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Workplace Positive Actions, Trans People's Self-Esteem and Human Resources' Evaluations

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Abstract

This study provides empirical patterns regarding trans people's self-esteem-oriented reflections during observations of positive workplace actions. The case of a 2015 UK workplace guide is utilized to fulfil our aims. We adopt Rawls' political philosophy framework in order to evaluate whether trans people's self-esteem-oriented concepts might be enhanced by policy makers' positive actions. The study does find that trans people's self-esteem and self-respect are enhanced by policy makers' positive actions to promote inclusivity in the workplace. Due to these actions trans people feel more accepted, valued and trusted by the government. We suggest that if a workplace policy is perceived to be recognizing trans people's worth this may be internalized, resulting in positive self-evaluations by trans people. In addition, we present empirical patterns from HR departments which have been aware of the workplace guide. HR officers suggest that the workplace guide informs their strategies, and positively affects the creation of a more inclusive workplace culture, the corporate profiles of their firms and staff organizational behaviours (such as, achieving results, fostering collegiality, reducing complaints) and addresses LGBT business and trans staff-members' needs. We suggest that if employers adopt policy makers' positive workplace policies aiming to increase inclusivity, they may be able to realize positive organizational outcomes in their firms.

Keywords: Workplace Guide, Positive Actions, Self-Esteem; Gender Identity

JEL Classification: K31; J11; D03; H11; H5; I18; J15; I31

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1. Introduction

Transphobia includes negative perceptions based on a person's gender identity (Drydakis, 2017a). Due to transphobia, a high incidence of bias, harassment and exclusion takes place against trans people (Drydakis, 2016; 2017a; b). Trans people experience rejections from their families and violation of human rights which restrict their decisions, progression and wealth (Drydakis 2017a; b; Köllen, 2016; Bevan, 2015; Trevor and Boddy, 2013; Grant et al., 2011). Equality legislations and positive actions aim to ensure that all members in a society can live their lives free from prejudice, thus reducing misery, maximising their potential and promoting self-esteem (Lane, 1982). Rawls (1971) envisioned self-esteem as a public matter and perhaps the most important primary good; a just society should accord self-esteem to all people. This can be done by granting and protecting equal rights in a society that nevertheless tolerates economic inequality (Lane, 1982). This study provides empirical patterns on how trans people reflect on self-esteem-oriented concepts when they observe positive workplace actions from policy makers.

In 2015, the UK Government Equalities Office (GEO, 2015) released a guide for employers on recruiting and retaining trans staff. The GEO guide aims to build awareness and understanding of trans issues by establishing support structures for trans people. The guide aims to help employers comply with the law. It is designed to provide employers with practical advice on the recruitment and retention of trans employees and potential employees. It also sets out good practice in relation to equality monitoring and HR procedures, including inductions and ways to support staff members who are planning to transition. Firms should have to adopt policies in order to challenge transphobia and reduce potential discrimination claims. The UK Government has attempted to create a base for an inclusive workplace in firms to maximize the benefits of an engaged and diverse workforce. Firms should secure fair access to jobs without discrimination in relation to their gender identity. Firms should provide specific contact within the organization for any applicants and employees who would like to discuss their trans status and applicants and employees should be free to identify their gender. The guidance clarifies that a person can change gender with or without medical diagnosis or treatment in order to gain protection against discrimination on the grounds of gender reassignment (GEO, 2015).

In this study, by attracting information from people belonging to the trans community, we aim to assess how trans people react by observing the GEO guide. The theoretical framework of this study is based on Rawls' (1971) political philosophy framework. We suggest that trans people's self-esteem might be enhanced by the Government's inclusive workplace guide. Moreover, we argue that if we envision the GEO guide as a societal positive action aiming to create diverse workplaces, the self-evaluations of trans employees might be strengthened. If the GEO guide is perceived as a recognition of trans people worth, we guess that they might internalize policy

makers' positive actions. Furthermore, if trans people perceive the release of the workplace guide as their community's achievement positive self-esteem outcomes can be expected. By synthesizing the empirical outcomes, we are inclined to accept our considerations.

In what follows, in Section 2, we present trans people's societal, workplace and transitioning experiences in the UK. In Section 3, we provide insights into the UK Equality Act of 2010 and positive workplace actions in relation to trans status. Section 4 presents the study's theoretical considerations. In Section 5, we discuss the importance of self-esteem. In Section 6, we describe the data gathering approach and we introduce the study's questionnaire, while Section 7 presents the outcomes. In Section 8, a discussion and Human Resources (HR) evaluations are offered. Section 9 concludes the study.

2. Trans people's experiences in the UK

In the UK, the Government Equalities Office (GEO, 2018) estimates that there are between 200,000 and 500,000 trans men and trans women. Based on the 2010 UK Equality Act, people do not need to have undergone any specific treatment or surgery to change from their birth sex to their preferred gender (Rundall, 2010; Whittle et al., 2008). People can acquire the preferred sex once they have received a diagnosis of gender dysphoria (Rundall, 2010; Whittle et al., 2008). McNeil et al. (2012) found that 70% of trans people felt that they had lost or missed out on something as a result of being trans including a career, home, childhood and youth, equality and respect, personal development, education, and qualifications. The study found that 52% had experienced problems with work due to being trans; the most common problems were harassment and/or discrimination, being unfairly turned down for a job, and not having applied for a job due to fears of harassment and discrimination. Worryingly, the study presented that 84% of trans people had thought about ending their lives at some point.

The GEO (2018) measured that 20% of trans people were likely to have left education once they had completed secondary education compared to 13% of cisgender people. This pattern has negatively affected higher education rates, employment levels and annual income within the transgender community. Thirty-five percent of trans people were found to have an undergraduate degree or higher compared to 51% of cisgender people, while 63% were less likely to have had a paid job in the 12 months preceding the study than cisgender respondents (83%). Additionally, 60% of trans people were likely to earn less than £20,000 per annum in comparison to 45% of cisgender people. In addition, the study found that trans people were less satisfied with their lives, scoring their life satisfaction level on average 5.40 out of 10, than cisgender people, who scored their life satisfaction level on average 6.67 out of 10. Of particular concern is that 67% of trans people said that they avoided being open about their gender identity for fear of a negative reaction from others.

Hudson-Sharp and Metcalf (2016) suggested that there is extensive workplace transphobia. Trans employees experience negative treatments and are subject to aggressive behaviours which may be more frequent than other rates of mistreatment related to sexual orientation. Ozturk and Tatli (2016) evaluated that trans staff with significant education levels and working experience are turned down for jobs after face-to-face interviews. In addition, the study suggested that trans employees have offers withdrawn after disclosing their intention to transition.

