

# Are You In or Out? An Inquiry into the Source and Audience of Job Advertisements

*Maria Rosel S. San Pascual*

---

*This inquiry into the source and audience of job advertisements takes a multi-disciplinary perspective by integrating contemporary labor economics theory into the study of a mass media phenomenon. This approach enriches the analysis and interpretation of the manifest and latent content of job advertisements addressed to the working-age population. In analyzing the content of job advertisements and comparing the results with the statistics and literature, the study finds that, given limited information about actual productivity, firms rationally stereotype among workers on the basis of observable indicators such as age, sex, education, years of work experience, proficiency, skills, and traits.*

---

## Introduction

Urban-based working-age people must have, at least at one point in their lives, seriously scanned through the pages of the classified ads to check for job opportunities. And in a country like the Philippines beleaguered with employment problems, a good number of these working-age individuals would have depended on job advertisements more than once in their lifetime.

Job advertisements, or the messages themselves, link the job seekers and the firms. On the source side, firms take advantage of this popular medium to publicize job availability as well as the desired characteristics and traits of prospective respondents. On the audience side, job seekers utilize classified ads to check for employment opportunities.

## Problem and Objectives

This paper addresses the general question of what newspaper classified ads communicate to the working population and what these messages reveal about the employers.

The argument that messages have latent as well as manifest content is not new in the field of communication. According to Pernia (2004: 30), “by exploring how words are used in the message, it is possible to make inferences about the source of the message and its audience, as well as the prevailing social, political, and cultural circumstances”.

In this study of job advertisements, the firms are the sources of the message. The message includes the advertised jobs as well as statements of characteristics and qualifications desired of applicants. The job seekers are the audience. The prevailing circumstances refer to the profile of the working-age population, patterns of their participation in the labor force, and the existing social and cultural contexts.

More specifically, the following research questions are posed:

1. What desired characteristics and qualifications do firms specify in their advertisements?
2. What audience groups fit these specifications?
3. What are the possible reasons behind such specifications? In particular, do the profile of the Philippine labor force, patterns in labor force participation, and the existing social and cultural circumstances influence such specifications?

## Study Framework

The *theory of statistical discrimination* provides the framework for making inferences about the source or the firm, the message or the statement of labor preferences, the audience or the labor force, and the general circumstances that motivate the source into packaging its message as such.

Being fundamentally derived from economics, the theory of statistical discrimination assumes rationality in human behavior (Campbell & Brue 1995). Applied in the context of job advertisements, this theory supposes that the image a firm has of the person who best fits the available post has some logical bases. This image of the “best person for the job” is articulated in job advertisements as statements of desired characteristics and qualifications of applicants (see Figure 1).

Statistical discrimination occurs whenever an individual is judged on the basis of the *average* characteristics and qualifications of the group or groups to which he or she belongs rather than upon his or her own *personal* characteristics or merits (Campbell & Brue 1995; Thurow 1975). In the context of this study, the groups refer to the male and female workforces.

The average characteristics and qualifications of the male and female workforces facilitate the identification of the “best person for the job”. Since firms can be assumed to behave rationally, this image is not haphazardly constructed; i.e., the average characteristics and qualifications used as bases for identifying the “best person for the job” are derived from some credible sources.

It is in this sense that statistical discrimination is referred to as *rational stereotyping* (Altonji & Pierret 1997). Such stereotyping is “rational” because (1) firms’ specifications of desired characteristics and qualifications are driven by reasons meant to maximize productivity; (2) firms have a “sound” image of the person who will best fit the job; and (3) this image is usually derived from sources such as statistics and literature (see Figure 1). At the same time, it is also “stereotyping” because the firms’ judgments of individuals are not based upon each person’s characteristics and merits but upon what is typical in the male and female groups with which these individuals are identified (Campbell & Brue 1995).

Rational stereotyping, to some extent, is similar to the *attribution theory* of Fritz Heider. According to Heider, the behavior of individuals can be attributed to several situational and personal causes such as ability, effort, desire, sentiment, belonging, obligation, and permission (Littlejohn 2002). In the context of job advertisements, the reasons behind the firms’ specification of the best person for the job can be attributed to *situational causes* or causes affected by the environment such as the firms’ knowledge of patterns in male and female labor force participation, which is derived from statistics and literature.

For example, a firm, say, a call center that serves US-based clients, announces openings for customer-service assistants. The said firm specifies preference for single women aged 20-25 years. This preference may be based on trends in women’s labor force participation indicating that, on average, single women at these ages are more likely to agree on working on night shifts. This preference for single applicants is rational because it is derived from statistics. However, this specification is also stereotyping because, while married women are typically not amenable to working on graveyard shifts, there are still a number of them who will be willing and able to work during the early hours. Hence, this call center firm rationally stereotypes.

