

Economic Inequality & Affirmative Action

Employment Discrimination by Name

Source

Are Emily and Greg More Employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A Field Experiment on Labor Market Discrimination

Marianne Bertrand & Sendhil Mullainathan
Working Paper 9873

<http://www.nber.org/papers/w9873>

NATIONAL BUREAU OF ECONOMIC RESEARCH

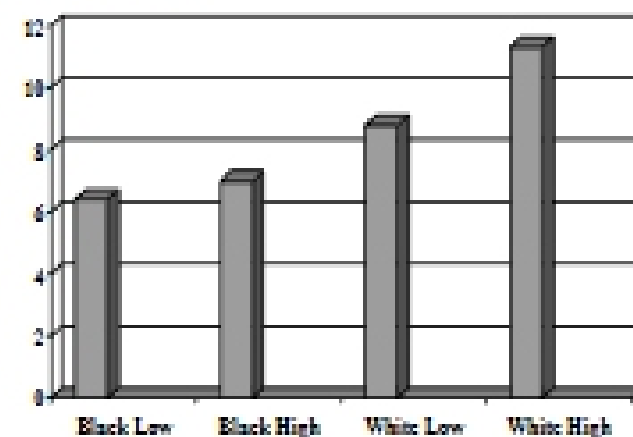
Method (1)

- Controlled experiment
- Chicago and Boston July 2001 – January 2002
- Generated a bank of realistic but fictitious resumes of college graduates
- Resumes were of high and low quality, as assessed by experience, career profile, employment gaps, skills listed
- Names randomly assigned to resumes were either "White" (e.g. Emily, Kristen, Carrie) or "Black" (e.g. Latoya, Ebony, Tamika). Many names used.

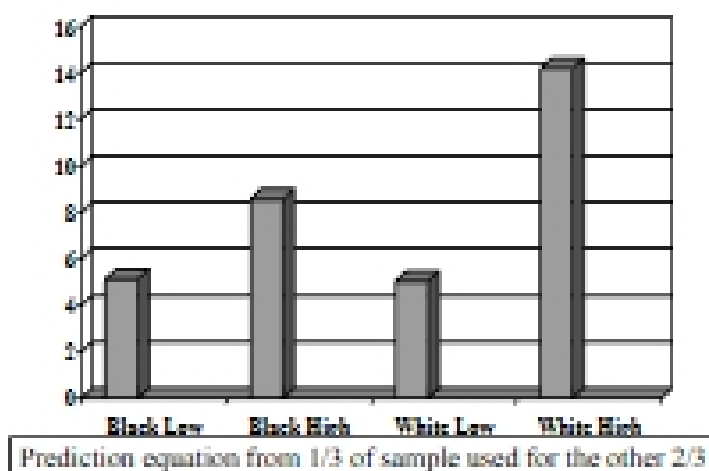
Method (2)

- Responded to 1300 newspaper ads for jobs in four occupational categories: sales, administrative support, clerical services and customer services.
- For each advertised job, sent four resumes by fax or mail: White high quality, White low quality, Black high quality, Black low quality. Nearly 5000 resumes sent.
- Dependent variable is whether the employer called or emailed and left a message

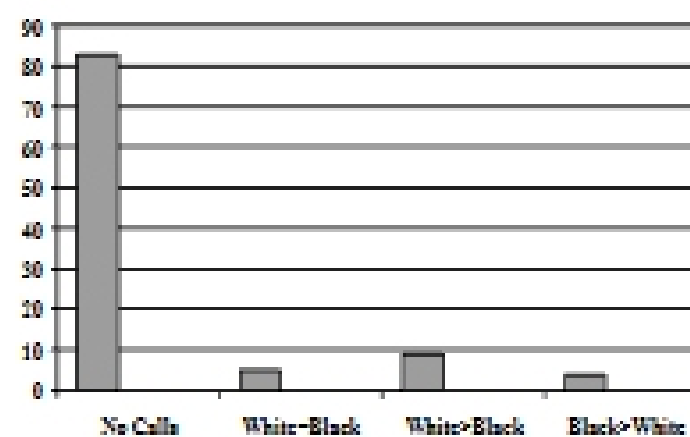
Result 1: % of applicants called by race and subjective "quality" measure



