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## Background

- Youth and young adults with disabilities are consistently under-employed and experience concerning rates of ableism while looking for work and in the workplace.
- Youth are at a distinct developmental and transitional period, yet we do not know about their experiences with workplace ableism.

### Objective

To explore the experiences and impact of workplace discrimination and ableism among youth and young adults with disabilities.



### What is Ableism?

- Ableism is unwanted, exploitative or abusive conduct against disabled people that violates their dignity and security or creates intimidating or offensive environments.
- Ableism and prejudice towards people with disabilities denies their opportunity to compete on an equal basis.

## Methods

### Design & Approach

- Systematic search of 7 databases
- Data was extracted using a structured form and study quality was assessed using Kmet's quality assessment tool

### Search Strategy

- Key terms:
  - Discrimination, ableism
  - Employment
  - Disability

### Inclusion Criteria

- Empirical, peer-reviewed studies involving:
  - Youth/young adults (mean age age ≤ 29 years); or findings delineated by age
  - Participants with a disability
  - Outcome related to discrimination or ableism in the workplace or search for employment

## Results: Overview

- In a total of 2,654 hits, 39 studies met our inclusion criteria.
- Study and sample characteristics:
  - 21 studies were quantitative; eighteen studies were qualitative.
  - Eight countries were represented in the included studies: US (14), Canada (11), UK (5), Australia (3), Netherlands (2), Norway (2), Brazil (1), Tanzania (1)
  - Sample sizes ranged from 8 to 462,945

## Results: Key trends

### Rates of ableism

- 3 studies reported on the rates of workplace ableism among youth and young adults with disabilities.
- Rates of ableism, discrimination or harassment in study populations ranged from 15% (of individuals aged 15-29), to 37% (of individuals 29 and under).

### Factors affecting workplace ableism

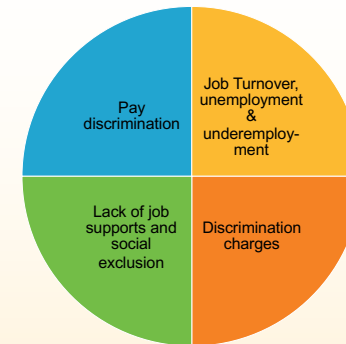
- **Disability type:** 'visible' disabilities were associated with the experience of workplace ableism.
- **Gender:** Studies reported mixed findings on the impact of gender.
- **Education:** Studies reported mixed findings on relationship between education and workplace ableism.
- **Employer type & knowledge about disability:** Industry type, size, and employer knowledge around disabilities influenced experiences and likelihood of ableism.

### Ableism in the job search and anticipated ableism in the workplace

- 15 studies reported on experiences of ableism during the job search or anticipated ableism from employers.
- Youth and young adults experienced discrimination at different stages of the application and hiring process.



## Impact of workplace ableism



## Discussion

- Concerning trends identified in our review, including pay gaps and high rates of discrimination charges, highlight the persistence of ableist norms and institutions in the workplace.
- None of the studies reported on coping mechanisms for young people dealing with ableism. This may reflect the need for further support for youth in developing and using coping strategies.

## Future directions

- Document rates and prevalence of workplace ableism among youth with disabilities and consider how this varies by factors such as disability type, education-level and gender.
- Examine experiences of ableism in common childhood conditions such as cerebral palsy, spina bifida, autism and acquired brain injury.

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