Regardless of trans people's struggles due to societal biases, transitioning is suggested to be a liberating process that positively affects their well-being. McNeil et al. (2012) found that 81% of trans people felt that they had gained confidence, self-expression and resilience as a result of being trans. Similarly, Drydakis (2017a; 2017b) found that transitioning improved trans people's mental health, life and job satisfaction. These relations can be seen in what Drydakis (2017b) called the Trans Curve, which presents the improvements in mental health and life and job satisfaction as trans people change their outward appearance to match their gender identity. Drydakis (2017a) evaluated that a range of mental health indicators such as positivity towards life, the ability to cope with stress, and optimism about the future are all positively affected by transitioning. The same holds for self-esteem, social relationships, communication and negotiation skills (Drydakis, 2017a).

3. The UK Equality Act of 2010 and positive workplace actions

Based on the 2010 Equality Act, gender reassignment is a protected characteristic. Chapter 1, Section 7 of the 2010 Equality Act states that: *"A person has the protected characteristic of gender reassignment if the person is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex"*. According to Marvell et al. (2017), stakeholders, firms and employees believe that the 2010 Equality Act provides the bare minimum of protection and excludes many categories including intersex and non-binary people. These trans subcategories are left vulnerable to negative treatment in the workplace (Drydakis, 2017b).

Marvell et al. (2017) revealed that the 2010 Equality Act provides insufficient guidance for firms to enable them to adopt the best strategy to cope and facilitate the needs of trans persons. In general, the literature states that there is a lack of understanding regarding trans issues amongst HR departments and managers (Marvell et al., 2017). Trans issues are often combined with sexual orientation with limited thought as to what the trans umbrella might mean (Drydakis, 2017b). For instance, the Total Jobs (2016) report presented that most firms have gender anti-discrimination policies (63%) and no tolerance to bullying (50%) but only a few mention gender identity (23%). Equaliteach (2014) suggested that 68% of managers surveyed felt that there was a gap between trans policies and practice. An explanation for this pattern was the light touch way in which policies

are disseminated and motivated and the lack of awareness amongst cisgender colleagues. Marvell et al. (2017) evaluated that organizational policies can provide managers and staff with a framework to guide their actions and behaviours towards trans issues.

Positive actions in the UK, also known as affirmative action in the US, occur when a firm adopts policies to make sure that there is no biased treatment in employment or education and instead equal opportunities exist (Holzer and Neumark, 2000). Positive actions are focused on supporting minorities to overcome the effects of historical or institutional discrimination or to promote diversity in business and public sector organizations. There is evidence suggesting that positive actions improve employment opportunities for minority population groups (Holzer and Neumark, 2000). Studies have also found that employees who believe their firms support positive actions most strongly consider their firm to be fair and to provide equal chances in career development (Parker et al., 1997).

The 2010 Equality Act allows positive action with respect to employment. Section 158 of the EA allows, but does not require, any action to be taken to support those with a protected characteristic, including gender reassignment, as long as it is a proportionate means (Jarrett, 2011). Such an action might include training to enable people to gain employment in sectors where the participation of minority groups is disproportionately low (Archibong and Sharps, 2013). Section 159 of the 2010 Equality Act also permits, but does not require, an employer to take a protected characteristic into account when deciding whom to recruit or promote in scenarios where people having the protected characteristic are at a disadvantage or are underrepresented (Jarrett, 2011). These positive actions can be taken only where the applicants are equally qualified. Each action should depend on the seriousness of the relevant disadvantage, the under-representation, the extremity of need and the availability of other means of countering them (Jarrett, 2011). However, we should highlight that positive discrimination such as quotas is unlawful in the UK (Archibong and Sharps, 2013).

Regardless of the antidiscrimination legislation, there are gaps between equality policies and practices within organizations (Archibong and Sharps, 2013). As presented, trans people experience severe challenges (Drydakis, 2016; 2017a; 2017b) and therefore policy makers and firms should work in a proactive way in order to eradicate discriminatory practices. Given the fact that trans people continue to experience discrimination the need for positive action persists (Drydakis, 2017a; b). We suggest that the GEO workplace guide aims to offer a framework for practical advice and provides positive actions for trans people.

4. Rawls, positive actions and trans people's self-esteem

We adopt Rawls' (1971) political philosophy framework in order to evaluate whether trans people's self-esteem-oriented concepts might be enhanced by policy makers' positive actions. Rawls (1971) envisioned self-esteem as perhaps the most important social primary good and suggested that societies should be organized in a way that people's self-esteem is secured (Zink, 2011). Rawls (1971) argued that self-esteem is an entitlement of personhood and should be equated with self-respect. Thomas (1978) suggested that self-respect is understood as the sense of worth that is grounded in the conviction that one deserves to be treated fairly in virtue of the fact that one is a person. In contrast, for Deigh (1983) self-esteem means that if one's spirit is high because they believe that they made or will make something of themselves, they have been or will be successful in their life pursuits.

Rawls (1971) defined self-respect and self-esteem as a person's sense of their own value and confidence in their ability to fulfil their aim, subject to their power (Rawls, 1971). People begin to build self-evaluations through "other's" recognition of their worth, which in turn give them the confidence to organize and undertake a life plan (Thomas, 1978). In this context, "other's" refers to policy makers, employers and workplace unions. If a person's characteristics and/or status is not approved by others, this might leave their self-evaluations weak and underdeveloped. Policy makers should support people's self-evaluations by establishing an equality base. This can be achieved by distributing rights and liberties (Zink, 2011). Rawls (1971) suggested that equality initiatives are to the greatest benefits of the least advantaged. Policy makers can grant rights, ban discriminatory practices and provide a base for equal opportunities for minority groups.

In this study, we suggest that both self-esteem and self-respect-oriented outcomes for trans people might be enhanced whenever policy makers work to promote socioeconomic equality through workplace positive actions. Lack of equality might be detrimental to self-esteem among minority people. Based on the Stress-Buffering mechanism, social aid can positively affect psychological states (Cohen and Wills, 1985). The notion that policy makers will provide necessary resources may bolster minority people's perceived ability to cope with challenges and demand, thus changing the appraisal of a difficult situation and reducing its adverse experiences and evaluations. Moreover, based on the Main Effect mechanism (Cohen, 1988) social support can promote positive psychological states such a self-worth, identity, purpose, and well-being. Given these theoretical considerations we suggest that trans people's psychological states can be positively affected by supportive actions from policy makers. Studies have found that societal discrimination, perceived discrimination, stereotypes, power relations and disapprovals negatively affect people's self-evaluations (Schmitt et al., 2014; Wirth and Williams, 2009).

