an advantage and are responsible for that advantage. This negative relation would reflect a tendency for those who are higher in HS to support existing arrangements, consistent with a view that the existing gender imbalance is justified and should be maintained. Relations between benevolent sexism (BS) and the variables just noted were expected to reflect less antipathy and a more positive attitude toward women.

Relations between hostility toward men (HM) and beliefs about gender discrimination were expected to be opposite in direction to those just noted for HS and BS. Thus, it was predicted that the belief that men have an advantage in the workplace and are responsible for this advantage would be positively related to (HM), and the belief that women now have an advantage and are responsible for it would be negatively related to HM. We expected that relations involving benevolence toward men (BM) would be similar to those predicted for hostile sexism (HS). According to Glick and Fiske (2001a), hostile sexists would be more likely to exhibit benevolence toward men because they "tend to view men as superior to women"

(p.159). Glick and Fiske consider that HM "does not directly seem to be a legitimizing ideology for traditional gender relations, but instead reflects the resentment that a powerful group can evoke" (p.164) and that BM "is, clearly, an ideology that is compatible with traditional gender relations and, like HS and BS, potentially a form of system justification" (p.164).

These predictions involving the ambivalent sexism measures and beliefs about advantage and responsibility are consistent with ambivalent sexism theory and its emphasis on system justification. They are also in accord with the assumption that sexist attitudes expressed in hostility and benevolence reflect underlying values relating to power, universalism, benevolence, self-direction, and tradition, consistent with the evidence that we described previously. Power and tradition values as expressed in sexist attitudes would influence beliefs about advantage and responsibility when there are threats to status and traditional arrangements in organizations. Universalism, benevolence, and self-direction values would also influence these beliefs when goals associated with equality, social justice, personal relationships, and freedom of choice and independence are salient.

We also tested hypotheses about emotions that might be associated with beliefs about male or female advantage in the workplace. Previous research has shown that justice variables such as perceived responsibility and deservingness predict reported emotions relating to positive or negative outcomes (Feather 2006; Weiner 2006). For example, Feather (2006) has presented a model relating discrete emotions to a structural model of deservingness and reported the results of studies that are relevant to this model. Resentment and guilt are two of the emotions to which this model has been applied. In the present context, resentment and guilt would tend to occur when outcomes in the workplace for either men or women are perceived to be undeserved. The emotions that are reported may be collective as well as personal in nature. For example, guilt may be collective in the sense of how men should feel about women's disadvantage in the workplace (Boeckmann and Feather 2007; Branscombe and Doosje 2004). We explored reported attributions of resentment and guilt in the present study in relation to gender effects and relations involving the ambivalent sexism measures.

On the assumption that people higher in hostile sexism (HS) would perceive male advantage in the workplace as more deserved and legitimate, we predicted that those higher in HS would report less resentment and less attributed guilt to men when men were advantaged in the workplace, and more resentment and more attributed guilt to women when women had the advantage. For example, high scorers on the HS scale should be less likely to agree that men should feel guilty about gender inequality in the workplace, more likely to feel resentful when women get promoted over equally qualified men, and more likely to agree that women should feel guilty about having an unfair advantage over men. These relations were expected to be in the opposite direction for hostility toward men (HM), and to be less evident for the BS and BM measures, each of which reflect more positive attitudes to women and men, respectively.

Gender Differences in Discrimination Beliefs and Emotions

We also expected to find some gender differences in beliefs about male and female advantage in the workplace, and also in emotions associated with these beliefs. In a recent review of gender differences in attitudes toward affirmative action, Crosby et al. (2006) reported that the vast majority of studies find that women endorse affirmative action much more strongly than do men. Differences consistent with this finding were expected in the present study in relation to beliefs about discrimination and emotions associated with perceived male or female advantage. Women compared to men were expected to agree more that men had the advantage in the workplace and were responsible for this advantage, and to agree less that women had the advantage and were responsible for it. Women were also predicted to report less guilt about any advantage they might have and more resentment when the advantage favored men.

