

Impacts of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Prison Record on Food Service Sector Employment Outcomes:

A Mixed-Methods Approach using Data from an In-person Application Audit

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Background

6.7 million adults are under correctional supervision in the US.

Women's incarceration rates increasing greater than men's incarceration rates.

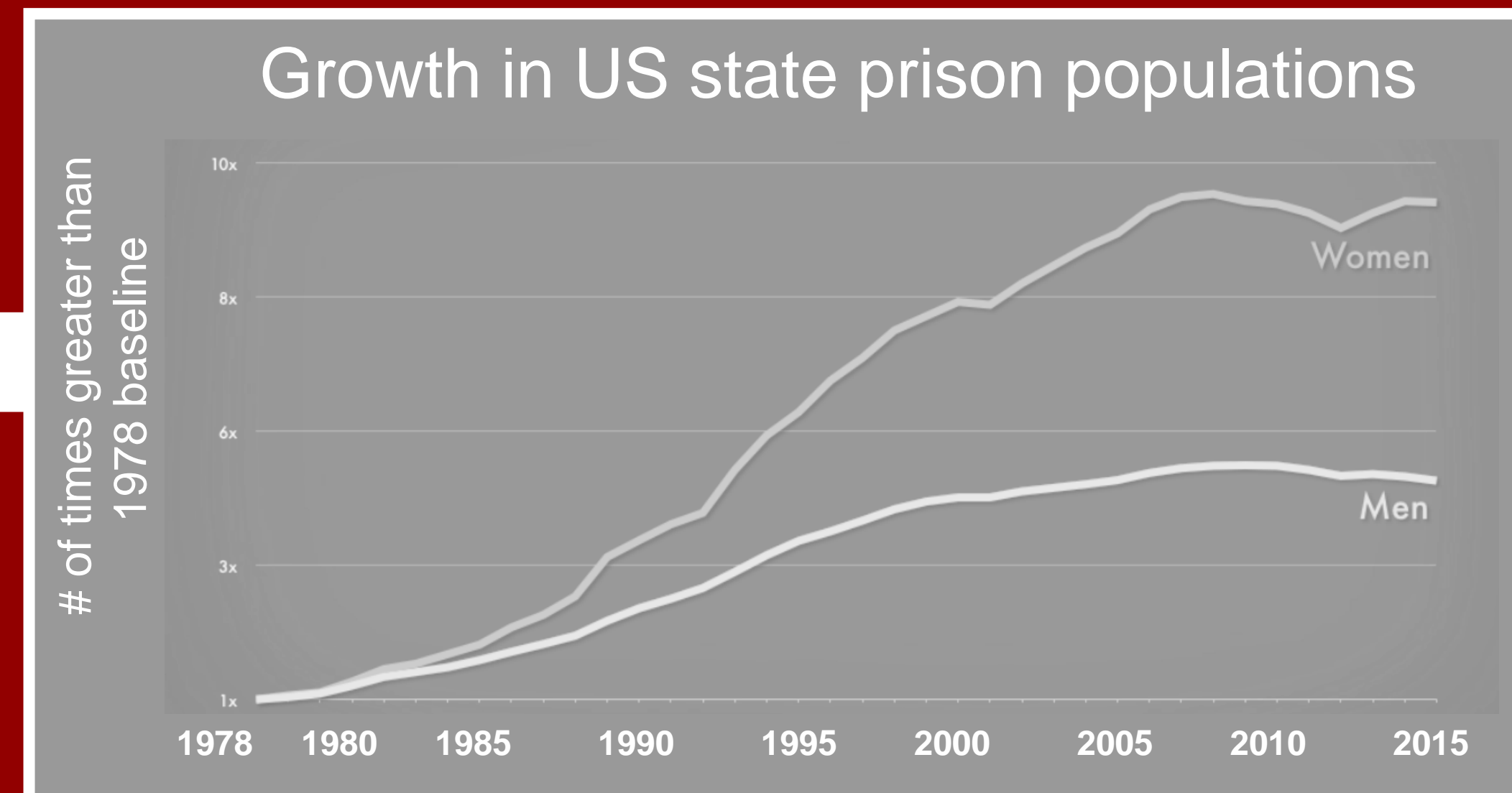
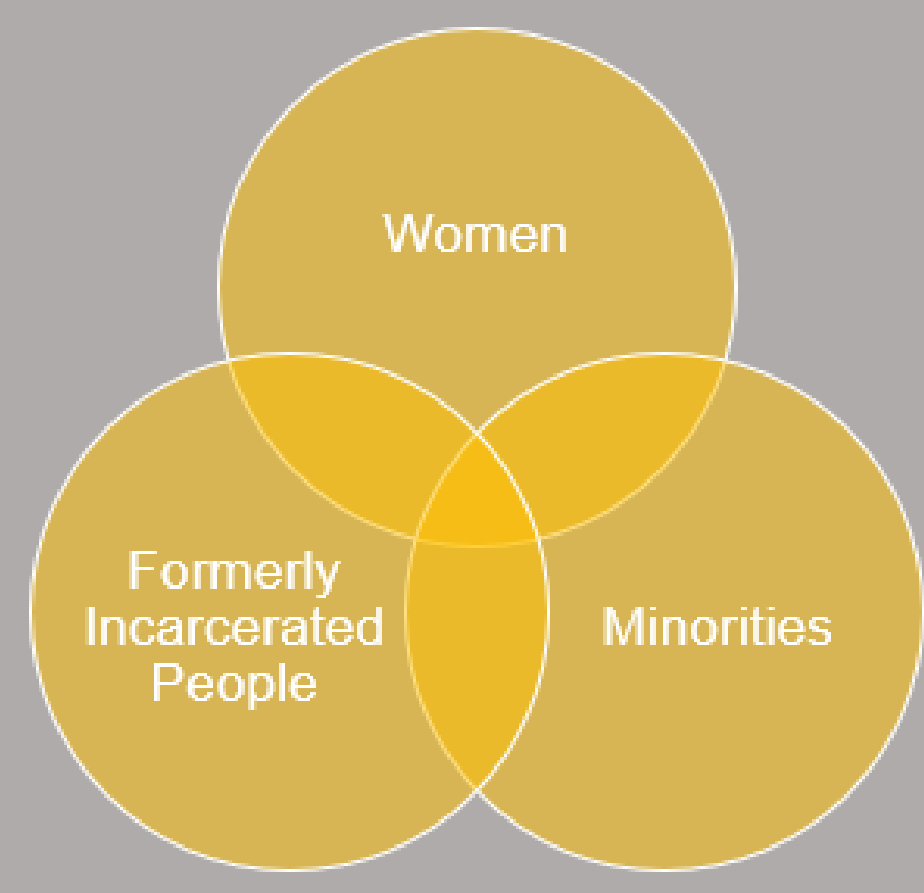


