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Propagation of Bias: the Data Behind the Damage of “Do Your Time”

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Research shows that men often benefit from the perception of promise whereas women are judged on demonstrated experience (e.g., Player et al., 2019). In economic geology, this bias can be seen in the “do your time” mentality, where previous experience disproportionately benefits men for raises and career progression versus women and other minority populations (such as racial minorities and the LGBTQ+ community) who must demonstrate ability before receiving advancement opportunities. This inequity is particularly pronounced when it comes to fieldwork, a key component in many disciplines of economic geology. The “do your time” mentality is particularly damaging during the early-career stage, where it is also pervasive. Managers influenced by the “promise vs. demonstrated” bias are more likely to start women and minorities at lower wages and positions, while believing that the inequity will balance over a career—once they have “proven” themselves. Presented here are data from professional surveys and individual examples demonstrating the opposite, that these early career inequities propagate throughout careers resulting in increasing salary deficiencies and consistently delayed career progression, meaning women and minorities must work years longer than their counterparts to achieve the same income or career level, or may never be able to do so. The propagation of “do your time” bias from early career can be so dramatic as to destabilize intergenerational elasticity and negatively impact the socioeconomic status of the next generation, particularly in modern families that are dependent on two salaries or where a woman or minority is the sole earner. This propagation of bias undermines the narrative that exploration and mining create high paying jobs. Solutions are discussed to improve oversight on hiring decisions, even for the most junior positions.

Player et al., 2019, Overlooked leadership potential, *Frontiers in Psychology*, v. 10.