

## More experience racial discrimination at work

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More Singaporeans say they experience racial discrimination when applying for jobs or promotions, finds new study.

Compared to five years ago, the study found that slightly more individuals from minority groups have reported experiencing discriminatory treatment at work.

This, despite respondents' "universal consensus" that ability, rather than factors such as race, should trump all in work-related decisions.

When it comes to applying for jobs here, 73% of Malays, 68% of Indians, and 49% of others, which includes Eurasians, say they've experienced discriminatory treatment.

However, only one in three (38%) Chinese say they've felt the same way.

Of the figures, 22% of Malay and 21% of Indian jobseekers say they "often/very often" experience discrimination. Both are slight increases from the Institute of Policy Studies' (IPS) and OnePeople.SG's findings in 2013.

Chinese and those from other races reported a decrease in such experiences: only 3% of Chinese and 13% of others experience bias "often/very often".

A similar trend appears in the area of job promotions: 70% of Malays, 66% of Indians and 48% of others feel racially discriminated against when applying for advancements.

Again, only one in three (39%) Chinese have experienced a similar bias.

The study found that 20% of Indians, 18% of Malays and 11% of others often feel discriminated against during the process, while only 3% of Chinese feel the same.

The three researchers from IPS also asked respondents what attributes are important when recruiting someone to work for them.

"There was universal consensus that ability, rather than factors such as race, were important in hiring decisions," the researchers wrote. "More than half said ability was always important and a third said it was important most of the time, far higher proportions than for any other factor.

"However, a substantial proportion of respondents still perceived other attributes such as education, language and race of the job applicant as important. For instance, over four in 10 said language was either always important, or important most of the time."

Analysing the results by respondents' race, they found that the applicant's race was slightly more important to Chinese respondents than others:

Chinese – 78%

Malays – 62%

Indians – 55%

Others – 61%