These predictions about gender differences can also be related to justice variables such as deservingness and entitlement. Women may feel that they have been treated unfairly in the past and that they deserve and are entitled to corrective action that tilts the scales in their direction. They resent the unfair advantage that men are perceived to have and feel less guilty about a female advantage based on an affirmative action policy because it helps to correct what they perceive to be an unfair disadvantage. Gender differences in beliefs about discrimination may also reflect self and group interests with people more likely to endorse belief statements that favor the material interests of self and their gender group (Bobo 1998; Konrad and Hartmann 2001; Konrad and Spitz 2003). Policies that favor the advancement of one group over another convey obvious rewards in terms of status and material benefits and one would expect that they would be supported more by the party who benefits. Endorsement of beliefs about gender discrimination may also be interpreted in terms of social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1986), such that beliefs that favor a person's own gender category (male or female) are endorsed in contrast to beliefs that favor the other gender category.

We also expected to find gender differences in the ambivalent sexism measures that would replicate previous findings (Feather 2004; Glick and Fiske 2001a, b). Men were expected to score higher on hostile sexism (HS) and

benevolent sexism (BS), but with a smaller gender difference for BS; women were expected to score higher on hostility toward men (HM) but lower on benevolence toward men (BM). Glick and Fiske (2001a) discuss these differences in terms of system justification and self and group interest. For example, they state that "Even if women show some degree of system justification, they would still find it in their self- and group interests to reject HS" (p.131). In contrast, they would find BS a more palatable form of system justification for women and more in their interest to accept.

Finally, we investigated whether the relations that we have described between the ambivalent sexism measure and beliefs about discrimination and emotions would be moderated by whether participants in the study were men or women. Would the hostile and benevolent beliefs held by women predict discrimination and emotion variables in a similar way to the hostile and benevolent beliefs held by men? We had no specific predictions about gender differences that might occur in these relations but we considered the question worthy of investigation.

Hypotheses

In summary, we tested the following main hypotheses in the current study:

1. Women will agree more than men that men are advantaged in the workplace and that women are disadvantaged. They will report less attributed guilt about female advantage and more resentment about male advantage.
2. Agreement that men are advantaged in the workplace will be negatively related to hostile sexism (HS) and positively related to hostility to men (HM). Agreement that women are advantaged will be positively related to HS and negatively related to HM.
3. Relations between the advantage measures, benevolent sexism (BS), and benevolence toward men (BM) will reflect less antipathy and more positive attitudes toward women and men, respectively.
4. Resentment and attributed guilt about male advantage will be negatively related to HS and positively related to HM. Resentment and attributed guilt about female advantage will be positively related to HS and negatively related to HM.
5. Relations between resentment and attributed guilt, BS, and BM will reflect less antipathy and more positive attitudes toward women and men.
6. Relations between BM and the discrimination and emotion variables will be similar in profile to relations between HS and the same variables.

In addition, we expected to replicate gender differences previously obtained for the ASI and AMI measures.

Method

Participants and Procedure

There were 225 participants (111 male, 112 female, 2 of unspecified gender) who were sampled from the introductory classes at Flinders University in 2004. The mean age of the sample was 23.34 years (SD=7.78). As part of a wider study Feather and Mckee (2006), these participants responded to the ASI and AMI and to a set of items concerning discrimination in the workplace.

Materials

ASI and AMI Measures

We used the 22-item ASI and the 20-item AMI described by Glick and Fiske (2001a). These two scales assess hostile and benevolent attitudes toward men and women, respectively, within the context of male/female relationships.

Participants responded to the items in each inventory by using a six-point scale labelled 0 (*disagree strongly*), 1 (*disagree somewhat*), 2 (*disagree slightly*), 3 (*agree slightly*), 4 (*agree somewhat*), and 5 (*agree strongly*). The internal reliabilities (coefficient αs) for the ASI measures were .90 for the 11-item hostile sexism scale (HS), and .83 for the 11-item benevolent sexism scale (BS). The internal reliabilities for the AMI measure were .85 for the ten-item hostility toward men scale (HM) and .86 for the ten-item benevolence toward men (BM). We averaged item responses for each measure for each participant.