The provision of rights implies that each person is important and capable not only of governing themselves but of participating in the government of their society (Lane, 1982; Rawls, 1971). People with similar abilities and ambitions should have similar life chances and policy makers should provide all people with roughly equal access to educational and employment opportunities (Zink, 2011; Rawls, 1971). We suggest that the GEO workplace guide aims to secure that trans people's self-expressions are not constrained in ways that could cause them doubt about their values and the values of their life plan, which will undermine their self-evaluations.

For Lane (1982), the right to work is the first right. The right to work entails self-esteem because it is the right of a person to consider themselves as a functioning member of society. Rawls (1971) suggested that the opportunity for meaningful work is fundamental to people's self-esteem. In addition, Arneson (1987) characterized meaningful work as linked to workplace democracy, which includes the features of equality and participation. If people lack access to meaningful work, their self-evaluation may be damaged (Arneson, 1987). We suggest that the GEO workplace guide aims to ensure that fair treatment for trans people is decided by the principle of justice. Hence, if justice is practiced a trans person should not consider themselves as inferior. Even in an economically unequal society, awarding equal rights and liberties will provide all with equal bases for self-esteem (Lane, 1982; Rawls, 1971).

Rawls (1971) believed that in order for people to achieve some self-esteem they should realize success while pursuing goals they value (Marsh et al., 1992). If for trans people the development of the workplace guide is perceived as an achievement of the trans community, we may anticipate positive reflections in their self-esteem. Frequently, progress on trans rights relates to the outcomes of trans people's strategic interactions with policy makers. The accomplishment of such goals might positively affect trans people's self-esteem. We suggest that trans people might receive attention, honour and respect as a result of policy makers' positive actions aiming to support their workplace opportunities.

5. The importance of self-esteem

Rawls (1971) suggested that without self-esteem nothing may seem worth doing, or if some things have value for people, they lack the will to strive to them (Lyle, 2015). People with higher self-esteem are more satisfied with their lives, have fewer interpersonal problems, achieve at a higher and more consistent level, and are less susceptible to psychological problems and physical illness than those with lower self-esteem (Lyle, 2015; Fernandez-Gonzalez et al., 2015; Karatepe and Demir, 2014; World Health Organization, 2014; Carter and Garber, 2011; Avison and McAlpine, 1992; Rosenberg and Pearlin, 1978; Rosenberg, 1965).

Self-esteem has a significant influence on employees' self-efficacy and subjective well-being. Self-esteem prospectively predicts employment status, occupational status, and income across several waves of data, whereas these work-related outcomes do not prospectively predict self-esteem (Orth et al., 2012; Salmela-Aro et al., 2007). Several studies point out that increasing self-esteem improves job performance, job satisfaction and organizational performance (Ferris et al., 2014; Chang et al., 2012; Ferris et al., 2010; Sommer and Baumeister, 2002; Judge and Bono, 2001). Moreover, self-esteem levels affect employees' work skills, ability to cope with stress, ability to form relationships on the job and level of dynamic behaviour (Judge et al., 2012; Singh and Dubey, 2011; Judge et al., 2003).

Discrimination and inequalities are found to contribute to lower self-esteem and associated higher internalizing disorders (Kira et al., 2012; Kaufman, 2009). They can create a sense of powerlessness as they imply a lack of control over important life outcomes and exclusion from positions of power (Sidanius and Pratto, 1999; Verkuyten, and Nekuee, 1999). Unequal treatments can harm psychological well-being by making it hard for people to find a job or apartment, undermining learning in educational settings, or depriving people of adequate health care (Schmitt et al., 2014). In addition, routine discrimination can become a chronic stressor that may erode people's protective resources and increase vulnerability to physical illness (Gee 2002; Inzlicht et al., 2006). Schmitt et al. (2014) found that perceived discrimination increases people's depression anxiety, psychological distress and reduces self-esteem and life satisfaction. Perceived discrimination can undermine psychological and physical well-being by threatening the fulfilment of needs for inclusion and acceptance (Wirth and Williams, 2009; Pascoe and Smart Richman, 2009; Williams and Mohammed, 2009; Pascoe and Smart Richman, 2009).

The studies presented suggest that self-esteem makes people happy while societal biases negatively impact on well-being indicators. Given the aforementioned frameworks, one could suggest that a benevolent policy maker aiming to reduce biased treatments and increase inclusivity might be able to enhance self-esteem and well-being evaluations within minority population groups.

6. Data gathering and questionnaire

Between 2013 and 2015, academics at Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) were invited to provide their expertise on trans people's workplace outcomes to the GEO and to Inclusive Employers during the preparation of the GEO workplace guide. Inclusive Employers is the UK's first and leading membership organization for employers looking to build inclusive workplaces. In 2018, i.e. three years after the release of the GEO workplace guide, ARU academics initiated a research project in order to assess whether the GEO workplace guide enhances trans people's self-esteem-oriented evaluation. The project received ethics approval from the Faculty's ethics panel

and a questionnaire was forwarded to 25 trans unions, which were randomly selected through the TransUnite website. TransUnite is a comprehensive resource for people in the UK searching for support in the trans community. An envelope with 50 questionnaires was posted to each union. Union gatekeepers were kindly asked to distribute the questionnaires to their members during their weekly or monthly meetings. Instructions were provided suggesting the reply forms to be returned to the research team. Prepaid envelopes were provided. The participant information sheet and the participant information consent form invited trans people to take part in the survey. To participate, respondents were instructed to take the survey and return the assent form to the gatekeeper of the union.

The survey asked those who belong to the trans community to participate in the survey. In the questionnaire (Appendix), we utilized the GEO's workplace guides terminology on trans statuses and the various terms were offered in footnotes. The questionnaire asked whether participants were identified as trans women, trans men, non-binary people, or belonged to another trans category. The questionnaire asked whether the participants have undergone sex reassignment surgery and whether they have acquired a Gender Recognition Certificate. A certificate issued under the Gender Recognition Act which enables trans people to be legally recognised in their acquired gender. Basic demographic questions were also included to capture participants' age and working status.

