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**“The Gender Gap in Negotiations: The Role of Ambiguity
in Job Advertisements“**

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1. Introduction

Although there have been developments towards gender equality such as the increasing female labor market participation or advancements in education for women (Goldin, 2014), the state of absolute equality on the labor market regarding compensation (Bertrand, 2018) and career opportunities has not yet been achieved (Becker-Schmidt, 2008; Gneezy et al., 2009). The gender pay gap as well as further gender imbalances are dominant on modern labor markets around the globe and are frequently discussed. Besides gender discrimination and the traditional role of women in society, the aversion towards risk and competition are popular explanations for the differentiated position of women on the labor market (Eriksson & Lagerström, 2012; Gneezy et al., 2009; Meier et al., 2017).

Despite various gender imbalances in the labor market, the gender pay gap is the prevalent issue discussed. Taking the hours of work per week and solely full-time workers into account, the difference in gross annual income between gender in Austria was 14.3% in 2019 (*Statistik Austria*, 2019). In comparison to other states, Austria figures among the countries with the highest gender-related wage differences and above the average in the European Union (EU) (Geisberger & Glaser, 2017). A survey conducted on the Austrian labor market illustrates that only one third of differences in pay can be attribute to structural differences. Hence, factors like age, industry of the job, size of the company and the region, part-time or full-time employment and the level of education account for a substantial fraction of differences in wage. Nevertheless, two thirds of the pay-gap in Austria cannot be explained by these factors and, therefore, other reasons for this imbalance on the Austrian labor market must be found (*Statistik Austria*, 2019).

A common explanation in the field of research is that women avoid entering competitive environments, are in general less likely to engage in negotiations and particularly in salary negotiations. According to a popular contribution by Babcock & Laschever (2004), only 7% of female graduates do negotiate their starting salary, whereas 57% of their male counterparts do so. Various researcher found that gender differences in bargaining power explain 10-15 % of the gender pay gap. Moreover, these differentials are particularly relevant in explaining the wage gap among highly educated individuals (Bertrand, 2018; Card et al., 2016). Females' tendencies to avoid negotiations or to engage in them less aggressively than men may lead to long-term consequences, namely the gender wage gap (Blau & Kahn, 2017). Therefore, knowing the importance and understanding the origins of gender differences in negotiations are

crucial to decrease the gender gap in the labor market (Stevens & Whelan, 2019) by implementing suitable policies (Säve-Söderbergh, 2019).

1.1. Research Issue

Women's aversion towards negotiation is frequently used as one explanation for the gender wage gap. Findings show that individuals gain from bargaining situations and that females frequently do not pursue these opportunities (Bowles & Babcock, 2013). This might lead to the conclusion that women should negotiate more in general. However, Exley et al. (2020) show that forcing women to engage more often into negotiations is not profitable for them, rather the opposite is true. Negotiating more frequently includes potential losses in differing forms. Individuals may experience opportunity costs of time, future costs due to backlash effects or less opportunities for further successful negotiations. Neither pushing women to negotiate (Exley et al., 2020) nor train them how to negotiate more successfully will lead to the closure of the negotiation gap between gender. Thus, an approach to solve this issue may be achieved by implementing "fix-the-institutions" rather than "fix-the-women" initiatives (Recalde & Vesterlund, 2020).

According to recent research there are different factors influencing the gender gap in negotiation. Nevertheless, literature suggests that the pronouncement of something being negotiable and a given range for the bargaining subject, mitigates the effect of gender within negotiations (Leibbrandt & List, 2014; Small et al., 2007). This approach is also documented in the literature review of Recalde & Vesterlund (2020) using the above mentioned "fix-the-institutions" and "fix-the-women" initiatives.

Further literature on gender differences in negotiations suggests that the gender gap is narrowed the most when implementing an increase in transparency. Examples of increased pay transparency imply the permission to discuss wage within a company, the disclosure of a pay range, reports of pay statistics with the information of gender and occupation included (Recalde & Vesterlund, 2020) as well as information for job applicants on the salary negotiability (Leibbrandt & List, 2014). It is important to mention that Austria is among a few countries such as Australia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, and the UK, which requires firms by law to disclose compensation statistics in view of gender and occupation. As far as legislation is concerned, the US is behind in comparison to the mentioned countries (Recalde & Vesterlund, 2020).

The mentioned findings on the gender negotiation gap, the suggested initiatives on institutions rather than on women themselves as well as the differences in labor market characteristics lead

to the question whether the increased transparency in job advertisements on the Austrian labor market has an impact on female job seekers negotiation behavior. Thus, the research question in the present paper reads as follows:

How does the ambiguity regarding wage negotiation in job advertisements influence women's propensity to initiate the negotiation?

Do women perceive the initial wage offer as less negotiable than men? Do women perceive the salary as less negotiable when there is no explicit statement about individual bargaining?

1.2. Research Aim

Research contributions such as laboratory experiments regarding gender differences in negotiation are ambitious. Nevertheless, the majority of existing empirical evidence regarding the issue of gender differences in salary negotiations was conducted in the US and Australia covered by a few large-scale field studies (Artz et al., 2018; Dittrich et al., 2014; Leibbrandt & List, 2014; Samek, 2019; Säve-Söderbergh, 2019; Stevens & Whelan, 2019). These effects have not yet been examined in Austria. As mentioned above, the Austrian labor market has some legal and structural peculiarities from the US and Australia. Additionally, researchers in the specific field of interest suggest that the issue of gender gaps in negotiation has to be further investigated to see whether the results hold true on other labor markets (Artz et al., 2018). Therefore, an overview of the Austrian labor market situation with a focus on the gender gap as well as the legal labor requirements will be given in this paper. With respect to the differences in labor market conditions, this paper aims to provide insights on female job seekers' behavior regarding the initiation of salary negotiations in the job search process and contributes to the existing literature in the field of gender differences in negotiation.

Thus, this paper presents an overview of the recent research on the topic of job gender differences in competition with a focus on negotiations, the gender wage gap in Austria as well as other characteristics of the Austrian labor market. So, primary data was collected through an online vignette study to examine whether ambiguity regarding wage negotiability in job advertisements deters or fosters women's propensity to initiate salary negotiations. By investigating whether explicit statements in job advertisements foster women's propensity to initiate a salary negotiation as well as the perception of wage negotiability the conducted vignette study focuses on the aspect of transparency regarding salary negotiation options.

Although the respective research field heavily focuses on gender equality, the potential impacts of the above-mentioned imbalances on economic growth are significant (Flory et al., 2018). In

order to attract highly skilled workers, it is crucial for employers to know which factors in job advertisements trigger females to self-select out of the process prior the employer's knowledge. By providing answers to the research questions of the paper, beneficial insight for Austrian employers is generated to broaden their talent pool, increase diversity within their organization and, therefore, facilitate added value creation. Furthermore, the paper aims to understand which factors in a job advertisement as well as in the starting salary negotiation influence women's bargaining behaviors and their actual propensity to negotiation. Therefore, the main focus is on the impact of increased transparency regarding wage negotiation options and, hence, this research contributes to companies' pools of diverse as well as talented employees.

2. Theoretical Background

The gender wage gap is a contemporary research issue investigated by different disciplines aiming towards a convergence of the gap. Besides this issue being discussed from a gender equality perspective, the reduction of discrepancies in earnings between genders is also a prevalent topic within economics. Findings show that the aversion towards risk and competition may be an explanation for the underrepresentation of women in top leadership positions. On closer inspection, however, the disparities between gender on the labor market are impacted by various factors and often cannot entirely be explained by observable characteristics.

The following chapter reviews the existing literature on gender differences regarding risk and competition. Moreover, the issue of differences between gender in the setting of negotiations will be discussed and factors influencing the disparities will be analyzed.

2.1. Gender Differences in Attitudes towards Risk and Competition

The research question which will be answered within this thesis addresses the phenomenon of females being less likely to initiate negotiations in comparison to men. Gender differences in negotiations are often explained by women's aversion towards competitive environments. This research issue has received particular attention in the existing literature; researcher investigated the willingness of males and females to enter competitive environments in laboratory as well as natural field experiments. The evidence that women are less willing to enter a competition than men is considered to be one crucial factor for explaining the persistent gender gap in top-level positions and earnings (Bertrand, 2018; Gneezy et al., 2009; Niederle & Vesterlund, 2007; Sutter & Glätzle-Rützler, 2014).

Recent research studies how the gender gap in educational choices, job entry decisions and earnings might be affected by varying attitudes towards risk and competition (Booth & Nolen, 2012; Buser et al., 2014; Flory et al., 2015; Niederle & Vesterlund, 2007). The aversion to enter competitive settings can result in large costs for individuals, e.g., a missed promotion opportunity due to self-selection out of the process (Claussen et al., 2015) or the failure to receive, use or obtain scarce resources (Flory et al., 2018). Due to the vast amount of literature in this field of research and its importance to understand gender differences on the labor market, the following chapter is concerned with the disparities between genders towards competition and risk. Eventually, the growing body of literature provides evidence that psychological traits play a crucial role in the well-documented gender gap towards educational, occupational choices and – most importantly for the present research – earnings. However, psychological

traits alone will not explain the existing gaps. Therefore, another important debate has to be taken into account: namely that nurture rather than nature is the explanation for women's aversion to compete (Bertrand, 2018).

Thus, not only gender per se is a variable influencing an individual's behavior in competitive environments. Demographic factors like age, education, culture, and the parent's education must be taken into account and, therefore, will be further discussed in the following. Different research contributions investigated individuals' willingness to enter competitions with respect to the participants' age (Buser et al., 2014; Flory et al., 2018) or their cultural background (Gneezy et al., 2009). Furthermore, recent studies focus on the effect of role models and on how they might contribute to narrowing the gender gap in top management positions (Bergmann et al., 2017; Meier et al., 2017).

Nurture or Nature

Croson & Gneezy (2009) state that disparities between gender on the labor markets are often caused by differences in preferences. Reviewing recent literature on the respective issue, researchers found strong evidence that the differences occur at a certain point in life and, hence, are affected by the nurture of women. Gneezy et al. (2009) investigate differences between gender with regard to the selection into competitive environments across different cultures, namely a patriarchal and a matrilineal society. The research provides support that the discrepancies in competition preferences are influenced by social structures rather than caused by innate preferences. Further studies complement these findings and state that the nurture of boys and girls is crucial in forming risk and competition preferences over time. By pushing boys to engage in assertive environments such as competitive sports and persuading girls to remain cautious, children internalize stereotypical behavior patterns early in life (Booth & Nolen, 2012).

While the study by Gneezy et al. (2009) examines the competitiveness in two different cultures, a recent research contribution investigates the gender differences regarding negotiations across cultures. They found that while men earn more in patriarchal societies, women do so in matrilineal societies. To some extent, this provides evidence that bargaining outcomes are culture-dependent and driven by societal forces (Andersen et al., 2018).

The aversion towards competitive environments does not only harm girls early in life but rather over time (Sutter & Glätzle-Rützler, 2014), having a substantial impact on their participation in the labor market. Negotiations of various kinds are considered highly competitive settings and

crucial for career advancements. Scenarios of negotiations on the labor market are often characterized by the responder's demanding behavior and the consideration of solely one's own outcome. Negotiating on one's behalf is proven to decrease women's bargaining power since females are nurtured to have agreeable characteristics, namely being caring, modest and so on. Therefore, women are advantaged when negotiating on someone else's behalf but rather disadvantaged when competing for their own outcome. In comparison men found to behave disagreeable were being rewarded for this trait in bargaining situations, e.g., for compensation (Blau & Kahn, 2017).

Nevertheless, even if women adopt their behavior to disagreeable attributes, they are not rewarded for behaving accordingly. Hence, the gender differences in the nurtured attribute agreeableness contributes to the gender gap in earnings due to the imbalanced perception of men and women. Accordingly, the situation to negotiate over pay mitigates women's willingness to enter the negotiation as well as their assertiveness within the bargaining situation (Bowles et al., 2005).

Culture

The above-mentioned research contribution by Gneezy et al. (2009) examines the cultural aspect of gender differences. Thereby, the effect of gender in competition in matrilineal and patriarchal societies was observed in both cultures. However, the reversed results were detected in the matrilineal society in comparison to the predominantly patriarchal society Western countries live in. This research suggests that the gender differences in competition are rather due to culture as well as nurture of individuals than due to evolutionary reasons. Furthermore, Bowles et al. (2007) show that female individuals are penalized for their demanding behavior within negotiations, whereas men's assertive bargaining behavior is widely accepted by negotiators. Hence, this explanation reflects social stereotypes which are prevalent in the respective culture. The stereotypes are a result of gender norms and imparted preferences of a society which are shaped differently across cultures (Andersen et al., 2018).

Age

The majority of existing literature examines the effect of gender and competition within the setting of laboratory experiments with a focus on children or young adults. Nevertheless, a small body of literature focuses on the question whether the aversion towards risk and competition is consistent over the years (Flory et al., 2018). Buser et al. (2014) find the differences between gender to be considerably small in comparison to other studies and show that these disparities vanish over time. Contrary, Mayr et al. (2012) do find developments in

competitiveness, namely that adults aged 25-74 do change their behavior with regard to competition. Flory et al. (2018) examine the influence of age and gender on the competitiveness and state that female individuals who are aged under 50 are less competitive than men, whereas women that are 50 or older are much more or at least as competitive as their male counterparts regardless of their age.

Role Models

The glass ceiling is a real and relevant phenomenon in the economy, accordingly, the gender gap in top management position is characterized by competitive individuals and, hence, might be less attractive for women than for men (Meier et al., 2017). Flory et al. (2015) find that female job seekers are less likely to apply for jobs with competitive compensation schemes. Thus, women self-select out of certain industries or branches in the labor market. The well-documented underrepresentation of women in top management position might persist due to missing role models in the respective occupations and contributes to the gender disparity.

As mentioned beforehand, nurture rather than nature influences females' competition aversion and, hence, soft policies that make competing less threatening might be appropriate to reduce gender differences (Bertrand, 2018). In a recent study, Meier et al. (2017) investigate the effect of competitive female role models on women's choice to compete and whether they have a short- or long-term impact on gender differences in competition. Their results show that female role models help female individuals to self-select into competitive environments and to gain more trust in their own skills and knowledge.

Another study conducted a field experiment with the aim to increase the number of female students majoring in economics. The researcher exposed them to women who studied at the same university and pursued a successful career afterwards. The researcher found that the role model intervention led to a substantial increase in female students' interest to major in economics, which was especially significant for top female students. Role model interventions are particularly desirable when they positively influence the women's compensation potential and they are beneficial for female individuals who would have taken another educational path with lower income (Porter & Serra, 2017).

By demonstrating to other women that competition can be something positive instead of threatening, the role model effect could foster females' self-selection into competitive environments. Since self-selection is a requirement for career advancements, these results suggest that making successful and competitive women more visible could possibly increase

the number of women in top management positions (Meier et al., 2017; Porter & Serra, 2017). Bowles & Babcock (2013) put emphasis on the importance which every woman in a high-status position has, contributing to a convergence in the gender pay gap and, therefore, changing social structures which currently keep women in their place.

Although all mentioned research contributions in the present chapter show significant differences in competition preferences between gender, a recent study shows that the differences are dependent on the research environment and suggests that the phenomenon should be examined in various experimental setting. While a vast body of literature focuses on the fact that women perform worse under tournament incentives than men, Angelovski et al. (2020) take a new approach and investigate participants' behavior in a competitive bidding process for a ranked position representing a job. This approach is particularly relevant since the job search as well as competing in the market economy does include various aspects of behaviors. Considering the multi-faceted competitiveness on the labor market, the study captures more than a typical head-to-head simultaneous competition setting, namely the fact that different positions lead to different wages, the need for different resources depending on the position and that the assignment to a position happens by a competitive procedure (Angelovski et al., 2020).

2.2. Gender Differences in Negotiations

While the studies mentioned in chapter 2.1. “Gender Differences in Competition” examine the gender differences on the willingness to enter a competition in an arbitrary setting, little empirical evidence exists about gender differences with regard to the initiation of wage negotiation within the job entry process (Kugler et al., 2018). This chapter reviews the literature on gender differences in negotiation in general and narrows it down to research contributions examining differences between men and women in the specific setting of wage negotiation.

Wage negotiations substantially determine individuals’ outcomes on the labor market. Therefore, the effect of gender in negotiations states a relevant explanation for the existing gender gap in labor market outcomes (Card et al., 2016; Recalde & Vesterlund, 2020; Säv-Söderbergh, 2019). It is a common finding that job applicants who do not negotiate their first salary offer will experience significant pay differences in comparison to individuals who did negotiate. Diverse studies examine this phenomenon and found that female applicants are less likely than males to negotiate the offered wage (Bowles et al., 2007; Exley et al., 2020; Säv-Söderbergh, 2019) and are even willing to work for a lower wage when it is not explicitly stated as negotiable (Leibbrandt & List, 2014). Although the differences in starting salaries may seem minor at first, they result in substantial gaps over time (Andersen et al., 2018; Bowles et al., 2007).

