

How different backgrounds in video interviews can bias evaluations of applicants

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Abstract

Organizations are increasingly using technology-enabled formats such as asynchronous video interviews (AVIs) to evaluate candidates. However, the personal environment of applicants visible in AVI recordings may introduce additional bias in the evaluation of interview performance. This study extends existing research by examining the influence of cues signaling affiliation with Islam or homosexuality in the background and comparing them with a neutral background using an experimental design and a German sample ($N = 222$). Results showed that visible signs of religious affiliation with Islam led to lower perceived competence, while perceived warmth and interview performance were unaffected. Visual cues of homosexuality had no effect on perceptions of the applicant. In addition, personal characteristics of the raters, such as their intrinsic religious orientation or their attitudes towards homosexuality influenced applicants' ratings, so that a non-Muslim religious orientation was negatively associated with evaluations of the Muslim candidate and a negative attitude towards homosexuality was negatively associated with evaluations of the homosexual candidate. This study thus contributes to the literature on AVIs and discrimination against Muslims and members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community in personnel selection contexts.

Keywords: *technology-mediated interviews, asynchronous video interviews, personnel selection, bias.*

Practitioner Points

- Research has found mixed results on the effects of backgrounds on the evaluation of applicants in AVIs
- This study replicates findings on the effects of cues signaling homosexuality
- Furthermore, the study extends recent research by examining cues signaling affiliation with Islam using a German sample
- Visual cues of affiliation with Islam affected perceived competence, while visual cues of homosexuality had no effect
- Personal characteristics like intrinsic religious orientation and attitudes towards homosexuality influenced applicants' ratings

The COVID-19 pandemic and increasing digitization have fundamentally changed the way interviews are conducted as part of the personnel selection process. Organizations are increasingly turning to technology-mediated formats such as videoconference interviews (Basch, Melchers, et al., 2021) or asynchronous video-interviews (AVIs) for pre-selection in order to save money, time, or the environment (Basch et al., 2022; Lukacik et al., 2022). However, such interviews are also associated with differences in applicants reactions (Basch et al., 2020; Blacksmith et al., 2016) or performance ratings compared to traditional face-to-face interviews (Sears et al., 2013). This might be explained by differences in communication (Basch, Melchers, et al., 2021), technical disturbances (Fiechter et al., 2018), or a distorted perception of applicants by interviewers (Basch, Melchers, et al., 2021). Another reason could be that elements in applicants' video background affect interviewers' perceptions (Lukacik et al., 2022). However, research has only examined a limited number of background elements and is limited to North American contexts (Powell et al., 2023; Roulin, Lukacik, et al., 2023; Scott & Roulin, 2024). Therefore, our study has two main goals: First, we replicate Roulin, Lukacik, et al.'s (2023) findings about sexual orientation with a German-speaking sample. Second, we examine a previously unexplored cue: affiliation with Islam. The results of this study can have important practical implications for both organizations and applicants.

The Influence of Backgrounds in AVIs

Unlike traditional face-to-face (FTF) or videoconference interviews, AVIs offer an alternative and flexible way to assess applicants. Applicants participate in a fully online interview and video-record their answers to pre-defined questions, which are then rated by an interviewer or a computer algorithm (Lukacik et al., 2022). AVIs ratings can be influenced by the provision of preparation time (Basch, Brenner, et al., 2021), re-recording opportunities (Roulin, Wong, et al., 2023) or low communication quality (Fiechter et al., 2018). In addition, Lukacik et al. (2022) suggested that AVI recordings provide interviewers with visual cues from the applicant's background that can lead to biased ratings. In addition to information

from the applicant's appearance and clothing that are available in FTF interviews, recording background in AVIs might include personal information (e.g., from photographs, posters, or decorations) that can influence performance ratings in two ways.

