Age, Women, and Hiring
An Experimental Study

Joanna N. Lahey

Abstract

As baby boomers reach retirement age, demographic pressures on public programs may cause policy makers to cut benefits and encourage employment at later ages. But how much demand exists for older workers? This paper reports on a field experiment to determine hiring conditions for older women in entry-level jobs in two cities. A younger worker is more than 40 percent more likely to be offered an interview than is an older worker. No evidence is found to support taste-based discrimination as a reason for this differential, and some suggestive evidence is found to support statistical discrimination.

Received September 2006.
Accepted March 2007.

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