Are Joris and Renske more employable than Rashid and Samira?

A study on the prevalence and sources of ethnic discrimination in recruitment in the Netherlands using experimental and survey data.

By Dr. Lieselotte Blommaert

Abstract:
Ethnic discrimination in recruitment partly explains existing ethnic inequalities in the labor market. This study examines the prevalence of ethnic discrimination in recruitment in the Netherlands and investigates which individual and contextual conditions foster or hamper ethnic discrimination in recruitment.

Using data from field and laboratory experiments, surveys and reaction time tests, this study provides strong evidence of ethnic discrimination in recruitment procedures in the Netherlands. Discrimination of both male and female minority applicants occurs across sectors and occupational levels. During economic recessions discrimination occurs more often. Not all employers are equally likely to discriminate. Those who have more positive interethnic contacts and those with higher educational levels are less likely to discriminate, while males and those with religious (Christian) backgrounds are more likely to discriminate. Discrimination is not always the result of conscious (explicit) processes; having unconscious (implicit) negative associations with ethnic minorities also increase the likelihood of discriminating.

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