First, some backgrounds can represent deviations from the social norms and expectations about how applicants should behave in interviews, and thus influence perceptions of applicants' attitude or personality. Applicants are perceived as unprofessional when they are recording themselves in front of *inappropriate* backgrounds, posters, or photographs (Mejia & Torres, 2018). For example, one study found that a *messy* background was associated with lower performance ratings (Powell et al., 2023). In contrast, Scott and Roulin (2024) found that while a bedroom background was perceived as less professional than an office background, the type of background or the use of blurring did not affect first impressions or final interview ratings.

Second, AVI backgrounds can provide information about applicants' socioeconomic status or potentially legally protected grounds, which can lead to stigmatization regardless of applicants' job-related skills and qualifications. Roulin, Lukacik, et al. (2023) examined the influence of AVI background providing information about parental status, political affiliation, and sexual orientation. They built on the dual-process model of interviewer bias (Derous et al., 2016) and the stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002) to predict how such information could bias ratings. For instance, the dual-process model suggests that when stigmatized applicant characteristics (e.g., being a parent, a member of a sexual minority, or supporting a political party different than the interviewer's) are visible to interviewers, they activate Type-I processes, which are fast, automatic, and heuristics-driven judgments associated with more intuitive and biased decisions. While more conscious and deliberate Type-II processes can serve to update initial judgment and correct biases, they are only used with non-stigmatized applicants (Derous et al., 2016). In addition, the stereotype content model suggests that interviewers might assign lower perceptions of warmth and competence

(i.e., less benevolent and qualified) to stigmatized than non-stigmatized applicants. Roulin, Lukacik, et al. (2023) found that the effect of AVI background varied depending on the type of information (i.e., stigmatized applicant features). Contrary to their predictions, parents were viewed as warmer and rated more positively than non-parents, and no effects were found for sexual orientation. However, interviewers evaluated applicants as warmer and rated them more positively if they supported the same political party as them.

Overall, research on how different types of background that reveal personal information about applicants do impact AVI ratings is limited. The conceptual model by Lukacik et al. (2022) directly mentioned sexual orientation and religious affiliation as two background elements that could be visible and practically important to examine. While Roulin, Lukacik, et al. (2023) already investigated sexual orientation, they also suggested investigating alternative background features such as religion. Indeed, AVI background can convey information about one's religious affiliation (through symbols) which — just like sexual orientation— are visual cues of stigmas (Summers et al., 2018). Moreover, Roulin, Lukacik, et al. (2023) relied on North American samples. Background features might be more or less impactful in different contexts or cultures. As an example, the gay travel index (GTI) indicates how safe it is to travel to foreign countries for members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community, based on anti-discrimination laws, how many assaults against members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community have been reported, etc. Canada tops the list of the safest countries, whereas Germany only ranks 10th (Geißler, 2021). Furthermore, Islamophobic tendencies have increased in Germany due to the flow of refugees from Turkey or Middle-Eastern countries in the last ten years (Mediendienst Integration, 2021). As such, the present study aims to explore the influence of background information indicating affiliation with the Islamic faith and the 2LGBTQI+ community in Germany.

Religious Affiliation

Various field experiments showed prejudice against, and discrimination towards, Muslim applicants in selection (Zschirnt & Ruedin, 2016). However, many studies rely on Arabic-sounding names to manipulate applicants' religion, thereby conflating religious and ethnic discrimination (Bartkoski et al., 2018; Di Stasio et al., 2021). Moreover, in studies across several regions, applicants affiliated with Islam received fewer callbacks than applicants of the same ethnicity who were affiliated with Christianity or had no religious affiliation (Di Stasio et al., 2021; Wright et al., 2013).

