



EVIDENCE-INSIGHTS-POLICY

LABOR MARKET DATA ANALYTICS THROUGH ONLINE JOB MATCHING PLATFORM IN INDIA

Reflections of Employers' Gender Preferences in Job Ads in India



CONTEXT

India's female labor force participation rate is only 27 %, among the lowest in the world. One of the explanations for this is employers' preference for hiring male workers over female. Chowdhury, Areias, Imaizumi, Nomura, and Yamauchi (2018) analyze job recruitment advertisements listed in an Indian online job portal, examine whether employers prefer a certain gender at hiring, and investigate whether they offer gender-discriminatory salaries.

DATA

Data includes 830,929 job advertisements posted on an Indian jobs portal, Babajobs.com (which later merged with QuikrJobs), between 2011 and 2017 in

20 cities. The job categories span 27 sectors, and includes both formal and informal jobs.

Imposing gender-specific hiring restrictions on job ads is not illegal in India. In the sample, about one-third of the job ads specify the gender for the potential candidate, and 60 % of gender-specified ads favor men over women.

FINDINGS

- The results show a high existence of employers' gender bias in hiring, and gender preferences are highly job specific. Men are preferred in machine-related tasks (e.g., garment work, machinist, driver), sales (e.g., retail clerk), or elementary outdoor jobs (e.g., delivery

collectors, gardeners, watchmen). By contrast, women are favored for teaching, clerical, and other household elementary jobs (e.g., maid, nursemaid). A clerical job ad is more than 4 times likely to target women than men.

- ⦿ Business-process outsourcing (BPO) is the most gender-neutral job, with just 14 % of ads specifying gender. BPO and professional jobs require a high level of skills and educational qualifications; thus, these jobs are less likely to specify gender preference. Nevertheless, among the gender-specified job ads, women are more in demand than men for BPO and vice versa for professional jobs.
- ⦿ Salaries offered in female-targeted ads were on average 10 percentage points lower than in male-targeted ads. Only clerical jobs offer 19 % higher salaries for women. All the others discriminate against women, including the teaching and BPO sectors, which often prefer



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to hire women over men. Female-targeted ads for BPO and teaching jobs offer 27 % and 24 % lower salaries, respectively, than male-targeted ads.

- ⦿ The composition of the male-female salary gap in job ads shows that half of the wage gap arises as female-targeted jobs are low-quality, low-skill jobs. The rest of the gap is simple gender discrimination against women irrespective of experience or qualifications.