Researchers found that within salary negotiations there are many factors increasing the respective gender gap. The characteristics of compensation negotiations often include potential social costs, which women experience more frequently than men (Bowles et al., 2007). Furthermore, negotiations regarding labor market outcomes are generally on behalf of the applicant him or herself, are competitive, and often leave the negotiation subject and range ambiguous. Hence, the setting of salary negotiation fosters women’s aversion to initiate or participate in a negotiation situation. There is a substantial body of literature that attempts to understand and explain which factors cause the variations in negotiations between males and females. An important question to ask – given the persistent gender pay gap and glass ceiling effect – is whether and why gender differentials in the propensity to initiate negotiations arise (Recalde & Vesterlund, 2020). Reviewing the research contributions in the respective field shows that the research issue consists of multiple layers; however, three areas seem to have attracted special attention.

First, the question whether differences in negotiation arise due to the differentiated perception of a negotiation opportunity rather than the actual negotiation outcome is found of interest.

Secondly, the anticipation of the backlash effect which female employees experience when behaving more aggressively or like their male counterparts in negotiations (Bowles et al., 2007) is potentially hindering women to negotiate more demanding and more often. Furthermore, the question whether the ambiguity of wage negotiation has an impact on women's bargaining is of interest within recent literature (Leibbrandt & List, 2014; Stevens & Whelan, 2019) and, therefore, will be analyzed in detail later on.

2.2.1. Opportunities to Negotiate

Emerging trends of employment, such as higher job turnover rates and new forms of organizations, open up new opportunities for individuals to negotiate on the labor market (Kugler et al., 2018). While these changes encourage new chances on the labor market, the question whether negotiation opportunities are disproportionately allocated between gender arises. Answering the respective question and taking related socio-economic factors into account plays an important role in finding approaches fostering women's career advancements and decreasing the gender wage gap (Small et al., 2007). In the following potential explanations for females' lower propensity to initiate a negotiate will be discussed.

While Leibbrandt and List (2014) investigate the propensity of females and males to negotiate the compensation within the job application process, further studies address the question whether individuals have the opportunity to negotiate wage and whether these negotiation opportunities actually arise. Stevens & Whelan (2019) examine the availability of compensation bargaining opportunities and the occurring differentials between male and female employees. Results show that there is not a certain age profile which makes the availability of negotiation opportunities more likely. In contrast, the situation of an actual initiation of a negotiation over pay is correlated to age. Older employees, namely 56- to 65-year-olds, are found to be less likely to negotiate their wage even when the opportunity actually occurs (Stevens & Whelan, 2019). Additionally, Brenzel et al. (2014) state that not only older individuals are less likely to negotiate over pay, but a decreased probability to negotiate also plays a minor role for younger workers which are aged approximately under 25.

Furthermore, individuals' level of education as well as jobs requiring high levels of skills seem to play an important role regarding the availability of negotiation opportunities. Consequently, employees who fulfil the high requirements of a specific job do have a greater propensity to negotiate their wage (Artz et al., 2018; Stevens & Whelan, 2019). This is also confirmed by Brenzel et al. (2014) who examined the wage bargaining on the German labor market. According to this research contribution, highly educated individuals experience more

opportunities to negotiate compensation, at least in the process of job applications. Conducting their research from the perspective of German employers, the authors found that applicants' employment status is a crucial factor whether a negotiation takes place or not. Individuals who are self-employed, are currently or were previously employed outside the hiring firm have a greater propensity to negotiate wage in comparison to unemployed applicants (Brenzel et al., 2014).

Another finding shows that the propensity of having the opportunity to negotiate as well as the propensity to actually initiate a salary negotiation decreases with less hours worked per week, independent of the individual's gender. However, it is known that women frequently work less hours than men and hence have less bargaining power. This is also shown by the survey mentioned beforehand concerning influencing factors on the gender wage gap. The researchers Geisberger & Glaser (2017) found that the hours worked and the sector of occupation are key variables influencing the gender wage gap in Austria. According to various research contributions the same factors represent the key variables regarding the opportunity to negotiate over pay (Artz et al., 2018; Brenzel et al., 2014; Stevens & Whelan, 2019).

Nevertheless, Leibbrandt & List (2014) found women to be more likely to negotiate when the opportunity was explicitly stated. Complementing these findings with the research contributions of Stevens & Whelan (2019) as well as Artz et al. (2018), the relevance of ambiguity in negotiation settings is highlighted. While Stevens & Whelan (2019) do find significant differences between gender in having the opportunity to negotiate, these differences disappear when individuals have the actual opportunity to negotiate. This result replicates the finding that as soon as an explicit opportunity to negotiate arises women are not less likely than their male counterparts to seize the negotiation opportunity (Leibbrandt & List, 2014).

Moreover, according to Exley et al. (2020) the suggestion that women should negotiate more is not helpful to gain greater financial outcomes. Conducting an experiment, the researchers show that when women have the choice to enter a negotiation or not, they seize the negotiation opportunities which result in gains. In comparison, whenever women detect negotiation opportunities which could have resulted in losses, they tend to avoid these. According to this research, women do know when to ask, men have the same ability of knowing when to ask and forcing females to negotiate will harm them.

However, the research design of the respective contribution eliminated some factors which are known to be drivers for gender differences in negotiation. For example, participants in the experiment are informed about which resources they bring to the negotiation, their outside

options and they interact in a setting where negotiation is explicitly an option (Exley et al., 2020). The latter concerns the role of ambiguity in wage negotiation opportunities and the effect it has on women's propensity to initiate the negotiation. Knowing that negotiations are possible generates a positive effect for women and fosters their propensity to initiate negotiations by themselves (Kugler et al., 2018; Leibbrandt & List, 2014). Due to the research focus of the present paper on the effect of explicit statements on wage negotiability this phenomenon will be discussed in detail in a later chapter.

The lower propensity of initiating negotiations may also reflect the differentiated perception of men and women of whether a situation is negotiable or not (Bowles et al., 2007). However, the perception of a situation being negotiable might change over time and past successful or unsuccessful negotiations have an impact on this perception. Thus, the negative and positive experiences of past wage negotiations gained by individuals over time are relevant factors in negotiation settings (Stevens & Whelan, 2019). In comparison to that finding, Small et al. (2007) argue that women might be aware of these opportunities. Rather the framing of the situation is a crucial factor on the gender effect in this regard. Therefore, the researchers examine the notion of something being negotiable, which may foster or deter the gender difference. They found that bargaining seems particularly intimidating to women when it is framed as "opportunity to negotiate", whereas the gender differences are significantly decreased when situations are framed as "opportunities to ask" (Small et al., 2007).

2.2.2. The Backlash Effect

The attempt to initiate a negotiation for greater personal resources like a higher salary requires a dominant behavior which is often associated with masculinity. Thus, when initiating respective negotiations, difficulties for women arise. Leaning in and attempting to negotiate like men disturbs the perception of women and their stereotypical niceness most likely causing social resistance (Bowles et al., 2007).

Bowles et al. (2007) investigate this effect and show that females were disinclined and treated more harshly by evaluators when they negotiated a higher salary beforehand. Due to assertive negotiations, women were perceived as less nice and more demanding than women who accepted the initial wage offer. The reluctance to further work with individuals that negotiated for a higher wage was greater for women and almost non-existent for men. Although women in this scenario might successfully negotiate for higher compensation, they may miss out on important work assignments or support from their supervisors. Hence, their success in the negotiation bears substantial social costs which decreases the chance for further career

advancements. This research contribution provides evidence to some extent that women experience backlash effects when taking more aggressive approaches and get punished for adapting to a more stereotypical masculine negotiation behavior.

2.2.3. Gender Matching

Besides the mentioned factors, the negotiation partner's gender plays an important role regarding the bargaining outcome. Conducting an experiment on negotiations in a general setting, Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry (2018) found that when a female responder and a male proposer perform a negotiation the proposer will gain 11 Euro more than in any other constellation of gender and roles. Only in the situation where females take the role of the weaker player, namely the responder the result shows that women ask for less. Although the existing research suggests that there are no significant differences in bargain power between men and women this contribution highlights the importance of gender matching in negotiation settings.

The results by Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry (2018) are supported by Dittrich et al. (2014), who examine the gender differences in behavior during wage negotiations within a laboratory setting. According to this contribution, female potential employees do ask for less wage from men than male employees ask from women or men. The researchers draw the conclusion that gender interaction within a negotiation setting are highly relevant in understanding the effect of gender in wage bargaining, which contributes to the existing gender wage gap (Dittrich et al., 2014; Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry, 2018).

Eliminating the drivers for gender differences within negotiations, such as the negotiation partner (Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry, 2018), it becomes clear that the effect of gender rather depends on the perceived negotiability of a situation (Stevens & Whelan, 2019). In a popular study of Gneezy et al. (2003), participants were asked to solve mazes competing within different gender-matching constellations and being rewarded under differing schemes. While women who performed within a single-sex group score high level outcomes, female participants who performed against their male counterparts had a significantly decreased performance. Thus, the authors conclude that the lower performance of women competing in a heterogenic environment may partly explain the gender gap within tournament settings, e.g., in wage negotiations.

2.2.4. The Role of Ambiguity

Ambiguity occurs in different forms, however, with regard to negotiations there are two popular types, namely situational and structural ambiguity. Situational ambiguity refers to the degree to which a situation is explicitly mentioned as negotiable or leaves individuals ambiguous whether

bargaining is possible or not. In settings where the situational ambiguity is low, negotiating is the desirable behavior regardless of the individual's gender. Hence, in these situations women and men should bargain to the same extent because women can seize the opportunity without fearing backlash over their behavior. An important aspect influencing situational ambiguity is the negotiation subject suggesting that a frequently negotiated issue has a lower degree of ambiguity than one that is less likely to appear on the bargaining table. Whenever a topic is less commonly discussed it leaves individuals to a situation in which they do not know whether the subject is actually negotiable (Kugler et al., 2018).

The high degree of ambiguity concerning compensation negotiations is likely to be a factor amplifying gender effects. The existing research on this issue provides evidence that gender roles have an even greater impact whenever the negotiation subject, the range as well as the expected behavior are ambiguous (Bowles & Babcock, 2013). Various studies find that gender effects in negotiation situations decrease when individuals know what they can expect from it. These findings conclude that initiatives providing transparency to the negotiators, especially to females, help to equalize opportunities to negotiate (Bowles et al., 2005; Kugler et al., 2018; Leibbrandt & List, 2014; Small et al., 2007)

In comparison, structural ambiguity is defined as the degree to which the individuals' circumstances in a bargaining situation, such as outside options or the occupational status, are not certain. This aspect has been found to be a factor that is affecting women's willingness to enter a negotiation regarding their salary (Johnson, 2016). Besides further factors like the undervaluation of own skills (Bowles et al., 2007) and the fact that women feel less comfortable when bargaining on behalf of themselves, the role of ambiguity is crucial to narrow the gender gap in negotiation. Bargaining over pay contains various properties of high structural and situational ambiguity. In other words, individuals who enter into salary negotiations face high levels of uncertainty concerning the range of potential outcome, appropriate negotiation parameters and how the compensation expectations will be received by the negotiation partner (Bowles et al., 2005).

An important research contribution in this regard is conducted by Leibbrandt & List (2014) who observed the impact of situational ambiguity – in this case the explicit statement in job advertisements that wage is negotiable – on the willingness of female job seekers to apply for the job and female's propensity to initiate the negotiation for a higher salary. Thereby the researchers conducted a field experiment with two differing job advertisements to examine the influence of negotiation ambiguity on the participants' entry behavior – one with an explicit

statement that salary negotiation is possible and another that leaves the option for a negotiation vague. The posted salary in the job advertisements was identical and was chosen slightly above the median salary of the industry. Since the manipulation of the ambiguity is the only difference in the two treatments, the applicants' decision whether to apply or not and whether to negotiate or not can be related to the statements in the job advertisements (Leibbrandt & List, 2014).

The researchers found that when it is not explicitly stated that the salary is negotiable, males are more likely to negotiate for a higher wage, while females tend to signal that they are willing to work even for a lower wage. Once the job advertisement explicitly mentions the option to negotiate the salary, differences between gender disappear. Therefore, job advertisements which signal ambiguity of wage negotiation led to a much more pronounced gender gap in applicants. These results implicate that women react to slight changes in the salary description of job advertisements and men favor jobs where the initial salary negotiation is ambiguous (Leibbrandt & List, 2014). In addition to the evidence from the respective field research, results from past laboratory experiments confirm that men perform better in competitive settings where negotiation opportunities are uncertain (Bowles et al., 2005; Small et al., 2007).

Concludingly, gender is not a reliable factor for negotiation performance; neither females nor males perform better or worse in bargaining situations. Nevertheless, circumstances of negotiations such as the gender matching (Dittrich et al., 2014; Hernandez-Arenaz & Iriberry, 2018) and the situational ambiguity (Kugler et al., 2018; Leibbrandt & List, 2014) can create conditions where differences in negotiation outcomes between gender are amplified. However, gender is proven to be a factor that causes social resistance and backlash effect for women who negotiate their resources as assertively and demandingly like men do (Bowles et al., 2007). Eliminating the ambiguity of wage negotiation, Exley et al. (2020) show that pushing women to bargain more in a setting where negotiations are explicitly accepted and expected is not necessary or helpful. Hence, eliminating the driver ambiguity equalizes men and women within negotiation settings, at least to some extent.

2.3. Labor Market Conditions

While the above reviewed research contributions provide evidence that there are significant differences in dealing with negotiation between men and women, the geographic scope of research is limited to a specific region. For example, Leibbrandt & List (2014) conducted their large-scale field experiment in the US. Due to differences in labor market conditions, this paper aims to broaden the research on a geographical scale. The coverage of collective agreements in most industries in Austria (*Warum Kollektivverträge?*, 2019) is one example that differentiates the labor markets and provides varying circumstances for its participants.

Recent literature on the issue of the gender wage gap and potential initiatives to narrow the compensation differences suggest that changes to the remuneration and the structure of jobs within the labor market must be implemented to improve temporal flexibility. Further, the convergence of the gap would be substantially furthered if firms did not have an incentive to disproportionately compensate male and female employees. Thus, the solution must not include pushing women to negotiate and compete more on the labor market but rather involve institutional initiatives (Goldin, 2014). Consequently, the labor market conditions play a crucial role concerning the convergence of the gender negotiation and pay gap.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, research in the field of gender negotiation differences was mostly conducted in the US (Hall & Krueger, 2012; Leibbrandt & List, 2014) as well as Australia (Artz et al., 2018; Stevens & Whelan, 2019) and Germany (Brenzel et al., 2014). The contributions examine the factors influencing women's wage bargaining behavior with the main interest to investigate the consequences on the gender wage gap. While the majority of research focuses on factors like age, working hours, education and further possible impacts on the gender effect in negotiations, one research contribution highlights the positive effect of explicit negotiation opportunities on women's propensity to negotiate (Leibbrandt & List, 2014).

Further research shows that the perceived opportunity to negotiate is crucial and that men more than women report to have these opportunities. Hall & Krüger (2012) found that women in the US report to work in a job in which wage bargaining did not occur, hence many female employees engaged in jobs where wage posting determined the compensation. Card et al. (2016) state that firm-specific compensation policies might have an influence on the gender wage gap. Thus, it is important to examine the labor market conditions and which wage-setting is prevalent on the Austrian labor market to conclude whether the wage determination stated in a job advertisement influences women's propensity to negotiate.

In the following chapter the conditions of the Austrian as well as German and US American labor market will be discussed. The respective labor markets are considered because of the large number of research contributions that were conducted in these countries.

Firstly, one of the most popular effects on the gender wage gap and the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions will be reviewed, namely the Glass Ceiling. Further, the economic relevance as well as reasons for its existence will be discussed. Secondly, the gender wage gap in Austria will be analyzed, influencing factors will be discussed and compared to the other nations. Since literature suggests that the signaled process of wage formation has a substantial effect on the gender disparities in negotiation as well as the gender wage gap, wage determination processes are subsequently reviewed and the prevalent situation in Austria will be highlighted.

2.3.1. The Glass Ceiling

Focusing on differences in gender on the labor market, the effect of the Glass Ceiling must not be neglected in this thesis. The research outcome of the empirical investigation may contribute to the understanding of the underrepresentation of highly educated female individuals within leadership positions. If results will show that women's propensity to negotiate increases by more transparency in job advertisements, appropriate initiatives and actions for firms can be derived to motivate women to move up the career ladder.

Bernard et al. (2018) illustrate that the "Glass Ceiling" is a real phenomenon and examine how females' labor force contribution developed over the past 40 years: Although women in Europe account for 45% of the total labor force, solely 23.2.% are board members of one of the largest firms listed and only 5.1% of females are in a CEO position. In 2014, women constituted half of the US American workforce, yet they only accounted for 25% of the top 10% earners in the respective year.