Research has also examined the effect of religious symbols. For instance, traditional Muslim dress is associated with negative stereotypes and increased levels of aggression (Unkelbach et al., 2008). Muslim women of Turkish origins who wear the hijab (i.e., a headscarf representing an outward and visible sign of religious affiliation) are disadvantaged in selection in Germany (Weichselbaumer, 2020). Fernández-Reino et al. (2023) replicated these findings with applicants for customer service jobs in Germany, the Netherlands, and Spain. Moreover, Muslims are perceived as less competent and warm than other groups both in Canada (Fiske, 2012) and in Germany (Froehlich & Schulte, 2019). Overall, research has focused on the influence of traditional Islamic dress among women, because they are visible in FTF interviews or on a picture attached to an application. With AVIs being recorded from home, other Islamic symbols such as art involving Arabic script, the Qur'an in a bookshelf, or pictures of mosques might become visible (Lukacik et al., 2022), activate Type-I-processes (Derous et al., 2016), trigger negative warmth/competence stereotypes (Fiske et al., 2002), and lead to biased ratings.

In addition, Roulin, Lukacik, et al. (2023) relied on subjective and holistic ratings of performance at the end of the interview, which can be more prone to be influenced by bias (e.g., Kutcher & Bragger, 2004). Therefore, we examine interview performance using a rating scales to assess response quality for each question ("interview ratings" in the following). By

doing so, we want to investigate if biases resulting from background information also hold true for less holistic measures. Accordingly, we predict:

Hypothesis 1: An applicant with background cues signaling affiliation with Islam will receive lower evaluations for (a) interview ratings, (b) perceived warmth, and (c) perceived competence than an applicant without such cues.

The dual-process model (Derous et al., 2016) emphasizes that interviewers' characteristics, such as their (in)ability for perspective-taking, can also play a role in how much they rely on biased Type-I judgments. For instance, discrimination against Muslim applicants could depend on interviewers' own religiosity and beliefs. Allport and Ross (1967) described people with strong intrinsic religious orientation as living their religion out of intrinsic convictions that are firmly anchored in their belief system, and striving to implement their religious values in everyday life. Strong intrinsic orientation can lead to discriminatory attitudes toward people from other religious faiths (Griffin et al., 1987). The relationship between intrinsic orientation and prejudice depends on the evaluator's own religious affiliation, and the specific target group of discrimination (Kirkpatrick, 1993). As such, if AVI raters are not Muslim themselves (but Christian or Atheist), and because Muslims are often stereotyped in the German context (Froehlich & Schulte, 2019), we predict:

Hypothesis 2: When judging an applicant with background cues signaling affiliation with Islam, raters' (non-Muslim) intrinsic religious orientation will be negatively related to evaluations of (a) interview ratings, (b) perceived warmth, and (c) perceived competence.

Sexual Orientation

Another group that might be discriminated against is the 2SLGBTQI+ community, but research findings are mixed. Some studies found that members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community are less likely to be invited to interviews than heterosexual applicants (Drydakis, 2009; Horvath & Ryan, 2003; Weichselbaumer, 2003), while others found no (or very small)

differences (Bailey et al., 2013; Roulin, Lukacik, et al., 2023; Van Hove & Lievens, 2003).

Gay men are discriminated particularly when applying for more male-dominated job (Ahmed et al., 2013). Nadler et al. (2014) also found that discrimination based on sexual orientation disappears when interviewers must explain their ratings.

Roulin, Lukacik, et al. (2023) emphasized that applicants' background in AVIs can include cues about their sexual orientation (e.g., rainbow flag). While they did not find any bias against the gay or lesbian applicant in their study, they called for more research on this topic, and highlighted the need to ensure visual cues were salient (e.g., using a picture of same-sex partner kissing instead of simply being next to one another). In addition, research on discrimination against 2SLGBTQI+ applicants in Germany is lacking. However, a survey showed that about 30% of the German 2SLGBTQI+ community reported having experienced workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (Pawlik, 2021). Based on dual-process theory (Derous et al., 2016), stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002), and the findings presented above, we predict:

Hypothesis 3: An applicant with background cues signaling membership in the 2SLGBTQI+ community will receive lower evaluations for (a) interview ratings, (b) perceived warmth, and (c) perceived competence than an applicant without such cues.

