

Older job applicants up to three times less likely to be selected for interview than younger ones, study finds

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Fifty-year-old job seekers are up to three times less likely to be selected for interview than younger applicants with less relevant experience, a

major new study shows.

Research found that applications from 28-year-old white men were three times more likely to get an interview than those sent by 50-year-old black [women](#), and over twice as likely as those sent by 50-year-old white women.

Academics from Anglia Ruskin and Cyprus universities applied for 811 sales and service jobs in England, sending in applications from fictional British job seekers.

One was a 28-year-old white man with nine years' experience relevant to the job, and the others were from 50-year-old white and black men and women with 31 years' relevant experience. All the fictional applicants said they were employed at the time, and their age and [ethnic background](#) were noted on their CVs.

Researchers found that applications from young white men were:

- 1.8 times more likely to be selected for interview than ones from 50-year-old white men
- 2.3 times more likely to be selected than those from 50-year-old white women
- 2.6 times more likely to be selected than those from 50-year-old black men
- 3 times more likely to be selected than those from 50-year-old black women.

Professor Nick Drydakis, Dr. Anna Paraskevopoulou of the School of Business and Law, Anglia Ruskin University, and Dr. Vasiliki Bozani of Economics Research Centre, University of Cyprus, also found that the young men were accepted for interview for jobs that paid more highly, around £19,863, than the ones that 50-year-old men were invited to,

around £17,552, 13% lower.

The jobs that 50-year-old women were selected for interview for paid £2,454 per year, 14% lower than those for 28-year-old white men, those that 50-year-old black men were selected for paid £2,572 less, and those for 50-year-old black women paid £2,937 less.

Dr. Paraskevopoulou told the British Sociological Association's annual conference in Glasgow today [Thursday 25 April] that the study showed that "Despite the growing participation of older workers in the labour market, many employers are prejudiced against older workers.

"Older applicants might not receive invitations for an interview, or they might receive invitations to [interview](#) for lower-paid [jobs](#).

"The results of this study also showed that this ageism was worse for older black men and much worse for older black women.

"These results originate from stereotypical beliefs that the physical strengths and job performance decline with age, and earlier among women than men. They are also in line with general and persistent racial prejudices.

"This study shows how much work is still needed to address age bias in the labour market. The existence of age, gender and racial bias in the workplace could have serious consequences for society as a whole and the individuals affected."

She said that anti-discrimination and inclusion policies should be designed and that firms should not only solicit applications from older individuals but also ensure that they are fairly considered once received.

The researchers wrote job applications which matched the fictional

applicants with the role they were applying for in terms of education and hobbies, ensuring that the only difference were in age and the length of work experience.

Provided by British Sociological Association

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