In 2019, 3.8% of employed women in Austria in comparison to 8.1% of all men were working in leading positions. Despite having the same level of education within this context, women are still underrepresented in high level positions and are often found in the middle of the company's hierarchy. Although 19.9% of women aged between 25 and 64 graduated from university in Austria and only 16.6% of Austrian men did so, the differences are particularly significant among this population group: solely 8.6% of women who hold an academic degree are in leadership positions in comparison to 18.9% of men (*Gender-Statistik*, 2021).

According to the existing literature, the “Glass Ceiling” is not only found to be caused by gender discrimination but is rather influenced by a variety of factors. However, one critical aspect is the perception of women in leadership positions, which is still shaped by socially constructed gender schemata. The passing on of these beliefs eventually leads to fewer positive attitudes to women in leadership positions (Heilman & Eagly, 2008). Further, the differentials in wages between males and females are not solely reflected by the sorting in different occupations; women also earn less than their male counterparts within the same company or occupation (Goldin, 2014).

2.3.1.1. Economic Relevance

Apart from the female employee perspective, the employer side must be aware that the absence of women in leadership positions in the economy is a prevalent topic and will cause outside pressure via political regulations like quotas (Scharfenkamp et al., 2019). Nevertheless, not solely outside pressure created by regulations plays a role but also the aspect that female talent could be wasted due to circumstances on the labor market. The labor market environment often favors men and makes women self-select out of the environment (Bertrand, 2018; Flory et al., 2018) leading to potential losses for companies, and thus the economy as a whole (Kuhn & Villeval, 2015).

Bertrand (2018) argues that choosing from a limited pool of leaders, respectively men, an economy will operate within efficiency frontiers. Assuming that the allocation of innate talent is equal between female and male individuals, the economy eventually must miss out on superior outcomes due to half of potential leaders, namely women, not being on top of the income distribution. A study was conducted to quantify how much economic growth is being “left on the table” due to women’s underrepresentation. The researchers found that approximately one quarter of growth in the US GDP per person within the time period of 1960 and 2010 can be lead back to the increasing number of women and minorities working in occupations where they were underrepresented before (Bertrand, 2018).

Besides the mentioned argument, another aspect, namely “diversity and inclusion”, plays a crucial role with regard to the importance of the glass ceiling effect. While economic research did not focus on providing evidence for the productivity enhancing role that “diversity and inclusion” might have, human resources and management research argue that more diverse firms will improve their economic outcomes (Bertrand, 2018). A recent study shows that employers do expect that integrating diversity will gain a competitive edge for their companies by providing different perspectives, ideas, experiences, and characters. Furthermore,

approximately 25% of the participating companies state that the environment of inclusion is beneficial for all employees and helps to exploit their full potential (Jonsen et al., 2021).

2.3.1.2. Why Does the Glass Ceiling Exist?

Although women overtook men when it comes to completed years of schooling, certain types of degrees providing the greatest earnings on the labor market are still male dominated (Bertrand, 2018). Contrary to the assumption that women do earn less due to their occupational choices, Goldin (2014) argues that female employees receive less compensation within the same companies as well as occupations than men. However, in a study conducted by Bertrand (2018) it has been shown that the females born in 1950 chose fields of study, which lead to 14% lower mean earnings than the fields of study chosen by men in this birth cohort.

According to this study and further research contributions such as Goldin (2014), the conclusion that women's education is no longer a factor impacting the gender pay gap, might be wrong. Hence, an effort to create a greater understanding of why women do not choose to engage in certain fields of study must be undertaken in order to converge the disparities in the earning distribution. One of the most popular explanations of why women do not choose specific fields of study and are underrepresented in the top earning distribution are differences in attitudes towards risk and competition (Bertrand, 2018). Since this issue has already been discussed at an earlier point in the paper, it will solely be highlighted with regard to the glass ceiling.

High-earning occupations are frequently characterized by competitive settings where participants must be assertive and willing to compete against each other. Hence, demanding and stronger individuals will be most likely rewarded disproportionately to their less assertive colleagues. Research contributions mentioned beforehand provide evidence that women do prefer to stay away from these environments. Accordingly, the effect of gender in competition has a significant impact on the earning distribution and is most pronounced in high-profile occupations (Bertrand, 2018).

Further, Niederle & Versterlund (2007) examine gender differences in competition with an experimental approach which shows that although women perform equally well as their male opponents, women do enter competitive tournament scheme less often. Concludingly, women who perform well and, therefore, have great chances to outperform males choose not to enter the competition. Pertaining to the labor market payoff maximization this concludes that too many high ability women self-select out of the tournament, especially for top management positions, resulting in loss of talent in the economy.

2.3.2. The Gender Wage Gap

The latest general income report conducted in 2018 by the Austrian Court of Auditors stated that in 2017 women earned on average 37% less than their male counterparts. This result is not corrected for working time, however, when only full-time equivalents were considered, the gender wage gap still accounts for 16%. The inequalities regarding wages are highest among full-time white-collar workers where women earn 32% less than men. Whereas the differences for full-time blue-collar workers account for 28% and for individuals working in the public sector only 6% (*Living and Working in Austria*, 2021).

The unadjusted Austrian gender pay gap which is defined as “the relative difference between the average gross hourly earnings of women and men in the private sector” (*Gender Pay Gap Statistics - Statistics Explained*, February 2021) was at 21.7% in 2015. In 2006, it was at 25.5%, accordingly, the wage differences slightly decreased within the last ten years. Nevertheless, in comparison to other EU member states, Austria is above the average and ranks amongst the countries with the biggest wage differentials between men and women. Statistics Austria conducted an analysis examining the impact of various factors on the gender pay gap: According to this study, differences partly are caused by observable characteristics such as economic activity, occupation, education, age, length of service in the company, full- and part-time work, type of employment contract, region or size of the company. In other words, 39% of the gender gap in Austria were explained through the mentioned factors, whereas 61% cannot be explained and remain unobservable, at least with the factors implemented in the model (Geisberger & Glaser, 2017).

This finding is also shown by Böheim et al. (2013), who examined the persistence of the gender pay gap in Austria between 2002 and 2007. By using a decomposition method, the researchers were able to observe factors potentially contributing to wage inequalities. Thus, observable factors such as education or labor market experience and unobservable factors such as statistical discrimination or preferences towards competition and risk were examined. The authors report that the gender pay gap decreased by 3 percentage points from 2002 to 2007, which can be traced back to certain developments within this timeframe (Böheim et al., 2013).

There were three developments which had impacted the narrowing of the gender pay gap over the past few years. Firstly, women improved their formal education (Böheim et al., 2013). This aspect has been widely documented and various research contributions report that women overtake men with regard to education (Bertrand, 2018; Goldin, 2014). Secondly, the development of returns to education for male and female individuals is converging. However,

men still dominate in the educational degrees in which the highest labor market returns are generated. The last development concerns the relative improvements of females' unobserved factors. Further, it has been shown that the gender pay gap is narrower at the bottom of the earning distribution due to the fact that collective bargaining is the standard procedure on the Austrian labor market (Böheim et al., 2013). This finding is replicated by Säve-Söderbergh (2019) who report that the difference in compensation between gender is higher in jobs where individual negotiation occurs rather than in jobs with pre-determined pay.

Although the biggest union in Austria, the Union for Salaried Employees, Graphical Workers and Journalists, recommended to implement female compensation bargaining rounds in 2011 to raise women's pay and, therefore, lower the high Austrian gender pay gap, the suggestion was never realized. Since then, no attempt to start a similar initiative was implemented. Nevertheless, in various collective agreements the issue of leaves, e.g. parental, which frequently concerns women, were targeted and increased compensations in these situations were discussed (*Living and Working in Austria*, 2021).

2.3.3. Wage Determination

Compensation determination is a key variable within job search models for organization as well as for job seekers. Thereby, two common mechanisms can be differentiated: compensation bargaining and compensation posting (Brenzel et al., 2014).

Some job applicants can bargain over their compensation within the job application process, while other job seekers will experience wage as pre-determined and, therefore, as a "take it or leave it" opportunity. In the case of the latter, namely wage posting, an employer defines the employee's requirements, duties and skills. Further the conditions of the compensation will be set before the recruiting process starts. In comparison to this, in wage bargaining models the organization sets an initial compensation offer and the applicants can respond with a counteroffer. Thus, the ensuing situation is defined by alternating bargaining (Brenzel et al., 2014; Hall & Krueger, 2012).

Nevertheless, the process of individual wage bargaining is not always the prevalent procedure on the labor market. Hall & Krüger (2012) report that only one third of workers in the US bargained over their actual salary. Regarding unionism and governmental jobs, the determination process most likely does not include individual bargaining. Brenzel et al. (2014) report a similar wage determination for unionized and public employment on the German labor market. However, Brenčič (2012) examined three labor markets and found substantial

differences in the incidence of wage posting. The researcher investigated the wage determination in job advertisements in the US, UK, and Slovenia. The results show that posting of wage is most prevalent in the UK: around 86% of job advertisements included a wage offer. However, the degree of how negotiable the respective offer is varied, namely with regard to negotiable, non-negotiable, minimum, and maximum compensation offers in the job advertisement (Brenčič, 2012).

Furthermore, the author found that hiring firms are less likely to pre-determine wage when searching for a highly skilled worker. (Brenčič, 2012). This leads to the conclusion that wage posting is a successful compensation determination for potential candidates whose reservation wage is beyond the one posted and, hence, excludes workers who have a higher reservation wage as well as productivity (Brenzel et al., 2014). Reviewing the literature on wage determination in different countries, it can be assumed that job applicants' behavior regarding individual bargaining depends on the organization's design of compensation determination.

USA

The approach of high centralization and coordination where unions play a crucial part in the wage determination process and which is often applied in Europe results in similar wage developments across regions. However, this constellation is mostly absent in the US. In comparison to Germany or Austria, collective bargaining does not cover all states but is rather a regional phenomenon. Due to the size of the US, the state has no uniform wage determination process and rather functions on an atomistic wage bargaining system, which makes the process less obvious and transparent. For example, in New England or on the West Coast collective bargaining is still deeply rooted in transportation, communications, food processing, health care, manufacturing, retail, service, entertainment, hospitality, as well as in many other sectors (Compa, 2014).

However, the majority of bargaining in the private sector occurs at the level of the individual firm. Contrary to Europe sectoral bargaining with social partners does not exist in the US; unions rather negotiate directly at the enterprise level with managements. For large national groups, bargaining takes place at the national level on a "master agreement", followed by "supplemental agreements" at the company's different locations.

Austria

In Austria, it is a legal requirement for employers to state the minimum wage in every job advertisement, either according to the collective agreement or the minimum wage possible for

the respective position (*Angabe des Mindestentgelts im Stelleninserat*, 2021; *Living and Working in Austria*, 2021) Although there is no general legal minimum wage in Austria, the majority of wage formation in the private sector takes place on the basis of collective agreements. In international comparison, Austria has an extremely high coverage rate of collective agreements, which accounts for 98% across all industries (*Warum Kollektivverträge?*, 2019).

This is due the obligatory membership of the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber (WKÖ), which represents the employers' side in collective bargaining. However, the collective bargaining on behalf of the employees' side is performed by various trade unions which are part of the Austrian Trade Union Federation (ÖGB) and the sectoral subunits of the mentioned Chamber for employers (WKÖ) (*Living and Working in Austria*, 2021).

The wage determination within the labor market plays an important role regarding the pay inequalities and the gender wage gap. Researcher state that the lower compensation for female individuals on the labor market could be increased by collective bargaining, centralized compensation settings or other institutional policies (Blau and Kahn 2003). However, considering Austria's high rate of collective bargaining and its significant gender pay gap, collective agreements might not be the problem's solution.

Besides the statement of the minimum wage according to the collective agreement in job advertisements, employers frequently explicitly mention that a high education level as well as experience in the respective industry and occupation can lead to a higher wage than stated. However, this additional declaration does not have to be stated since it is not a legal requirement for Austrian employers (*Angabe des Mindestentgelts im Stelleninserat*, 2021).

3. Research Approach

The overall research issue refers to women's lower willingness in comparison to men to engage in competitive environments rooting in women's competition and risk aversion. Regarding the labor market, risk and competition frequently characterize the environment and, hence, hinder female individuals moving up the career ladder. Besides the large body of literature concentrating on the general issue of competition aversion, recent literature aimed to examine females' behavior within bargaining situations. The results show that there are various factors influencing the negotiation outcome for females.

Therefore, the literature review highlighted the most relevant aspects: structural factors, social stereotypes and the backlash effect, the importance of the gender matching within a negotiation as well as transparency regarding negotiation opportunities and ranges. The latter factors have proven to be crucial. Researcher found that women do not lack in their negotiation skills but rather do not perceive situations as negotiable and, therefore, do not take the opportunities. Thus, men more than women have the possibility to bargain over salary, resources, or promotions.

According to various contributions the disparity in negotiation outcomes has a substantial impact on the gender gap in earnings, whereby the starting salary establishes the basis for further discrepancies over time. Hence, investigating and attempting to understand the origin of negotiation differences between women and men within the job entry process may contribute to a convergence of the gender gap in pay. In the present paper the main focus lies on the influencing factor of transparency regarding the negotiation opportunity within a job advertisement. It has been shown that the explicit statement that salary is negotiable mitigates the effect of gender. Consequently, female applicants are more likely to have a greater compensation outcome. Conducting large field experiments in the US the researcher found to some extent evidence that females take negotiation opportunities as often as men do whenever explicitly offered.

However, to broaden the research perspective on the geographical level and examine whether these results hold true for other labor markets, the present paper investigates the effect of explicit negotiation statements in job advertisements on females' propensity to initiate the negotiation over wage on the Austrian labor market. In comparison to the US, most of the occupations on the Austrian labor market are covered by collective agreements pre-determining wage and setting additional frameworks for workers in the respective industry.

3.1. Research Questions

Considering the above summarized research on gender differences in negotiations and the influencing factors as well as the geographical scope of the existing literature the following research questions were formulated:

How does the ambiguity regarding wage negotiation in job advertisements influence women's propensity to initiate the negotiation?

Do women perceive the initial wage offer as less negotiable than men? Do women perceive the salary as less negotiable when there is no explicit statement about individual bargaining?

3.2. Hypotheses

Reviewing the literature on wage determination it is important to examine the labor market conditions and which wage-setting process is prevalent on the Austrian labor market. By doing so a conclusion can be drawn whether the wage determination stated in a job advertisement namely the explicit opportunity to negotiate or wage posting influences women's propensity to negotiate. According to the glass ceiling effect the gap regarding pay grows with higher education and is largest in top level positions (Bertrand, 2018). This may be explained by the greater range of negotiation outcomes within high educated positions. In other words, due to women's lower propensity to individually bargain over the initial salary offer, the wage gap broadens whenever opportunities to negotiate occur. As mentioned beforehand individual bargaining is a phenomenon mostly emerging in jobs which require highly skilled and qualified workers (Artz et al., 2018; Stevens & Whelan, 2019). Since education of men and women within industries mostly converged over the past decades (Goldin, 2014) the lower propensity of initiating negotiations may also reflect the differentiated perception of situations being negotiable or not (Bowles et al., 2007). Therefore, the following hypothesis was derived:

H10: There is no difference between gender in the propensity to initiate the wage negotiation in a job interview.

H1a: Men are more likely to initiate the wage negotiation in a job interview than women.

However, reviewing the literature on bargaining opportunities for men and women, it can be determined that transparency is a driving factor (Leibbrandt & List, 2014). In the case of salary negotiations opportunities may be explicitly stated as such or leave the applicants ambiguous about the negotiability of wage. Individuals who enter salary negotiations face high levels of uncertainty concerning the range of potential outcome, appropriate negotiation parameters

(Bowles & Babcock, 2013) and how the compensation expectations are received by the negotiation partner (Bowles et al., 2007).

In Austria the initial wage offer in a job advertisement is required by law (*Angabe des Mindestentgelts im Stelleninserat*, 2021) and, thus, will not have any positive effect on job seekers. However, the explicit statement whether the company is willing to pay more than the minimum collective wage is not legally regulated and, hence, might have a positive or negative impact on female job seekers.

Various research contributions show that transparency regarding negotiations is a driving factor forwarding the convergence of the gender pay gap. Conducting a laboratory field experiment Exley et al. (2020) show that women do not have to be forced to negotiate more whenever they know the bargaining subject, the range, and their options outside the negotiation. By eliminating the driving factors for gender differences namely high structural and situational ambiguity, this research highlights the importance of transparency and illustrates that a low level of ambiguity fosters women's propensity to initiate a negotiation (Exley et al., 2020).

