



THE ROLE OF WORKPLACES IN HIRING DISCRIMINATION : EVIDENCE FROM A LARGE-SCALE CORRESPONDENCE STUDY

This project aims at measuring the effect of the firm context on hiring discrimination in France. We aim at designing and conducting a new large-scale correspondence study that will contribute to our knowledge on discrimination on the labor market by: (1) responding to real job vacancies posted on the **five major platforms of online job boards** in the French labor market targeting more than 10,000 applications (2) adopting a multidimensional approach to discrimination capturing the effect of various potential factors and analyzing their interactions (gender, ethnicity, education, social class) (3) merging the correspondence study data with firm-level and fiscal data that will allow us to investigate the role of the workplace context.

Related Literature

Discriminatory mechanisms draw on categorical distinctions that are meaningful in social interactions (and on which actors have beliefs and expectancies) to deny or reduce access to opportunities for some groups. Although evidence on discrimination can be inferred from the analysis of large statistical data on group-gaps - in France for example, studies have shown that **more than 2/3 of the ethnic employment gap remains unexplained** (Meurs et al., 2006, Aeberhardt et al., 2010, Combes et al., 2016) - direct measurements are increasingly collected through the implementation of field experimental designs such as paired-testing audits.

Research Goals / Contributions

In this project, we will shed light on the **firm mechanisms explaining discriminatory behavior of employers/firms** in investigating which of the obtained firm characteristics are correlated with the difference in callback rates (workforce composition, sector, size, location, international exposure,...).



Data and Methodology

We will conduct a large-scale correspondence study assessing discrimination mechanisms in France and analyzing their firm level drivers. Discrimination will be estimated by comparing the outcomes for the fictitious applicants relying on the **number of call-backs by employers**.

As the marginal cost per application is relatively low, we target **10,000 applications in total**. To maximize the job offers collected during the study, we will **focus on dynamic sectors** that offer a large quantity of vacancies and on all French regions.

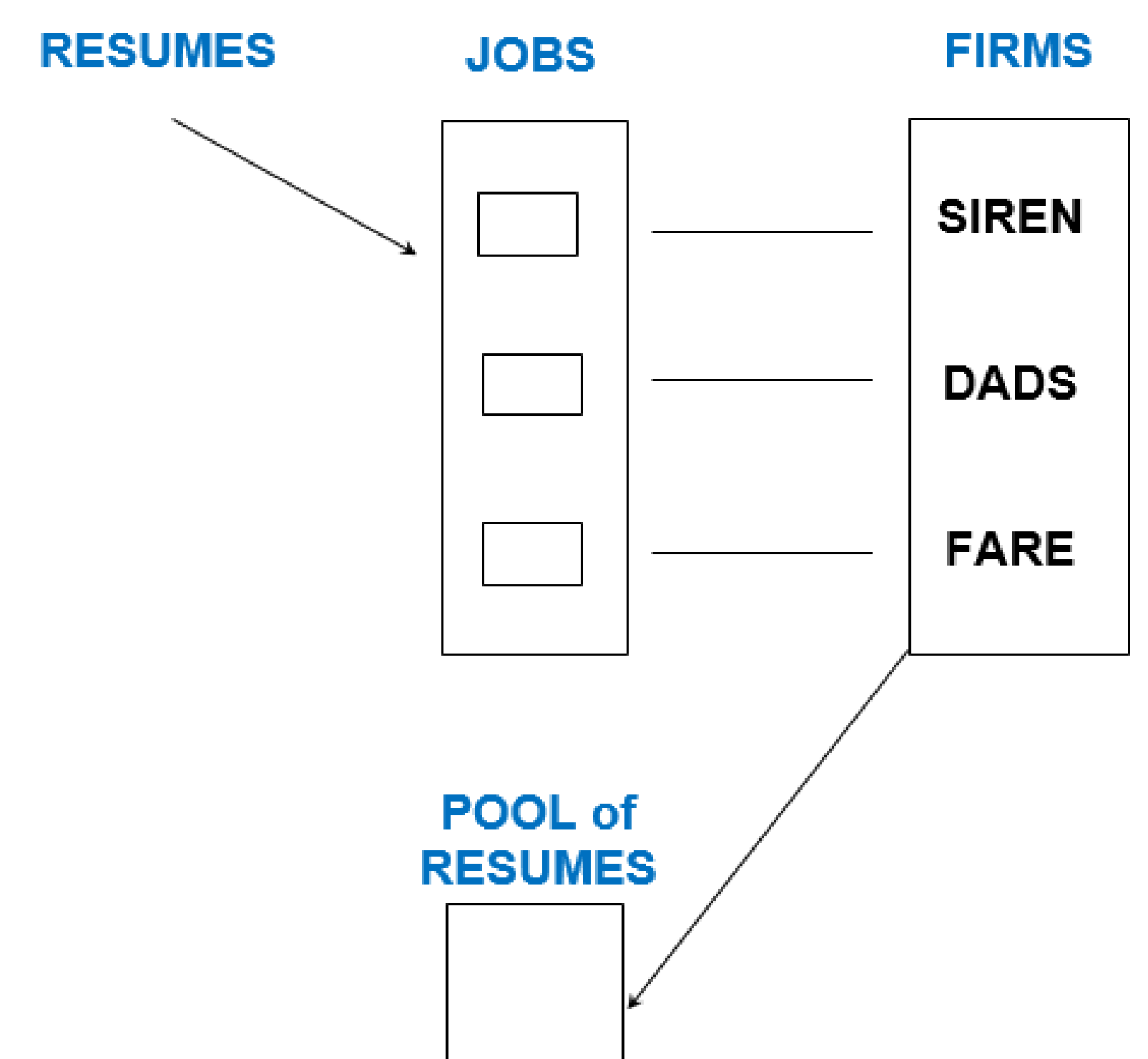
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Correspondence studies