Image from www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/women_overtime.html

Employment discrimination for...



Consequences....

- Employment = more successful reentry
- Incarcerated mothers = family impacts
- Impacts on minority communities
- White applicants with a criminal record fare better in the job market compared to blacks *without* a record

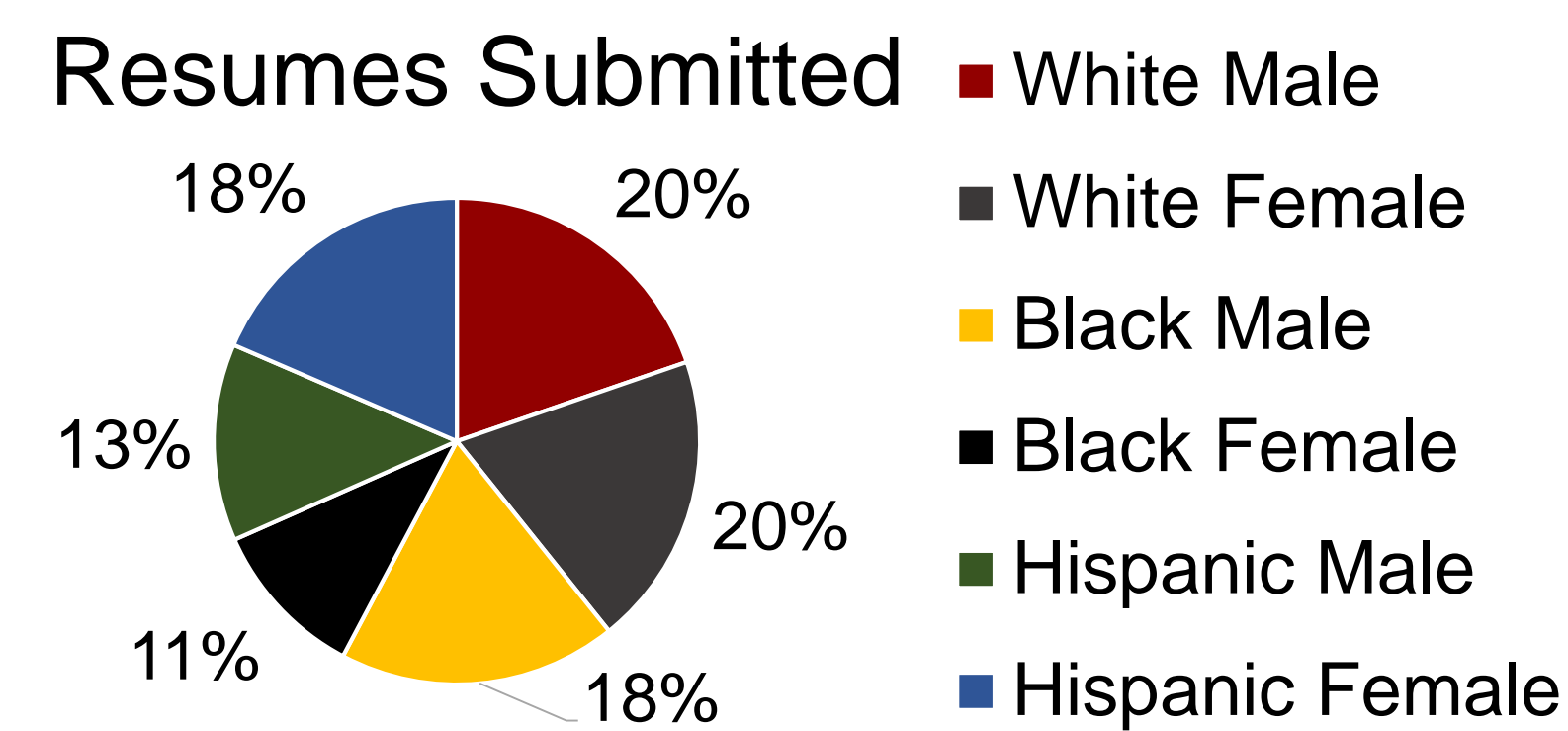
My Questions

How does the interview process for restaurant jobs differ between men and women, across racial and ethnic groups, and for those with and without criminal record?

Does a prison conviction record impact some groups more than others?

Methods

- Jobs found on Craigslist summer of 2012
- Testers given 48 hours to apply to assigned jobs
- 518 applications, 260 included conviction condition
- Variety of positions in food-service (31.5% = server; 26.5% front of house)



12 Testers:
6 Male/ 6 Female
2 White/ 2 Black/ 2 Hispanic

6 pairs of testers
Apply and interview
in-person
60 establishments

Detailed
field notes of
experiences
and
observations

Field notes
were coded
6 themes

Results

Gendered comments

"[He] said something about having 'big hands' and then said 'you know what I mean?'
"She said they needed a fresh, young face behind the bar to attract more attention."