In the main questionnaire, we included an opening statement in order to inform the participants on the nature of this survey (Appendix). The opening statement reads: *"In 2015, the UK Government (Government Equalities Office) released a workplace guide which is specifically aimed at employers, to help them recruit and retain trans employees. The guide includes practical advice, suggestions and ideas which are a useful tool for the managers of trans staff and for trans staff themselves. The guide aims to support employers to be trans-friendly, and the suggestions are for anyone in a firm who wants to build their awareness and knowledge of trans issues. The Government anticipates that the guide will enable employers to respond fully and confidently to specific issues that impact on trans people, be they employees or potential employees with a hope to create a more inclusive culture for all staff. Our survey is designed to measure what you are thinking at this moment after considering the workplace guide. Please reflect on ways that you believe that the workplace guide has made, makes or will make a difference to you. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself at the moment relative to how things were before the release of the guide."*

To create the questionnaire, seminal scales on the subject matter were synthesized and extended (Boyle et al., 2015; Heatherton and Polivy, 1991; Tafarodi and Swann, 1995; Harter and Pike, 1984; Rosenberg, 1965). As observed in Table 1, to capture whether trans people believe that

the release of the workplace guide makes them experience greater self-esteem and self-respect we included both direct (Statements nos. 8 and 9) and indirect items (Statements nos. 10 to 17). The indirect items, which form one's self-esteem and self-respect, capture patterns relating to confidence, self-growth, pride, optimism, etc. (Statements nos. 16 to 17). Moreover, we included items to capture whether trans people believe that the release of the workplace guide will affect their future employment (Statements nos. 18 to 20). Items were also added to measure whether the release of the workplace guide means that trans people believe they can more actively practice their gender identity (Statements nos. 5 to 7). Finally, we included items to capture whether trans people believe that the Government accepts and values them more given the release of the workplace guide (Statements nos. 1 to 4). The format of a typical ordered-level Likert (1932) scale was utilized to code the answers (0 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree). Summing the scores for the 20 answers brings a score ranging from 0 to 80. The higher the score, the higher the level of agreement in the listed items will be.

[Table 1]

The questionnaire formed a scale, which consists of the 20 items presented, aiming to capture, in general, how minority people reflect when they observe positive workplace actions. As described, the scale consists of heterogeneous items capturing a variety of reflections. Given the theoretical framework of our study and the relationships presented, we suggest that each item might relate to minority people's self-evaluation measurements. The Cronbach's alpha analysis presented in the next section assesses the reliability of our summative rating scale. It is anticipated that one might be interested to observe only the direct self-esteem evaluations or only the indirect evaluations. In addition, one might have an interest in observing how people predict workplace experiences, etc.

Given the nature of the questionnaire, we suggest that the level of correlation between some of the items will be significant. In particular, this might be the case for items capturing self-esteem, self-respect and self-worth. A 20 x 20 items correlation matrix - which is presented in the next section - provides further insights. As previously mentioned, the concepts of self-esteem and self-respect are debatable in the literature. For Rawls (1971), the two concepts are similar; for other authors, however, there are conceptual differences between them (Deigh, 1983; Thomas, 1978). Meanwhile, in the empirical literature it is suggested that self-respect and self-worth shape self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965). In our study, we have included a direct question for each concept in order to observe potential differences in the magnitude of the measurable pattern.

Before presenting the study's outcomes, it is important to highlight that our research should be considered as an exploratory one as we aim to propose a research design. The patterns to be

presented should be read with extreme caution as our data gathering does not intend to offer conclusive information regarding the research objectives of this study.

7. Outcomes

We received completed questionnaires from six trans unions (a trans union correspondence rate of 24%). In Table 1, we observe that the sample consists of 97 observations where 53.6% are from trans women, 27.8% are from trans men, 5.1% are from non-binary people and 13.4% are from people belonging to other trans categories. Based on the answers we received, the other trans categories in our sample include people self-identified as cross-dressers, intersex and queer. The mean age is 34.7 years. Approximately 10.3% of the respondents have undergone sex reassignment surgery and 23.7% have acquired a Gender Recognition Certificate. Employed people account for 59.7% and the rest are either unemployed (23.7%) or inactive (16.4%). Although our sample is very small and definitely not representative, it seems that the employment rate for trans people is lower compared to the country's average. In 2018, the employment rate in the UK was 75.7% and the unemployment rate was 4.2% (Office for National Statistics, 2018).

In Table 1, we present the mean values of the 20 items. Firstly, we observe that only 16.4% of the participants were aware of the GEO guide. The mean value for the statement 'by considering the release of the workplace guide I feel that the Government values me more' lies between 'agree' and 'strongly agree', or 3.02. In addition, the mean value for the statement '...I experience greater self-esteem' lies between 'neither agree nor disagree' and 'agree', or 2.48. Relevant patterns are observed for the statements '...I feel more proud of myself'. However, the mean value for the statement '...I feel that I will be treated more equally at work' lies between 'disagree' and 'neither agree nor disagree', or 1.63. Comparable qualitative patterns are observed for the statement '...I feel that I will be treated more equally when seeking a job'.

In Table 2, we present the scale's Cronbach's alpha analysis. The alpha coefficient is 0.85, suggesting internal consistency. Table 3 offers the correlation matrix which is used to determine whether the scale is correlated with each of the variables used in this study. The meaningful and statistically significant correlations suggest that trans women have a higher scale performance ($r=0.2$, $p<0.05$) while non-binary people have a lower scale performance ($r=-0.28$, $p<0.01$). That is, trans women agree more with the study's statements while non-binary people agree less with the study's statements.

[Table 2]

[Table 3]

In Table 4, we present the proportions for each of the 20 statements. The most frequent response for the statement 'by considering the release of the workplace guide I experience greater

self-esteem' is 'agree' at 36.08%. The same qualitative pattern holds for a few cases such as, '...I experience greater self-respect' and '...I feel that the Government values me more'. In some cases, the 'neither agree nor disagree' response dominates the outcomes. For instance, this is the case for the statement '...I feel more optimistic about the future' and '...I feel that I will be treated more equally when seeking a job'. In those two cases, the 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' responses are more frequent than the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses. The last line of Table 4 indicates the aggregate proportions; in total, the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses exceed the rest options. It is also evident that the most frequent response is 'agree'.

[Table 4]

In Table 5, we present the 20 x 20 items correlation matrix. A few statistically significant coefficients are estimated. For instance, there is a positive correlation between 'by considering the release of the workplace guide I feel that the Government appreciates me more' and '...I experience greater self-esteem' ($r=0.30$, $p<0.01$). Moreover, there is a positive correlation between '...I experience greater self-esteem' and '...I experience greater self-respect' ($r=0.21$, $p<0.01$). Moreover, a positive correlation between '...I feel that the Government trusts me more' and '...I feel that I will be treated more equally at work' ($r=0.23$, $p<0.05$) is estimated.

[Table 5]

Table 6 presents estimations of the scale's determinants. The estimations suggest that trans women ($b=16.89$, $p<0.01$), trans men ($b=14.23$, $p<0.01$), and all the other trans categories in this sample ($b=12.19$, $p<0.05$) agree more with the study's statements in comparison to the non-binary persons. Further, it is estimated that those who have undertaken sex reassignment surgery agree less with the study's statements than those who have not undertaken sex reassignment surgery ($b=-7.77$, $p<0.10$). Finally, it is evident that unemployed people agree more with the study's statements than inactive people ($b=5.65$, $p<3.17$).