Discrimination and Emotion Items

Participants responded to 16 items that were presented under the heading "Promotion Opportunities in the Workplace." They were asked to think about the opportunities that men and women may have for promotion in Australian society and to respond to a set of statements about the way in which a person's gender (whether a person is a man or a woman) may have an effect on his or her chances for promotion. They responded to each statement by using a 1–7 scale labelled *disagree strongly* (scored 1), through *unsure/neutral* (scored 4), to *agree strongly* (scored 7).

The selection of the 16 statements was based on previous research (Feather and Boeckmann 2005, unpublished manuscript; Boeckmann and Feather 2007) and the items were designed to measure eight variables. An exploratory

factor analysis using principal components analysis supported an eight factor solution accounting for 77.6% of the variance. Each of these variables was assessed by using two items that had considerable face validity and the score for each variable was the average of the two item responses for each participant. The variables, their associated items, and internal reliabilities (coefficient αs) were as follows. Given the fact that each variable involved only two items, the reliabilities are not at high levels but they are acceptable for research purposes.

Male Advantage

"Men have an unfair advantage over women in getting promotions," and "Women have been unfairly disadvantaged in getting promoted compared to men"; Items 1 and 11, r (219)=.37, p<.001; α=.54.

Female Advantage

"Men have been unfairly disadvantaged in getting promoted when compared to women," and "These days women have an unfair advantage over men in promotions"; Items 5 and 13, r (219)=.47, p<.001; α=.64.

Male Responsibility

"Men are mainly to blame for how little opportunity women have had for promotion," and "Men have been somewhat responsible for how little opportunity women have had for promotion"; Items 3 and 7, r (221)=.55, p<.001; α=.70.

Female Responsibility

"Women have been somewhat responsible for when they have failed to get ahead in their careers via promotion," and "Women are mainly to blame when they fail to get ahead in their careers via promotion"; Items 2 and 8, r (220)=.45, p<.001; α=.62.

Male Guilt

"Men should feel guilty about the past and present inequality of Australian women in the workplace," and "Men should feel guilty about the bad promotion outcomes women have received in the workplace that were brought about by men"; Items 9 and 12, r (217)=.50, p<.001; α=.66.

Female Guilt

"These days women should feel guilty about having an unfair advantage over men in gaining promotions," and "Women should feel guilty about reducing opportunities that men have for promotion"; Items 4 and 15, r (220)=.38, p<.001; α=.55.

Resent Male

"It makes me angry when men are promoted over women who are just as well qualified," and "I resent it when men get promoted over equally qualified women just because they are men"; Items 6 and 14, r (220)=.44, p<.001; α=.61.

Resent Female

"I resent it when women get promoted over equally qualified men just because they are women," and "It makes me angry when women are promoted over men who are just as well qualified"; Items 10 and 16, r (219)=.51, p<.001; α=.68.

Results

Gender Differences

We conducted an analysis of gender differences in the measured variables using one-way (male versus female) multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA). The analysis showed that the omnibus F was highly significant, F (12,193)=6.88, p<.001.

Table 1 presents mean scores for each variable and the results of t tests for gender differences. These results show that male participants scored higher on hostile and benevolent sexism (HS and BS) when compared with female participants. Male participants also scored higher on benevolence toward men (BM) but female participants scored higher on hostility toward men (HM).

Female participants perceived men to have an advantage in gaining promotions whereas this difference was reversed for male participants. In the case of the emotion items, female participants, when compared with male participants, were less likely to agree that women should feel guilty about any advantage they might have over men in gaining promotions. They also reported more resentment than male participants when men were promoted over equally qualified women. All of these results were consistent with hypotheses.

Correlations Between ASI, AMI, and Discrimination and Emotion Variables

Tables 2 and 3 present the correlations between both the ASI and AMI variables and each of the measures relating to gender discrimination. Also presented are the partial

Table 1 Means and standard deviations for study variables in relation to gender.