Racial/ethnic comments

"He said he didn't like to stereotype but... everyone that comes into apply looks 'thuggish' and he is all for second chances, but he has to have a balance between the two."

Reactions to felony

"We are not looking to hire any parolees."
"He asked if I worked there or was an inmate."
"Ooh you were a prisoner? Did you beat somebody up? I'm just kidding."

Employment concerns

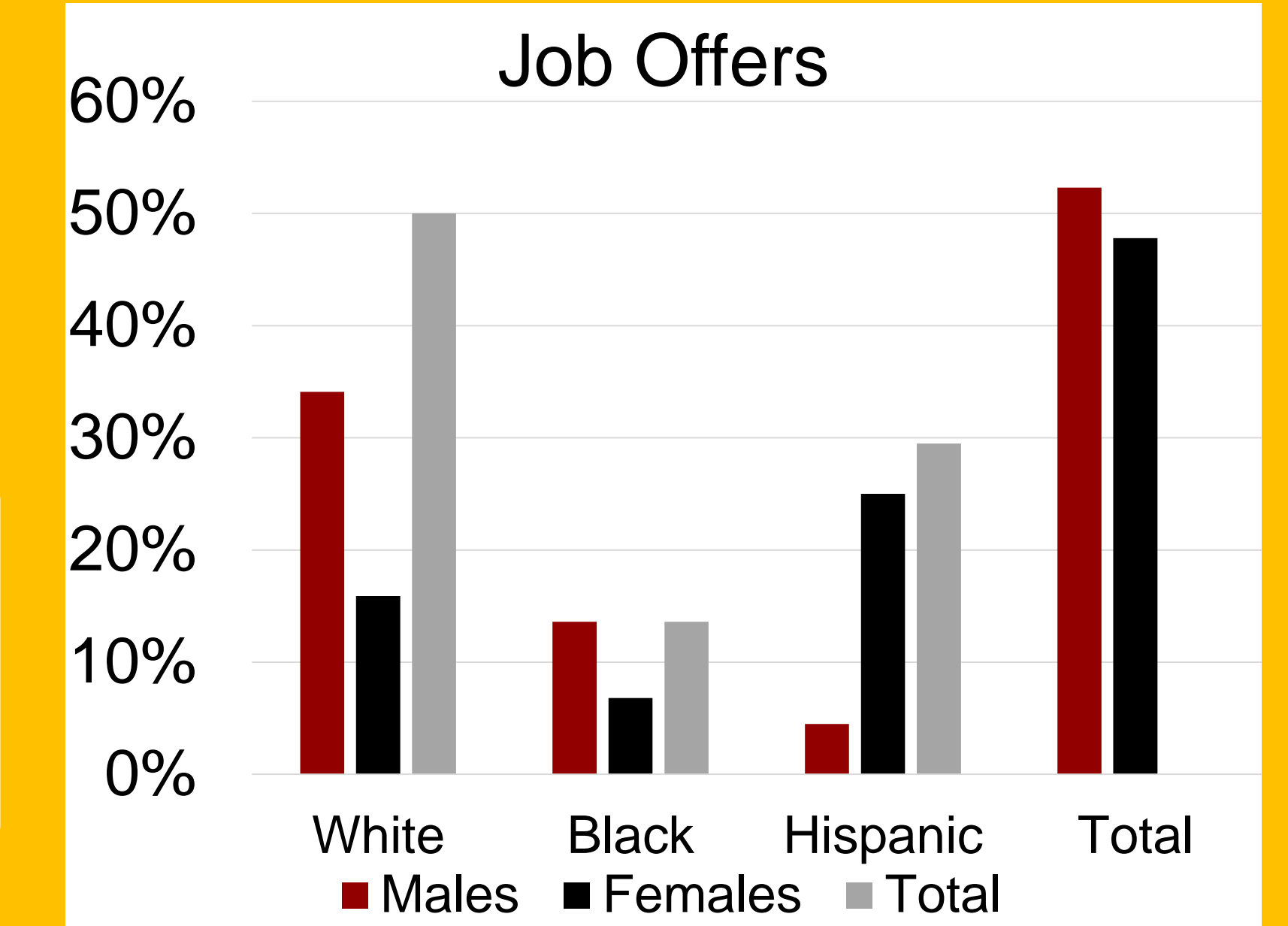
"You aren't going to bail on us are you?"
"He asked what I had been doing while I've been unemployed for the last 8 months."
"Why have you found a job yet?"

