

Race and Marriage in the Labor Market: A Discrimination Correspondence Study in a Developing Country

Raymundo M. Campos-Vázquez (Colmex)
Joint with Eva O. Arceo-Gómez (CIDE)
May 29, 2014 - SOMEDE

Just Published: The American Economic Review Papers and
Proceedings, 104(5), 376-380. <http://goo.gl/A7Od71>

Motivation

- Equality of opportunities is a tenet of utmost importance.
- Discrimination has been widely studied by social scientists.
- “According to conventional wisdom, Latin America is a highly discriminatory society” (Chong & Ñopo 2007, p. 1, IDB)
- In Mexico according to ENADIS 2010:
 - 81% individuals believe their rights have been violated because of their skin color.
 - 33% of the youth declare that they believe they did not get a job because of how they look.
- Are gender, marital status, or racial issues relevant in Mexico?
- Relevance: Absence of race in official statistics in Mexico

Main Findings

- We implement a field experiment in which we send fictitious resumes to over 1,000 firms.
- 8 different applications (CVs) per ad with varying gender, civil status, and picture.
 - Callbacks are higher (40%) for females than males– in basically every single dimension.
 - Phenotypes for women: “European” 23% more callbacks than “Indigenous”.
 - Marital status for women: Married women need to send 15% more CVs to get the same callbacks as single women.
 - However, “Indigenous” phenotypes are penalized more for being married than “European” and “Mestizo” phenotypes.
- Important public policy implications.

Experimental Setup (I)

- We construct two datasets
 - Bank of randomized CVs
 - Job advertisements
- A typical CV includes:
 - Name, Picture, Address, email and cellphone
 - Education including high school
 - Activities while studying and/or professional experience
 - Hobbies and some additional information
- Names: 8 common first and last names in Mexico (no association with social background). Example: Gabriela López Acosta.
- Address: Neighborhoods with the same social background.
- We randomized all personal and professional information in the CV

Experimental Setup (II)

- We randomize pictures
 - Each individual authorized us to use his/her image and were aware of the nature of the study.
 - Interested in the effect of skin color “white (European)” vs “darker (Native)”.

- Females



- Males



RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

	All	Male	Female
Male	0.51		
Female	0.49		
Business	0.71	0.70	0.73
Engineering	0.29	0.30	0.27
Public College	0.62	0.64	0.61
Private College	0.38	0.36	0.39
Married	0.27	0.29	0.26
Age	24.5	24.6	24.4
Scholarship	0.26	0.23	0.28
Leadership	0.50	0.49	0.51
Other Language	0.25	0.25	0.25
Availability	0.50	0.51	0.50
N	8,149	3,992	4,157

Econometric Results--All

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]
Female	0.043*** [0.008]	0.043*** [0.008]	0.043*** [0.008]	0.043*** [0.008]	0.043*** [0.008]	0.035*** [0.008]
Public college	-0.000 [0.006]	-0.000 [0.006]	-0.000 [0.006]	-0.000 [0.006]	-0.000 [0.006]	0.001 [0.006]
Married	-0.011 [0.008]	-0.010 [0.008]	-0.010 [0.008]	-0.010 [0.008]	-0.011 [0.008]	-0.003 [0.007]
Pic1 (White)		0.025*** [0.007]			0.026*** [0.007]	0.026*** [0.007]
Pic2 (Mestizo)		0.017** [0.007]				0.018*** [0.007]
Pic 4 (No Picture)		-0.006 [0.008]		-0.01 [0.008]		-0.005 [0.007]
Pic 1 and 2 (White & Mestizo)			0.024*** [0.005]	0.021*** [0.006]		
Pic 2 and 4 (Mestizo & No Pic)					0.006 [0.006]	
Fixed Effects	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Notes: Own calculations. N=8,149. Robust standard errors with cluster at the firm level. *, **, *** significance level 10, 5, 1% respectively. All regressions include control variables: age, type of high school, major, availability, other language, etc. Linear probability model. Similar results with logit or probit.

Result: Males



0.015
[0.010]
11.5%



0.014
[0.010]
11.4%



10.0%

No
Picture

-0.004
[0.010]
9.7%

Marriage Penalty: Non-existent

Notes: Own calculations. Robust standard errors with cluster at the firm level. Control variables: age, type of high school, major, availability, other language, etc. Linear probability model. Similar results with logit or probit.

Result: Females



0.033

[0.011]

17.1%



0.019

[0.010]

15.8%



No
Picture

-0.009

[0.011]

12.9%

13.8%

“Indigenous”-phenotype needs to send 23% more CVs than “European”-phenotype to reach 1 callback.

Marriage Penalty: -2.8 pp (5% significant)

Single: 15.6% vs Married: 12.8% → Married need to send 15% more CVs

Notes: Own calculations. Robust standard errors with cluster at the firm level. Control variables: age, type of high school, major, availability, other language, etc. Linear probability model. Similar results with logit or probit.

Conclusions

- We carry out a field experiment to disentangle discrimination for recent graduates: gender, marital status, and attractiveness.
- We send approximately 8 fictitious CVs to over 1,000 job advertisements.
- Callbacks are higher (40%) for females than males– in basically every single dimension.
- Main Results:
 - Employers do not seem to look for a specific type of men, however the opposite occurs for women.
 - Phenotypes for women: “European” 23% more callbacks than “Indigenous”, Marriage penalty.
 - Marital status for women: Married women need to send 15% more CVs to get the same callbacks as single women
 - However, “Indigenous” phenotypes are penalized more for being married than “European” and “Mestizo” phenotypes. More consistent with taste-based than statistical discrimination.

Policy implications

- Employment Act, Art. 133: Discrimination prohibited, but does not include discrimination by marital status, religion or physical appearance.
- Nonetheless, most job ads ask for a picture and including the marital status is customary in Mexico
- That type of ads may affect the probability of entering a job independent of aptitudes. They should not be allowed.