Tom, Dick or Anna beat Hu to the job

What's in a name? An added difficulty in getting a job if it's not Anglo-Saxon, research by the Australian National University shows.

A study into hiring discrimination sent 4000 fake curriculum vitae to employers in Sydney, Melbourne and and Brisbane, changing only the names of the applicants. It found call-back rates were higher for applicants with an Anglo-Saxon name.

"Sydney has the highest level of labour market discrimination for Chinese and Middle Easterners," one of the report's authors, economist Andrew Leigh, said. "There may be other stages of discrimination at the interview itself and in the workplace but we can't observe that."

Common indigenous, Middle Eastern, Italian and Chinese names were substituted across fictional templates to measure employer bias. Other factors such as qualifications, experience and gender were kept equal.

In Sydney a person named Fatima Hariri or Ping Lee had to apply for twice as many jobs as a Lisa Robinson to secure the same number of interviews.

People with distinctively Aboriginal names fared somewhat better. For every 20 job applications sent by Anglo-Saxon sounding counterparts, indigenous people had to fire off an extra five. Italian jobseekers had to send an additional three.

Discrimination was more acute in certain industries, the report found. For entry-level jobs in data entry, customer service, sales and waiting tables, employment prospects were worst for ethnic-sounding waiting staff.

Job prospects were particularly bad if the would-be waiter had a Middle Eastern name. They would have to put in 127 percent more applications for the same number of interviews.

"That's potentially because being a waiter requires the most customer interaction," Professor Leigh said. "You might imagine an employer who was not themselves discriminatory but who was worried their customers were."

However, findings for data entry showed employers were not blameless. Again, Chinese and Middle Eastern-sounding job applicants were worst hit.

A man named Hu Chen for example would need to apply for 182 percent of the jobs someone called Martin Johnson, the report found.
Bosses prefer to interview Anglos

CITIES OF CONTRAST

How many more applications does a candidate with a racially or ethnically sounding name need to submit to get the same number of interviews as someone with an Anglo-Saxon-sounding name?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Brisbane</th>
<th>Melbourne</th>
<th>Sydney</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>41% more</td>
<td>48% more</td>
<td>25% more</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>57% more</td>
<td>61% more</td>
<td>92% more</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>28% more</td>
<td>7% less</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern</td>
<td>51% more</td>
<td>64% more</td>
<td>80% more</td>
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Source: Australian National University

Stephen Lunn
Social affairs writer

EMPLOYERS are far less likely to interview a person with a Chinese, Middle Eastern or Aboriginal name for a job even if their CV is identical to someone with an Anglo-Saxon name.

And Sydney bosses discriminate more than those in Melbourne or Brisbane, a new study using 4000 fake CVs reveals.

Australian National University professor of social sciences Andrew Leigh sent out 4000 fictitious resumes to employers in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne looking for entry-level workers in the hospitality, data entry, customer service and sales area.

The CVs were identical apart from made-up names indicating Italian, indigenous, Chinese or Middle Eastern heritage, ensuring responses purely measuring discrimination, Professor Leigh said. All bogus applicants had a high school education in Australia.

The results were conspicuously different depending on whether the CV bore surnames such as Mitchell, Chang, Hariri, Tipungwuti or Bianchi.

“To get the same number of interviews as an applicant with an Anglo-Saxon name, a Chinese applicant must submit 68 per cent more applications, a Middle Eastern applicant must submit 64 per cent more, an indigenous applicant 35 per cent more and an Italian applicant 12 per cent more,” Professor Leigh said.

Sydney bosses were less likely to give jobseekers with Chinese and Middle Eastern names a go than the other two capital cities, but more likely to grant an interview to a person with an indigenous name.

Chinese jobseekers needed to send 92 per cent more job applications than those with an Anglo-Saxon background to secure an interview in Sydney, while Middle Eastern applicants needed to post 80 per cent more resumes.

In Brisbane it was 57 per cent and 51 per cent respectively.

“As a Sydney lad, I was confident its bosses would be the most tolerant and cosmopolitan of the three cities, while Brisbane employers would be a bunch of rednecks. It was, in fact, the other way around,” Professor Leigh said.

But Italians in Melbourne can take heart. The study shows they are more likely to be offered an interview than someone with an Anglo-Saxon name.

Ref: 52974442
Sorry Hassan, the job goes to Andrew

By Emma Macdonald
Education Reporter

Middle Eastern job-seekers were subject to the highest rates of discrimination. According to the report, Does Racial and Ethnic Discrimination Vary Across Minority Groups, written by Professor Alison Booth, Professor Andrew Leigh and researcher Elena Varganova, to get the same number of job interviews as someone with an Anglo-Saxon name, a Chinese applicant must submit 68 per cent more applications.