As noted above, interviewers' characteristics can play a role in the activation of, and reliance on Type-I processes (Derous et al., 2016). Accordingly, an interviewer who has more negative attitudes towards members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community should rate sexual minority applicants particularly negatively:

Hypothesis 4: When judging an applicant with background cues signaling membership in the 2SLGBTQI+ community, raters' negative attitudes towards homosexuality will be negatively related to evaluations of (a) interview ratings, (b) perceived warmth, and (c) perceived competence.

Method

Sample

We initially recruited 458 individuals via posts on social media (Facebook, Xing, LinkedIn, Instagram), personal contacts, and www.surveycircle.com. After removing participants with incomplete data ($n = 201$; $n = 154$ abandoned the questionnaire before the first video response), consent withdrawal ($n = 3$), indicating a lack of attention to the videos ($n = 15$), or failed attention checks (i.e., “choose the option 4 = *agree*”; $n = 17$), the final sample consisted of 222 individuals. Mean age was $M = 26.58$ years ($SD = 8.59$) and 66% identified as females, 32% as males (one other gender). About half of participants (49%) held a university degree and 27 % had previous experience as an interviewer. Of those, 62% had under one year and 25% 1-3 years of interviewing experience. None of the participants belonged to the minority group they evaluated: in the Islamic affiliation condition, no participant identified as a Muslim (34% atheist, 21% protestants, 33% catholic, 8% other); in the homosexuality condition, 99% identified as heterosexual and 1% as bisexual. All participants were asked to complete the 20-minute study on a laptop or desktop computer. There was no monetary incentive for participation.

Procedure

The study was administered online. After providing informed consent, participants were asked to imagine they were working as a recruiter in the HR department of a multinational organization. They were tasked with watching and rating the responses of one applicant applying for a customer service job. They were presented with the job description (see Appendix A in the online supplement). Then, participants were randomly assigned to one of the three experimental conditions (i.e., neutral/control, visual cues signaling affiliation with Islam, or membership in the 2SLGBTQI+ community – see *Design* section below). They watched video-recorded responses to five AVI questions, rated the quality of each response individually. The interview questions were taken from Ingold et al. (2015), but were adapted

to a job in customer service. The scripted responses were inspired from previous AVI studies [anonymized for peer-review] but adapted to the customer service job. Response quality ranged from rather poor to very good, to create more opportunities for ratings to be influenced by other factors (e.g., background). See Appendix C for questions and scripted responses.

Following the entire interview, participants completed measures about the applicant's perceived warmth and competence, an attention check, and could provide comments. Participants in the Islamic affiliation condition reported their own religious beliefs and their intrinsic religious orientation, while those in the 2SLGBTQI+ condition reported their attitude towards homosexuals. Additionally, a manipulation check question assessed their perception of the probability that the applicant was affiliated with Islam or homosexual. Finally, participants answered demographic questions.

Design

All conditions involved the same applicant (a White male in his 20s) who wore the same neutral and professional clothes without any accessories. For the neutral background, we included a bookshelf with books, a file folder, pens, a neutral calendar, and a cup with pens to make the background subtle and realistic. In the Islam affiliation condition, we added three elements: A Quran with the inscription "Al-Quran, Al-Karim" was placed on the bookshelf, and two posters with Islamic lettering were visible on the back wall. In the 2SLGBTQI+ condition, we instead added a framed photo showing the applicant kissing another man on the bookshelf, and a rainbow flag on the wall. We first recorded the neutral condition videos. Those videos were then manipulated with the DaVinci Resolve software to add the unique background elements for the other two conditions. This ensured that the applicant's responses were completely identical in terms of content, tone, and non-verbal behaviors across all conditions. See Appendix B for illustrative screenshots of each condition.

Pre-Test

We pre-tested an initial draft of the video material with 50 students from a German university (28 for affiliation with Islam, 22 for 2SLGBTQI+ membership). Participants were asked to identify the information provided about the applicant in the video (from a selection). The percentage of participants who correctly identified the background information was 57% for the Islam condition and 64% for the 2SLGBTQI+ condition. Based on feedback from participants, the videos were reshot to improve lighting conditions and eye contact. In addition, more neutral objects were added in the background to make the manipulations more subtle and realistic.