[Table 6]

8. Discussion

8.1 Outcomes evaluation

The aim of this exploratory study was to quantify how trans people reflect when they observe positive workplace actions from policy makers. The main aim was to focus on self-esteem related concepts. We utilized the case of the 2015 GEO workplace guide designed to support trans people's workplace outcomes. By constructing a new scale and working with trans unions and trans participants, we have attempted to capture a variety of self-esteem-oriented reflections. The study utilized Rawls' (1971) political philosophy concepts of rights, policy makers' actions and people's self-esteem. Based on the outcomes of our survey more trans people agreed that observing the GEO

guide encouraged greater self-esteem and self-respect. Rawls (1971) envisioned self-esteem and self-respect as quite similar concepts. The items in the scale also enabled us to assess the self-esteem pattern in an indirect way. The patterns suggested that more people agreed that they felt more positive, confident and secure by considering the Government's positive actions. These items form a person's self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965).

In this survey, we hypothesized that trans people's self-esteem might be enhanced if policy makers adopt positive workplace actions to promote inclusivity. We suggested that if we envision the GEO guide as a societal action aiming to establish an equality base, trans people's self-evaluations might be strengthened. The estimated patterns might support the aforementioned suggestions. If the GEO guide is perceived by the trans community as a recognition of their worth they might internalize the positive action adding to their self-esteem. The outcomes demonstrate that trans people believe that the GEO guide made them feel more accepted, appreciated, trusted and valued by the Government. Studies also suggest that a lack of equality and disapprovals negatively affect people's self-evaluations (Schmitt et al., 2014; Wirth and Williams, 2009). Our patterns might suggest that positive governmental actions positively impact on trans people's self-assessments because these are perceived to be actions aiming to minimize transphobia in society. Their self-esteem might be positively affected whenever they receive attention and respect from policy makers. In addition, if trans people perceive the release of the workplace guide as an achievement of the trans community, we can anticipate positive self-esteem enhancements.

The estimates suggested that there is heterogeneity in the responses among trans groups with trans women agreeing more with the study's statements. It might be of interest to evaluate how different trans groups internalize policy makers' positive actions and the corresponding reflections on self-evaluations. This requires a qualitative oriented research for an in-depth understanding of the assigned pattern. The same holds for the outcome suggesting that trans people not having undergone gender reassignment surgery agree more with the study's statements compared to those who have not. One might suggest that, having undertaken gender reassignment surgery, an individual has completed, in a sense, the transition and thus they agree less with the statements in the questionnaire, and/or value the importance of the GEO guide to a lesser degree. In addition, unemployed people were found to be more likely to agree with the study's statements compared to inactive people. One could argue that the workplace guide is more important for those looking for a job than for those who do not belong in the labour force. Therefore, for unemployed people the workplace guide might have a direct positive effect on their self-reflections.

Of further importance was the outcome that very few trans people were aware of the GEO guide. This might highlight that the Government's positive action has not been effectively communicated. If this is the case, trans unions and individuals might not have made good use of the

guide's potential. Dissemination and utilization of positive workplace actions should be part of the agenda for policy makers. In addition, we have to refer to the large amount of trans people who were not optimistic that the GEO guide will positively affect their workplace experiences in the future. Forty one percent of the participants either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that, due to the GEO guide, they will be treated more equally at work. Although trans people agree the release of the workplace guide demonstrates that the Government values them more and experience greater self-esteem, a significant amount of trans people were pessimistic about the actual impact of the positive action. Whether a positive action will bring outcomes is a government's big challenge. Social dialogue between policy makers, unions and employers might be required for coordinated workplace actions to integrate vulnerable population groups (Drydakis et al., 2017).

The outcomes of this study should be interpreted with caution. This study did not measure trans people's self-esteem levels in general, but rather how trans people reflected on self-esteem indicators by observing positive workplace actions by the Government. The study was designed to assess how a specific action might reflect on feelings and self-evaluations. In addition, only limited observations were collected. One should consider this feature before offering generalizations. A new research should attempt to attract more observations. We expect also that a greater awareness of the guide's existence might alter the outcomes.

Furthermore, the patterns have been driven by the 20 items. A new survey could experiment with new additions and potential deletions of the existing statements. Moreover, in the literature, the 'neither agree nor disagree' response option is subject to debate. In this study, 32% of the participants chose it as their belief which is perceived to be a significant portion. One might consider the inclusion of just the four standard options. The new patterns will shed light on those cases where people were either struggling to choose between agree and disagree, did not have a strong opinion or wanted to avoid a clear answer. In this study, we suggested that the 'neither agree nor disagree' option response is a respectful opinion which encouraged its inclusion as an option. Given the aforementioned issues, our study should be treated as a primarily exploratory one aiming to propose an approach to access the study's objectives.

8.2 *HR evaluations*

The outcomes of this study provided us with patterns in relation to trans people's self-esteem-oriented reflections during observations of the GEO workplace guide. In this study a final matter of interest was raised to quantify how HR operations have been affected by the GEO workplace guide and to consider whether Rawls' (1971) fairness arguments could impact on firms and HR environments. We conducted a parallel survey targeting firms and organizations which hold

an Inclusive Employers membership. We suggested that the affiliated firms and organisations should have been aware of the GEO workplace guide and observed its narratives. A questionnaire was forwarded to 30 HR departments across the UK which were randomly selected through the Inclusive Employers membership website. The questionnaire consisted of 20 items and the alpha coefficient was 0.75, suggesting internal consistency. We received answers from twelve HR departments. The sample represented the public, private and third sectors. It could be the case that only those firms/organizations which observed and implemented the guide, and/or had experiences with trans employees, and/or were proactive regarding LGBT policies took part in the survey. For all these reasons the patterns should not be interpreted as representative.

In Table 5 it is observed that in a range of questions HR officers agreed that observing and actively implementing the GEO workplace guide recommendation (i) assisted them in creating a more inclusive workplace culture (58.3%), (ii) positively affected their corporate profile (66.6%), (iii) enhanced LGBT union activity in the firm/organization (58.3%), (iv) positively affected staff organizational behaviours (50%), (v) enabled them to create a diverse way of thinking (41.6%), (vi) addressed LGBT business and HR needs (58.3%), (vii) informed HR strategies (41.6%), and (viii) helped them to deal with trans staff-members' needs (41.6%).