Further contributions complement these findings and emphasize that the explicit statement that there is a negotiation opportunity generates a positive effect for women (Kugler et al., 2018; Leibbrandt & List, 2014). These findings conclude that initiatives providing transparency to the negotiators especially to females help to equalize opportunities to negotiate (Bowles et al., 2005; Kugler et al., 2018; Leibbrandt & List, 2014; Small et al., 2007). More precisely and substantial for this thesis, the research contribution by Leibbrandt & List (2014) investigates whether the explicit statement of wage negotiability in job advertisements influence female job seekers' decision to initiate the negotiation positively. Thereby, it has been found that both genders are impacted by the greater transparency regarding negotiability.

However, the statement may have a greater impact on females and, therefore, leads to a convergence of gender differences in this regard. Taking the reviewed literature into account and concluding that not only female but all individuals feel encouraged by an explicit opportunity to negotiate over wage, the following hypothesis was formulated:

H20: The statement regarding negotiability in the job advertisement does neither influence women nor men in their decision to initiate the wage negotiation.

H2a: The explicit statement that the offered wage is negotiable in a job advertisement influences job seekers to initiate the wage negotiation positively.

According to existing research (Artz et al., 2018; Leibbrandt & List, 2014; Stevens & Whelan, 2019) female individuals tend to perceive fewer situations as negotiable and, thus, also recognize less wage negotiation opportunities. Leibbrandt & List (2014) show that women are less likely to bargain over the offered wage and sometimes are even willing to work for a lower salary than initially stated. Rather than engaging in a wage negotiation, women accept the offer. As discussed above by implementing an explicit opportunity to negotiate the negotiation differences between gender disappear.

Although the emphasis on wage negotiability has a great positive effect on women's negotiation behavior, research shows that the absence of an explicit statement regarding the wage negotiability has an even greater negative impact on females in comparison to males (Leibbrandt & List, 2014). Further research on this issue provides evidence that the gender effect is more present whenever the negotiation subject, the range as well as the expected behavior are ambiguous (Bowles & Babcock, 2013). Thus, the following hypothesis was created to test whether no statement regarding the negotiability of wage will negatively influence women's willingness to initiate the negotiation:

H2b: No statement concerning the negotiability of the offered wage in a job advertisement influences female job seekers to initiate the wage negotiation negatively.

Further the lower propensity to negotiate might reflect the differentiated perception of men and women whether a situation is negotiable or not (Bowles et al., 2007). This, however, may be influenced by past positive or negative experiences as well as the opportunities the individuals had in the past. Thus, individuals' perception about wage negotiability might be affected by gained experiences such as success or failure and are considerable factors (Stevens & Whelan, 2019).

H30: There is no difference between gender in the perception of wage negotiability regarding the initial wage offer.

H3a: Women do perceive the initial wage offer as less negotiable than men, regardless of the negotiability statement in the job advertisement.

3.3. Empirical Approach

The present study was designed within an online survey to collect data for this thesis using the online survey tool "SoSci Survey". The aim of this paper is to identify the cause effect relationship between the two dependent variables, namely the decision to initiate a negotiation

as well as the perception of wage negotiability, and the independent variable, namely the stated option of negotiability in the job advertisement. In doing so, the focus of the research strongly lies on gender differences appearing in the respective setting.

Before the empirical part of the research started, a target group was defined in order to attract participants through the stated salary in the job advertisements. Therefore, the specific group of students or recently graduates of Business or International Business Administration, respectively newcomers to the labor market aged between 20 and 35 was chosen. Participants shall have either no or little working experience, namely a maximum of 5 years, cover all genders and shall currently or have been seeking for a job in the past 12 months. The limitation to a concrete target group is necessary to examine a group of people who have not gained a lot of experience regarding wage bargaining on the labor market. Furthermore, it is crucial for the research outcome that participants feel attracted to the respective job advertisements and, therefore, act according to their natural behavior.

3.3.1. Survey Design

To test whether female job seekers are more averse to initiate a wage negotiation than men, the research approach of a vignette study was chosen. For the respective research approach to be credible, the stated vignettes are based on recent studies presented in chapter 2.2. “Gender Differences in Negotiations”. The survey itself was conducted in German and was online from 19th May to 14th of June 2021. The main sources of data acquisition were social media channels such as WhatsApp, Facebook and LinkedIn. An introduction text was created and in order to not reveal the purpose of the research, namely investigating the gender effect within the context of salary negotiations, only a short description giving away that the survey examines the participants’ behavior in negotiation settings was stated. Apart from the introduction part, the survey can be divided in six sections:

Pre-Survey Questionnaire

Firstly, to verify the participants personal, educational, and occupational details a questionnaire was stated and shall sort out individuals who are not suitable as potential participant. The first question, namely whether the participant studies or has studied business administration or any related field, sorts out all individuals who are not or never have studied the respective field. Furthermore, by asking questions regarding the participants’ work experience, level of education and their job seeking intention, it was possible to correct the data to the intended target group after the collection process. Collecting information on the participants’ educational

and occupational background allows to include further variables in the subsequent data analysis which aims at determining differences in negotiation behavior and outcomes between gender.

Vignettes

After the questionnaire the main part of the research, namely the assignment of one out of two vignettes, takes place. A description above each vignette instructs the participants to put themselves in the hypothetical scenario. In each scenario respondents must imagine seeking a job and finding a job advertisement online that they find attractive due to the stated job tasks, the company as well as the industry.

According to online research on job platforms, most advertisements consist of three parts: job tasks, applicant's requirements and the company's offer including the initial wage offer. However, within this research each vignette represents only the last part of a job advertisement, namely the company's offer. Both vignettes include that the company offers *a dynamic work environment, career advancements, flexible working hours as well as the initial wage offer*. By creating the vignettes, average starting salaries of 2,700€ for job seekers in the respective field was chosen and solely the statement regarding the wage negotiability varied.

Figure 1: Vignette „Explicit Statement “. Own illustration.

Auf der Suche nach einem passenden Job stoßen Sie online auf ein Stelleninserat, welches Ihnen inhaltlich zusagt. Sowohl das Unternehmen selbst, die Branche, in der das Unternehmen tätig ist als auch die Aufgabenbereiche entsprechen Ihren Vorstellungen. Nun scrollen Sie nach unten und finden den letzten Abschnitt des Stelleninserats, in dem das Angebot des Unternehmens, welches Sie als potenzielle/r neue/r Mitarbeiter/in erwarten können, dargelegt wird.

Unser Angebot für Sie:

- ein dynamisches Umfeld in einem marktführenden Konzern,
- abwechslungsreiche und vielfältige Aufgabenbereiche,
- vielfältige Weiterentwicklungs- und Karrieremöglichkeiten,
- flexible Arbeitszeiteinteilung,
- 2.700 € brutto pro Monat auf Vollzeitbasis, wobei wir je nach Erfahrung und Qualifikation eine marktkonforme Entlohnung bieten.

Wir freuen uns auf Ihre Bewerbung!

This manipulation of the negotiation statements is the approach to test whether ambiguity regarding wage negotiability has an impact on the propensity to initiate wage negotiations and the differences between gender in this regard. The first treatment is “explicit statement” (Figure

1) in which participants are confronted with a company's offer, stating explicitly that the initial wage is negotiable in the application process. The second vignette is "no statement" (Figure 2), which does not include any description of wage negotiability.

Figure 2: Vignette „No Statement “. Own illustration.

Auf der Suche nach einem passenden Job stoßen Sie online auf ein Stelleninserat, welches Ihnen inhaltlich zusagt. Sowohl das Unternehmen selbst, die Branche, in der das Unternehmen tätig ist als auch die Aufgabenbereiche entsprechen Ihren Vorstellungen. Nun scrollen Sie nach unten und finden den letzten Abschnitt des Stelleninserats, in dem das Angebot des Unternehmens, welches Sie als potenzielle/r neue/r Mitarbeiter/in erwarten können, dargelegt wird.

Unser Angebot für Sie:

- ein dynamisches Umfeld in einem marktführenden Konzern,
- abwechslungsreiche und vielfältige Aufgabenbereiche,
- vielfältige Weiterentwicklungs- und Karrieremöglichkeiten,
- flexible Arbeitszeiteinteilung,
- 2.700 € brutto pro Monat auf Vollzeitbasis.

Wir freuen uns auf Ihre Bewerbung!

Company's Offer and Expectation Match

With regard to the assigned vignette, the probands must rate different statements via a 5-point Likert scale. In doing so, they were asked whether the entire offer, the stated wage as well as the offerings separately – *career advancement opportunities, flexible working hours, a variety of job tasks and a dynamic working environment* – meet their expectations. Rating opportunities ranged from 1 - strongly disagree to 5 - strongly agree. Furthermore, respondents are asked whether they find wage the most important determinant within a job, and if they would apply for the job based on the stated offer.

Job Interview Scenario

After the vignettes' introduction and the offer-expectation match of participants, the hypothetical scenario is taken one step further. Therefore, respondents must imagine that they are invited to a job interview for the respective job. The behavior regarding wage negotiation was the focus in this part. Firstly, participants must rank how likely they are to wait for their interview partner to ask for their salary expectations in this scenario. Furthermore, questions about whether they initiate the negotiation whenever the opponent does not ask for their salary negotiations or whether they assume that the initial wage offer is set are asked. This part aims

to examine the participants' assertiveness in the interview and shall explore the differences between female and male respondents in their initiation to negotiate.

General behavior

In this section, respondents are asked about their general behavior in job entry and application processes. In doing so, participants shall not refer to the firm's offer anymore and rate the statements according to their behavior in their real-life job search. Statements regarding their perception of wage negotiability within an application process were presented and shall be ranked via 5-point Likert scale again. Therefore, respondents must give ratings on, for instance, the following statements:

- "I negotiate assertively whenever I feel perfectly qualified for the job."¹ (GNB_02)
- "Salary negotiation is an indispensable part in an application process."² (GNB_04)
- "The initial wage in a job advertisement is negotiable."³ (GNB_06)
- "It is important for me to enforce my salary negotiations."⁴ (GNB_07)

Referring to the second research question, this part shall assess whether women do or do not perceive the starting salary in a job as negotiable.

Demographic data

The last part of the thesis' survey was a collection of the participants' demographic data to include factors beyond gender, such as age or occupational status, potentially influencing behavior and decisions. This is particularly relevant since literature suggests that not only gender but also varying factors impact individuals' negotiation behavior. Further, the questionnaire includes questions about their past experiences with application processes and whether they had an opportunity to negotiate over the initial wage within this process.

¹ Translated from German: „Ich verhandle das Gehalt eindringlich, wenn ich finde, dass ich für die Stelle qualifiziert bin.“

² Translated from German: „Die Gehaltsverhandlung ist für mich ein fixer Bestandteil im Laufe eines Bewerbungsprozesses.“

³ Translated from German: „Das Einstiegsgehalt in einem neuen Job ist immer verhandelbar.“

⁴ Translated from German: „Mir ist es wichtig, dass ich meine Gehaltsvorstellungen durchsetzen kann.“

3.3.2. Data Collection

The present research collected empirical data by means of a pretested online survey regarding the negotiation behavior of respondents (total number of participants, N=134). Thereby the differences between gender are in the focus of research. Within the present chapter, a univariate analysis of the data will be given by highlighting relevant variables for the analysis and analyzing the sample.

In order to test the hypothesis, the following variables and level of measurement have been defined. With regards to the independent and the dependent variables, the aim is to examine how *gender* and the *statement of negotiability* in a job advertisement influence job seekers *propensity to initiate the salary negotiation* in a job interview. Further, the influencing factors on the *perception of wage negotiability* with the focus on *gender* will be determined.

Dependent variables

The dependent variables *negotiation behavior in the interview (NBI)* were measured on a 5-point Likert scale *1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neither agree nor disagree, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree*. In this survey, the respondents' *propensity to initiate the wage negotiation* within the given scenario is measured by one question (*NBI_02*). Participants were asked to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement "If I do not get asked about my wage expectations during the interview, I will initiate the negotiation myself."⁵

Further, to investigate whether the participants would have a negotiation over pay and to examine the differences in salary expectations between gender, the following two questions with regard to the stated wage offer were asked: "Would you negotiate for a higher pay? If so, how much more would you demand in a salary negotiation? (Reminder: The stated salary is 2,700€)"⁶ and "What would be your absolute limit regarding your gross monthly salary?"⁷

General negotiation behavior (GNB) refers to the participants' general behavior within wage negotiations. However, the collection of these variables also reveals the respondents' *perception of wage negotiability* in general. By creating a new variable, namely *mean_GNB* ($mean_GNB = GNB_02 + GNB04 + GNB_06 + GNB_07/4$), the respondents' perception can be summarized. The chosen items were selected by calculating a reliability test to check for

⁵ Translated from German: „Wenn ich nicht nach meiner Gehaltsvorstellung gefragt werde, nenne ich sie im Laufe des Gesprächs selbst.“

⁶ Translated from German: „Würden Sie das Gehalt höher ansetzen als im Inserat angegeben? (Erinnerung: das angegebene Gehalt ist 2.700 €). Wenn ja, wieviel höher würden Sie es ansetzen?“

⁷ Translated from German: „Was wäre Ihre Schmerzgrenze bzw. zu welchem Bruttomonatsgehalt würden Sie den Job annehmen?“

internal consistency of the 5-point Likert scale and were confirmed to be items representing the participants' general negotiation behavior best within the created item set. The process of the items' reliability test will be discussed in detail within the next chapter, namely the data analysis.

Independent variables

Discussing the existing literature on gender differences in negotiations, it has been determined that a variety of factors influence both genders' negotiation behavior. Therefore, the survey aimed to conduct the following socio-demographic variables: *gender* was measured on a nominal scale with three options: male, female and diverse; *age* measured on a metric scale, allowing participants to enter their age in a range from 0-100. However, within the data analysis the variable *age* was transformed into the following ordinal scale: 20-22 years, 23-25 years, 26-28 years, 29-31 years, 32-34 years, and 35 years and older.

Similarly, *years of working experience in the relevant field* was measured on a metric scale, allowing respondents to enter their working experience within a range from 0-100 years. Likewise, the variable was transformed into a nominal scale with the following categories: no experience, less than one year, one to two and a half years, two and a half years to four years, four to five years, more than five years.

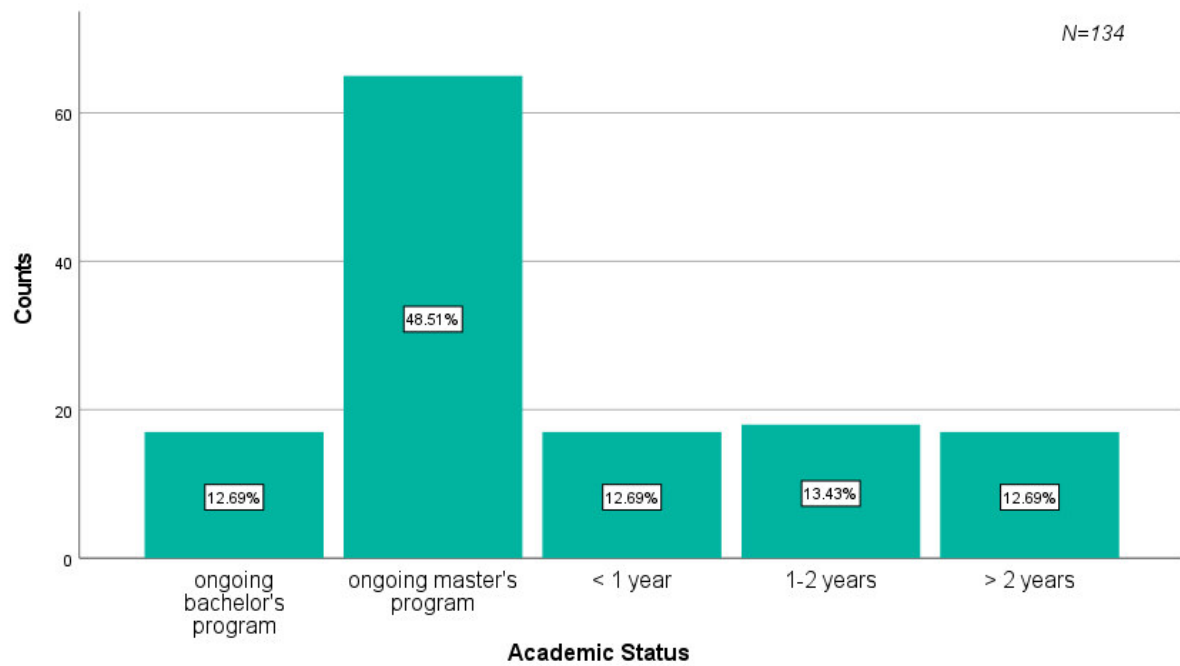
Participants' *nationality* was measured on a nominal scale with three options: Austrian, German and others; *academic status* measured on a nominal scale with five categories: ongoing bachelor's program, ongoing master's program, graduated less than one year ago, graduated one to two years ago, graduated more than two years ago.

Sample

As mentioned beforehand, a pre-questionnaire was conducted to sort out all individuals who do not fit into the defined target group. Therefore, the collected data was reduced from N=146 to N=134 valid responses which were then considered for the statistical analysis. The main reason for the data reduction is that individuals do or did not study business or international business administration or in any related field.

