

# Disadvantaged men more likely to do 'women's work' reveals new study

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New research has revealed that men who are disabled and from an ethnic minority are significantly more likely to do jobs traditionally associated with women.

The work, led by the University of Exeter Business School, analysed the [workforce](#) across the lowest grade in a very large FTSE company, focusing on the lowest paid, low skilled and often part-time jobs.

The study uncovered a number of startling facts:

- Ethnic minority [men](#) are 50% more likely to work part-time and in the lowest grade than white males
- Men in the lowest grade are 66% more likely to be from an [ethnic minority](#), while women in the same grade bracket are 32% less likely to be from an ethnic minority
- Men in the lowest grade are three times more likely to have a disability than in the rest of the workforce. Disabled men are also more likely to be found in the lowest income bracket than women

In addition, the research found that white men are nearly twice as likely to be promoted as ethnic minority men, and men without disabilities are more than four times more likely to be promoted than disabled men.

Prof Carol Woodhams, from the University of Exeter, said: "It is an unpalatable yet accepted fact that the lowest paid, lowest status work in

the UK is predominantly undertaken by women. However, this is the first time that academics have studied the types of men who undertake this work."

"Our data shows that men from disadvantaged groups are much more likely than women to end up in low-level work. We don't know why this is, but one suggestion is that men with labour market "disadvantages" are perceived to be less "masculine" in some way. Another explanation could be that women already bear a huge, overriding disadvantage because of their gender alone, which means men may suffer disproportionately when they are disadvantaged in other respects."

The study analysed more than 125,000 cases of workers in the lowest grade over several years. Lowest grade jobs typically comprise roles such as clerical, secretarial and customer service.

Prof Woodhams concludes: "This research is the first time that the impact of labour market disadvantages on men has been quantified. We were surprised by the results that disabled men, and those from an ethnic minority, are more likely to be found in feminised, low status work but more shocked that this effect is worse amongst men than it is in [women](#). This same pattern can also be seen in relation to promotion out of low level [work](#). Employers really need to have a good look at their workforce and start addressing these inequalities."

Provided by University of Exeter

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