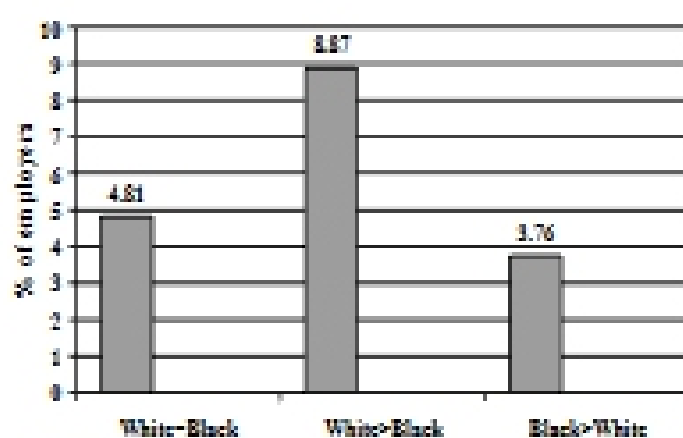
Result 2: % of applicants called by race and expected response predicted by other variables



Result 3: Racial mix of calls to applicants by 1300 employers



Result 3: Racial mix of calls to applicants by 232 employers who called at least one



Devah Pager: The Price of a Criminal Record

Controlled experiment, entry-level job seekers responding to newspaper ads in Milwaukee job market

Figure 1. The Effect of a Criminal Record on Employment Opportunities for Whites

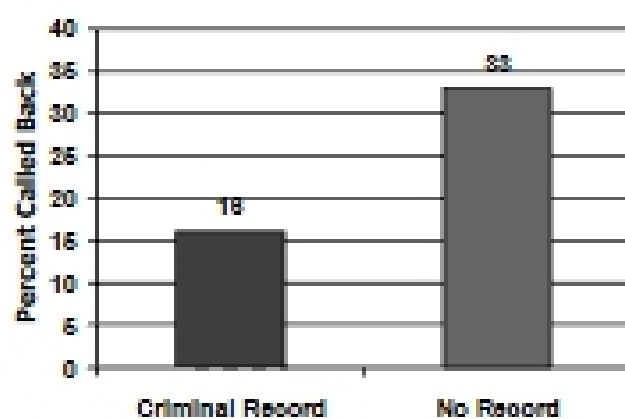
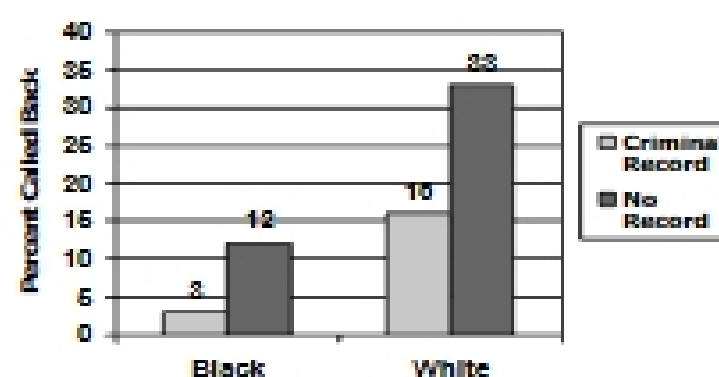
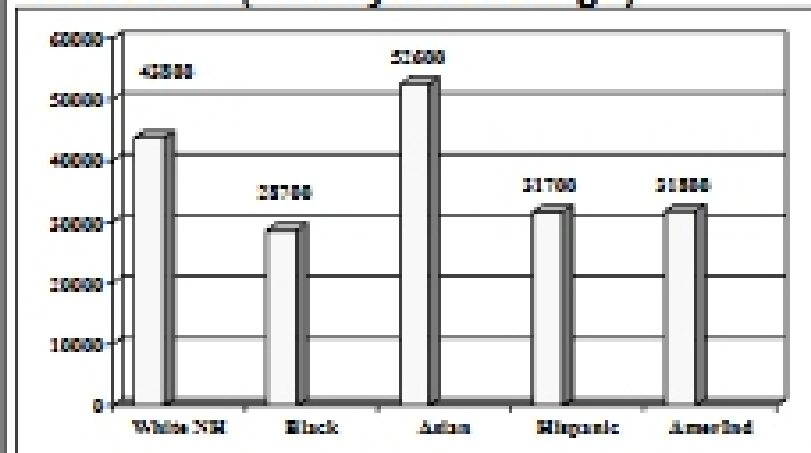