Middle Eastern applicants must submit 64 per cent more applications, Indigenous applicants 35 per cent more applications, and Italian 12 per cent more applications.

While the study is not the first of its type – a similar experiment in the United States found that a black applicant must submit 50 per cent more applications to get the same number of interviews as a white applicant – it is one of the largest internationally.

Professor Booth said “... we were able to estimate precisely the extent of hiring discrimination.

“Because all other characteristics are held constant, we can be sure that we are really measuring discrimination.”

Continued Page 8

NAMES USED TO JUDGE DISCRIMINATION IN THE JOB MARKET

Anglo-Saxon first names:
Female: Jennifer, Lisa, Sarah.
Male: Martin, Andrew, Phillip.

Anglo-Saxon last names:
Abbott, Adams, Johnson.

Middle Eastern first names:
Female: Fatima, Lala, Nadine.
Male: Ahmed, Hassan, Bilal.

Middle Eastern last names:
Hariri, Baghdadi, Chikhani.
Sorry Hassan, the job goes to Andrew

While 35 per cent of Anglo-Saxon names received a call back following a written application, this dropped to 32 per cent for Italian names, 26 per cent for indigenous names, 22 per cent for Middle Eastern names and 21 per cent for Chinese names.

Female Chinese job applicants faced the greatest discrimination, having to supply 82 per cent more job applications to receive the same number of interviews as an Anglo-Saxon job-seeker.

This compares with 54 per cent for male Chinese applicants.

Middle Eastern male applicants fared worse, having to submit 76 per cent more applications than an Anglo-Saxon to gain an interview. This compares with 52 per cent for Middle Eastern women.

Discrimination was also measured across the cities, with Sydney showing the highest level of discrimination, followed by Melbourne then Brisbane.

Chinese job-seekers in Sydney needed to submit 92 per cent more applications and Middle Eastern job-seekers 80 per cent more to get the same number of interviews as an Anglo-Saxon. These figures dropped respectively to 61 per cent and 64 per cent in Melbourne and 57 per cent and 51 per cent in Brisbane.

When job ads were broken down by industry, hospitality was the most discriminatory with Middle Eastern waiters and waitresses required to submit 127 per cent more applications than an Anglo-Saxon for a job interview and Chinese applicants 99 per cent, indigenous 70 per cent and Italians 27 per cent.

In data entry, Chinese applicants had to submit 82 per cent more applications, Middle Eastern applicants 71 per cent, indigenous applicants 60 per cent and Italians 19 per cent.

Sales required Chinese applicants to submit 71 per cent more applications, Middle Eastern applicants 59 per cent, Italians 19 per cent, and indigenous applicants 16 per cent.

Customer service proved to be the least discriminatory industry, with Italians having to submit 21 per cent more applications, Chinese 12 per cent, indigenous applicants 9 per cent and Middle Eastern applicants 2 per cent.

When CVs were broken down into low or high quality templates, high quality CVs were far more likely to help an Anglo-Saxon applicant than others.

A low-quality Anglo-Saxon CV received a 28 per cent call-back rate, while a high-quality CV received a 42 per cent rate.

Middle Eastern CVs received a 22 per cent call-back rate whether they were high or low quality.

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

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

“In another experiment … we found implicit discrimination against ethnic minority names, suggesting that part of the effect in the hiring experiment is likely to be subconscious,” he said.
It’s official: Australian bosses are racist when it’s time to hire

By PETER MARTIN

A FOREIGN or indigenous-sounding name gives people less chance of landing a job in Australia, a study has found. Unless your name sounds Italian and you’re in Melbourne, in which case it can be an advantage.

Australian National University researchers Alison Booth, Andrew Leigh and Elena Varganova sent out 4000 fake job applications to employers advertising on the internet for entry-level hospitality, data entry, customer service and sales jobs, changing only the racial origin of the supposed applicants’ names.

Applicants with Chinese names fared the worst, having only a one-in-five chance of getting asked in for interviews, compared to applicants with Anglo-Saxon names whose chances exceeded one-in-three.

Typically a Chinese-named applicant would need to put in 68 per cent more applications than an Anglo-named applicant to get the same number of calls back. A Middle Eastern-named applicant needed 64 per cent more, an indigenous-named applicant 35 per cent more and an Italian-named applicant 12 per cent more.

But the results varied by city. Sydney employers were generally more discriminatory than those in Melbourne or Brisbane, except when it came to indigenous names, where they were more accepting.