These studies create an **artificial pool of applications** and **randomly assign the potentially discriminatory characteristic** (gender, ethnicity, residential location...) to each application. In labor market correspondence studies, an application is successful when an employer "calls back" to invite the fictitious applicant for an interview. The use of correspondence studies has increased during the 2000's, following the article by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004), featuring the first large-scale paired-testing protocol that directly investigates the underlying mechanisms of racial discrimination in hiring in Boston and Chicago newspapers.

In France, correspondence studies have provided evidence that **women and ethnic minorities (mainly from African and Maghreb countries) face hiring discrimination** (Adida et al., 2010, Duguet et al., 2010, Edo and Jacquemet, 2014).



Our study will mainly focus on a large number of different occupations in order to maximize the number of observations and minimize the probability to be discovered as fictitious by employers. We will respond daily to job advertisements provided by the major online platforms (Monster, Jobijoba, Indeed, Keljob, ANPE, APEC and Le Bon Coin).

We will merge the results from our experimental study with several administrative datasets at the firm level: the official repository of all establishments (SIREN, Insee), matched employer-employee data (DADS, Insee) and fiscal data (FARE, Insee). The merge will be performed using official identifiers for either the firm (SIREN) or the establishment (SIRET), by collecting these identifiers at the time of the correspondence study, for each vacancy.

Discriminations and category-based policies research group

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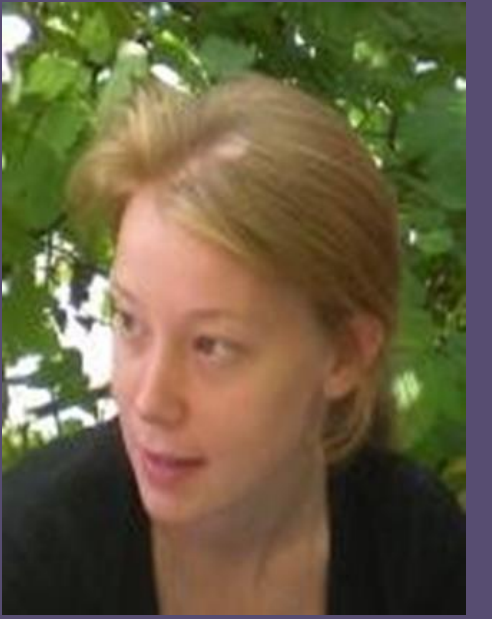
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Her research focuses on discrimination against African immigrants in France and against African-Americans in the US. In particular, she uses both individual-level data from surveys and from the Internet to study the impact of racial prejudice on labor market and housing outcomes of minorities.

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