Given the assigned patterns one can suggest that when employers utilise policy makers' positive workplace policies aiming to increase inclusivity, they may be able to realize positive organizational outcomes in their firms. The results are in line with existing literature. Barbulescu and Bidwell (2013) found that acceptance of LGBT employees can increase a firm's strategic benefits. Liddle et al. (2004) found that inclusive workplace environments can positively affect employee recruitment, productivity, stress and commitment. Johnson and Cooper (2015) found that acceptance of secluded employees can lead to higher productivity and employee retention. Hossain et al. (2019) found that laws prohibiting discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation and gender identity can spur innovation, which can ultimately lead to higher firm performance. Forbes Insights (2011) found that workforce diversity can encourage a variety of perspectives and approaches, which may positively affect innovation. Shan et al. (2016) and Wang and Schwarz (2010) found that firms with a higher degree of corporate sexual equality have higher stock returns and market valuations. In addition, studies have found that firms which adopt formal written statements barring biases based on gender identity, implement inclusive HR practices in relation to recruiting and retaining LGBT people, and adopt a framework to provide trans-inclusive health-oriented benefits experience positive organizational outcomes in relation to trans employees' mental well-being, interaction with colleagues and job satisfaction (Webster et al., 2018; Dwertmann et al., 2016; Ruggs et al., 2015; Rabelo and Cortina, 2014; Badgett et al., 2013).

Since the main focus of this study was measuring trans people's self-esteem reflections during observations of the GEO workplace guide we suggest that new HR-oriented research is needed in order to measure the impact of the workplace guide on a variety of workplace and organizational outcomes. A new study should employ a greater number of HR departments and consider how organizational outcomes are moderated by awareness and the degree of implementation of the GEO workplace guide. In addition, trans employees and managers' experiences should be captured in order to evaluate the guide's impact on workplace practices.

8. Conclusions

In this study we provided empirical patterns regarding trans people's self-esteem-oriented reflections during observations of positive workplace actions. The case of a 2015 UK workplace guide was utilized to fulfil our aims. The study found that trans people's self-esteem and self-respect were enhanced by policy makers' positive actions to promote inclusivity in the workplace. Due to these actions trans people felt more accepted, valued and trusted by the government. In addition, we presented empirical patterns from HR departments which had been aware of the workplace guide. HR officers suggested that the workplace guide informed their strategies, and positively affected the creation of a more inclusive workplace culture, the corporate profiles of their firms and staff organizational behaviours, and addressed LGBT business and trans staff-members' needs. We suggested that if a workplace policy is perceived to be recognizing trans people's worth this may be internalized, resulting in positive self-evaluations by trans people. In addition, we suggested that if employers adopt policy makers' positive workplace policies aiming to increase inclusivity, they may be able to realize positive organizational outcomes in their firms.

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Table 1. Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Standard deviation
Socio-demographic characteristics		
Age	34.70	11.54
Trans women	53.60	0.50
Trans men	27.83	0.45
Non-binary	5.15	0.22
Other trans category	13.40	0.34
Sex reassignment surgery	10.30	0.30
Gender Recognition Certificate	23.71	0.42
Employed	59.79	0.49
Unemployed	23.71	0.42
Awareness of the workplace guide	16.49	37.30
Scale's items (n=20), or reaction to the statements (in ordinal terms)		
"By considering the release of the workplace guide:"		
1. I feel that the Government accepts me more	3.13	0.78
2. I feel that the Government appreciates me more	3.16	0.87
3. I feel that the Government values me more	3.02	0.86
4. I feel that the Government trusts me more	3.04	0.99
5. I feel that I have more freedom of expression regarding my gender identity	2.71	0.86
6. I feel that I am more able to live and celebrate my gender identity	2.80	0.99
7. I feel less afraid of being a trans person	2.63	0.98
8. I experience greater self-esteem	2.48	1.01
9. I experience greater self-respect	2.50	1.00
10. I experience greater self-worth	2.52	0.99
11. I feel more positive about myself	2.47	0.96
12. I feel more proud of myself	2.43	0.96
13. I feel more confident in myself	2.42	0.96
14. I feel more empowered as a person	2.56	0.94
15. I feel more secure as a person	2.38	1.06
16. I feel more optimistic about the future	1.95	0.99
17. I feel that I have a clearer purpose in life	2.12	1.05
18. I feel that I will be treated more equally at work	1.63	0.97
19. I feel that I will be better able to express my needs to others at work	2.20	1.28
20. I feel that I will be treated more equally when seeking a job	1.74	1.12
Scale (n=20)	49.97	10.02

Notes: The sample consists of 97 observations.

Table 2. Scale; Cronbach's Alpha	
	Alpha
Scale's items (n=20), or reaction to the statements (in ordinal terms)	
"By considering the release of the workplace guide:"	
1. I feel that the Government accepts me more	0.838
2. I feel that the Government appreciates me more	0.844
3. I feel that the Government values me more	0.840
4. I feel that the Government trusts me more	0.839
5. I feel that I have more freedom of expression regarding my gender identity	0.845
6. I feel that I am more able to live and celebrate my gender identity	0.847
7. I feel less afraid of being a trans person	0.842
8. I experience greater self-esteem	0.844
9. I experience greater self-respect	0.857
10. I experience greater self-worth	0.846
11. I feel more positive about myself	0.842
12. I feel more proud of myself	0.842
13. I feel more confident in myself	0.845
14. I feel more empowered as a person	0.842
15. I feel more secure as a person	0.845
16. I feel more optimistic about the future	0.854
17. I feel that I have a clearer purpose in life	0.851
18. I feel that I will be treated more equally at work	0.855
19. I feel that I will be better able to express my needs to others at work	0.848
20. I feel that I will be treated more equally when seeking a job	0.854
Test scale	0.853
<i>Notes: The sample consists of 97 observations.</i>	

Table 3. Correlation matrix on the scale and on the demographic characteristics

	Scale	Trans women	Trans men	Non-binary people	Other trans categories	Sex reassignment surgery	Gender Recognition Certificate	Employed	Unemployed	Inactive	Awareness of the guide
Scale	1										
Trans women	0.21**	1									
Trans men	-0.03	-0.66*	1								
Non-binary people	-0.28*	-0.25**	-0.14	1							
Other trans categories	-0.08	-0.42*	-0.24**	-0.09	1						
Sex reassignment surgery	-0.14	0.17***	-0.05	-0.07	-0.13	1					
Gender Recognition Certificate	0.01	0.17***	0.03	-0.13	-0.21*	0.52*	1				
Employed	-0.01	0.03	-0.00	-0.09	0.01	0.00	0.11	1			
Unemployed	0.06	-0.01	-0.02	0.19**	-0.07	0.05	-0.08	-0.67*	1		
Inactive	-0.09	-0.03	0.03	-0.10	-0.06	-0.05	-0.05	-0.54*	-0.24**	1	
Awareness of the guide	0.11	0.02	-0.09	0.10	0.06	-0.05	0.01	0.08	0.01	-0.10	1

Notes: The sample consists of 97 observations. (*) Statistically significant at the 1%. (**) Statistically significant at the 5%. (***) Statistically significant at the 10%.