But only in Melbourne was there a type of non-Anglo name that was actually loved. Melbourne employers were 7 per cent more likely to respond well to someone with an Italian name than they were to an Anglo name.

Asked to guess why, Dr Leigh hastened to point out that the 7 per cent bias in favour of Italian-sounding names was not statistically significant.

“Or it could be because many of the jobs we pretended to apply for were waiter and waitressing positions in bistros, bars, cafes and restaurants,” he said.

The fake applications had made clear that the supposed job-seekers had completed secondary schooling in Australia, making it unlikely that the employers had assumed the non-Anglo applicants could not speak English.

A similar study carried out in the US found that applicants with African-American-sounding names needed to submit 50 per cent more applications than white applicants to get the same number of interviews, suggesting that Australian employers were more prejudiced, except when it came to Italians and Australians with indigenous names.

Sydney employers were generally more discriminatory than those in Melbourne or Brisbane, except when it came to indigenous names, where they were more accepting.
Research from the Australian National University shows employers are more likely to call prospective job seekers with Anglo-Saxon names than applicants with 'foreign-sounding names'. Economists Alison Booth and Andrew Leigh and researcher Elena Varganova created fake CVs to chart the discrimination. But in reality Australia's corporate elite feature a number of unusual names - Sigma Pharmaceuticals CEO is Sri-Lankan born Elmo de Alwis, whilst Elmer Funke Kupper is the head of Tabcorp and Cholmondley Darvall is the CEO of Deutsche Australia.

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MENTS: Deutsche Australia, Tabcorp
Name your price for jobs

Bosses show bias against ethnic applicants

Emma Chalmers
IN CANBERRA

THE key to nailing a dream job may be all in a name — your name.

New research has found job seekers with ethnic-sounding names have a harder time securing an interview than their Anglo-Saxon colleagues.

Researchers from the Australian National University sent more than 4000 fake CVs to employers hunting for staff through job advertisements as part of their 2007 experiment.

Professor Alison Booth said the researchers varied just the names on CVs to take a gauge of "hiring discrimination" and found people with ethnic names were less likely to be called up for an interview.

Job hunters with Anglo-Saxon names had a 35 per cent hit rate with employers in getting a phone call in response to their application. But aspiring workers from different backgrounds had to work more than twice as hard in some instances to get a call back.

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

In Brisbane, the research suggested Chinese job hunters faced the greatest discrimination, having to send out more than double the number of applications to get the same results as their Anglo-Saxon counterparts.

Chinese women also had a harder time securing interviews than Chinese men.

That trend was reversed for Italian women.

Among the last names surveyed were Rosso, Ferrari and Romano (Italian), Chen, Huang and Chang (Chinese), Kassir and Baghdadi (Middle Eastern) and Tjungarrayi (Indigenous). They were pitted against Anglo-Saxon last names including Abbott, Adams and Johnson.
Prejudice rules in jobs hunt

Stephen Johnson

JOB seekers are finding that the old adage "It's not what you know but who you know" does not necessarily apply in Australia — it's actually more about where you come from.

An Australian National University study has found people with Chinese names are much more likely to be knocked back for a job interview than applicants with an Anglo-Saxon name.

Researchers found Chinese job seekers also had less chance of being called back than Middle Eastern and Italian contenders.

They sent 4000 fake job applications for entry-level waiting, data entry, customer service and sales jobs.

All the fictitious employment seekers went to high school in Australia.

The research found that overall, Chinese job seekers were called back 21 per cent of the time they applied for a job, compared with 22 per cent for Middle Eastern people and 26 per cent for indigenous applicants.

By comparison, Anglo-Saxon job seekers were called back 35 per cent of the time, only slightly ahead of Italians on 32 per cent.

"It's consistent with the notion that an influx of migration increases prejudice," researcher Andrew Leigh said.

Professor Leigh said minorities would fare better in the labour market if they Anglicised their names.

When looking at individual jobs, the study found people with a Middle Eastern background had to send 127 per cent more applications for a waiter's position than Anglo-Saxon contenders.

The study also found Middle Eastern job seekers would fare better if they applied for work with a non-Anglo-Saxon employer or in an ethnically diverse neighbourhood.

Minority groups were also more likely to be discriminated against in Sydney than in Brisbane or Melbourne.

In Sydney, Chinese job seekers needed to send 92 per cent more job applications than those with an Anglo-Saxon background, while Middle Eastern applicants needed to post 80 per cent more resumes.
JOB HUNTING
Nationality plays key role

JOBSEEKERS are finding the old adage that it is not what you know but who you know does not necessarily apply in Australia. It is more about where you come from.

