REDEFINING AGE AND GENDER IN DIGITAL RECRUITMENT

AMIDST POPULATION AGEING: A MULTIFACETED ANALYSIS OF STEREOTYPES, INEQUALITIES, AND PERCEPTIONS IN THE MODERN WORKPLACE

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Digital Transformation in Recruitment

Digital platforms in recruitment may reduce traditional biases (Lungu, 2020).

Perceptions of older workers in digital skills are complex and influenced by stereotype threats (Chasteen et al., 2020).

Literature Review - Age and Gender Biases

Workplace Inequalities

Significant concerns about age and gender inequalities.

Greater levels of prejudice towards old age among men in certain factors (González-Celis & Sánchez-Sosa, 2020).

Stereotypes and prejudices create workplace discrimination (Dovidio et al., 2010).

Ageism in the Workplace

Cross-Cultural Differences

Higher levels of age bias in individualistic, industrialized countries (North & Fiske, 2015).

Need for broader understanding of ageism's impact across cultures.

Gender Disparities in Digital Industries

Gender Stereotypes

Digital industries perceived as 'geeky', technical, and masculine, contributing to gender inequalities (Gill, 2012).

Research question

How an applicant's age affects their likelihood of being invited to an interview by a personnel and HR officer, considering the applicant's level of digitalization skills?

Methodology

Participants: The study involved 608 participants, HR managers who acted as evaluators. These evaluators were provided with job advertisements and candidate resumes to assess.

Materials: The main materials used in this study were a **detailed job advertisement for a sales representative position** and **resumes of candidates.** The job advertisement specified the requirements and benefits associated with the role, while the resumes varied in the age and gender of the candidates.

Job Advertisement

The job advertisement was for a Sales Representative for Retail Chains, detailing the responsibilities, requirements, and benefits of the position.

Key responsibilities included

- customer care,

- acquiring new clients,

- negotiating business terms,

- collaborating with the marketing department.

Candidate Resumes

Resumes presented candidates of different ages (32 and 56 years old) and genders (male and female).

The aim was to examine how these variables influenced the evaluators' perceptions and recommendations.

Questionnaire

The evaluators were asked to read the job advertisement and candidate resumes and then complete a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included:

- Likelihood of recommending the candidate for the next round of selection on a scale.

- Evaluation of required skills/competencies for the position and the candidate's proficiency in these areas on a scale of 0 (not required) to 4 (very high level).

- Planning for the training needs of the newly hired person on a scale from 0 (fully prepared) to 3 (requires complete training).

Skill Evaluation

Evaluators rated the necessity and the candidate's level of various skills such as:

- Computer and internet use

- Artistic and creative abilities

- Physical skills

- Managerial skills and work organization

- Independent work organization and initiative

- Office work organization

- Information retrieval and analysis

- Mathematical calculations

- Service, repair, and installation of technical equipment

- Interaction with colleagues and clients

At what level are the skills of the participant
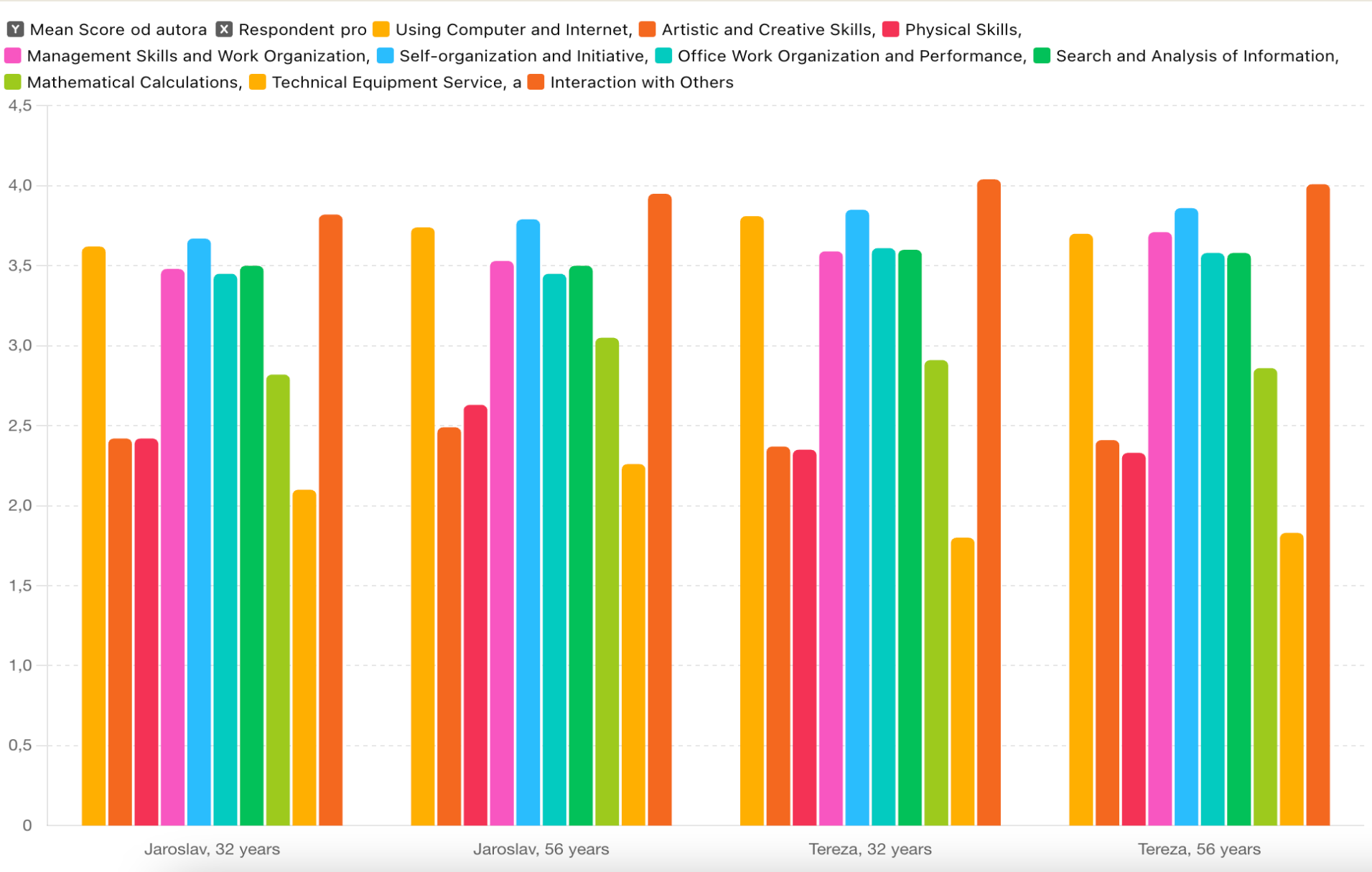
Results