The image of the best person for the job should at least be easily observable if not always measurable. Thus, it is usual for firms to use considerations such as age, sex, civil status, educational background, and other characteristics and qualifications as indicators of productivity. These observable indicators are the desired characteristics and qualifications listed in employment advertisements. Firms use these observable indicators as filters to assure that they will attract only the most productive labor. They also use these candidate specifications as criteria to guarantee that they will hire only the most productive workers in the labor market (see Figure 1).

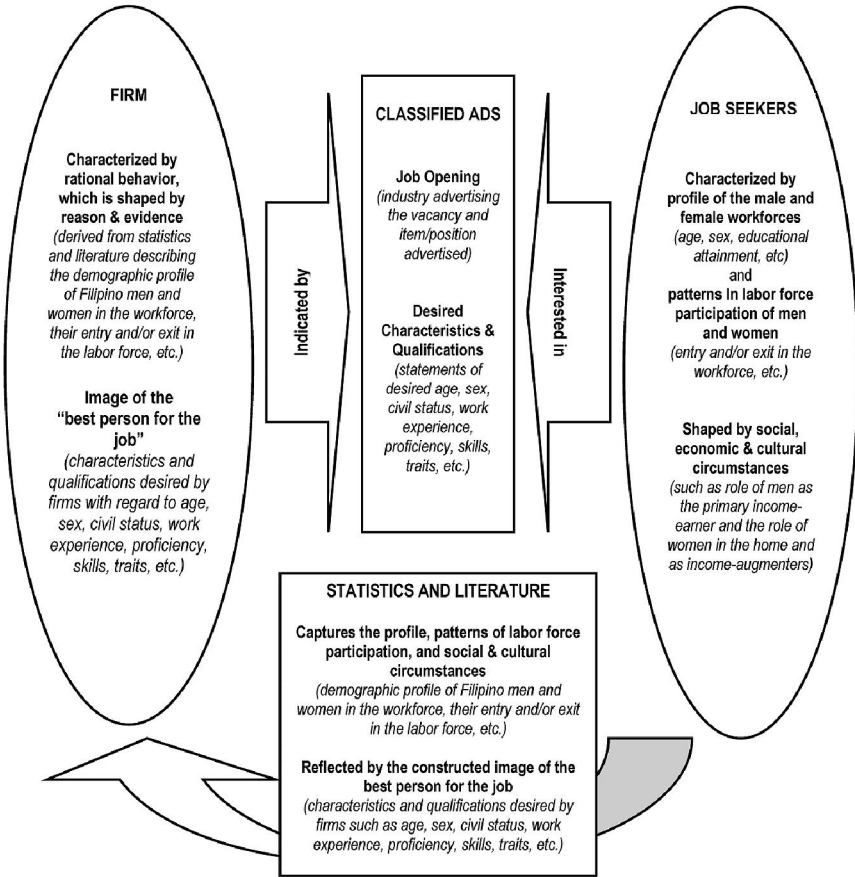


Figure 1. Rational Stereotyping in Job Advertisements

As with the construction of the image of the best person for the job, firms should also have a valid reference that they can use in coming up with observable indicators that would ensure them of being able to attract and hire the most productive workers. Statistics and literature could serve as legitimate references that firms may use in drawing up their list of desired characteristics and qualifications. For instance, recent statistics and literature reveal that in the Philippines, age-related variables such as marriage, childbirth, and child rearing generally do not significantly affect women’s labor force participation. With such knowledge, firms are now open to accepting women applicants regardless of age.

## Methodology

To answer the research problems posed, this study content analyzed job advertisements posted in the Sunday edition of the country's top two national broadsheets: the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* and the *Manila Bulletin*. These two broadsheets have a separate section devoted to employment advertisements in their Sunday edition.

According to the theory of statistical discrimination, rational stereotyping happens when an individual is judged on the basis of the average characteristics and qualifications of the group or groups where s/he belongs. In the context of the present study, two groups were examined, specifically the male and female work forces.

A sample of 384 is enough to ensure 5% margin of error and 95% level of confidence for a population of 100,000 and above (Reinard 1998). As such, this study analyzed a total of 384 advertised jobs over a one-year period, from June 2003 to May 2004. A random sampling of one Sunday per month was drawn and 16 randomly selected advertised items or positions were then analyzed for every sampled Sunday for each of the two broadsheets. A total of 192 advertised items or positions were analyzed per broadsheet over the 12-month period.