However, the finalized sample consists of 61.2% (n=82) business administration students and 38.8% (n=52) individuals who have completed their studies in this field within the last 5 years. 12.70% (n=17) of them are currently attending the bachelor's program, 48.50% (n=65) are in the master's program, whereas 26.10% (n=35) finished their degree within the past two years and 12.70% (n=17) finished it more than two years ago (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Bar chart: Participants' academic status.



The mean of age range corresponds to 26 to 28 years with 42.54% (n=57) and ranges from 20 to 37, whereby most respondents namely 96.30% (n=129) are between 20 and 34 years old (Figure 4). Focusing on the participants' working experience measured in years, the following was found: the average of relevant working experience is 3.2 years, whereby more than one quarter, respectively 26.12% (n=35), has never worked in a job relevant to their field of studies. The majority of the respondents namely 92.5% (n=124) have a maximum of 5 years of experience, and, therefore, fit the intended target group (Figure 5).

Figure 4: Bar chart: Age of participants in years.

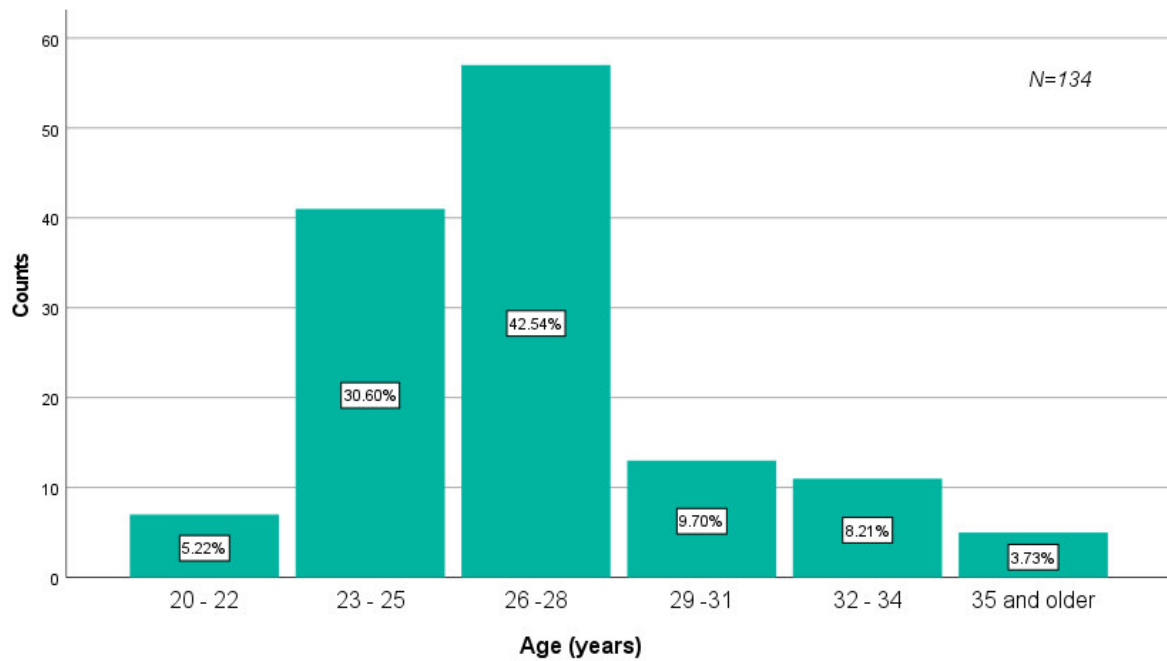
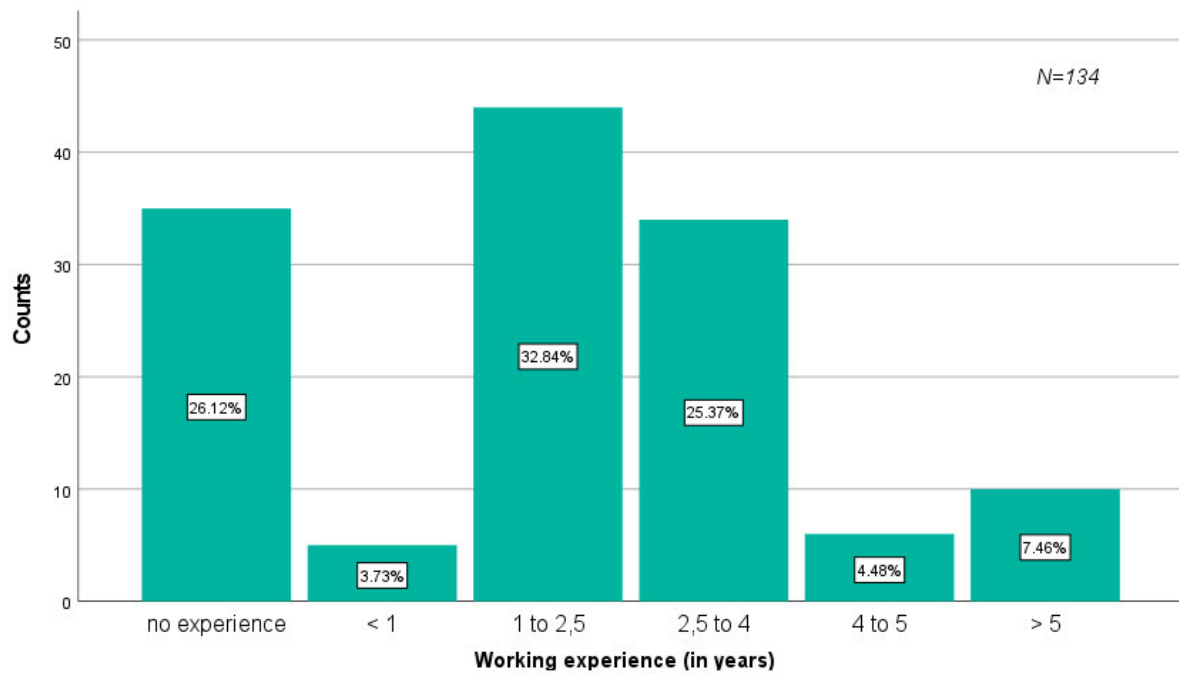


Figure 5: Bar chart: Participants working experience in years.



Further, it can be determined that 59% (n=79) of the participants are female and 41% (n=55) male (Table 1). Regarding the nationality of the participants, three quarters, respectively 75.4% (n=101) of respondents are Austrian, 17.9% (n=24) are German, and 6.7% (n=9) belong to other nationalities (Table 2). With regards to the respondents' experience on the labor market, it can be seen in Table 3 that 91.8% (n=123) already searched for a job on an Austrian online platform,

and, therefore, it can be assumed that they are familiar with job advertisements and the statement of minimum wage according to collective agreements in Austria.

Table 1: Frequency Gender.

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	55	41.0	41.0	41.0
	Female	79	59.0	59.0	100.0
	Total	134	100.0	100.0	

Table 2: Frequency Nationality.

		Nationality			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Austria	101	75.4	75.4	75.4
	Germany	24	17.9	17.9	93.3
	Others	9	6.7	6.7	100.0
	Total	134	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: Frequency Job Search on an Austrian online platform.

		Job search in Austria			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	123	91.8	91.8	91.8
	No	11	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	134	100.0	100.0	

Concerning the participants' expectation corresponding to the hypothetical initial wage offer, great differences can be observed between gender. While 26.60% (n=26) of women participating answered that they *strongly agree* or *agree* that the wage offer meets their expectations and even 64.60% (n=51) either *strongly agree*, *agree* or *neither agree nor disagree*, male respondents are not satisfied by the initial wage offer. Only 20% (n=11) men responded that they *strongly agree* or *agree* that the salary meets their expectations and only 40% (n=23) *strongly agree*, *agree* or *neither agree nor disagree* to that statement (Figure 6).

With regard to the question which amount of salary respondents consider as their minimum wage for a job, it can be determined that women more often than men would accept the job for less than the initial wage offer of 2,700€. While only 14.50% (n=8) of men stated to be willing to work for less, more than one third of female respondents, namely 34.20% (n=27), stated a

lower minimum salary which they are willing to work for. Further, 43.60% (n=24) of male participants stated that their minimum wage amounts to 3,001€ or more, while only 15.20% (n=12) female participants responded likewise (Figure 7).

Figure 6: Bar chart: Wage offer and salary expectations by gender.

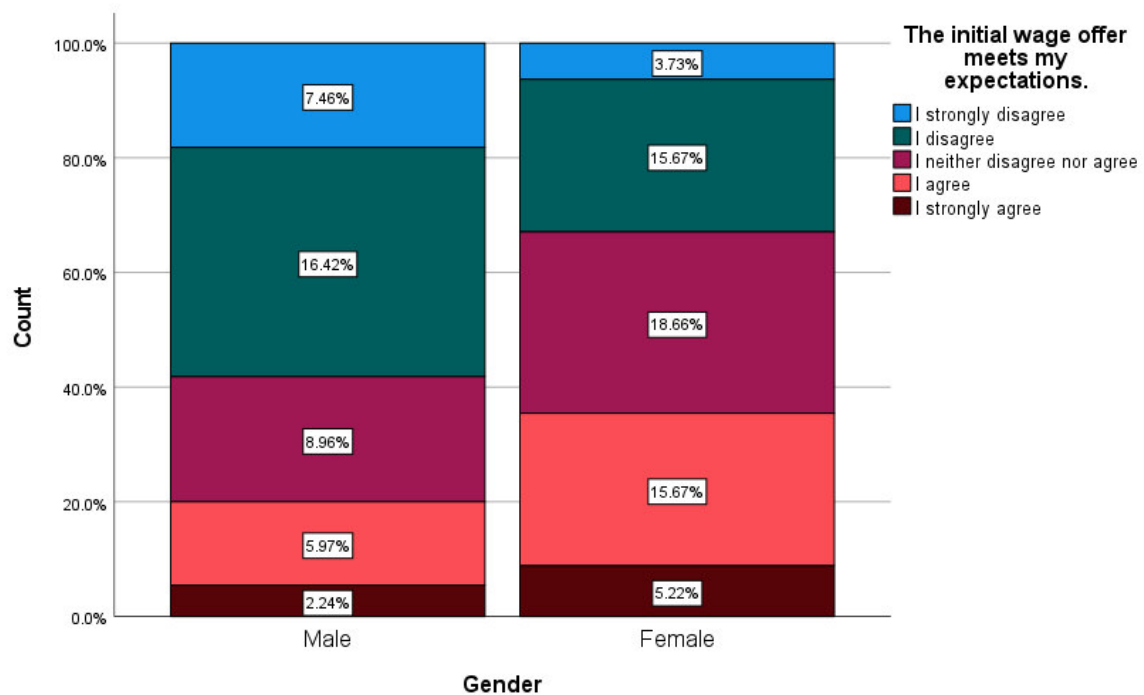
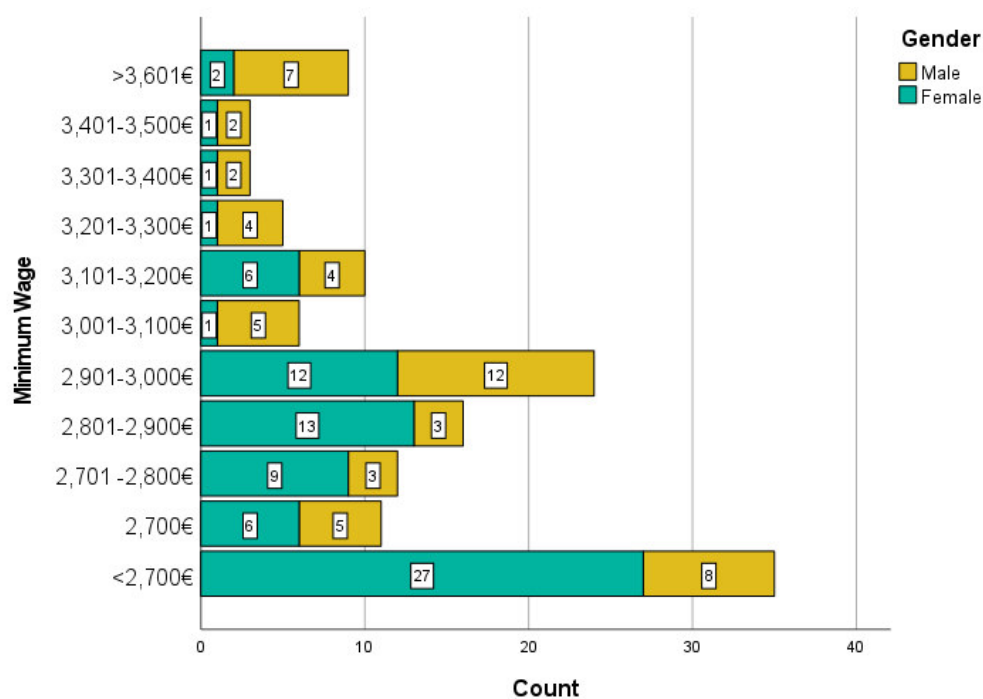


Figure 7: Bar chart: Participants' minimum wage expectation.



4. Data Analysis

The present chapter deals with the statistical analysis of the collected data. In the first subchapter, subscales are tested on their internal consistency by computing Cronbach's Alpha to ensure that further analyses are reliable. Further, the hypotheses which were derived earlier in this paper are tested by conducting independent sample t-tests as well as an analysis of variances. Moreover, the subchapter 4.3. "Regression Analysis" aims to give deeper insights into which factors influence respondents' *propensity to negotiate over pay* as well as their *perception of wage negotiability* within an application process. In doing so, the focus lies on the differences which can be found between gender. Finally, the result of the conducted statistical analysis will be reviewed and interpreted.

4.1. Reliability Test (Cronbach's Alpha)

To check the internal consistency and as a reliability analysis, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated. The chosen analysis shall reveal whether the used 5-point Likert scale provides consistency. Therefore, a reliability test was conducted for two subscales, namely *offer expectation match (OEM)* and *general negotiation behavior (GNB)*. The first subscale is used to measure how much the respondent feels attracted to the hypothetical company's offer created for the research purpose.

Conducting the test for the first set of seven items Cronbach's Alpha accounted for .434. After eliminating two items (*OEM_05*, *OEM_06*), the alpha value rose to .594 which is an acceptable value accounting for consistency within the set of the five items:

- "A market-leading company is where I want to work."⁸ (*OEM_01*)
- "I am interested in possibilities for further training and career advancements."⁹ (*OEM_02*)
- "The initial wage offer meets my expectations."¹⁰ (*OEM_03*)
- "The company's offer meets my expectations."¹¹ (*OEM_04*)
- "I would apply for the job."¹² (*OEM_07*)

⁸ Translated from German: „Ein großes marktführendes Unternehmen ist ein Umfeld, in dem ich arbeiten möchte.“

⁹ Translated from German: „Die Möglichkeit auf Weiterbildung ist interessant für mich.“

¹⁰ Translated from German: „Das angegebene Gehalt im Inserat entspricht meinen Vorstellungen.“

¹¹ Translated from German: „Das Angebot des Unternehmens entspricht meinen Vorstellungen.“

¹² Translated from German: „Ich würde mich auf die ausgeschriebene Stelle bewerben.“

Table 4: Cronbach's Alpha for OEM_01, OEM_02, OEM_03, OEM_04, OEM_07.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.594	5

Table 5: Item Statistics for OEM_01, OEM_02, OEM_03, OEM_04, OEM_07.

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
The initial wage offer meets my expectations.	14.99	6.985	.326	.554
A market-leading company is where I want to work.	14.25	7.785	.186	.631
I am interested in possibilities for further training and career advancement.	13.37	8.880	.125	.634
The company's offer meets my expectations.	14.34	6.616	.606	.416
I would apply for the job.	14.31	5.627	.576	.390

Referring to the second set of items (*GNB*), the reliability test showed that four out of seven items account for the highest alpha, namely .814. Accordingly, using the variables *GNB_02*, *GNB_04*, *GNB_06* and *GNB_07* result in internal consistency of the set (Table 24 & 25, see Appendix).

4.2.Hypotheses Testing

H10: There is no difference between gender in the propensity to initiate the wage negotiation in a job interview.

H1a: Men are more likely to initiate the wage negotiation in a job interview than women.

The first hypothesis assumes that there is no difference between *gender* in the *propensity to initiate a wage negotiation (NBI_02)* in a job interview, regardless of the mentioned negotiability statement in the job advertisement. A first look at *Figure 9* reveals that more than 70% of male respondents in comparison to slightly more than 40% females *agree or strongly agree* that they would initiate the wage negotiation when they do not get asked by the interviewer.

Figure 8: Bar chart: Propensity to initiate the salary negotiation by gender.