Variable	Male		Female		
	M	SD	M	SD	t
ASI measures					
Hostile sexism (HS)	2.63	1.07	2.05	.96	4.17***
Benevolent sexism (BS)	2.30	.95	1.85	.92	3.52***
AMI measures					
Hostility toward men (HM)	1.84	.86	2.23	1.00	−3.05**
Benevolence toward men (BM)	2.17	1.07	1.66	.90	3.81***
Discrimination measures					
Male advantage	4.29	1.30	4.72	1.18	−2.58**
Female advantage	3.67	1.22	3.15	1.16	3.22***
Male responsible	4.08	1.40	4.35	1.14	−1.54
Female responsible	3.70	1.17	3.41	1.19	1.85
Emotion measures					
Male guilt	3.34	1.21	3.57	1.25	−1.37
Female guilt	3.41	1.31	2.83	1.12	3.55***
Resent male	4.60	1.26	5.54	1.26	−5.49***
Resent female	4.39	1.36	4.59	1.57	−.99

Degrees of freedom for the *t* tests varied from 214 to 219 due to minor missing cases.
*$p<.05$ (2-tailed), **$p<.01$ (2-tailed), ***$p<.001$ (2-tailed).

correlations controlling for the influence of hostile and benevolent beliefs.

ASI Variables

For the ambivalence toward women measures the simple correlations involving *hostile sexism* (HS) with the discrimination and emotion variables were generally consistent with hypotheses when all participants were considered (Table 2). Higher HS scores were associated with less male advantage in gaining promotions, less male responsibility for the gender imbalance in promotions, more female guilt, and less resentment when men were promoted over equally qualified women. Higher HS scores were also associated with more female advantage, more female responsibility, and more resentment when women were promoted over equally qualified men. All of these simple correlations were statistically significant. The correlations tended to maintain their level when the influence of benevolent sexism (BS) was partialed out.

The pattern of correlations involving HS was similar in direction for male and female participants but the correlations were mostly stronger for the males (Table 2). However, when tested by using Fisher's *z* statistic the only

Table 2 Correlations of ASI scales with discrimination and emotion variables for male and female participants.

Variable	Simple correlations						Partial correlations					
	Hostile sexism (HS)			Benevolent sexism (BS)			HS (controlling for BS)			BS (controlling for HS)		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Male advantage	−.16	−.19*	−.22***	−.01	−.02	−.05	−.17	−.22*	−.22**	.07	.02	.03
Female advantage	.43***	.29**	.40***	.22*	.10	.20**	.41***	.27**	.37***	.07	−.02	.04
Male responsible	−.29**	−.03	−.21**	−.07	.07	−.03	−.28**	−.08	−.21**	.05	.08	.06
Female responsible	.50***	.35***	.45***	.13	.02	.11	.50***	.38***	.46***	−.08	−.13	−.10
Male guilt	−.27**	.10	−.13	.18	.19	.15*	−.37***	.03	−.22**	.31**	.16	.23***
Female guilt	.34***	.27**	.35***	.30***	.11	.26***	.29**	.27**	.30***	.16	−.01	.10
Male resentment	−.23*	−.04	−.22***	−.13	.01	−.14*	−.18	−.05	−.17*	−.06	.01	−.06
Female resentment	.17	.22*	.17*	.00	.13	.05	.18	.18	.16*	−.08	.05	−.02

*N*s for the simple correlations ranged from 107 to 109 for male participants and from 103 to 108 for female participants due to minor missing cases. ASI = Ambivalent Sexism Inventory.
*$p<.05$ (2-tailed), **$p<.01$ (2-tailed), ***$p<.001$ (2-tailed).

Table 3 Correlations of AMI scales with discrimination and emotion items for male and female participants.

Variable	Simple correlations						Partial correlations					
	Hostility to men (HM)			Benevolence to men (BM)			HM (controlling for BM)			BM (controlling for HM)		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Male advantage	.07	.28**	.21**	−.04	−.02	−.08	.10	.32***	.26***	−.11	−.29**	−.24***
Female advantage	.23*	.07	.09	.37***	.15	.31***	−.03	−.05	−.10	.31**	.17	.33***
Male responsible	.11	.19*	.16*	−.16	.02	−.11	.24*	.20*	.23***	−.26**	−.10	−.21**
Female responsible	.20*	−.09	.02	.22*	.12	.20**	.03	−.16	−.12	.16	.23*	.26***
Male guilt	.12	.30**	.23***	.02	.27**	.10	.15	.18	.21**	−.09	.14	−.03
Female guilt	.18	−.01	.03	.36***	.14	.31***	−.09	−.13	−.17*	.32***	.20*	.34***
Male resentment	−.15	.16	.08	−.25**	−.12	−.26***	.00	.29**	.27***	−.19	−.25*	−.35***
Female resentment	−.18	.00	−.06	.01	.00	−.01	−.24*	.03	−.05	.16	.04	.04