In order to find out the desired characteristics and qualifications that the sample firms specified in their advertisements, the content analysis inquired into the following: (1) job description, particularly the nature of the company according to industry and nature of the item or position advertised based on the standard occupational classification, and (2) candidate specification or the demographic variables such as age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, school, and course; on the job-experience; and desired proficiency, skills, and traits.

Data from the content analysis of job ads were encoded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. For the purposes of this research, descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentages, and standard mean or averages were used.

## Discussion of Findings

Employment advertisements usually contain some description of the job as well as the preferred characteristics and qualifications of the desired candidates. The job description specifies the nature of the advertised post while candidate specifications lay out the desired or necessary characteristics and qualifications of prospective employees for them to be able to perform the job well (Hemming,

Mason & Fisher 1997). Candidate specifications are the observable indicators used by firms to gauge the applicants’ potential. It is in the candidate specifications where firms set out their criteria for selecting the “best person for the job”.

**Job description**

Almost 70% of the advertisements stated the name of the employer or the firm but slightly less than half included a description of the company. As expected, all of the advertisements mentioned the item or position to be filled, although only 6.5% described the item or position (see Table 1).

Table 1. Job description in advertisements

Job Description	Frequency	Percentage
	Number of ads with such content	Out of 384 ads analyzed
Item or position to be filled	384	100.0
Company location	280	72.9
Name of company	268	69.8
Description of company	167	43.5
Job location	111	28.9
Salary, commission, benefits, perks	51	13.3
Description of item or position	25	6.5
Nature of job		
Full-time or Part-time	24	6.3
Day-shift or night shift	4	1.0
Office or field work	29	7.6

Like any other advertisement, job ads exist to promote. Employment ads will not only sell the job but also promote the company. As such, it is not unusual to see descriptions such as “a leading multinational company”, “a stable and expanding industry leader dealing with world class brands”, “Asia’s first and largest”, “international”, “Japanese”, “American”, “European”, and other grand portrayal of the company. It is also not surprising to read a number of titles such as “marketing associate”, “marketing specialist”, “customer service representative”, “customer interaction specialist”, and “inbound sales specialist”, all of which simply mean dealing with sales and hence being a sales worker. One also finds a lot of “executive posts” advertised, from administration executive, account executive, sales executive, executive assistant, executive secretary, to executive chef.

*Nature of company and preferred sex of candidates*

Almost all of the frequently advertised industries indicated preference for female candidates. In fact, in most of these industries, more than 50% of the firms preferred women candidates. Only the manufacturing companies revealed an almost equal preference for male and female applicants (see Table 2).

Table 2. Frequently advertised industries and preferred sex of respondents

Advertised Industry	Preferred Sex of Respondents (in %)	
	Male	Female
Manufacturing	53.3	46.7
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles, motorcycles and personal and household goods	37.5	62.5
Real estate, renting and business activities	36.8	63.2
Hotels and restaurants	27.3	72.7
Transport, storage and communication	16.7	83.3
Community, social and personal service activities	0.0	100.0

This phenomenon in the ads is reflected in patterns of labor force participation in our country. According to Alonzo, Horton & Nayar (1996), women in the country are unlike those of other East and Southeast Asian countries where they are usually more represented in agriculture than in industrial activities. In the Philippines, women exceed men in community, social and personal services, and in wholesale and retail trade. Women form almost half of the workforce in manufacturing (Alonzo, Horton & Nayar 1996). According to Eviota (1992), this is to be expected because recent decades have shown significant increases in nontraditional manufactured exports – such as garments, handicrafts, and electronics – which are predominantly labor-intensive and are generally considered women’s work.

*Nature of item or post and preferred sex of candidates*

Preference for male and female candidates varies per occupation. Women are favored for such occupations as clerks, service workers, shop and market sales workers, technicians and associate professionals, and even professional-level occupations. Meanwhile, there are equal numbers of postings for female and male applicants to work as officials of government, heads of special interest groups, and corporate executives. Preference for male candidates, on the other hand, dominates trade and related works, machine operation, and occupations needing laborers and unskilled workers (see Table 3).

Table 3. Frequently advertised occupations and desired sex of respondents

Advertised Occupation	Preferred Sex of Respondents (in %)	
	Male	Female
Clerks	4.0	96.0
Service workers, shop and markets sales workers	23.8	76.2
Technicians and associate professionals	27.3	72.7
Professionals	46.7	53.3
Officials of the government, heads of special interest groups, and corporate executives	50.0	50.0
Trade and related workers	71.4	28.6
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	80.0	20.0
Laborers and unskilled workers	100.0	0.0

This phenomenon is again reflected in patterns of labor force participation in the Philippines. Based on the January 1996-October 2000 Labor Force Surveys, women in the country dominate occupations such as sales, service, and clerical work. Women also exceed men in professional, technical, and related work. On the other hand, more men are employed in production and transport and equipment work.