Figure 2. The Effect of a Criminal Record for Black and White Job Applicants

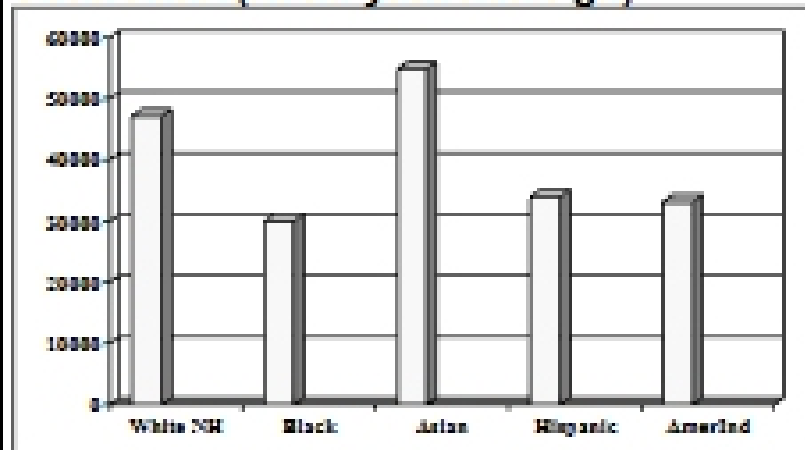


Some economic trends

Median Household Income by Race 1998-2000 (three year average)

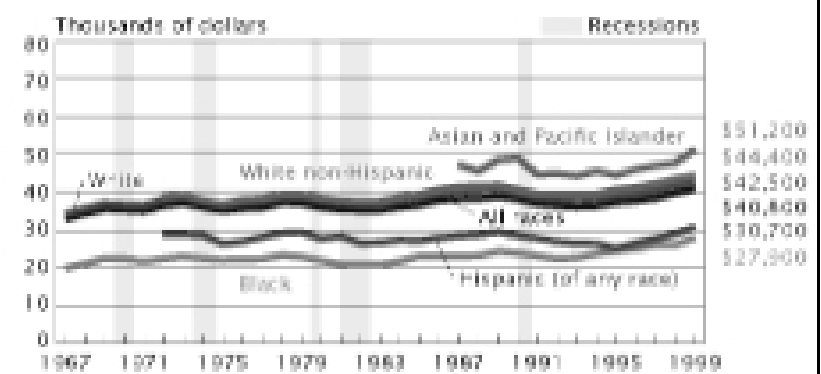


Median Household Income by Race 2000-2002 (three year average)



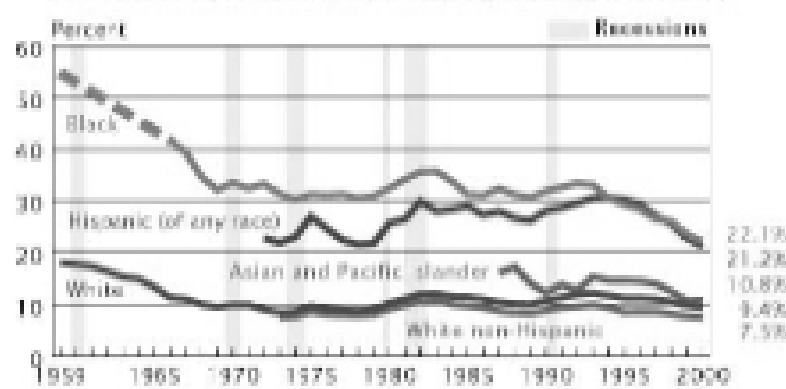
Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1967 to 1999

Income increased for all groups; highs set or equaled for all groups

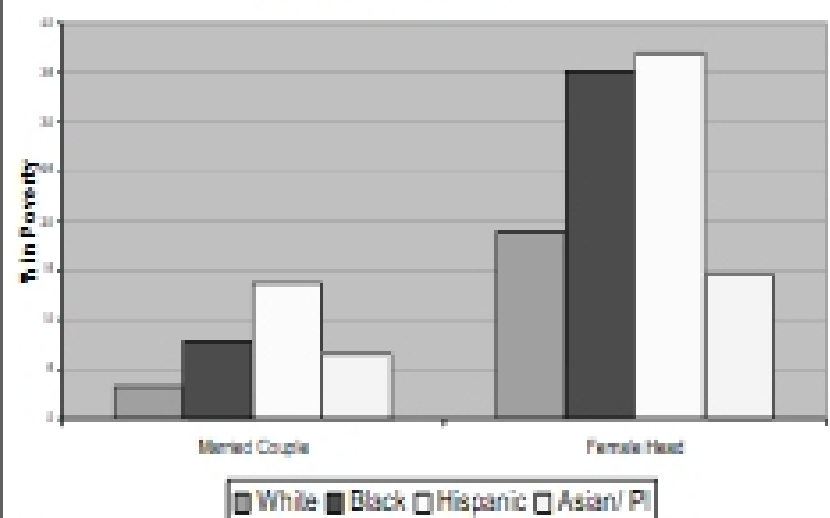


Poverty Rates by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1959 to 2000

Poverty rates declined for Blacks and Hispanics; lows set or matched for all groups except Whites



Poverty by Race & Family Type



Source: U.S. Census, Poverty in the United States: 2001, P90-219, Table 1.