Table 4. Scale's items (n=20) or reaction to the statements (in percentage terms): "By considering the release of the workplace guide:"

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I feel that the Government accepts me more	34.02	48.45	15.46	1.03	1.03
2. I feel that the Government appreciates me more	40.20	42.26	12.37	4.12	1.03
3. I feel that the Government values me more	29.89	49.48	14.43	5.15	1.03
4. I feel that the Government trusts me more	39.17	36.08	16.49	6.18	2.06
5. I feel that I have more freedom of expressions regarding my gender identity	20.61	35.05	40.20	3.09	1.03
6. I feel that I am more able to live and celebrate my gender identity	28.86	32.98	29.89	6.18	2.06
7. I feel less afraid of being a trans person	22.68	29.89	38.14	7.21	2.06
8. I experience greater self-esteem	15.46	36.08	34.02	10.30	4.12
9. I experience greater self-respect	16.49	36.08	30.92	14.43	2.06
10. I experience greater self-worth	16.49	36.08	34.02	10.30	3.09
11. I feel more positive about myself	13.40	38.14	34.02	11.34	3.09
12. I feel more proud of myself	12.37	36.08	38.11	9.27	4.12
13. I feel more confident in myself	11.34	38.14	36.08	10.30	4.12
14. I feel more empowered as a person	17.52	35.05	35.05	11.34	1.03
15. I feel more secure as a person	14.43	31.95	37.11	10.30	6.01
16. I feel more optimistic about the future	5.15	25.77	35.05	27.83	6.18
17. I feel that I have a clearer purpose in life	10.30	23.71	41.23	17.52	7.21
18. I feel that I will be treated more equally at work	2.06	14.43	43.29	25.77	14.43
19. I feel that I will be better able to express my needs to others at work	21.64	16.49	35.05	14.43	12.37
20. I feel that I will be treated more equally when seeking a job	11.34	6.18	41.23	27.83	13.40
Scale	19.17	32.42	32.11	11.7	4.5

Notes: The sample consists of 97 observations from trans men, trans women, non-binary people and other trans categories.

Table 5. Correlation matrix on the scale's items

	Item1	Item2	Item3	Item4	Item5	Item6	Item7	Item8	Item9	Item10	Item11	Item12	Item13	Item14	Item15	Item16	Item17	Item18	Item19	Item20
Item1	1																			
Item2	0.57*	1																		
Item3	0.53*	0.50*	1																	
Item4	0.45*	0.55*	0.48*	1																
Item5	0.33*	0.27*	0.41*	0.31*	1															
Item6	0.30*	0.25**	0.39*	0.31*	0.13	1														
Item7	0.38*	0.28*	0.45	0.35*	0.37*	0.37*	1													
Item8	0.21*	0.30*	0.35*	0.34*	0.19***	0.31*	0.23**	1												
Item9	0.11	0.08	0.03	0.12	-0.10	0.21**	0.11	0.21*	1											
Item10	0.32*	0.15	0.16***	0.17***	0.36*	0.28*	0.14	0.32*	0.29*	1										
Item11	0.50*	0.27*	0.38*	0.39*	0.26*	0.28*	0.26*	0.43*	0.28*	0.47*	1									
Item12	0.43*	0.22**	0.33*	0.20**	0.39*	0.33*	0.28*	0.29*	0.26*	0.61*	0.53*	1								
Item13	0.45*	0.23*	0.38*	0.30*	0.12	0.22*	0.20**	0.17***	0.06	0.23**	0.19**	0.30*	1							
Item14	0.45*	0.32**	0.34*	0.34*	0.31*	0.16	0.25**	0.25**	0.09	0.22**	0.30*	0.32*	0.53*	1						
Item15	0.27*	0.21**	0.26*	0.23**	0.33*	0.16	0.16	0.20**	-0.04	0.20**	0.16*	0.28*	0.52*	0.54*	1					
Item16	0.10	0.10	0.16***	0.26*	0.13	0.14	0.23**	0.09	-0.06	-0.12	-0.08	0.00	0.19***	0.14	0.28*	1				
Item17	0.19***	0.18	0.27*	0.24**	0.14	0.21**	0.44*	0.25**	0.06	-0.02	0.18***	0.22**	0.06	0.15	0.06	0.43*	1			
Item18	0.13	0.04	-0.04	0.23**	0.16	-0.00	0.17***	0.11	-0.14	0.12	0.09	0.01	0.03	0.08	0.17***	0.10	0.02	1		
Item19	0.16***	0.08	0.11	0.31*	0.22**	0.01	0.23**	0.21**	0.08	0.18	0.10	0.15	0.10	0.25**	0.26*	0.21**	0.05	0.47*	1	
Item20	0.05	0.01	0.06	0.19**	0.11	-0.00	0.20**	0.11	0.00	0.08	0.13	0.08	0.19	0.10	0.15	0.04	0.02	0.47*	0.51*	1

Notes: The sample consists of 97 observations. Scale's items (n=20), or reaction to the statements (in ordinal terms): "By considering the release of the workplace guide:" Item1. I feel that the Government accepts me more; Item2. I feel that the Government appreciates me more; Item3. I feel that the Government values me more; Item4. I feel that the Government trusts me more; Item5. I feel that I have more freedom of expressions regarding my gender identity; Item6. I feel that I am more able to live and celebrate my gender identity; Item7. I feel less afraid of being a trans person; Item8. I experience greater self-esteem; Item9. I experience greater self-respect; Item10. I experience greater self-worth; Item11. I feel more positive about myself; Item12. I feel more proud of myself; Item13. I feel more confident in myself; Item14. I feel more empowered as a person; Item15. I feel more secure as a person; Item16. I feel more optimistic about the future; Item17. I feel that I have a clearer purpose in life; Item18. I feel that I will be treated more equally at work; Item19. I feel that I will be better able to express my needs to others at work; Item20. I feel that I will be treated more equally when seeking a job. (*) Statistically significant at the 1%. (**) Statistically significant at the 5%. (***) Statistically significant at the 10%.