Measures

Interview ratings. First, participants rated the answer to each question on a rating scale from 1 = *very weak answer* to 5 = *very good answer*. We used the average rating across all five questions.

Perceived warmth and competence. We used the perceived competence (4 items, $\alpha = .81$, e.g., "I perceive this applicant to be competent") and warmth (4 items, $\alpha = .79$, e.g., "I perceive this applicant to be friendly") measures from the Stereotype Content Scale (Fiske et al., 2002). Items were rated on a 5-point (*not at all-extremely*) scale.

Intrinsic religious orientation. We used three items ($\alpha = .80$) from the Duke University Religion Index by Koenig and Büssing (2010). Participants indicated on a 5-point scale the extent to which statements (e.g., "My religious beliefs are what is really behind my overall lifestyle") applied to them.

Attitude towards homosexuality. We slightly adapted eight items ($\alpha = .84$) from the Attitudes towards Gay Men Scale from Herek (1988). An example item is "Homosexual behavior between two men is just plain wrong." Items were rated on a 5-point (*strongly disagree to strongly agree*) rating scale. In addition, participants provided their own sexual orientation (homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, or other).

Results

The means and standard deviations for the three experimental conditions are presented in Table 1. The experimental groups did not differ regarding age, sex, educational level, or previous interview experience, all F s < 1.29 , all p s $> .28$.

Hypothesis 1 stated that an applicant with background information signaling affiliation with Islam would receive lower interview ratings, perceived warmth, and perceived competence than a candidate with a neutral background. We conducted t -tests for all outcomes. We only found a significant difference for perceived competence, $t(151) = 1.96$, $p = .03$, $d = 0.32$, but none of the other outcomes, all t s < 1.54 , all p s $> .06$. H1c was thus supported, but not H1a or b.

Hypothesis 2 stated that when judging an applicant with background cues signaling affiliation with Islam, intrinsic religious orientation would be negatively related to ratings for the three outcomes. Correlations were significant for all three outcomes: interview ratings, $r(67) = -.33$, $p = .004$, perceived warmth, $r(67) = -.23$, $p = .03$, and competence, $r(67) = -.24$, $p = .03$. H2 was thus supported.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that cues of homosexuality in the background would lead to lower interview ratings, perceived warmth, and perceived competence (vs. a neutral background). We again computed t -tests for all dependent variables. However, none of the comparisons reached significance, all t s < 1.00 , all p s $> .15$. H3 was, therefore, not supported.

Hypothesis 4 stated that people with negative attitudes towards homosexuality would perceive the 2SLGBTQI+ candidate less favorably. However, we only found a significant negative relationship for competence, $r(69) = -.32$, $p = .003$, but not for the other outcomes, all r s $< .06$, all p s $> .30$. This provides only support for H4c, but not H4a or b.¹

¹ We replicated our analyses after removing participants in the Muslim and gay conditions who reported a low probability (i.e., score lower than 3 out of 5) that the candidate was affiliated with Islam ($n = 22$) or homosexual ($n = 11$), but keeping all participants in the control condition. There was no change in the pattern of the results, except for Hypothesis 2b: the correlation between intrinsic religious orientation and perceived warmth was smaller and non-significant, $r(45) = -.17$, $p = .13$, (see Appendix D in the online supplement for additional information).

Discussion

The present study investigated the influence of background cues related to affiliation with Islam and the 2SLGBTQI+ community on interview performance ratings in AVIs. It also explored the role of personal characteristics of the raters, such as intrinsic religious orientation and attitudes towards homosexuality, in shaping these perceptions. Background cues signaling affiliation with Islam led to lower ratings of perceived competence, but no significant effects were observed for interview ratings or perceived warmth. These findings align with previous research highlighting the mixed impact of visual cues in AVIs on perceptions of applicants. The subtlety and realism of the cues may have influenced the outcomes, with participants possibly focusing more on the interview content and applicant's behavior than the background. Interestingly, cues related to homosexuality did not impact any of the three outcomes. This result contradicts some previous research that suggested potential bias against members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community in selection (e.g., Weichselbaumer, 2003), but aligns with recent AVI research (Roulin, Lukacik, et al., 2023). Our findings could be attributed to various factors, including the subtle nature of the background cues, our sample (i.e., mostly young and educated), or the evolving social acceptance of diverse sexual orientations.

