

Free appearance discrimination in the workplace: research methods research propos...

[Media](#), [Interview](#)



The term 'appearance discrimination' represents a new discriminatory phenomenon in our modern society. As compared to the past, today's modern society tends to judge others by the individual's appearance, treating others differently based on their relative attractiveness. Appearance discrimination based on beauty gives rise to inequality in communities in today's societies and groups such as the labor market. This research proposes the discriminatory phenomenon that one's physical attractiveness is a significant factor in the workplace, and that discrimination based on physical beauty does occur therein.

For this research, the subjects of the study will all be working women - women who are currently employed. Since the term 'beauty' is more likely to apply to women rather than men in our society, the appearance discrimination study based on beauty will use purely women subjects. The age range of the subjects will be from 20 to 30 years of age. This age range was selected because this is the range where most of women start working and where most of women get easily judged by their physical looks and appearance. The women's race will not be named as a factor in the study, because it is believed that discrimination based on physical appearance does occur regardless of race. This discrimination occurs based on the physical appearance and the 'relative' attractiveness of the subjects. One more theory of this study is that this discrimination occurs across all races, ages and across all communities and groups. This research will compare how discrimination based on appearance takes place in Korea and in the United States. This study will also therefore take into account the cultural differences between the two countries. It will also endeavor to find out if

these cultural differences between Korea and the United States impact the phenomenon of discrimination due to physical appearance. The subject group will therefore be composed of both American and Korean women in the age range earlier specified. For Korean women's group, the composition in terms of ethnicity would be largely Asian.

The research questions involve not only finding out whether or not discrimination due to appearance occurs in the workplace, but also finding out the effects of discrimination in the workplace. Therefore statistical analysis will not be necessary in the course of analyzing the data gathered during the research. The data of the research will be mostly qualitative data, which will also be obtained with the use of qualitative methods. The main method for gathering qualitative data would be through the use of in-depth interviews. This method was selected because the topic is definitely a sensitive issue especially for those subjects who may have experienced any form of discrimination in the past due to their appearance. The venue for the in-depth interviews will be at the workplace of the subjects. Two types of workplaces are currently being considered for the research. The first type is the workplace where most of the workers are men, whereas the other type of venue is the workplace where most of the workers are women. If these two types of workplaces are used in the research, then it would be possible to discover and explore possible correlations between careers and the attractiveness of women in the workplace by analyzing the interview results for each type of venue. There also may be more specific details with regard to the effects of discrimination based on appearance in each type of venue. Once the criteria for the subjects have been fixed, the selection of subjects

will be made based on the said criteria. Working acquaintances and their friends will be asked to join the research as subjects as well. Using this method, it will be easier to prepare for the next interview subject. The process of interviewing will be more specific and detailed, and more information can be gathered from the subjects. Should there be another interviewer, this process will also facilitate the interview process as well. If there is a lack of subjects, then an advertisement will be posted online. The subjects will be compensated through modest gift cards or certificates such as Starbucks gift cards. Data collection methods will be uniform for the subjects from Korea and the subjects from the United States. The selection of interview venues will also be done in a similar way as the selection of subjects. The sample size for each of the two groups of subjects would be 30 women per group. The 30 women will already come from the two types of workplaces specified earlier. If the interviewer cannot travel to Korea for the interviews, the actual in-depth interviews can take place via Skype. The timetable for data gathering would be flexible – the interviews can take place either during lunch break or after the work schedules of the subjects. The time of the interviews would actually depend on the availability of the subjects. As stated earlier, the main objective of the study would be to determine whether or not there is a correlation between physical attractiveness and career progression for women. How does one's appearance influence one's career? Another goal of the study would be to provide information on this phenomenon such that women workers can be aware of these discriminatory events in the workplace. Should they be at the receiving end of these discriminatory practices, at least they should be

aware that they have become victims of these same practices. The time to gather the data would be planned for later on in the study.

Discrimination based on appearance and beauty remains a controversial and serious issue in the workplace today. Many groups in society must be aware of this phenomenon, and from the literature available on the subject matter, one sees that discrimination based on appearance does affect the earning capabilities of those women who are discriminated against. Also affected are the women's self-confidence and self-esteem, and consequently their ability to perform well in the workplace. On the other hand, those employees considered as beautiful and pleasing to the eyes have progressive careers and greater earning capabilities. These phenomena will likewise be studied in the research, and will be verified as well.