

## HOW MORALITY, COMPETENCE, AS WELL AS ATTRACTIVENESS PERCEIVED FROM WOMEN'S FACES AFFECT THEIR CHANCES OF GETTING A JOB.

Sara Pireddu (sara.pireddu3@unibo.it)  
ALMA MATER STUDIORUM UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA

# Introduction

First impressions are mostly organized along two dimensions: morality and competence (e.g., Abele & Wojciszke, 2014). According to the “**Perfection Bias**”, in an employment setting, men are only judged with respect to their competence; women are evaluated on their competence and morality (Moscatelli et al., 2018). Hence, **women are evaluated against more criteria than men on all of the dimensions considered.** Attractiveness affects a variety of job-related outcomes (Hosoda et al., 2003).

**Aims**

- to disentangle the role of competence, morality, and attractiveness perceived from faces in shaping impressions of male and female applicants (*Study 1*).
- to investigate the presence of a “perfection bias” at face perception level (*Study 1 & Study 2*).

The photos (*Karolinska Directed Emotional Faces*; Lundqvist, Flykt, & Öhman, 1998) were chosen on the basis of the perceived trustworthiness and intelligence of the face using the scores provided by Oosterhof and Todorov (2008), traits that correspond to morality and competence respectively (Leach et al., 2007).



Participants rated to what extent the applicant looked: honest, moral (**Morality**), intelligent, competent (**Competence**), attractive and good looking (**Attractiveness**). They then reported their global impression (**Impression**) and to estimate the applicants' selection likelihood (two items: **Hiring Decision**).

For female applicants, all the three predictors was significantly related to overall impression, which in turn was related to hiring decisions. For male applicants, only competence affected hiring decision, through impression.

## Study 2: Results

Competence, morality, and attractiveness were entered as predictors in two different linear regression analyses, for male and female applicants, on selection judgment.

Standardize regression coefficients of workplace competence, workplace morality, and attractiveness on selection judgment, for male and female applicants.

	Male Applicants			Female Applicants		
	$\beta$ (SE)	t	95% CI	$\beta$ (SE)	t	95% CI
Workplace Competence	-.47*** (.19)	4.06	.40, 1.18	.26* (.19)	2.17	-.03, .81
Workplace Morality	.16† (.18)	1.41	-.11, .63	.31* (.20)	2.61	.12, .91
Attractiveness	-.04† (.11)	-.40	-.26, .17	.24* (.12)	2.44	.05, .53
	$adjR^2 = .29$			$adjR^2 = .42$		
	$F(3, 72) = 11.11, \quad p < .001$			$F(3, 70) = 18.32, \quad p < .001$		