Regarding the role played by individual differences, intrinsic religious orientation was negatively related to ratings of applicants with background cues signaling affiliation with Islam. This suggests that individuals with strong intrinsic religious beliefs may exhibit biased perceptions of candidates visibly affiliated with another religion (e.g., Islam). These findings underscore the importance of considering not only applicants' characteristics but also raters' attributes when examining potential bias in selection. Interestingly, none of our participants identified as Muslim, although 6.6% of the German population is Muslim (BAMF, 2021).

In contrast, negative attitudes towards homosexuality were only associated with one of our three outcomes: the 2SLGBTQI+ candidate received lower ratings of competence. Raters'

negative attitudes towards homosexuality influencing specifically perceptions of competence is consistent with past work showing that being gay mostly hurts perceptions of men's competence, but not warmth (Fiske et al., 2002). In addition, attitudes towards homosexuality are multifaceted and complex, which may explain the limited impact on other perceptions.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting our findings. First, the sample size was relatively small, thus limiting statistical power to detect small effects. Additionally, a large number of people left before finishing the study, some of whom dropped out after seeing the first video. It is possible that some people with less favorable views of Muslims or members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community realized what the study might be about (e.g., discrimination of such individuals) and chose to leave in reaction to that. If that is the case, our findings might underestimate the level of bias against Muslim or gay applicants.

Most participants had limited interview experience. Experience could play different roles in the evaluation of candidates with cues in their background: On the one hand, more experienced hiring professionals might pay closer attention to subtle cues, and thus be more prone to biases. On the other hand, more experienced raters might have received training about how to best conduct and evaluate interviews and/or risks of bias, so that their ratings would be less influenced by factors such as background information. Future research with larger and experienced samples would shed more light on the role of interview experience and enhance the generalizability of our results. The study also focused on a German sample, but the effects of AVI background cues may be stronger in cultural contexts where different religious beliefs or sexual orientations are less accepted.

The study employed simulated AVIs, where participants evaluated a candidate following scripted responses. This may not fully capture the complexity of real-world AVIs, with less polished candidate's answers. In addition, we used scripts involving a mix of poor and good responses across questions, whereas past work (e.g., Roulin, Lukacik, et al., 2023)

kept response quality consistent across question. This was done to increase realism and to have room for raters to judge the applicant positively or negatively. That said, some participants might have focused on some of the responses when judging the candidate (i.e., only the best ones or the worst ones). Future work would directly examine how response quality consistency impacts ratings (in AVIs or interviews in general). Although we also used question-level ratings of performance, our ratings were still fairly subjective. Future research could explore whether biases are further reduced when a more structured scoring approach (e.g., behaviorally anchored rating scales) is used.

Additionally, we used the same White male actor for all video responses, which does not fully represent the diversity of applicants in real interviews. For the Islamic affiliation condition, this could have created two effects: Our actor looked stereotypically German, possibly leading some participants to doubt that he was truly Muslim and thus being more lenient in their judgments. Alternatively, some participants might have believed that he was Muslim and, because he belonged to their ethnic/national in-group, this different religious affiliation could have created a “black sheep” effect (Marques et al., 1988) resulting in even harsher ratings. This could have confounded perceptions of Muslims in general vs. possibly radicalized Muslims. However, our choice of a White candidate was also made to avoid race/ethnicity as a confound. For instance, if we had used an Arab-looking Muslim in that condition (and the White one in the control), then we would not have been able to disentangle the religion from the ethnicity effects, which was a problem in some past research (e.g., Di Stasio et al., 2021). Taken together, future research should, therefore, include different actors (male/female, ethnically diverse) to investigate these effects. Another point concerning religious affiliation was our assessment of intrinsic religious orientation. In fact, none of our participants were Muslim themselves so that a) intrinsic religious orientation only covered Christianity or other religions and b) an investigation of possible in-group vs. out-group mechanisms (like in Roulin, Lukacik, et al., 2023, investigation of political affiliation) was

