

Study: Names can cause discrimination

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U.S. researchers say they've discovered anyone with a name that even sounds African-American faces discrimination in the pursuit of rental housing.

The study's authors sent more than 1,100 identically worded e-mail inquiries to Los Angeles-area landlords asking about vacant apartments advertised online. The inquiries were signed randomly, Patrick McDougall, Tyrell Jackson or Said Al-Rahman.

The fictional McDougall received positive or encouraging replies from 89 percent of landlords, while Al-Rahman was encouraged by 66 percent of the landlords.

Only 56 percent, however, responded positively to Jackson.

"Los Angeles is one of the most diverse cities in the world, but it's clear that housing discrimination exists and that it begins long before a landlord meets a prospective tenant," said Oregon State University Assistant Professor William Loges, a co-author of the study.

The study's lead author was Adrian Carpusor, a former student under Loges at the University of Southern California. Carpusor conducts research for JD Power & Associates.

The research was detailed recently in the Journal of Applied Social Psychology.

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