†  $p > .16$ , \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

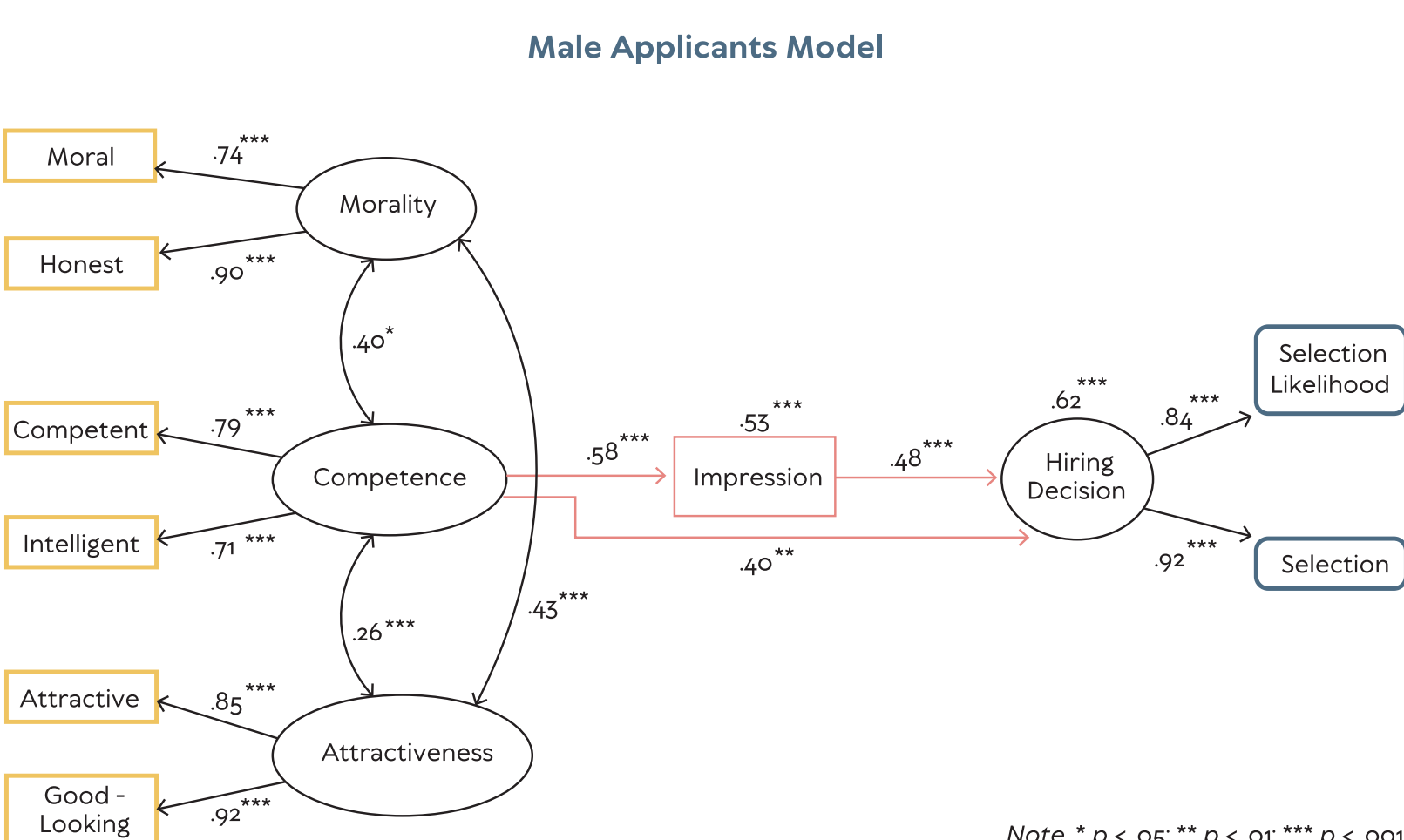
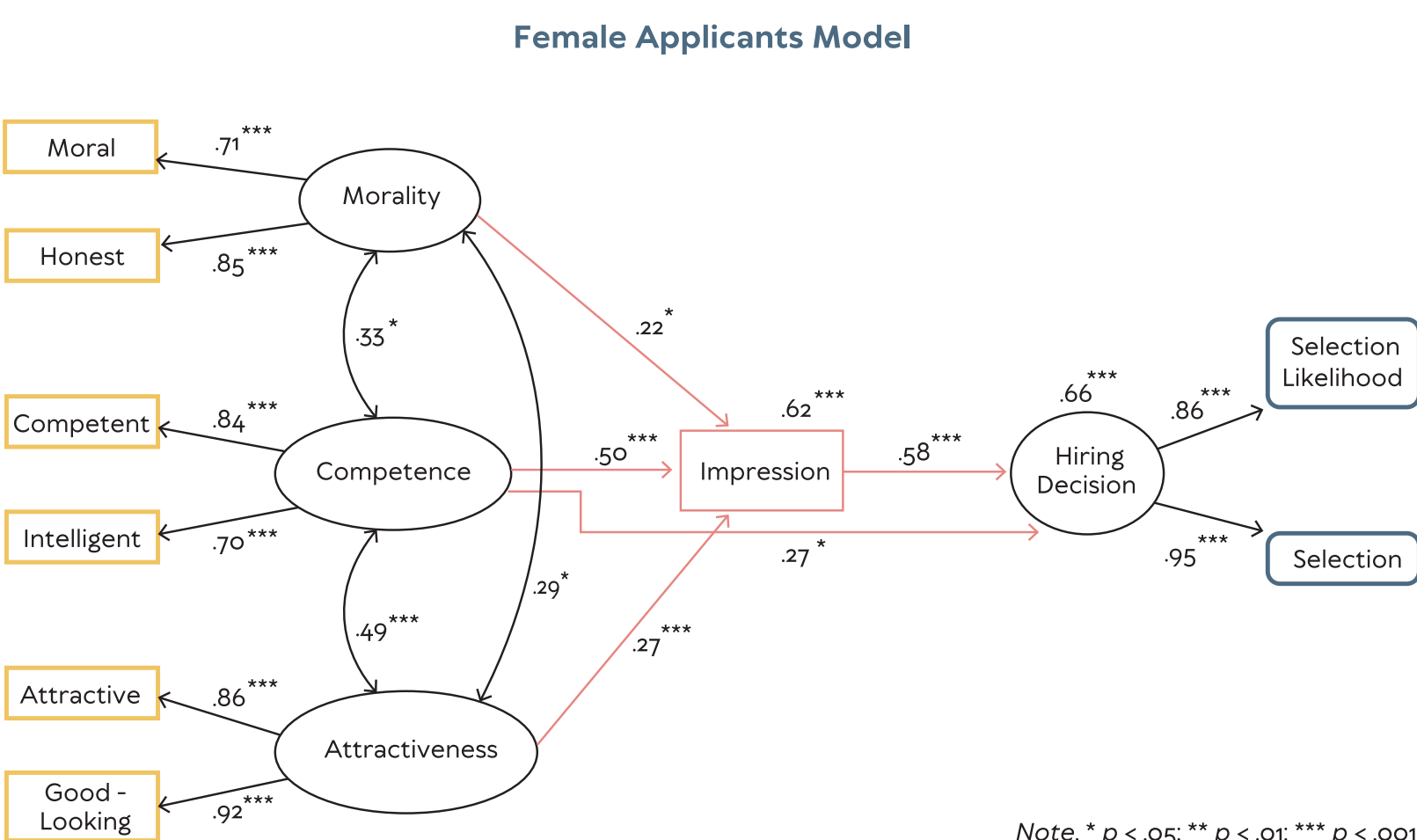
For male applicants, only competence was associated with selection judgment. For female applicants, competence, morality, and attractiveness were positively associated with selection judgment.

## Method

Participants: were 214 students (106 females) in *Study 1*, and 150 students (female = 66) in *Study 2*. *They judged only one applicant* (a male or a female student) for a job. *The CV was the same for all the applicants.*

## Study 1: Results

Multi-group Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) analyses.  
The model fitted the data very well:  
 $\chi^2_{SB2} = 50.417$ ,  $df = 44$ ,  $p = .235$ ,  $CFI = .993$ ,  
 $TLI = .988$ ,  $RMSEA = .036$  [.000, .076].



## Conclusions

- Competence, morality, and attractiveness inferred from faces affect impressions and in turn hiring decisions, but only for female applicants.
- For males, only competence has an impact on their selection judgments, directly and indirectly through impression.

*While for men looking competent is enough, women need to look competent, moral, and attractive. Hence, they not only have to be (Moscatelli et al., 2018), but also appear better than men in order to have the same chances to be hired.*