*N*s for the simple correlations ranged from 106 to 109 for male participants and from 106 to 108 for female participants due to minor missing cases. AMI = Ambivalence Toward Men Inventory.
*$p<.05$ (2-tailed), ** $p<.01$ (2-tailed), *** $p<.001$ (2-tailed).

statistically significant gender difference occurring for both the simple and partial correlations was for male guilt ($p<.01$). Male participants with higher HS scores were more inclined to deny that men should feel guilty about women's disadvantage.

Consistent with hypotheses, the discrimination variables were less strongly related to *benevolent sexism* (BS). The statistically significant simple correlations in Table 2 show that higher BS scores were associated with more female advantage, more male guilt, more female guilt, and less resentment when men were promoted over equally qualified women. Only the positive correlation of BS scores with male guilt remained after the influence of hostile sexism (HS) was partialed out.

The simple correlations involving BS were substantially reduced when separately computed for male and female participants (Table 2). They were nonsignificant for the female participants. There were statistically significant positive correlations between BS scores and both female advantage and female guilt for the male participants. The partial correlation between BS scores and male guilt was positive and also statistically significant for the male participants after controlling for the influence of hostile sexism (HS). In this case male participants with higher BS scores were more inclined to agree that men should feel guilty about women's disadvantage. However, none of the simple or partial correlations between male and female participants differed significantly when tested using Fisher's z statistic.

AMI Variables

The simple correlations involving the ambivalence toward men measures showed a different pattern of results from those involving the ASI measures. For all participants (Table 3), higher *hostility toward men* (HM) scores were associated with more male advantage, more male responsibility, and more male guilt. These correlations were consistent with hypotheses and they remained statistically significant after controlling for the influence of benevolence toward men (BM). In addition, higher HM scores were then associated with less female guilt and with more resentment toward men who were successful in promotion. In general, and as predicted, the correlations between HM and the discrimination and emotion variables tended to be opposite in direction to the correlations of HS with the same variables. They were also weaker and fewer statistically significant effects were obtained.

When gender differences between correlations were examined using Fisher's z statistic, the only statistically significant difference occurring for both the simple and partial correlations was for resentment toward the male ($p<.05$). Female participants with higher HM scores were more inclined to report resentment when men were promoted over equally qualified women.

For all participants higher *benevolence toward men* (BM) scores were associated with more female advantage, more female responsibility, more female guilt, but with less resentment when men won promotion over women (Table 3). All of these simple correlations were statistically significant. These correlations maintained their statistical significance when the influence of hostility to men (HM) was partialed out. The partial correlations also showed that participants with higher BM scores were less inclined to agree that men had an advantage over women and they were less in agreement that men were responsible for the gender imbalance. As predicted, this profile of correlations was similar to the correlations of hostile sexism (HS) with the discrimination and emotion variables (Table 2).

The pattern of correlations for the BM scores was similar in direction when male and female participants were compared but differed according to which correlations were statistically significant. If we focus on the partial correlations, the results show that for male participants higher BM scores were associated with more female advantage and more female guilt but with less male responsibility. For female participants, higher BM scores were associated with less male advantage, more female responsibility, and more female guilt, but with less resentment toward men who won promotion over equally qualified women. However, there were no statistically significant male/female differences in the simple and partial correlations when tested using Fisher's *z* statistic.

It is clear that benevolence toward men (BM) predicted a different pattern of relations with the dependent variables when compared with hostility toward men (HM), especially after the influence of hostility toward men (HM) was partialed out. In contrast, hostile sexism (HS) and benevolent sexism (BS) tended to predict in similar directions but HS was involved in a more extensive set of significant correlations with the discrimination variables when compared with benevolent sexism (BS).