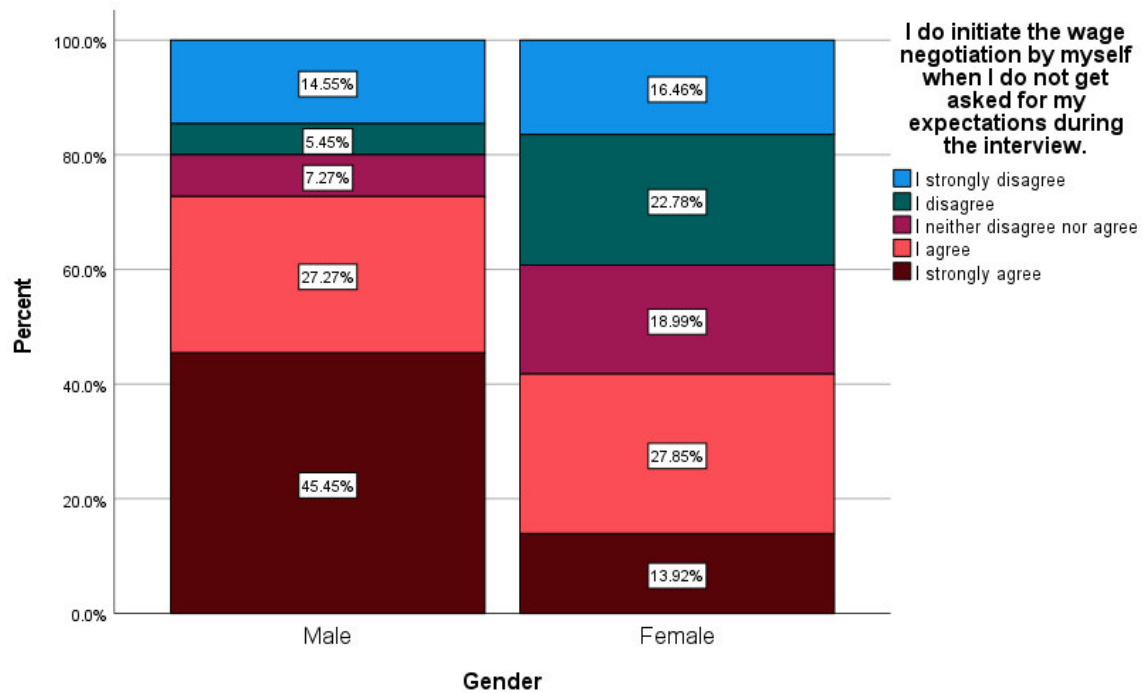


Table 5 shows the descriptive analysis of differences in means of participants' *propensity to initiate the negotiation* and shows that the means do differ. In order to test the hypothesis for statistical significance, an independent samples t-test was conducted (Table 6).

The result shows that the difference is significant with $p=0.001$ ($p<0.05$) and thus, the null hypothesis can be rejected. Accordingly, there is a statistically significant difference in the *propensity to initiate a negotiation over pay* between women and men. As graphically illustrated in Figure 9 as well as Figure 10, male participants have a greater tendency to initiate the wage negotiation in comparison to their female counterparts.

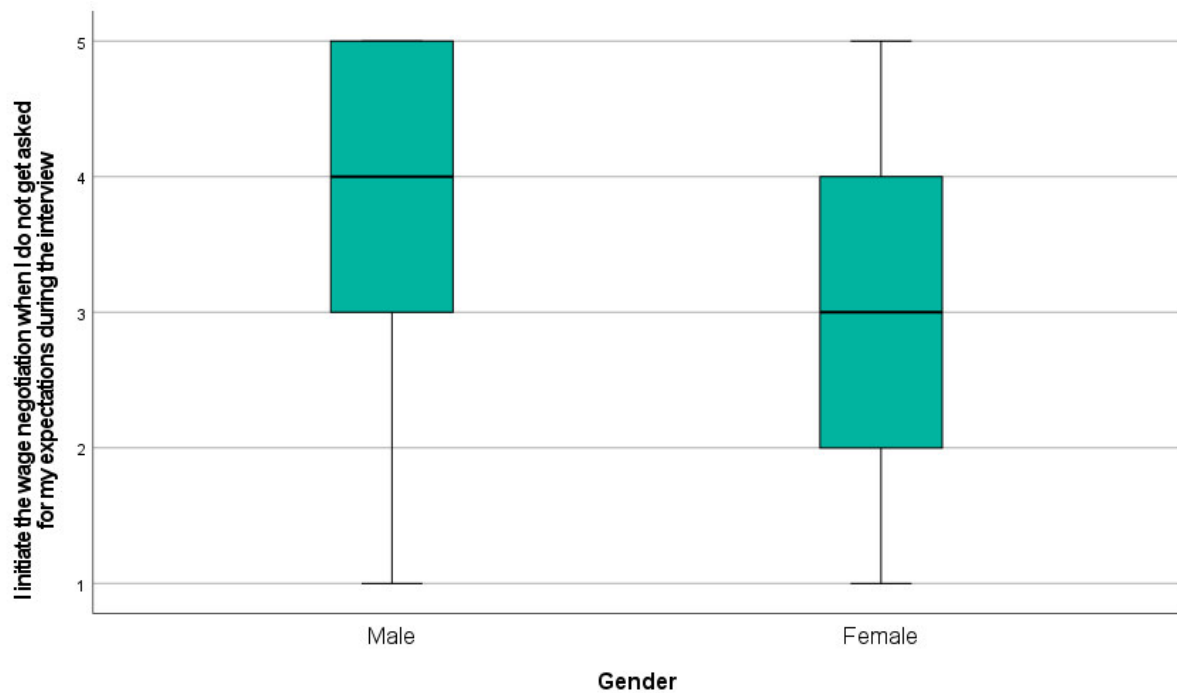
Table 6: Differences in means of decision to negotiate by gender.

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I initiate the wage negotiation when I do not get asked for my expectations during the interview	Male	55	3.84	1.437	.194
	Female	79	3.00	1.320	.149

Table 7: Independent samples t-test. Gender and negotiation initiation.

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
I do initiate the wage negotiation by myself when I do not get asked for my expectations during the interview.	Equal variances assumed	.061	.805	3.478	132	.001	.836	.240	.361	1.312
	Equal variances not assumed			3.425	109.86	.001	.836	.244	.352	1.320

Figure 9: Boxplots: Propensity to initiate the negotiation by gender.



H20: The statement of negotiability in the job advertisement does neither influence women nor men in their decision to initiate the wage negotiation.

Concerning the second hypothesis which refers to the influence of the negotiability statements in the hypothetical job offer, namely *no statement* and *explicit statement*, on the participants' decision to initiate a salary negotiating, Table 8 shows that there is solely a minor difference in means. Interestingly, the mean of the *propensity to initiate the negotiation* for each gender is even greater for *no statement* than for *explicit statement*.

Table 8: Differences in means of propensity to negotiate by negotiability statement.

Group Statistics					
	Negotiability statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I do initiate the wage negotiation by myself when I do not get asked for my expectations during the interview.	No statement	75	3.43	1.425	.165
	Explicit statement	59	3.24	1.430	.186

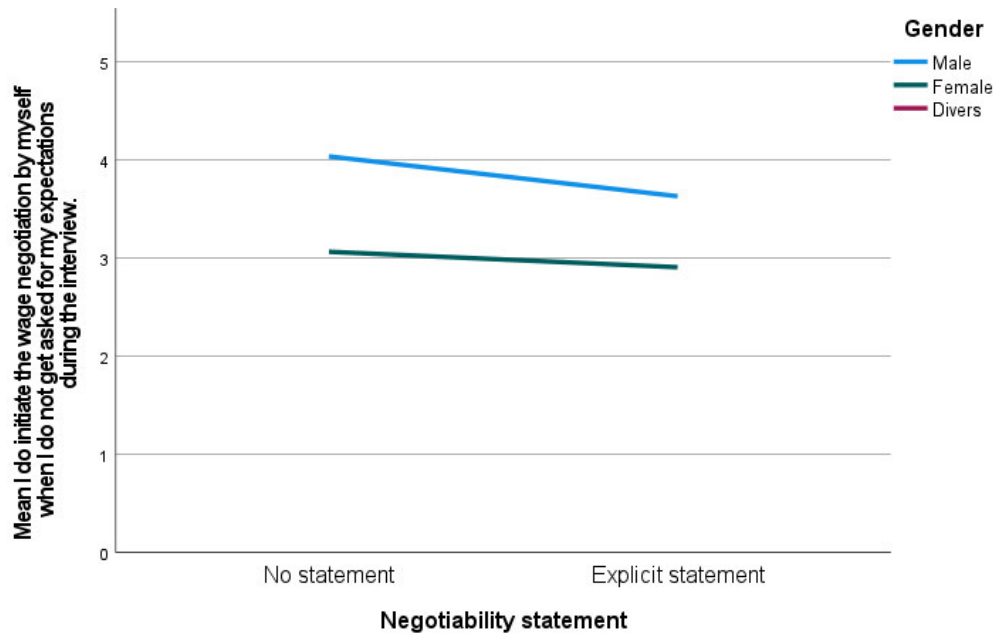
Regarding the distribution of statements between gender, it can be seen that the statements are equally distributed between male participants, namely 28 times “no statement” and 27 times “explicit statement”. To gain a more detailed understanding of the influence of *gender* and the *negotiability statement* on the *propensity to initiate*, a new variable namely *Gender_stat* was created ($Gender_stat = gender + negotiability\ statement$).

Additionally, it allows an overview on how the statements are distributed as well as the differences in means between gender. 47 females got assigned to the “no statement” vignette, whereas 32 got assigned to the “explicit statement” vignette. The differences in means between *gender* (Table 9) as well as the graphical presentation of differences in means of men and women in *Figure 10* suggest that the *negotiability statements* have no effect on the participants’ *propensity to initiate the negotiation* within this study.

Table 9: Differences in means by gender and statement.

I do initiate the wage negotiation by myself when I do not get asked for				
Gender_stat	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	
male no statement	4.04	28	1.347	
male explicit statement	3.63	27	1.523	
female no statement	3.06	47	1.358	
female explicit statement	2.91	32	1.279	
Total	3.34	134	1.425	

Figure 10: Line chart: Differences in means of the propensity to negotiate by negotiability statements and participants' gender.



However, to statistically confirm this assumption an analysis of variances (ANOVA) was conducted. Therefore, the new variable *Gender_stat* was used as independent variable in the analysis and allows to compare the variances in means between gender and the negotiability statement on the individuals' *propensity to initiate the wage negotiation* in the hypothetical setting (Table 10).

Table 10: ANOVA: *Gender_stat* and the *propensity to initiate the wage negotiation*.

ANOVA					
I do initiate the wage negotiation by myself when I do not get asked for my expectations durir					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	25.421	3	8.474	4.500	.005
Within Groups	244.788	130	1.883		
Total	270.209	133			

As mentioned above, the group sizes of the variable *Gender_stat* (male no statement, $n = 28$; male explicit statement, $n = 27$; female no statement, $n = 47$; female explicit statement, $n = 32$) are unequal (Table 9). Therefore, a post hoc test for unequal group sizes and equal variances was chosen for the analysis. The post hoc test reveals that the p-values are significant ($p < 0.05$) between the groups "male no statement" and "female no statement" as well as "male no statement" and "female explicit statement", respectively $p = 0.020$ and $p = 0.011$. Regarding the group "male explicit statement", neither of the groups has a significant value indicating that

males with an explicit negotiability statement do not differ in their propensity to initiate the wage negotiation from the other three groups (Table 11).

However, the comparison between *male no statement* and *male explicit statement* as well as *female no statement* and *female explicit statement* shows no significant difference. Therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Accordingly, there is no difference in the *propensity to initiate the wage negotiation* neither for men nor women between the *negotiability statements*.

Table 11: Post Hoc Test: Multiple comparison between Gender_stat and the dependent variable propensity to initiate the negotiation.

Dependent Variable: I do initiate the wage negotiation by myself when I do not get asked for my expectations during the interview.

Gabriel

(I) Gender_stat	(J) Gender_stat	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
male no statement	male explicit statement	.406	.370	.851	-.58	1.39
	female no statement	.972 [*]	.328	.020	.10	1.84
	female explicit statement	1.129 [*]	.355	.011	.18	2.08
male explicit statement	male no statement	-.406	.370	.851	-1.39	.58
	female no statement	.566	.331	.417	-.31	1.44
	female explicit statement	.723	.359	.242	-.23	1.68
female no statement	male no statement	-.972 [*]	.328	.020	-1.84	-.10
	male explicit statement	-.566	.331	.417	-1.44	.31
	female explicit statement	.158	.314	.997	-.68	.99
female explicit statement	male no statement	-1.129 [*]	.355	.011	-2.08	-.18
	male explicit statement	-.723	.359	.242	-1.68	.23
	female no statement	-.158	.314	.997	-.99	.68

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

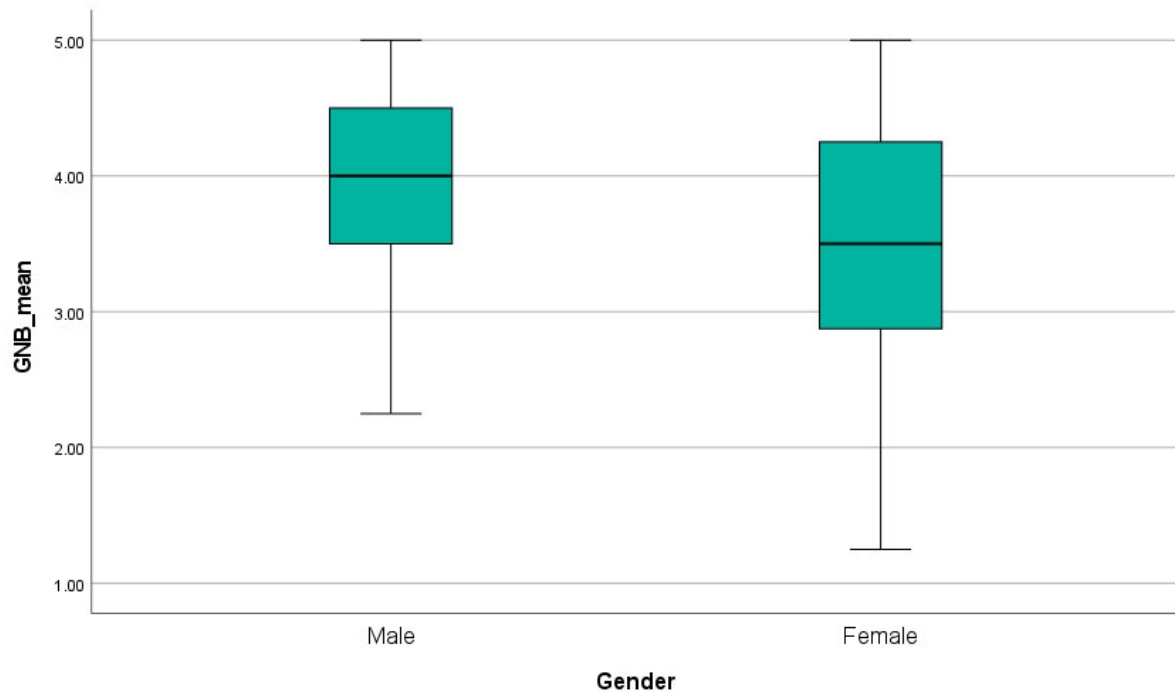
H30: There is no difference between gender in the perception of wage negotiability regarding the initial wage offer.

Concerning the third hypothesis, the dependent variable, namely the *perception of wage negotiability*, was measured by applying the 5-point Likert scale on multiple statements. Beforehand a reliability test, namely Cronbach's Alpha, was conducted for the item set *GNB* measuring the general negotiation behavior and participants' perception of wage negotiability. Since the test confirmed internal consistency of the chosen scale, a new variable, namely *mean_GNB* ($((GNB_02 + GNB_04 + GNB_06 + GNB_07)/4) = mean_GNB$), was calculated to measure the mean of respondents' general and personal perception of wage negotiability.

The hypothesis assumes that there is no difference between *gender* in their *perception of wage negotiability*. In *Figure 11*, differences in means by gender are graphically illustrated. Accordingly, male participants do rate the *perception of wage negotiability* higher on the Likert

scale than females do. However, to statistically verify this assumption and test whether the null hypothesis can be rejected, an independent samples t-test hypothesis was conducted.

Figure 11: Boxplot: Perception of wage negotiability by gender.



The t-test reveals that there is a significant difference with the p-value=0.008 between *gender*. Thus, the null hypothesis can be rejected confirming that there is a significant difference between *gender* in the *perception of wage negotiability* (Table 12).

Table 12: Independent samples t-test. Gender and the perception of wage negotiability.

