

Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination: three studies on career paths of women with young children

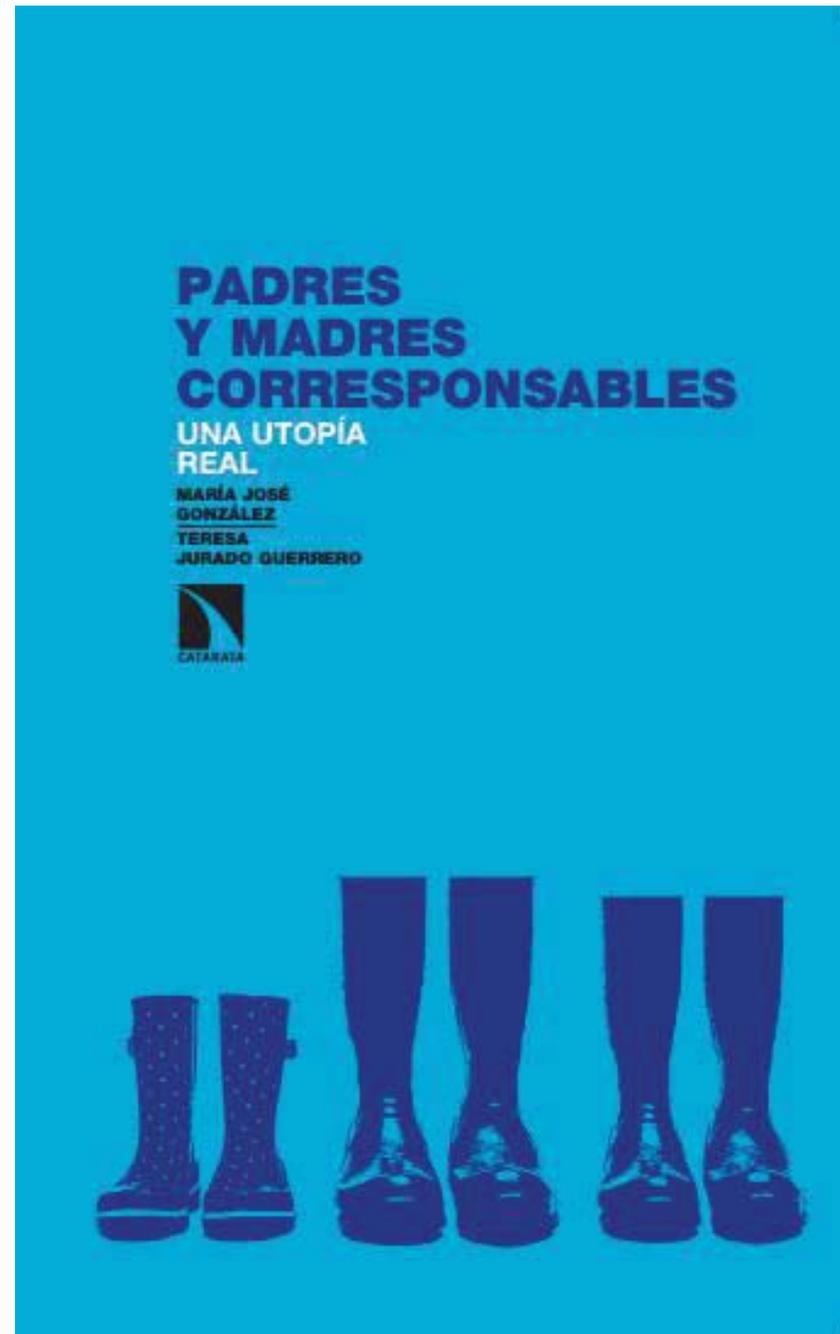
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Original
research
question &
motivation