Discussion

These results provide new information about how differences in gender and ambivalent sexism relate to beliefs about discrimination in the workplace when men and women are seeking promotion. In addition, the gender differences in the ASI and AMI measures replicate previous findings (Feather 2004; Glick and Fiske 2001a, b; Glick et al. 2004) with men scoring higher on hostile and benevolent sexism from the ASI and higher on benevolence toward men from the AMI, and women scoring higher on hostility toward men from the AMI. As we noted previously, these kinds of differences have been discussed by Glick and Fiske in relation to ideologies relating to patriarchy and paternalism, gender differentiation in roles and stereotypes, and heterosexual relations that serve to justify the structure of gender roles in society. Gender differences in status and power coexist with the need for mutual interdependence between men and women, leading to systems of beliefs and attitudes that express antipathy on the one hand and positive feelings on the other.

We would expect beliefs and attitudes toward promotion in the workplace to be consistent with these hostile and benevolent attitudes relating to women and to men and that is what we found.

There was firm evidence supporting the predicted gender differences in how participants responded to the discrimination and emotion items (Table 1). The male/female differences that were obtained reflected beliefs about the lower status of women in regard to promotion, with female participants more in agreement that men are advantaged and women disadvantaged in promotion opportunities, and with female participants also reporting more resentment about male advantage and less guilt should women be advantaged via affirmative action. Gender differences were not obtained for the responsibility variables or for the variables concerning male guilt and resentment about female advantage. Male and female participants were similar in their responses to these variables.

As we noted, the gender differences that we obtained in the ASI and AMI measures and the discrimination and emotion variables may be interpreted in terms of the sort of analysis proposed by Glick and Fiske (2001a, b) and also in terms of value differences between men and women that influence their attitudes and beliefs (Feather 2004; Glick and Fiske 2001a, b).

Other possible interpretations would appeal to self and group interests, justice concerns, and social identity processes. As discussed previously, favoring male or female advantage may reflect self and group interest as people contemplate the material and other benefits that would come from a rise in status that follows promotion (Bobo 1998; Konrad and Hartmann 2001; Konrad and Spitz 2003). The gender differences that we found are consistent with this interpretation. A rise in status following promotion would confer material and other benefits. Also, the emotions that people report about the gender imbalance in the workplace may reflect justice beliefs concerned with deservingness and entitlement (Feather 1999, 2006). Emotions such as resentment and guilt are firmly embedded in belief systems concerning lack of deservingness and entitlement. Research shows that people whose status was arrived at by unfair or negatively valued means are resented by others because their status is perceived to be undeserved (Feather and Nairn 2005; Feather and Sherman 2002; Feather 2007a). Resentment may also follow the perceived violation of legal or quasi-legal entitlements. Thus, if women believe that men have been unfairly benefited in competition for promotions they may feel resentful (Feather 2006) and also less guilty should the balance be partly corrected by affirmative action. Our results concerning resentment and guilt about male or female advantage may be interpreted along those lines. Finally, the gender differences that we obtained may also relate to social identity processes, with each gender holding attitudes and beliefs that favor the gender group or category to which they belong or with which they identify (Tajfel and Turner 1986).

A further variable influencing our results is the actual state of affairs in many organizations in Australia where there is a gender imbalance favoring men in higher status positions in many organizations, coexisting with government initiatives to correct the male advantage by enacting legislation

designed to enhance equal opportunity. These initiatives tilt the balance a little in the direction of favoring women.

Our results add to findings on gender differences by Boeckmann and Feather (2007) from a study that investigated responses to scenarios in which a hypothetical female employee in an organization that followed an affirmative action policy was promoted over a male employee. Results from this study, which used an Australian national sample, are consistent with the present findings. The study showed that female participants agreed more than male participants that men are unfairly advantaged in gaining promotions. Male participants were also likely to believe that women are responsible for their disadvantage and should feel guilty about reverse discrimination against men. Note that in the current study the male and female means for male advantage (4.29 and 4.72, respectively) were higher than the corresponding means for female advantage (3.67 and 3.15, respectively)—see Table 1. Also the male and female means for male responsibility (4.08 and 4.35, respectively) were higher than the corresponding means for female responsibility (3.70 and 3.41, respectively). These differences were statistically significant in both cases when the composite scores for male and female participants on these variables were tested ($p<.001$). So there was general agreement in the current study that men are more advantaged than women in gaining promotions in Australia and that men are more responsible than women for the female disadvantage, despite the male/female differences for each variable that we noted previously.