The analysis revealed detailed insights into the relationship between age, gender, and the perception of digital skills and social competencies. Here are some key findings:

Age Differences: Older candidates (56 years) were perceived as more competent in digital skills (internet use) and social interactions compared to younger candidates (32 years). This finding challenges common stereotypes about older workers.

Gender Differences: Younger female candidates (32 years) were rated slightly better in people skills compared to their male counterparts, although this difference was not statistically significant.

Influence of Age Over Gender: Age appeared to have a more substantial impact on the perception of digital skills and social competencies than gender. Older candidates were consistently rated higher in these areas compared to younger candidates, regardless of gender.

Multifactorial ANOVA Findings

- **Digital Skills (q2d_1):** The candidate's characteristics significantly influenced the evaluation of computer and internet skills, while the evaluator's characteristics and their interaction did not play a significant role.

- **Artistic and Creative Abilities (q2d_2):** No significant influence was found for any factor, indicating these abilities are evaluated independently of candidate or evaluator characteristics.

- **Managerial Skills (q2d_4):** The interaction between the candidate and the evaluator significantly influenced the evaluation, suggesting that managerial skills are perceived differently based on this interaction.

- **Mathematical Calculations (q2d_8):** The evaluator's characteristics significantly influenced the perception of mathematical skills, highlighting the subjective nature of these evaluations.