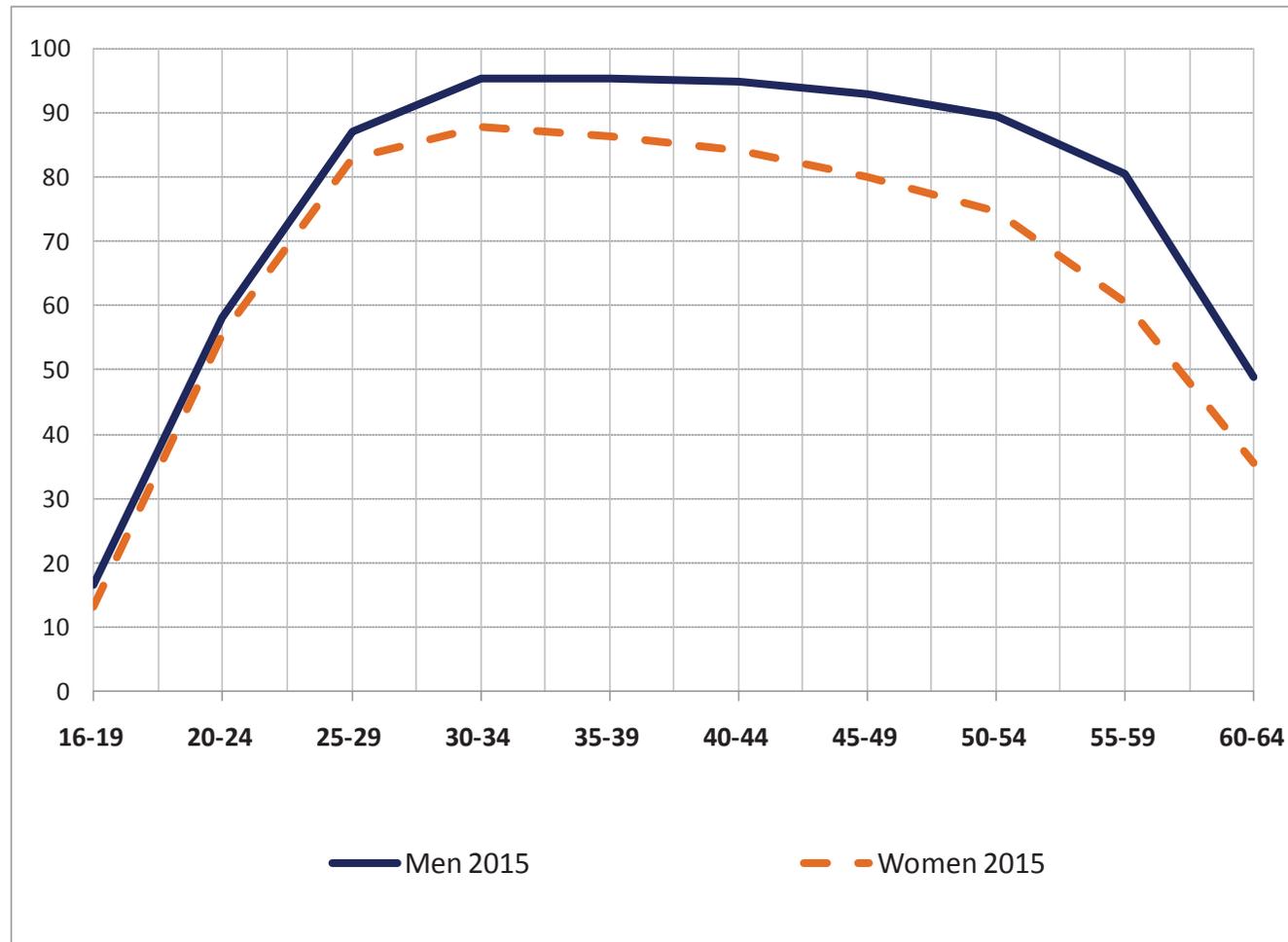
“In contemporary labor markets, discrimination rarely takes the form of women being paid less than men in the same jobs at the same establishments, but is manifest in men having better access to higher paying jobs within an occupation type, even when traditional labor market characteristics are controlled for.”

François, P. (1998) “Gender discrimination without gender difference: theory and policy responses”, *Journal of Public Economics*, 68, 1–32.

Goals

- (1) Measure the influence of **discrimination** on job mobility /career advancement by gender and family composition
- (2) Analyze presence of **gender stereotypes & prejudices** as determinants of employers' decisions

Activity rates by gender & age groups: 2005 and 2015



Source: LFS, 2n term (on-line data).

Definitions of concepts



ILLUSTRATION: JULIE NICHOLLS/CANOPY/CORBIS

DISCRIMINATION

“Differential or unequal treatment of the members of some group or category on the basis of their group membership rather than on the basis of their individual qualities”

Levin, J. & Levin, W. (1982). *The functions of discrimination and prejudice*. New York: Harper & Row: p.51.

- Gary Becker's (1957) **“taste” discrimination model** is among the best-known and influential economic theories seeking to explain discrimination: employers weight the costs and benefits of acting on their own prejudices and/or the prejudices of their employees and customers:
 - **Prejudiced employees** might resign or strike rather than work with members of a minority group.
 - **Prejudiced customers:** employers weight customer's “cost” of associating with members of a minority group.

Discrimination: a detriment to society as a whole because human capital resources will not be maximized.

STATISTICAL DISCRIMINATION: a cheap method for estimating productivities!

- **Statistical discrimination** is based on **rational decisions** by maximizing actors who are guided by empirically informed assessments of **productivity** and **risk**. Assessments may involve informal “common knowledge” or be grounded in formal statistical analysis.
- It is **not discrimination motivated by emotion**, negative affect, irrational taste or prejudice, unfounded stereotypes, and group interest.
- Involves patterns of reasoning, inference, & decision making widely practiced and uncontroversial in many domains of life (it is “natural,” “everyone does it,” and “it is useful”: e.g. car insurance).
- Characteristics such as race, gender, and age have the potential to serve as **readily available and inexpensive proxies for traits** that are difficult and expensive to measure -> decisions based on **predictors** will always “**unfairly**” **penalize** some individuals whose true performance or risk is more favorable than the predictor suggests.