*Candidate specifications*

The more popular candidate specifications are proficiency, skills and traits, educational attainment, age, course, and years and nature of work experience (see Table 4).

Table 4. Candidate specifications in advertisements

Years of Work Experience	Preferred Sex of Respondents (in%)	
	Male	Female
Fresh graduates are welcome	50.0	50.0
One year	33.3	66.6
Two years	44.4	55.6
Three years	0.0	100.0
Five years	100.0	0.0



*Preferred age and sex of respondents*

Age is a popular indicator of productivity because it signals a number of characteristics and qualifications such as work experience, maturity, willingness to be trained, willingness to take orders, capacity to give orders, and even probable civil status and age of children. As such, nearly half of the ads included age as candidate specification.

Almost all of the companies that advertised their preferred minimum age and sex of respondents favored women.<sup>1</sup> There was a slight preference for men in the 25-34 year-old bracket. Women are again favored in almost all of the ads that mentioned the preferred maximum age and sex of respondents (see Table 5).<sup>2</sup>

Table 5. Desired minimum and maximum age and preferred sex of respondents

Age Bracket	Desired Minimum Age		Desired Maximum Age	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
"Young/youth"	0.0	100.0	0.0	100.0
15-19 years old	0.0	100.0	NA	NA
20-24 years old	27.8	72.2	50.0	50.0
25-34 years old	53.8	46.2	26.7	73.3
34-44 years old	0.0	100.0	35.7	64.3
45-54 years old	NA	NA	100.0	0.0

Taking into account years of work experience, Table 6 shows that most companies are open to accepting women with shorter years of work experience. With men, however, they tend to favor those who have been in the workforce for a longer period of time. Thus, while it is often hypothesized that firms would more likely prefer older women because younger women are assumed to be constrained by childbirth and child care, it is evident in the ads that being a young woman is not much of an issue to employers.

Table 6. Desired years of work experience and sex of respondents

Years of Work Experience	Preferred Sex of Respondents (in%)	
	Male	Female
Fresh graduates are welcome	50.0	50.0
One year	33.3	66.6
Two years	44.4	55.6
Three years	0.0	100.0
Five years	100.0	0.0

According to the United Nations (2000), women, regardless of age, are now finding ways to combine family responsibilities with market work. Lim (2002) posits that with growing unemployment and underemployment, competition for jobs has turned out to be so intense and the cost of interrupted labor participation has become so high that women do not dare to withdraw from the labor force even when they have young children and especially if they have large families to support. As such, firms are now opening their doors to younger working mothers.

Filipino women are fortunate because the existence of the extended family and the assistance of grandmothers in child care permit fairly constant labor market participation across age groups (Alonzo, Horton & Nayar 1996; Eviota 1992). The extended family structure thus offers instant baby-sitters for the mothers. Women’s labor force participation rates by age are relatively flat, which means that there is no pronounced exit from and reentry into the labor force coinciding with child bearing and child rearing (Alonzo, Horton & Nayar 1996).

*Preferred civil status and sex of respondents*

Only a small percentage of the advertisements mentioned the desired civil status of applicants; thus, civil status does not seem to be a widely used indicator of productivity.

However, among the ads that cited civil status, a greater number indicated preference for single women than men (see Table 7). This bias towards single women is not “rational” because labor force statistics and literature show that, unlike their counterparts in other countries, married women in the Philippines have a relatively strong attachment to the labor force and work similar hours as men (Alonzo, Horton & Nayar 1996). Moreover, even when women get married and have children, they do not leave the labor force. Rather, they usually shift out of the service industry and into trade. This shift into trade is also accompanied by a shift from wage employment into self-employment (Alonzo, Horton & Nayar 1996).

Table 7. Preferred civil status and sex of respondents

Civil status	Preferred Sex of Respondents (in %)	
	Male	Female
Single	27.8	72.2
Married	NA	NA

### *Preferred education and sex of respondents*

More than 50% of the advertisements mentioned the preferred educational attainment of respondents. This shows that education is a popular candidate specification that serves as an indicator of the applicant's potential. Since potential is not an easily perceptible characteristic, most employers require a more observable indicator, such as education, in gauging the potential that applicants could bring into the job. Most of the advertisements that indicated tertiary education as the desired educational attainment of respondents revealed a preference for women (see Table 8).