These findings indicate that the perception of candidates' abilities is influenced by various factors, including the characteristics of both the candidates and the evaluators, as well as their interactions.
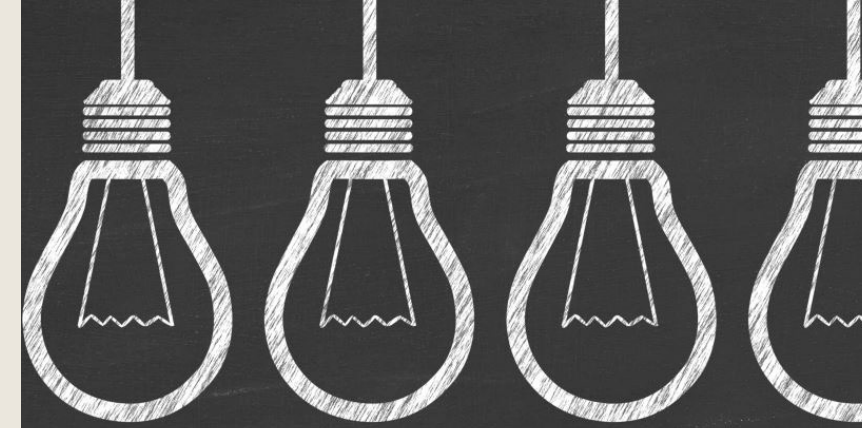
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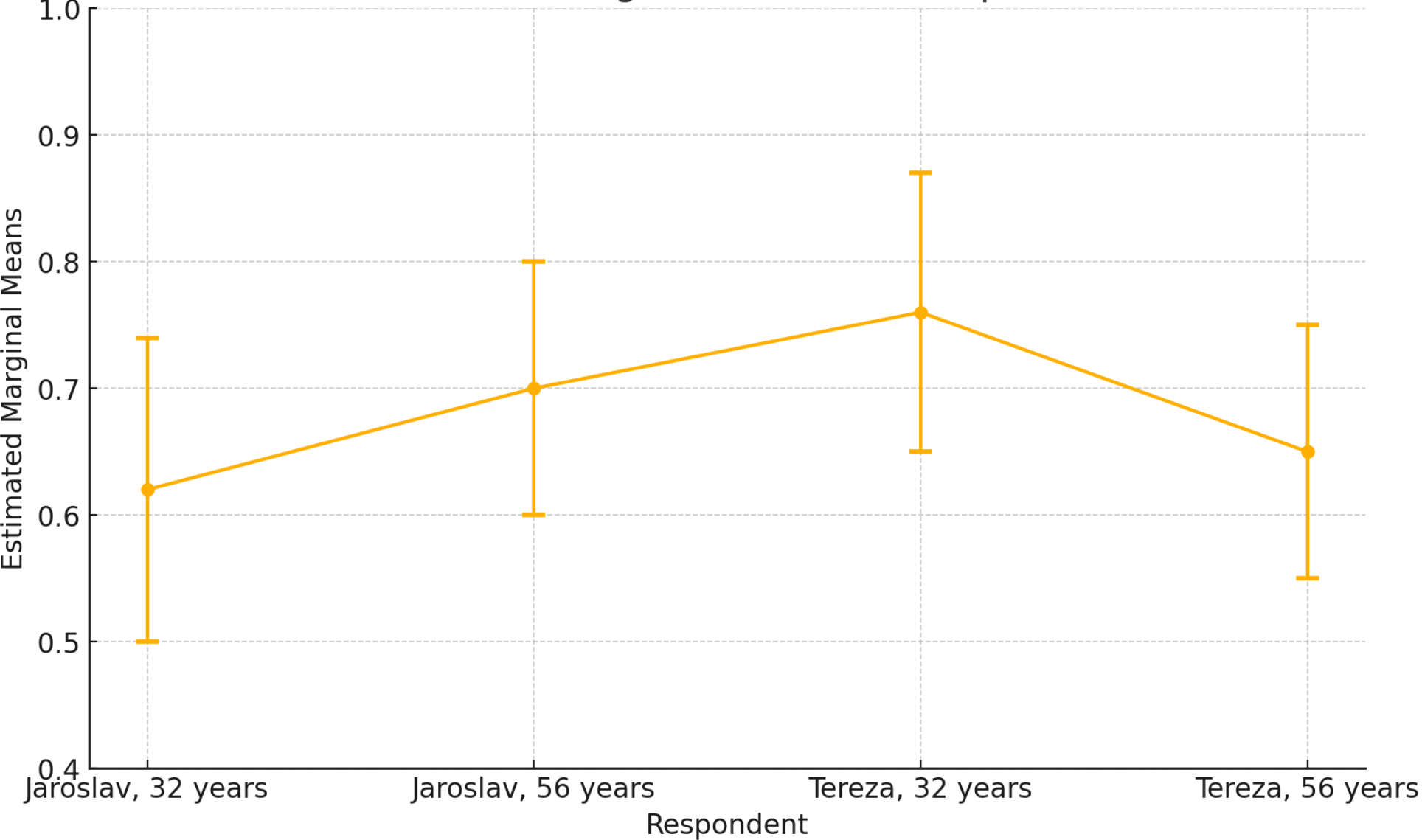
Implications for HR Managers

The results underscore the importance of addressing age and gender biases in recruitment. HR managers should be aware of these biases and implement strategies to mitigate their impact. This includes reassessing assumptions about older workers' digital competencies and promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace.
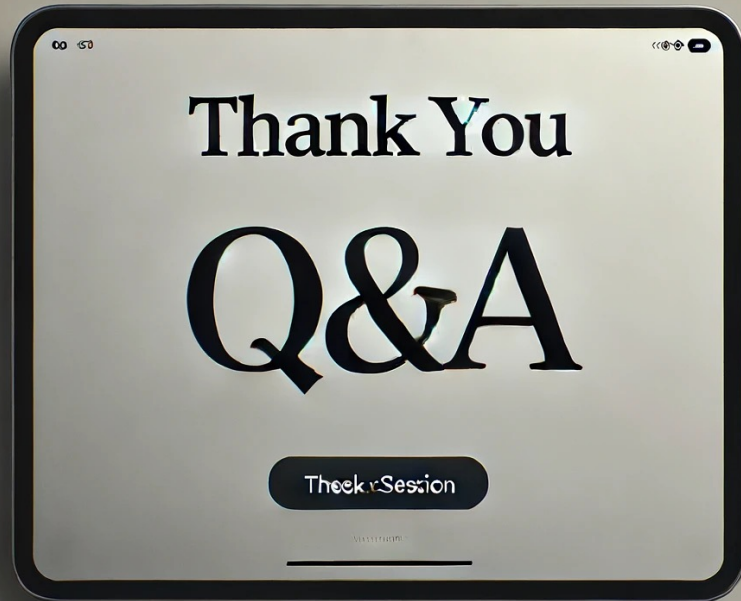
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