Independent Samples Test									
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference Lower Upper
GNB_mean	Equal variances assumed	.814	.369	2.718	115	.008	.43285	.15928	.11735 .74835
	Equal variances not assumed			2.769	109.805	.007	.43285	.15633	.12303 .74267

To test whether the null hypothesis can also be rejected only by using the item *GNB_06*, namely “The initial wage offer in job advertisements is negotiable”¹³, the means of the respective variable were compared and found to be varying (Table 13). Further, the result of the independent samples t-test reveals that the difference $p=0.035$ of individuals *perception of wage*

¹³ Translated from German: „Das Einstiegsgehalt in einem neuen Job ist immer verhandelbar.“

negotiability is significant between *gender*. Hence, this additionally supports that the null hypothesis can be rejected (Table 14).

Table 13: Differences in means by gender.

Group Statistics					
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The initial wage offer is negotiable.	Male	53	3.91	1.079	.148
	Female	73	3.47	1.191	.139

Table 14: Independent samples t-test.

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
The initial wage offer is negotiable.	Equal variances assumed	2.917	.090	2.128	124	.035	.440	.207	.031	.849
	Equal variances not assumed			2.162	118.0	.033	.440	.203	.037	.843

H3a: Women do perceive the initial wage offer as less negotiable than men, regardless of the negotiability statement in the job advertisement.

Similar to the testing of *H20*, the calculated variable *Gender_stat* represents the independent variable in the analysis. Although the ANOVA (Table 15) shows a significant p-value ($p=0.044$), a closer inspection of the post hoc test shows that the comparison of *negotiability statement* groups does not reveal any significant difference neither between *gender*, nor the *negotiability statements* and the *perception of wage negotiability* (Table 16). Therefore, the hypothesis cannot be rejected meaning that there is no statistically significant difference between the *explicit statement* and *no statement* on negotiability in a job advertisement regarding women's *perception of wage negotiability*.

Table 15: ANOVA gender and GNB_mean.

ANOVA					
GNB_mean					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.099	3	2.033	2.790	.044
Within Groups	82.324	113	.729		
Total	88.423	116			

Table 16: Post hoc test.

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: GNB_mean						
Tukey HSD						
(I) Gender_stat	(J) Gender_stat	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
male no statement	male explicit statement	.24916	.24433	.738	-.3880	.8863
	female no statement	.55779	.22236	.064	-.0221	1.1376
	female explicit statement	.57609	.24219	.087	-.0555	1.2077
male explicit statement	male no statement	-.24916	.24433	.738	-.8863	.3880
	female no statement	.30863	.21399	.476	-.2494	.8666
	female explicit statement	.32692	.23453	.506	-.2846	.9385
female no statement	male no statement	-.55779	.22236	.064	-1.1376	.0221
	male explicit statement	-.30863	.21399	.476	-.8666	.2494
	female explicit statement	.01829	.21155	1.000	-.5334	.5699
female explicit statement	male no statement	-.57609	.24219	.087	-1.2077	.0555
	male explicit statement	-.32692	.23453	.506	-.9385	.2846
	female no statement	-.01829	.21155	1.000	-.5699	.5334

4.3. Regression Analysis

To further investigate determinants influencing participants' *propensity to initiate the wage negotiation* and the *perception of wage negotiability*, regression analyses were conducted. Firstly, all variables that are believed to potentially influencing *the propensity to initiate the wage negotiation* are included in the regression. Since the testing of hypothesis showed that negotiability statements do not significantly have an impact on participants' behavior, these variables will not be further taken into account. Potential explanations with regards to the *negotiability statements* will be discussed at a later point in this thesis.

However, the first regression conducted includes the independent variables *age*, *academic status*, *working experience* and *gender*. The model does not predict the dependent variable *propensity to initiate the wage negotiation* very well with a R-squared value of .156 (see Appendix, Table 25). In a next step, non-sociodemographic variables were included in the

regression analysis to improve the model (Table 17). The improved model with more variables, namely variables *gender*, “I negotiate over pay although the initial wage offer meets my expectations”¹⁴ (*NBI_04*), “I insist on my salary expectations”¹⁵ (*NBI_03*) and “Salary negotiation is an indispensable part in an application process”¹⁶ (*GNB_04*) shows a higher adjusted R-square of .333 (Table 18). Accordingly, about 33% of the variance in the *propensity to negotiate* can be explained by the independent variables. Furthermore, all included variables show a significant p-value of less than 0.05 (Table 19).

Table 17: Regression analysis model summary.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.595 ^a	.354	.333	1.174

a. Predictors: (Constant), Salary negotiation is a indispensable part in an application process., Gender, I insist on my salary expectations., I negotiate over pay although the initial wage offer meets my expectations.

Table 18: ANOVA adjusted model.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	93.671	4	23.418	16.982	.000 ^b
	Residual	170.996	124	1.379		
	Total	264.667	128			

a. Dependent Variable: I do initiate the wage negotiation by myself when I do not get asked for my expectations during the interview.

b. Predictors: (Constant), Salary negotiation is a indispensable part in an application process., Gender, I insist on my salary expectations., I negotiate over pay although the initial wage offer meets my expectations.

¹⁴ Translated from German: „Ich verhandle das Gehalt, auch wenn das im Stelleninserat angegebene Angebot bereits meinen Vorstellungen entspricht.“

¹⁵ Translated from German: „Ich beharre auf meiner Gehaltsvorstellung.“

¹⁶ Translated from German: „Die Gehaltsverhandlung ist für mich ein fixer Bestandteil im Laufe eines Bewerbungsprozesses.“

Table 19: Included independent variables.

Coefficients ^a						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.024	.439		2.334	.021
	Gender	-.246	.110	-.170	-2.238	.027
	I negotiate over pay although the initial wage offer meets my expectations.	.194	.094	.188	2.065	.041
	I insist on my salary expectations.	.360	.119	.260	3.020	.003
	Salary negotiation is a indispensable part in an application process.	.236	.118	.195	1.999	.048

a. Dependent Variable: I do initiate the wage negotiation by myself when I do not get asked for my expectations during the interview.

With regard to the third hypothesis, the statistical analysis of the *perception of wage negotiability* is taken one step further to indicate factors that influence women's behavior. Referring to the reviewed literature, the *perception of negotiability* is likely to be impacted by past *opportunities to negotiate over pay* an individual experienced over time. While the graphical illustration of a boxplot shows differences in means (Figure 12), a further independent samples test reveals that those are statistically significant (Table 20).

Figure 12: Boxplot: Opportunity to negotiate on the perception of wage negotiability.

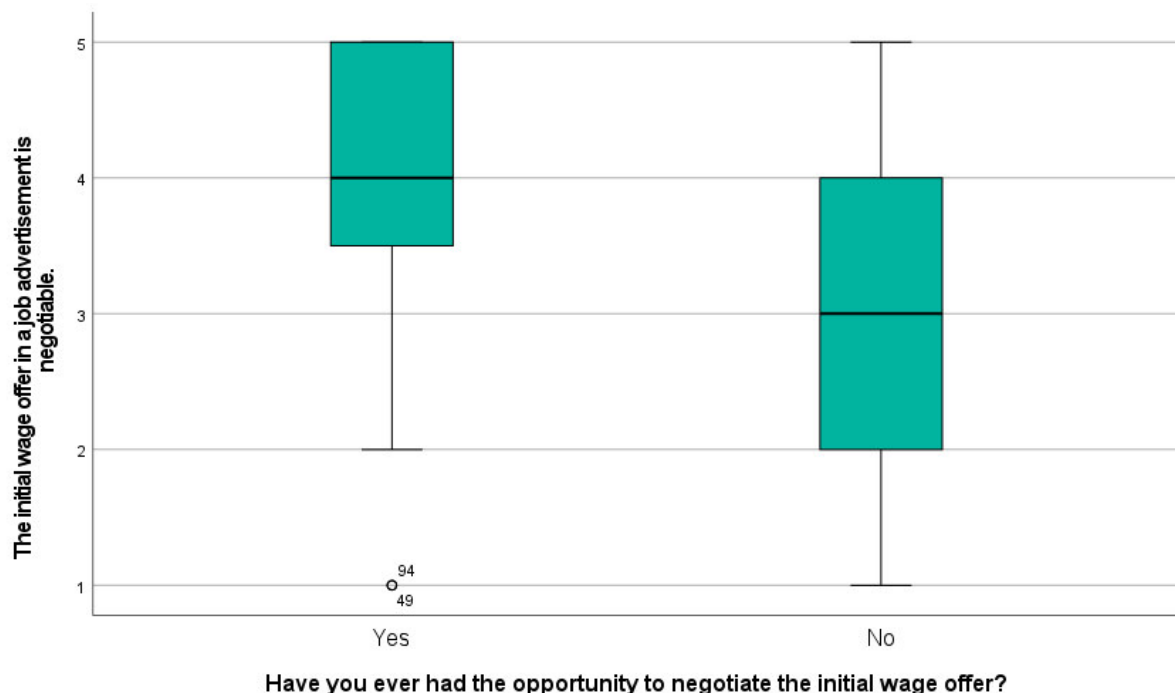


Table 20: Independent samples t-test.

		Independent Samples Test								
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
The initial wage offer in a job advertisement is negotiable.	Equal variances assumed	1.770	.186	5	122	.000	1.039	.194	.656	1.423
	Equal variances not assumed			5	93.180	.000	1.039	.198	.646	1.433

Hence, there is a significant association of *opportunity to negotiate* with the *perception of wage negotiability* ($p < 0.05$). However, to test whether past experienced *opportunities to negotiate* and *gender* have an impact on the *perception of wage negotiability*, a new variable was computed, and an ANOVA followed by a post hoc test were run. The variables *gender* and *opportunity to negotiate* were summed up to become the new variable *Gender_OppNeg* (*gender* + *opportunity to negotiate* = *Gender_OppNeg*).

Considering the frequencies, it can be determined that almost half of the female ($n=39$) participants experienced the opportunity to negotiate the initial wage, whereas half of them have not had the chance ($n=40$). In comparison, more than 70% of the male respondents ($n=40$) stated that they had at least one opportunity to negotiate over the initial wage offer in the past (Table 21).

Table 21: Frequencies Gender_OppNeg.

		Gender_OppNeg			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male_yes	40	29.9	29.9	29.9
	Male_no	15	11.2	11.2	41.0
	Female_yes	39	29.1	29.1	70.1
	Female_no	40	29.9	29.9	100.0
	Total	134	100.0	100.0	

By running an ANOVA for the variables, results show that there is a significant difference between the groups. The post hoc test reveals that the groups *male_yes* and *female_no* as well as *female_yes* and *female_no* significantly differ (Table 22). Regarding the difference within the genders, women who stated that they never had the opportunity to negotiate their wage (*female_no*) significantly vary from females who had the opportunity (*female_yes*). Contrary, within the male group (*male_no* and *male_yes*) no significant difference was found and therefore, indicates that men do perceive the initial wage offer equally negotiable, regardless of their past opportunities and experiences to bargain their salary (Table 23).

Table 22: ANOVA perception of wage negotiability between the groups Gender_OppNeg.

ANOVA					
The initial wage offer in a job advertisement is negotiable.					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	34.035	3	11.345	10.283	.000
Within Groups	134.600	122	1.103		
Total	168.635	125			

Table 23: Significant levels between Gender_OppNeg groups.

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: The initial wage offer in a job advertisement is negotiable.						
Tukey HSD						
(I) Gender_OppNeg	(J) Gender_OppNeg	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Male_yes	Male_no	.454	.327	.509	-.40	1.31
	Female_yes	-.028	.241	.999	-.66	.60
	Female_no	1.165*	.243	.000	.53	1.80
Male_no	Male_yes	-.454	.327	.509	-1.31	.40
	Female_yes	-.483	.330	.462	-1.34	.38
	Female_no	.710	.331	.144	-.15	1.57
Female_yes	Male_yes	.028	.241	.999	-.60	.66
	Male_no	.483	.330	.462	-.38	1.34
	Female_no	1.193*	.246	.000	.55	1.83
Female_no	Male_yes	-1.165*	.243	.000	-1.80	-.53
	Male_no	-.710	.331	.144	-1.57	.15
	Female_yes	-1.193*	.246	.000	-1.83	-.55

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Apart from the variable *opportunity to negotiate* (AQ_04), other factors might as well influence the participants' *perception of wage negotiability*. In order to test which independent variables have an impact on the general negotiability perception (*mean_GNB*), a linear regression was conducted. In doing so, besides the variable *opportunity to negotiate*, the *academic status*, namely graduation less than one year ago, graduation one to two years ago as well as an ongoing master's program and gender, were able to statistically predict individuals' perception of wage negotiability (Table 26 & 27, see Appendix).

4.4. Interpretation of Statistical Analysis

With regard to H10, it can be determined that the independent samples t-test showed a significant p-value and, therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected meaning that there is a

significant difference between women and men in the *propensity to initiate the salary negotiation*. This complements the findings in the existing literature suggesting that men more than women are willing to ask for higher pay. Furthermore, the description of the sample size beforehand reveals that male respondents have general greater salary expectations than female participants. Accordingly, approximately 35% of female respondents stated that the initial wage of 2,700€ does not meet their expectations whereas almost 60% of males do not agree to that statement.

Apart from the result that women have the tendency to be satisfied with lower wages generally, the sample description further showed that 35% (n=27) of female participants stated that their minimum wage expectation is lower than 2,700€. These results are also supported by existing literature saying that women have lower salary expectations in general (Bowles et al., 2007; Exley et al., 2020; Säve-Söderbergh, 2019) and are even willing to work for less whenever the wage is not explicitly stated as negotiable (Leibbrandt & List, 2014).

Concerning the role of ambiguity, it was found that the created *negotiability statements* respectively the vignettes had no impact on the participants. Neither the graphical illustration nor the statistical analysis namely, the t-test showed differences in means regarding the *propensity to initiate the wage negotiation*. Hence, H20 cannot be rejected meaning that there are no significant differences between *Gender_stat* and the *propensity to initiate the negotiation*. This result contradicts the literature contributions which suggest that transparency and the explicit request to negotiate have impact on women's negotiation behavior. However, potential explanations for the absence of an effect of the explicit statement vignette will be discussed in chapter 5.1. "Limitations and Implications".

H30 refers to the *perception of wage negotiability* and assumes that there is no difference between gender. However, the testing of the hypothesis showed that the null hypothesis can be rejected and that there are differences between gender in the *perception of wage negotiability*. Testing the impact of *negotiability statements* on the perception of wage negotiability, the calculated variable *Gender_stat* was included for the analysis. Results did show that the groups of *negotiability statement* do not reveal significant differences neither between *gender*, nor the *negotiability statements* and the *perception of wage negotiability*. Accordingly, H3a cannot be rejected meaning that there is no significant difference between the *explicit statement* and *no statement* of negotiability in a job advertisement regarding women's *perception of wage negotiability*.

With regards to the existing literature the *opportunity to negotiate* was further investigated to reveal whether there is an association between *gender* and *the perception of wage negotiability*. By calculating a new variable, namely *Gender_OppNeg* it was possible to test the influence of gender and past opportunities to negotiate over pay on the participants' *perception of wage negotiability*. The ANOVA showed that there is a significant difference between the groups and the post hoc test revealed that the groups *male_yes* and *female_no* as well as *female_yes* and *female_no* significantly differ. Considering the difference within the group of gender, it can be seen that women who stated that they never had the opportunity to negotiate their wage (*female_no*) significantly vary from females who had the opportunity (*female_yes*). In comparison to that the male group (*male_no* and *male_yes*) does not show any significant difference.

These results suggest that men do perceive the initial wage offer equally negotiable, regardless of their past opportunities and experiences to bargain their salary. Furthermore, the difference between *female_no* and *male_yes* indicates that male respondents who had the opportunity to negotiate their wage in the past do perceive the initial wage offer as more negotiable than female participants who never had the opportunity to negotiate over pay. Solely the question whether the individual had the opportunity to negotiate revealed that more men than women had the opportunity. Concludingly, women either perceived these opportunities less often or did not get offered to negotiate over pay. However, to some extent these results do correspond with previous findings highlighting the positive effects of past negotiation experiences (Bowles et al., 2007; Stevens & Whelan, 2019).

5. Discussion

The present thesis aimed at providing insights into gender effects on the initiation of salary negotiations as well as the perception of wage negotiability. Thus, the following chapter converges existing research findings with results obtained by the present vignette study. In the following limitations and implications of the present paper as well as further suggestions for future research with regard to the gender gap in wage negotiations will be highlighted.

5.1.Limitations and Implications

Firstly, limitations concerning the sample must be considered. The collected data provides information about sociodemographic characteristics and insights into individuals' salary negotiation behavior, their willingness to initiate these negotiations and their perception of wage negotiability based on a job advertisement. However, the overall research focused strongly on the differences occurring between gender. Because of the author's network, the sample is slightly imbalanced regarding gender; however, for the research purpose the size and the distribution of gender is still sufficient.