Threat/suspicion

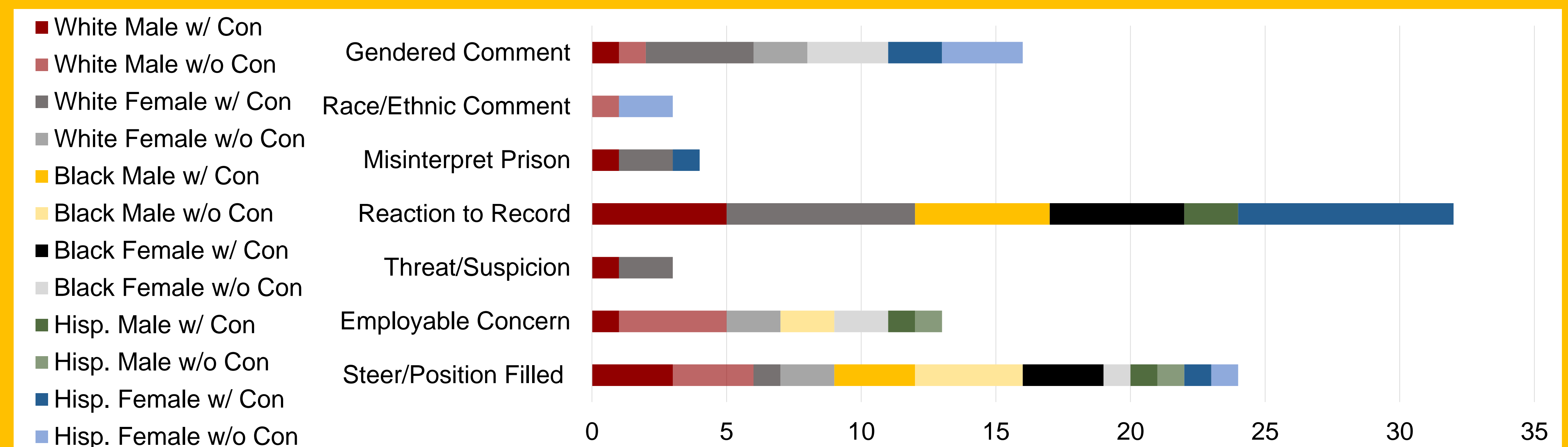
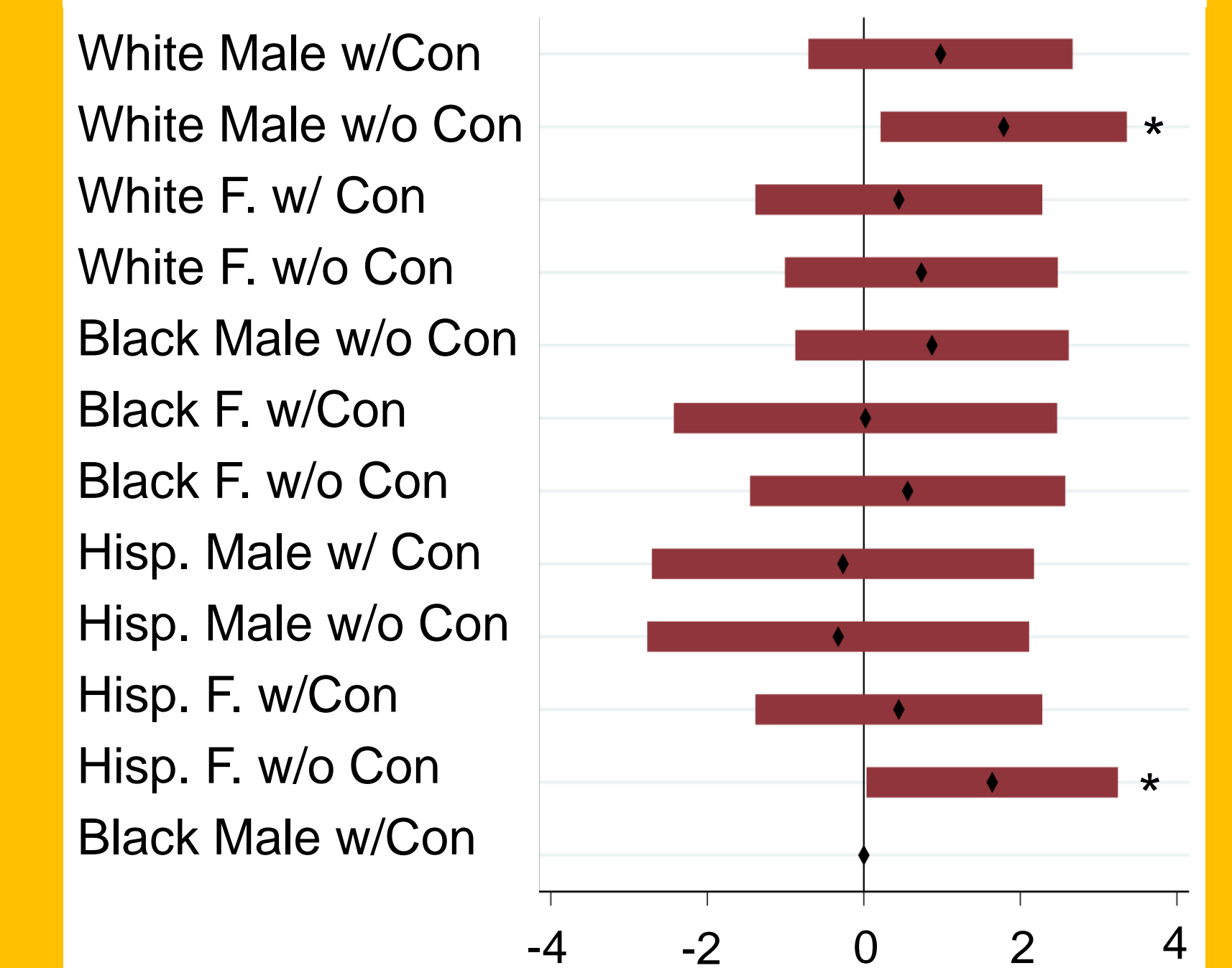
"You don't want to mess with us."
"I do not take bullshit."
"As long as its over now and you're being honest with me, I don't care."

Steering/position filled

"You look more like the server type."
"She said she thought I would be great for cocktail waitressing."
"Sorry, but they 'weren't really hiring'."



Job Offers - Coefficients Plot (results from logistic regression)



Conclusions

- White males received the most job offers, while Hispanic men received the fewest job offers
- Hispanic and white women without a conviction were statistically significantly more likely to receive a job offer compared to black men with a conviction.
- Prison was more often misinterpreted by employers for women applicants, especially white females.
- Female applicants were often treated like sexual objects.
- Black males were more often steered or told a position had been filled.
- Employers were most likely to react to a record for both white and Hispanic female applicants.

Implications

1. Prepare reentering individuals on how to react to crude questions or reactions to their felony record.
2. Offer "project proven" programs which offer applicants a credential to show employers that they know what it takes to be a good employee, regardless of employment history.
3. Make filing discrimination grievances more accessible for vulnerable populations