

WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2009

MINORITIES FIND IT HARDER TO GET JOBS

Job applicants find it easier to get an interview if they have an Anglo-Saxon name, according to new research from The Australian National University.

The study, conducted by ANU economists Professor Alison Booth and Professor Andrew Leigh from the Research School of Social Sciences, in conjunction with researcher Elena Varganova, estimated discrimination by sending over 4000 fake CVs to employers in response to job advertisements in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

"By varying the names on the CVs, we were able to estimate precisely the extent of hiring discrimination," said Professor Booth. "Because all other characteristics are held constant, we can be sure that we are really measuring discrimination.

"To get the same number of interviews as an applicant with an Anglo-Saxon name, a Chinese applicant must submit 68% more applications, a Middle Eastern applicant must submit 64% more applications, an Indigenous applicant must submit 35% more applications, and an Italian applicant must submit 12% more applications.

"By comparison, a similar study in the United States found that a black applicant must submit 50% more applications to get the same number of interviews as a white applicant.

The authors also carried out two other experiments to measure racial and ethnic discrimination in the general population.

"In one experiment, we mailed letters to several thousand households, to see whether they returned them or put them in the bin," said Professor Leigh. "We found that letters were slightly less likely to be returned if they were addressed to non-Anglo people."

"In another experiment testing reaction speed, we found implicit discrimination against ethnic minority names, suggesting that part of the effect in the hiring experiment is likely to be subconscious."

All the interviews in the study were approved by the ANU Human Research Ethics Committee.

A copy of the paper, *Does Racial and Ethnic Discrimination Vary Across Minority Groups? Evidence From Three Experiments*, is available at: <http://econrssh.anu.edu.au/~aleigh/>

For interviews:
Professor Andrew Leigh
02 6125 1374 (office)
0431 706 600 (mobile)

For media assistance:
Martyn Pearce, ANU Media Office
(02) 6125 5575
0416 249 245

ANU MEDIA OFFICE:	Jane O'Dwyer T: (02) 6125 5001 M: 0416 249 231	Simon Couper T: (02) 6125 4171 M: 0416 249 241	Martyn Pearce T: (02) 6125 5575 M: 0416 249 245	Alice Nixon T: (02) 6125 6125
--------------------------	--	--	---	----------------------------------