

# Men obstructed from entering female-dominated occupations

February 25 2021

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Job applications from men are disfavoured when they apply for work in female-dominated occupations. Reaching the interview stage was most difficult for men applying for jobs as cleaners. These are the results of a

study by researchers from Linköping University and the University of California, Irvine, recently published in the scientific journal *PLOS One*.

"We see that there are obstructions to men entering certain parts of the labor market. In the application process, we don't see any [discrimination](#) against women who want to get into male-dominated occupations. But we find considerable discrimination against men in female-dominated occupations," says Mark Granberg, doctoral student in economics at Linköping University.

The researchers submitted approximately 3,200 fictitious applications to employers around Sweden. For every application the researchers noted whether the fictitious applicant received a response and if so, what the response was.

The female-dominated occupations where discrimination against men was observed include nursing, childcare and preschool teaching—and the most disparate treatment was found in applications to house cleaning jobs. However, in male-dominated occupations such as auto mechanics, [truck drivers](#), IT developers and warehouse workers, the researchers saw no discrimination against women.

Discrimination in the first step of the application process against men seeking entry to female-dominated occupations is in line with previous research. However, this experimental study by Mark Granberg and his colleagues is broader and includes more occupational categories. It combines data from three previous correspondence tests in order to study [gender discrimination](#) in recruitment in Sweden. Correspondence testing is a common method when studying discrimination, where the fictitious test participants submit written applications and do not show themselves to the employer. However correspondence testing can only capture the presence of discrimination in the first stage of the application process.

"That men's applications—not women's—are eliminated in the application process is interesting. We already know that women are disadvantaged in the labor market in terms of salary and promotions. So, the follow-up question is, what happens along the way? That would be interesting to look at, but it's not something our study can shed light on," says Mark Granberg.

**More information:** Ali Ahmed et al, Gender discrimination in hiring: An experimental reexamination of the Swedish case, *PLOS ONE* (2021). DOI: [10.1371/journal.pone.0245513](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0245513)

Provided by Linköping University

Citation: Men obstructed from entering female-dominated occupations (2021, February 25) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2021-02-men-obstructed-female-dominated-occupations.html>

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