not possible. Therefore, future research could follow a different approach by providing a list of religious affiliations and asking participants to rate how similar they believe their spiritual beliefs are with each group. By doing so, this could act as a measure of affiliation with the target groups. Another possibility would be to include a more direct measure like Islamophobia.

Furthermore, the background cues were intentionally subtle and realistic, which may have mitigated their impact. In practice, the saliency and conspicuousness of background cues could vary, with more visible cues resulting in more biased evaluations. In addition, our design did not allow us to investigate if the effect of applicant religion (e.g., on ratings of competence) was specific to Islam or was about displaying religious affiliations per se. Future research could, therefore, design studies with different conditions with different religious affiliations (e.g., Muslim vs. Christian vs. Jewish) to see if hiring managers react negatively to a specific religion vs. displaying one's religiosity in one's background. Finally, we only examined and partly replicated two possible backgrounds. Future work could re-examine parental status (which Roulin, Lukacik, et al., 2023 examined) or look at other elements (e.g., political or social views).

Conclusion

This study contributes to the growing body of research on bias in technology-mediated interviews by examining the impact of background cues related to Islam and homosexuality in Germany. While some effects were observed, particularly regarding intrinsic religious orientation and competence ratings, the findings suggest that background cues in AVIs may not always lead to substantial bias in interview evaluations. However, given the mixed findings regarding the effects of AVI background on ratings from this study and from Roulin, Lukacik, et al. (2023) and Powell et al. (2023), we recommend that applicants choose a neutral background when completing video interviews. However, future research is needed to

further understand the complexities of bias in AVIs, which is crucial for developing fair and effective personnel selection processes in the digital age.

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Table 1*Mean and Standard Deviations for the Three Dependent Variables Across Experimental Conditions*

	Control (<i>n</i> = 86)		Islam (<i>n</i> = 67)		2SLGBTQI+ (<i>n</i> = 69)	
	<i>M</i>	(<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i>	(<i>SD</i>)	<i>M</i>	(<i>SD</i>)
Interview ratings	3.98	0.56	3.81	0.75	3.93	0.63
Warmth	3.93	0.64	3.80	0.79	3.94	0.62
Competence	3.90	0.64	3.68	0.75	3.80	0.59

Table 2*Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations for each Condition*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Control</i>							
1. Age	27.73	10.31					
2. Gender	0.29	0.46	.23*				
3. Interview ratings	3.98	0.56	-.04	-.25*			
4. Warmth	3.93	0.64	-.17	-.24*	.49**		
5. Competence	3.90	0.64	-.00	-.24*	.75**	.47**	
<i>Islamic affiliation</i>							
1. Age	25.51	6.97					
2. Gender	0.33	0.48	.22				
3. Interview ratings	3.93	0.63	-.39**	-.23			
4. Warmth	3.94	0.62	-.12	-.03	.46**		
5. Competence	3.80	0.59	-.43**	-.25	.78**	.42**	
6. Intrinsic religious orientation	1.84	0.94	.46**	.11	-.28**	-.17	-.18
<i>Homosexuality</i>							
1. Age	25.82	7.64					
2. Gender	0.32	0.47	.06				
3. Interview ratings	3.81	0.75	-.10	.14			
4. Warmth	3.80	0.79	-.31*	.18	.56**		
5. Competence	3.68	0.75	-.21	.09	.68**	.40**	
6. Attitudes towards homosexuality	4.56	0.61	-.42**	-.21	.01	.06	.33**

Note. *N*s = 86, 67, and 69 respectively. Gender was coded 0 = female and 1 = male. For data analysis, we excluded one person who identified as sexually divers.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