Furthermore, due to the collection through the online platform "SoSci Survey" it cannot be ensured that the respondents matched the intended target group and, therefore, the personal information provided by participants has to be trusted. Additionally, the limitation to a defined target group caused a limited sample size and, therefore, might be biased. Collecting data from an intended target group implies homogeneity and leads to a limited information value. While the findings might hold true for this occupation, the results cannot be accepted for other occupational groups. However, this limitation was chosen intentionally to ensure that the salary expectations of participants do not significantly diverge, at least within the same gender.

Another problem encountered during the thesis concerned the implementation of the empirical research method. In order to conduct a study aiming at understanding negotiation differences between gender on the Austrian labor market, a similar approach to an existing contribution was chosen¹⁷. The existing large scale field experiment conducted in the US offered a real job to attract job seekers. By doing so, the researchers were able to attract participants with the same educational and occupational backgrounds. However, due to limited resources of the present thesis the methodology had to be adjusted.

Therefore, the research design of a vignette study was chosen and led to various difficulties. Firstly, participants' reaction to the vignettes might have been biased by their thoughts on the

¹⁷ See (Leibbrandt & List, 2014)

study, e.g., which purpose the study has and which behavior is expected. However, the author of this thesis attempted to avoid this problem by not revealing the purpose of the study, i.e., the investigation of gender effects, in detail.

Furthermore, respondents were confronted with the hypothetical scenario of a job search process and had to think of their behavior rather than being in the situation. Thus, individuals' imagination was required which might deviate from their actual behavior. This issue was addressed by restricting the survey to individuals who have already been on job search in the past.

Besides the gender aspect within wage negotiations, the role of ambiguity and the effect of transparency regarding negotiability were the focus of this thesis. On the one hand, the objectives to examine the differences between gender with respect to negotiation behavior and the perception of negotiability were achieved, while, on the other hand, the aim to capture the effect of transparency regarding wage negotiability seems to have failed.

According to the reviewed literature, the aspect of transparency and especially the explicit opportunity to negotiate over wage are drivers to converge the negotiation gender gap. Although the two different vignettes – introduced in chapter 3.3.1. “Survey Design” – were designed to investigate differences in respondents' behavior, the statements did not cause any significant differences. Neither male nor female participants reacted to the vignettes differently. This leads to the question of whether the explicit opportunity to negotiate wage has no impact on individuals, or if the research design was not explicit enough.

5.2.Conclusion and Future Research

This thesis strongly focused on the investigation of ambiguity regarding wage negotiability in job advertisements and the effect of gender within this setting. However, the results of the study did not show significant differences between men and women nor between the stated vignettes of the study. There are two potential explanations for the respective outcome.

Firstly, the vignette representing the explicit statement of negotiability might not have been formulated explicitly enough and, therefore, participants did not adjust their behavior. However, another possibility is that women and men in the target group are not influenced by the vignettes at all and chose or chose not to initiate negotiations based on other factors. One influencing factor is past experiences to negotiate over wage.

Since literature suggests that individuals' past opportunities to negotiate over pay have an impact on their perception of wage negotiability, the collected data was analyzed in this regard.

The analysis revealed that there are significant differences between the group of individuals who had negotiation opportunities and those who had no opportunity as well as between gender. The results suggest that men do perceive the initial wage offer as equally negotiable, regardless of their past opportunities and experiences to bargain over their salary. Furthermore, the comparison of women who never had and men who had an opportunity to negotiate their wage indicates that male respondents perceive the initial wage offer as more negotiable than female participants who never had the opportunity to negotiate over pay.

Interestingly, past opportunities to negotiate have a bigger impact on the group of female participants than on male participants. In other words, women who already had the opportunity to negotiate over pay in the past are much more likely to perceive the stated wage as negotiable. In comparison to that, men are not affected by past experiences within the present survey. Men who say that they already had an opportunity to negotiate do perceive the stated wage as equally negotiable as men who did not have an opportunity to negotiate yet. These results do complement previous findings highlighting the positive effects of past negotiation experiences on females.

With regard to the formulated research questions, it can be summarized that there are significant differences in the willingness to initiate a wage negotiation as well as the perception of wage negotiability between men and women. Although the present survey did not find that the explicit statement of wage negotiability in job advertisements has a positive or a negative impact on women's propensity to initiate the negotiation or the perception of wage negotiability, the data provides evidence that women's and men's wage expectations as well as actual demands significantly diverge. Approximately 35% of female respondents stated that the initial wage of 2,700€ does not meet their expectations, whereas almost 60% of males did not agree with that statement. The collected data complements the existing literature which explains that men, more frequently than women, are willing to ask for higher pay and have higher salary expectations.

Consequently, the questions of why these differences arise, and what initiatives can lead to a convergence of the gender negotiation gap should be considered in future research. Furthermore, the approach for investigating the role of ambiguity in job advertisements and its effect on gender must be improved and further pursued. For this purpose, e.g., a field experiment offering a real job can be conducted to examine the negotiation behavior of individuals on the Austrian labor market and thereby provide a geographical extension of existing literature.

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7. APPENDIX

7.1. Abstract English

Since women have been found to be less likely to negotiate initial wages, this paper emphasizes the influence of wage transparency in job advertisements and aims at examining the negotiation gender gap. By conducting an online vignette study, the impact of explicit statements regarding wage negotiability in a job advertisement on participants' propensity to initiate negotiations and the perception of wage negotiability was investigated. Although the study revealed that the negotiability statement had no impact on women and men, results show that women have lower salary expectations and demand less within application processes. Furthermore, past opportunities to negotiate wages turned out to have a positive influence on female participants' perception of wage negotiability. In comparison, men always perceive the initial wage offer as negotiable, regardless of past negotiation opportunities. This raises the question of whether women get offered the opportunity to negotiate less often or if such an opportunity has to be presented to them explicitly. Thus, future research must further investigate the effects of transparent wage negotiability on women and how the gender negotiation gap can be converged.

7.2.Abstract German

Die vorliegende Arbeit untersucht geschlechterspezifische Unterschiede im Gehaltsverhandlungsverhalten, welche zu einschneidenden Einkommensunterschieden zwischen Frauen und Männern am Arbeitsmarkt führen. Das Hauptaugenmerk liegt dabei auf transparenten Gehaltsverhandlungsmöglichkeiten in Stellenausschreibungen, wobei sowohl der Einfluss von expliziten Aufforderungen zur Gehaltsverhandlung auf die Initiierung der Verhandlung als auch auf die Wahrnehmung der Verhandelbarkeit des Gehalts beleuchtet wird. Um das entsprechende Verhalten zu untersuchen, wurde eine Vignetten-Studie durchgeführt, in welcher sich die Probandinnen und Probanden in das hypothetische Szenario einer Jobsuche begaben.

Die Ergebnisse zeigten jedoch, dass die explizite Aufforderung zur Gehaltsverhandlung in der Stellenausschreibung, weder auf das Verhalten von Frauen noch auf das von Männern Einfluss hatte. Trotzdem konnten andere wissenschaftliche Erkenntnisse unterstrichen werden. Beispielsweise haben vergangene Möglichkeiten zur Gehaltsverhandlung einen positiven Einfluss darauf, ob Frauen das Gehalt als verhandelbar wahrnehmen oder nicht. Männer hingegen lassen sich von vergangenen Möglichkeiten zur Verhandlung nicht bzw. wenig beeinflussen. Dabei stellt sich die Frage, ob Frauen die Möglichkeit zur Verhandlung weniger oft geboten wird oder ob diese nur bei expliziten Aufforderungen die Möglichkeit wahrnehmen. Weiters konnten signifikante Unterschiede in Gehaltsvorstellungen und -forderungen zwischen den Geschlechtern festgestellt werden. Aus diesen Gründen müssen weitere Forschungsanstrengungen unternommen werden, um den Effekt von Gehaltstransparenz in Stellenausschreibungen zu untersuchen und eine Konvergenz der Verhandlungsdivergenzen zu erreichen.

7.3. Tables

Table 24: Cronbach's Alpha for GNB_02, GNB_04, GNB_06, GNB_07

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.814	4

Table 25: Item Statistics for GNB_02, GNB_04, GNB_06, GNB_07

Item-Total Statistics				
	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
It is important for me to enforce my salary negotiations.	11.27	7.873	.621	.775
Salary negotiation is a indispensable part in an application process.	11.00	6.828	.676	.746
The initial wage offer in a job advertisement is negotiable.	11.08	6.916	.656	.756
I negotiate assertively whenever I feel perfectly qualified for the job.	10.96	7.524	.590	.787

Table 26: Model Summary for opportunity to negotiate and academic status.

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.764 ^a	.584	.445	.92990	1.714

a. Predictors: (Constant), MaGrad, Have you ever had the opportunity to negotiate the initial wage offer?, Gender, Grad1, Grad2

b. Dependent Variable: GNB_mean

Table 27: ANOVA: opportunity to negotiate and academic status.

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.172	5	3.634	4.203	.014 ^b
	Residual	12.971	15	.865		
	Total	31.143	20			

a. Dependent Variable: GNB_mean

b. Predictors: (Constant), MaGrad, Have you ever had the opportunity to negotiate the initial wage offer?, Gender, Grad1, Grad2

7.4.Survey

Introduction Text of the Survey

Liebe Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer,

Im Rahmen meiner Masterarbeit führe ich eine empirische Untersuchung zum Thema Gehaltsverhandlungen durch.

Die Studie richtet sich an Studentinnen und Studenten der Wirtschaftswissenschaften bzw. Personen, welche das Studium vor Kurzem abgeschlossen haben. Die Befragung wird anonym durchgeführt und erfordert ca. 5 Minuten Ihrer Zeit.

Bitte füllen Sie die gestellten Fragen vollständig und gewissenhaft aus. Die erhobenen Daten werden von mir vertraulich behandelt, nicht an Dritte weitergegeben und ausschließlich zu Zwecken der wissenschaftlichen Auswertung verwendet.

Vielen Dank für Ihre Teilnahme!

1. Studieren Sie oder haben Sie Wirtschaftswissenschaften an der Universität Wien, Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien oder einer anderen Universität bzw. Fachhochschule studiert?

- ☐ Ja
☐ Nein

2. Wie lange ist der Abschluss Ihres Studiums her?

- ☐ Ich studiere noch (Bachelor).
☐ Ich studiere noch (Master).
☐ < 1 Jahr.
☐ 1-2 Jahre.
☐ > 2 Jahre.

3. Sind Sie auf Jobsuche bzw. waren Sie in den letzten 1-2 Jahren auf Jobsuche?

- ☐ Ja
☐ Nein

4. Haben Sie Berufserfahrung, die fach einschlägig ist bzw. Ihrem Studiengang entspricht? Wenn ja, wie viele Jahre Berufserfahrung haben Sie?

- ☐ Ja, Jahre.
☐ Nein

Im Folgenden wird Ihnen ein hypothetisches Szenario vorgestellt. Bitte lesen Sie sich den folgenden Text sorgfältig durch. In den darauffolgenden Seiten werden Ihnen zu dem Szenario Fragen gestellt.

Vignette 1: Explicit statement.

Auf der Suche nach einem passenden Job stoßen Sie online auf ein Stelleninserat, welches Ihnen inhaltlich zusagt. Sowohl das Unternehmen selbst, die Branche, in der das Unternehmen tätig ist als auch die Aufgabenbereiche entsprechen Ihren Vorstellungen. Nun scrollen Sie nach unten und finden den letzten Abschnitt des Stelleninserats, in dem das Angebot des Unternehmens, welches Sie als potenzielle/r neue/r Mitarbeiter/in erwarten können, dargelegt wird.

Unser Angebot für Sie:

- ein dynamisches Umfeld in einem marktführenden Konzern,
- abwechslungsreiche und vielfältige Aufgabenbereiche,
- vielfältige Weiterentwicklungs- und Karrieremöglichkeiten,
- flexible Arbeitszeiteinteilung,
- 2.700 € brutto pro Monat auf Vollzeitbasis, wobei wir je nach Erfahrung und Qualifikation eine marktkonforme Entlohnung bieten.

Wir freuen uns auf Ihre Bewerbung!

Vignette 2: No statement.

Auf der Suche nach einem passenden Job stoßen Sie online auf ein Stelleninserat, welches Ihnen inhaltlich zusagt. Sowohl das Unternehmen selbst, die Branche, in der das Unternehmen tätig ist als auch die Aufgabenbereiche entsprechen Ihren Vorstellungen. Nun scrollen Sie nach unten und finden den letzten Abschnitt des Stelleninserats, in dem das Angebot des Unternehmens, welches Sie als potenzielle/r neue/r Mitarbeiter/in erwarten können, dargelegt wird.

Unser Angebot für Sie:

- ein dynamisches Umfeld in einem marktführenden Konzern,
- abwechslungsreiche und vielfältige Aufgabenbereiche,
- vielfältige Weiterentwicklungs- und Karrieremöglichkeiten,
- flexible Arbeitszeiteinteilung,
- 2.700 € brutto pro Monat auf Vollzeitbasis.

Wir freuen uns auf Ihre Bewerbung!

Nachdem Sie das Angebot des Unternehmens kennen, bewerten Sie bitte folgende Aussagen zu der entsprechenden Stelle:



Ein großes marktführendes Unternehmen ist ein Umfeld, in dem ich arbeiten möchte.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Die Möglichkeit auf Weiterbildung ist interessant für mich.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Das angegebene Gehalt im Inserat entspricht meinen Vorstellungen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Das Angebot des Unternehmens entspricht meinen Vorstellungen.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Gehalt ist für mich die wichtigste Komponente in einem Job.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn alle anderen Komponenten in einem Job meinen Vorstellungen entsprechen, ist Gehalt für mich nebensächlich.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich würde mich auf die ausgeschriebene Stelle bewerben.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Stellen Sie sich nun vor, Sie werden zu einem Bewerbungsgespräch für die ausgeschriebene Stelle eingeladen. Bitte bewerten Sie folgende Aussagen zu Ihrem Verhalten während des Bewerbungsgesprächs:



Ich warte ab, bis mein/e Interviewpartner/in mich nach meiner Gehaltsvorstellung fragt.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn ich nicht nach meiner Gehaltsvorstellung gefragt werde, nenne ich sie im Laufe des Gesprächs selbst.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich beharre auf meiner Gehaltsvorstellung.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Würden Sie das Gehalt höher ansetzen als im Inserat angegeben? (Erinnerung: das angegebene Gehalt ist 2.700 €)

- ☐ Ja, ich setze das Gehalt um € brutto pro Monat höher an.
- ☐ Nein

Was wäre Ihre Schmerzgrenze bzw. zu welchem Bruttomonatsgehalt würden Sie den Job annehmen?

€ brutto auf Vollzeitbasis.

Bitte bewerten Sie folgende Aussagen zu Ihrem Verhalten während des Bewerbungsgesprächs:



Ich verhandle das Gehalt, auch wenn das im Stelleninserat angegebene Angebot bereits meinen Vorstellungen entspricht.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn meine Gehaltsvorstellungen nicht berücksichtigt werden und das Unternehmen auf das ursprüngliche Gehalt besteht, nehme ich den Job nicht an.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wenn das Gehalt nicht zur Sprache kommt, nehme ich an, dass das Gehalt in der Höhe des Inserats fixiert ist und spreche es nicht weiter an.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Bitte bewerten Sie nun folgende Aussagen zu Ihrem allgemeinen Verhalten in Hinblick auf Gehaltsverhandlungen. Das zu Beginn gezeigte Angebot des Unternehmens müssen Sie bei der Bewertung dieser Aussagen nicht mehr berücksichtigen.

	stimme gar nicht zu	1	2	3	4	5	stimme voll zu	kann ich nicht beurteilen
Keine Angabe zur möglichen Gehaltsverhandlung in einer Stellenausschreibung verunsichert mich.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ich verhandle das Gehalt eindringlich, wenn ich finde, dass ich für die Stelle qualifiziert bin.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Die Angabe des kollektivvertraglichen Mindestentgelts ist für mich ein grober Richtwert.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Die Gehaltsverhandlung ist für mich ein fixer Bestandteil im Laufe eines Bewerbungsprozesses.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Die Gehaltsverhandlung sollte seitens des Unternehmens eingeleitet werden.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Das Einstiegsgehalt in einem neuen Job ist immer verhandelbar.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Mir ist es wichtig, dass ich meine Gehaltsvorstellungen durchsetzen kann.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Welches Geschlecht haben Sie?

- ☐ Männlich
- ☐ Weiblich
- ☐ Divers

Wie alt sind Sie?

Jahre alt.

Welche Nationalität haben Sie?

- ☐ Österreich
- ☐ Deutschland
- ☐ andere

Haben Sie schon einmal über eine österreichische Jobplattform nach einer Anstellung gesucht?

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nein

Befinden Sie sich in einem aufrechten Dienstverhältnis?

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nein

Hatten Sie bereits ein oder mehrere Bewerbungsgespräche für eine befristete oder unbefristete Anstellung?

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nein

Hatten Sie im Zuge des Bewerbungsverfahrens die Möglichkeit das angebotene Gehalt zu verhandeln?

- ☐ Ja
- ☐ Nein