Table 6. Estimates of the scale's determinants	
Age	0.028 (0.089)
Trans women ^a	16.892 (4.665)*
Trans men ^a	14.235 (4.873)*
Other trans category ^a	12.199 (5.152)**
Sex reassignment surgery	-7.778 (3.816)**
Gender Recognition Certificate	1.411 (2.777)
Employed ^b	2.948 (2.722)
Unemployed ^b	5.659 (3.177)***
Awareness of the guide	3.217 (2.637)
F	2.29
Prob>F	0.023
R-squared	0.191
Adj. R-squared	0.107
Root MSE	9.472
<i>Notes: The sample consists of 97 observations. (^a) The reference category is non-binary people. (^b) The reference category is inactive people. Standard errors are in parentheses. (*) Statistically significant at the 1%. (**) Statistically significant at the 5%. (***) Statistically significant at the 10%.</i>	

Table 7. HR evaluations

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Has the implementation of the workplace guide assisted your firm/organization in creating a more inclusive culture?	33.33	58.33	8.33	0.0	0.0
2. Has the implementation of the workplace guide positively affected the corporate profile of your firm/organization?	16.66	66.66	16.66	0.0	0.0
3. Has the implementation of the workplace guide enabled your firm/organization to observe the business benefits of a diverse workforce?	0.0	58.33	25.0	16.66	0.0
4. Has the implementation of the workplace guide positively affected HR officers, managers and trans employees' organizational behaviour (such as providing directions, finding innovative solutions, achieving results, fostering collegiality, reducing complaints) in your firm/organization?	0.0	50.0	33.33	16.66	0.0
5. Has the implementation of the workplace guide positively affected trans employees' performance in your firm/organization?	8.33	33.33	50.0	8.33	0.0
6. Has the implementation of the workplace guide created a diverse way of thinking in your firm/organization?	8.33	41.66	41.66	8.33	0.0
7. Has the implementation of the workplace guide created an environment of ingenuity and innovation in your firm/organization?	0.0	25.00	33.00	25.0	16.66
8. Has the implementation of the workplace guide addressed LGBT business and HR needs in your firm/organization?	16.66	58.33	16.66	8.33	0.0
9. Has the implementation of the workplace guide informed HR strategies in your firm/organization?	58.33	41.66	0.0	0.0	0.0
10. Has the workplace guide helped the HR department in your firm/organization to deal with trans employees' needs?	33.33	41.66	25.0	0.0	0.0
11. Has the implementation of the workplace guide helped your firm/organization to handle situations in which an existing employee embarks on a transition?	8.33	41.66	33.33	16.66	0.0
12. Has the implementation of the workplace guide enabled your firm/organization to make recruitment decisions more inclusive for trans applicants?	41.66	58.33	0.0	0.0	0.0
13. Has the implementation of the workplace guide enabled your firm/organization to make sure that promotion decisions do not put up barriers to trans employees?	58.33	41.66	0.0	0.0	0.0
14. Has the implementation of the workplace guide assisted the HR department in your firm/organization to recruit trans staff?	0.0	58.33	41.66	0.0	0.0
15. Has the implementation of the workplace guide positively affected trans employees' transition and smooth integration into your firm/organization?	0.0	58.33	33.33	8.33	0.0
16. Has the implementation of the workplace guide positively affected changes to HR practices in your firm/organization?	25.0	58.33	16.66	0.0	0.0
17. Has the implementation of the workplace guide positively affected human rights awareness in your firm/organization?	8.33	75.0	16.66	0.0	0.0
18. Has the implementation of the workplace guide enabled your firm/organization to initiate CSR policies in relation to trans issues and minority people rights?	0.0	16.66	16.66	41.66	25.0
19. Has the implementation of the workplace guide enhanced LGBT union presence and activity in your firm/organization?	16.66	58.33	16.66	8.33	0.0
20. Has the implementation of the workplace guide enhanced social dialogue between HR, employees' unions and LGBT unions in your firm/organization?	8.33	75.0	8.33	8.33	0.0

Notes: the sample consists of 12 firms/organizations. The sample represents the public, private and third sectors.

Appendix

Questionnaire. Short version

Recruiting and Retaining Transgender Staff: a Guide for Employers

This is an anonymous survey. Please participate in our survey if you identify as a trans person and you are between 18 and 67 years of age. Your participation is much appreciated. This survey has received ethical approval from our university.

Project: In 2015, the UK Government (Government Equalities Office) released a workplace guide which is specifically aimed at employers to help them recruit and retain trans employees. The guide is entitled: Recruiting and Retaining Trans Staff: a Guide for Employers and is available online free of charge for your consideration.

The guide includes practical advice, suggestions and ideas which are a useful tool for the managers of trans staff and for trans staff themselves. The guide aims to support employers to be trans-friendly, and the suggestions are for anyone in a firm who wants to build their awareness and knowledge of trans issues.

For instance, the guide recommends that firms should:

- allow all staff to be themselves at work and to promote a culture of dignity, respect and equality for trans people.
- consider how they present themselves as diverse employers in order to attract the widest pool of applicants. Firms, through their websites and brand activities, should talk about challenging transphobia and make inclusion plans and HR policies accessible.
- let people identify their gender as they choose and where firms ask for titles, they should provide 'other' as an option.
- ensure that HR has sufficient knowledge and awareness of trans issues and identify a point of contact in HR for any potential trans applicants, should they wish to make contact.

The guide offers detailed suggestions for the before, during and after transitioning periods including short-term job changes, absences from work, use of facilities, etc.

The Government anticipates that the guide will enable employers to respond fully and confidently to specific issues that impact on trans people, be they employees or potential employees, with a hope to create a more inclusive culture for all staff.

Our survey is designed to measure what you are thinking at this moment after considering the workplace guide. Please reflect on ways in which you believe that the workplace guide has made, makes or will make a difference to you. The best answer is what you feel is true of yourself at the moment relative to how things were before the release of the guide.

Please react to the following statements:

By considering the release of the workplace guide:
I feel that the Government accepts me more

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

I feel that the Government appreciates me more
I feel that the Government values me more
I feel that the Government trusts me more
I feel that I have more freedom of expression regarding my gender identity
I feel that I am more able to live and celebrate my gender identity
I feel less afraid of being a trans person
I experience greater self-esteem
I experience greater self-respect
I experience greater self-worth
I feel more positive about myself
I feel more proud of myself
I feel more confident in myself
I feel more empowered as a person
I feel more secure as a person
I feel more optimistic about the future
I feel that I have a clearer purpose in life

I feel that I will be treated more equally at work
I feel that I will be better able to express my needs to others at work
I feel that I will be treated more equally when seeking a job

-Do you consider yourself to be a: Trans woman* ()
Trans man** ()
Non-binary person*** ()
You belong to another trans category (please specify)

* A trans woman is defined as a male-to-female trans person who was assigned male at birth but has a female gender identity.

** A trans man is defined as a female-to-male trans person who was assigned female at birth but has a male gender identity.

*** Someone who does not subscribe to the customary binary approach to gender, and who may regard themselves as neither male nor female, or both male and female, or take another approach to gender entirely.

-How old are you? _____

-Are you employed? Yes
No
If you are not employed, are you looking for a job?
Yes
No

- Have you undergone sex reassignment surgery? Yes
No

- Have you acquired a Gender Recognition Certificate? Yes
No

- Were you aware of the guide before our survey? Yes
No

End of survey.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. We truly value the information you have provided. Your responses will contribute to our analyses of the subject matter.