Stereotypes

- **Descriptive stereotypes** are widely shared beliefs about different traits and abilities men and women; **cultural beliefs** about **what men and women can do** → people tend to believe **men naturally excel at agentic occupations** such as lawyer or chief executive while women are best suited for communal occupations such as nurses or counsellors.
- **Prescriptive stereotypes** derive from **cultural beliefs** about what men and women **should or should not do**. Because **prescriptive stereotypes are norms, people tend to disapprove of those who violate them**. Men who do not behave agentially tend to be viewed as unmasculine and subjected to a variety of sanctions (Connell 1995). Similarly, women who do behave agentially are evaluated negatively on a number of dimensions.
- **Gendered organizational culture theory** (Acker, 1990): men and women may be evaluated differently when they take leave to care for children according to their socially prescribed roles.

Discrimination against mothers who challenge stereotypes / violate normative expectations

- What happens when mothers definitively prove their competence and commitment? (Benard, S. and S. J. Correll. 2010) – a lab study.
- **H^o: evaluators will discriminate against highly successful mothers** by viewing them as less warm, less likable, and more interpersonally hostile than otherwise similar workers who are not mothers.
- **Result: this “taste/moral discrimination” hypothesis worked for female but not male evaluators!**

Which method for which question?

No one method is superior. For this reason, it is advisable to **use triangulation**, that is, a combination of methods to reveal discrimination (Veenman, J. 2010.)

A multi-method approach

	STUDY 1	STUDY 2	STUDY 3
OBJECT OF ANALYSIS	Attitudes	Behaviors	Attitudes
DEPENDENT VARIABLE	Gender stereotypes on leadership	Gender discrimination in job entry	Gender discrimination in promotion
METHOD	Lab controlled experiment	Correspondence study	Vignette study
DATA COLLECTION	Responses of lab experiment	Callbacks to job applications	Online survey
TYPE OF DATA COLLECTED		Hierarchical dataset	Hierarchical dataset

Study 1: Job Entry

Audit & correspondence studies (Madrid & BCN)

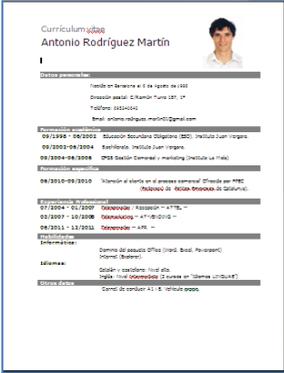
- Audit & correspondence studies use a quasi-experimental design to assess discrimination in multiple ambits, including the labor market
 - Difference between audit/correspondence studies: personal vs. non-personal contact with employers
- These studies overcome problems of endogeneity and selection effects in cross-sectional and panel studies, via random allocation of participants and controlled treatment effects

Typical correspondence studies:

1. Two CVs are sent to real job openings. They are perfectly matched except on one single variable of interests (eg: Sex)

2. All call-backs and emails are recorded. If there is a significant difference between the rates of response for the two types of CV's , discrimination is assumed

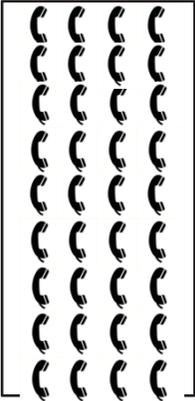
CV for men



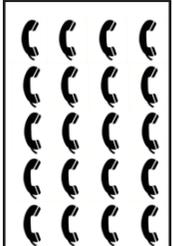
CV for women



CV for men

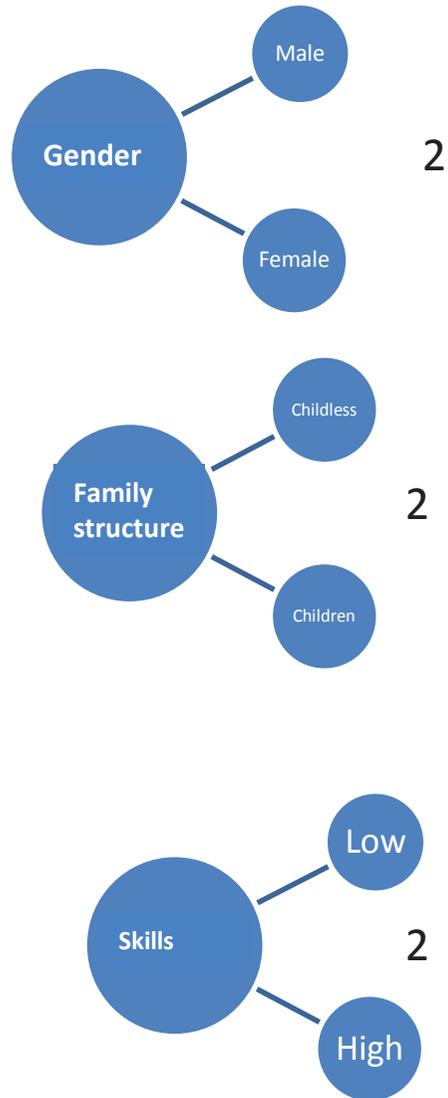


CV for women



↑
Discrimination
↓

Variables & dimensions of interests



All CV's fixed at age 37

$2 \times 2 \times 2 = 8$ CV's for each vacancy!!!

Table 1: Characteristics of the occupational group

	Masculine	Mixed	Feminine
Routine			
Non-Routine			