An Australian National University survey has found people with Chinese names are much more likely to be knocked back for a job interview than Anglo-Saxon named applicants. The study sent out 4000 fake job applications.

Researchers found Chinese jobseekers were called back 21 per cent of the time, compared with 35 per cent for Anglo-Saxons.
Bosses prefer ‘Anglo’ applicants

Michael Harvey

JOBSEEKERS with non Anglo-Saxon names find it harder to score interviews — unless they are Italians in Melbourne.

After decades of post-war migration, Melbourne bosses cry “Pronto!” to Italian applicants ahead of all others.

Research at the Australian National University uncovered widespread discrimination among employers.

People with Chinese-sounding names racked up the most knockbacks. And Sydney bosses were more prejudiced than their Melbourne counterparts.

Researchers sent 4000 bogus CVs in response to job ads in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane for junior positions in table-serving, data entry, customer service and sales.

The only difference in the CVs were the applicant’s name — varied along ethnic lines to give an estimate of “hiring discrimination”.

Bosses called back Anglo-Saxon jobseekers 35 per cent of the time — compared with 21 per cent of Chinese, 22 per cent of Middle Eastern, 26 per cent of indigenous and 32 per cent of Italians.

To get the same number of interviews as an applicant with an Anglo-Saxon name, the study found a Chinese jobseeker would have to apply for 68 per cent more jobs.

Likewise, a Middle Eastern person would have to put in 64 per cent more applications, an indigenous Australian 35 per cent more and an Italian 12 per cent.

Broken down across the three capital cities, Melbourne bosses were generally less discriminatory.

However, Melbourne came out worst in the case of indigenous applicants, who must apply for 48 per cent more jobs — compared with 41 per cent in Brisbane and 25 per cent in Sydney.

It’s a brighter picture for Italians in Melbourne. Compared with “Anglos”, they need to apply for 7 per cent fewer jobs to get an interview — the only ethnic group and city to record such a result.

Researcher Andrew Leigh said it proved the melting pot theory of ethnic groups eventually mixing.

“Melbourne was the main destination for the wave of post-war Italian migrants,” Prof Leigh said.

“This is a good news story in the sense that it tells us the melting pot works — it just takes a long time to boil.”

Overall, Prof Leigh said ethnic minorities would enjoy better strike rates if they Anglicised their names.

In one instance, Sydney woman Ragda Ali completed a TAFE course and received no calls on multiple job applications. But her luck changed when she changed her name to Gabriella Hannah.

“I applied for the same jobs and got a call 30 minutes later,” she told researchers.

Prof Leigh said: “It suggests Anglicising your name increases the chance of getting a job interview.”
Ethnic names lose in job hunt

SHANE WRIGHT
ECONOMICS EDITOR

Australian businesses tend to shun the curriculum vitae of workers with ethnic-sounding names, and children's party invites carrying a non-Anglo-Saxon name are more likely to end up in the bin, according to a study.

Three Australian National University economists found that a person with a Chinese-sounding name had to send 64 per cent more applications than one with an Anglo-Saxon name to get the same number of interviews.

A male with a Middle Eastern-sounding name had the least chance — needing to send out 127 per cent more applications.

The lead author and one of Australia's pre-eminent economists, Andrew Leigh, said yesterday it was clear that employers had at least a subconscious level of racism that affected whose resume they chose for a possible job interview.

"They're certainly discriminating against people on the basis of their names, there's no other reasonable interpretation of our results," he said.

"Much of that could be subconscious, and it may well be the case the employers would behave perfectly well towards ethnic minorities if they were standing next to them on a train or sitting next to them at a football game, but their implicit prejudices come into play when they have to make fast decisions."

In the study, 4000 CVs were sent out in response to jobs in the hospital, data entry, customer service and sales areas. Names were changed between Anglo-Saxon, Chinese, Middle Eastern, Italian and indigenous. To guard against factors such as English skills and education, the fake CVs said the applicant had gone to high school in Australia, had previous work experience and a TAFE qualification.

Italian-sounding names were least likely to be knocked back, relative to Anglo-Saxon names. Chinese sounding names sent to Sydney employers were most likely to be rejected.

Dr Leigh said changing a person's name could be one way to get a CV. "It certainly suggests that Anglicising your name increases your chance of getting a job interview," he said.

Ethnic Communities Council of WA president Ramdas Sankaran said some people had Anglicised their name "just so they can get their foot in the door". "Once they get there they show they're good enough, but there is something wrong if you have to change your name," he said.

The economists also tested whether children's party invitations sent to incorrect addresses were returned to the sender. Letters with an Anglo-Saxon name were more likely to get returned rather than binned. Letters with a Chinese name were least likely.