Our results showed predicted relations between the ambivalent sexism measures from the ASI and AMI and the discrimination and emotion variables. Hostile and benevolent prejudice toward women (HS and BS) predicted reactions to women's promotion opportunities that in various ways were in the direction of preserving and justifying male advantage in the workforce (e.g., by denying that men are unfairly advantaged, by blaming women for any disadvantage they might have, by reporting less guilt about women's bad promotion outcomes, etc.). These manifestations of sexist prejudice were stronger for hostile sexism than for benevolent sexism (Table 2).

Hostile sexism toward men (HM) predicted reactions that acknowledged men's unfair advantage, male responsibility for women's disadvantage, and male guilt about that disadvantage (Table 3). It is important to note, however, that relations involving benevolence toward men (BM) were in the direction of supporting and justifying male advantage in the workforce, and, as noted previously, they were similar in profile to the correlations between hostile sexism (HS) toward women and the dependent variables (see Table 2). Thus, they reflected positive attitudes toward men rather than negative prejudice. Benevolence toward men thus operated in a similar way to hostility toward women whereas, in contrast, hostility and benevolence toward women were more similar in the way they predicted beliefs and reported emotions. These differences are consistent with the discussion by Glick and Fiske (2001a) about relations between HS, BS, HM, and BM. They reported positive correlations between HS and BM. In the current study, these variables correlated positively for both male participants r (106)= .57 $p<.001$, and for female participants, r (104)= .53, $p<.001$.

The correlations between the ASI and AMI measures and the discrimination and emotion variables were similar in direction for male and female participants. The very few statistically significant differences in the male/female correlations that were obtained related to the emotion variables (male guilt, male resentment) rather than to the discrimination variables. They require replication in future studies.

Overall, the results involving the ASI and AMI measures were consistent with predictions and with the Glick and Fiske (2001a, b) analysis. They are also consistent with a value analysis that proposes that scores on the ASI and AMI scales reflect different value priorities that may be activated in settings where men and women compete for status, as when they vie for promotion. As noted previously, value types concerned with power, self-direction, benevolence, universalism, and tradition (Schwartz 1992, 2006) have been shown to correlate with ASI and AMI scores (Feather 2004), and we would expect these types of values also to influence a person's attitudes to affirmative action and their responses to the discrimination and emotion variables that were the focus of the current study. Future research is needed to investigate the role of values in this area.

Future research in this area might also examine how the variables that we studied in the current investigation operate in actual organizations. Such research is difficult to conduct for a variety of reasons that include time and expense but it is important to go beyond survey questions in order to establish the ecological validity of findings. Would our findings generalize to all types of organizational settings or would they be moderated by the gender balance within an organization or industry? We would expect that concerns about deservingness, entitlement, and legitimacy would vary depending on whether men or women predominate in the industry and who holds relative status or power. Given these concerns, the workplace may be a source of pleasure and satisfaction for some, but also a source of resentment and anger for others, as employees compare their status with others in terms of equity and fairness. A practical implication is the importance of setting up structures or committees within the organizations that are charged with the task of ensuring that procedures relating to gender issues are fair and can be justified and do not lead to discrimination based on gender and prejudice.

A limitation of the current study is that the reliabilities of the discrimination and emotion variables were not at high levels, although acceptable for research purposes. In future studies we should seek to develop improved measures of these variables. Although these variables worked quite well in tests of hypotheses in the current study, their reliabilities could be improved by further scale construction.

In conclusion, the present study makes a new contribution by relating gender discrimination in the workplace to both gender and ambivalent attitudes toward men and women. They show that beliefs about discrimination and emotions relating to male and female advantage were associated with both gender differences and with hostile and benevolent attitudes toward men and women. The results were supportive of an interpretation in terms of system- justification and they were also consistent with a value analysis. They also imply the importance of integrating justice variables such as deservingness, entitlement, and legitimacy into studies of how men and women are treated within organizations. Future research should extend into the workplace itself, sampling organizations where gender issues about status have either been resolved or are especially salient.

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