Table 8. Required educational attainment and preferred sex of candidates

Educational Attainment	Preferred Sex of Respondents (in %)	
	Male	Female
Secondary school graduate	100.0	0.0
Vocational or technical school graduate	0.0	100.0
Tertiary school graduate	26.2	73.8

This finding coincides with the types of occupation advertised. Since most of the advertised occupations that favor men are for laborers and unskilled workers and plant machine operators, minimal education is required to carry out the demands of these jobs productively. Alternatively, more women are required to have college education because they are often preferred to fill up such positions as technicians, associate professionals, and professionals (see Table 9).

There are jobs such as clerical and service and sales work that do not necessarily need higher levels of education, but most ads that posted vacancies in these positions nevertheless indicated a preference for college-educated respondents. This finding is consistent with Morada & Manzala's (2001) observation that classified advertisements seek overqualified applicants for some job vacancies. Stating a college degree as a requirement would actually discriminate against men more than women because data from the Labor Force Surveys show that, on the average, women comprise a bigger percentage of the college-educated workforce.

Table 9. Frequently advertised occupation and required educational attainment of respondents

Advertised Occupation	Required Educational Attainment (in %)			
	Secondary Education	Vocational/ Technical Skills	Tertiary Education	Graduate Education
Officials of the government, heads of special interest groups, and heads of corporate executives	0.0	0.0	85.4	14.6
Professionals	0.0	0.0	92.3	7.7
Technicians and associate professionals	6.1	0.0	87.9	6.1
Clerks	3.0	30.0	93.9	0.0
Service workers, shop and markets sales workers	8.3	0.0	91.7	0.0
Trade and related workers	16.7	33.0	50.0	0.0
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
Laborers and unskilled workers	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Education variables, however, show significant but diverse patterns between single and married women (Wary, Rogers & Peek in Abadiano & Salvatierra 1996). For instance, the higher wage rate associated with higher levels of education would make it costly for women not to participate in the labor market, thus encouraging them to participate in the labor force (Abadiano & Salvatierra 1996). Besides, women with considerable formal education are more likely to value the social and professional sense of accomplishment that participation in the labor market brings, and will thus have little motivation to stay at home (Canlas & Espinosa 1979).

Other studies show that below a certain threshold level of family income, married women work even if they have only low levels of education. However, if family income is above that threshold, married women with considerable levels of education may opt not to work because their spouses can already support the family (Canlas & Encarnacion 1976; Encarnacion 1973). This hypothesis is consistent with the traditional sexual division of labor, with husbands as main economic providers and wives as homemakers and providers of child care. This division

of labor generally supposes that a wife’s domestic duties extend to income augmentation when family’s economic survival is at stake (Wong 2000).

There is the prevalent perception that graduates of reputable schools have undergone extensive instruction, education, and training under close supervision by able faculty, and they are therefore more promising and more likely to be productive in the job. In this sense, schools serve as an observable indicator in assessing the likely potential of the candidate. Most of the advertisements that cited a preference for the type of school the applicants attended, however, simply stated “graduates of reputable schools” instead of identifying particular schools.

With regard to preferred course and sex of applicants, males are preferred over females for work requiring an engineering degree. On the other hand, females are preferred over males for jobs requiring degrees in accountancy, business-related courses, and computer and information technology (see Table 10). Consistency may also be observed in the match between field of education required and industry. For example, among female applicants, courses such as accountancy, business, computer/IT, engineering, and architecture are related to industries such as transport, storage and communication, hotel and restaurant, real estate, renting and business activities, and wholesale and retail trade.

Table 10. Frequently advertised course and preferred sex of applicants

Male	Female
Engineering (13 ads)	Accountancy (6 ads)
Others (Architecture, Business, Computer/IT, etc. with one ad each)	Business-related (4 ads)
	Computer/IT (3 ads)
	Engineering (3 ads)
	Architecture (2 ads)

*Desired proficiency, skills, and traits and preferred sex of candidates*

A big majority of the advertisements specified the necessary proficiencies, skills, and traits for the job. These proficiencies and characteristics serve as indicators for efficiency in carrying out the demands of the job as well as ability to harmoniously deal with colleagues and/or clients.

Most of the companies that indicated their desired proficiencies, skills and traits preferred female applicants. These companies, however, have more or less the same desired proficiencies, skills, and traits regardless of sex of the respondents. Among the desired characteristics are computer skills, oral and written communication skills, English proficiency, diligence, pleasing personality, and interpersonal skills (see Table 11). Preference for applicants with computer skills also reflects recent developments in information technology as the “new” industry.

Table 11. Desired proficiencies, skills, traits and sex of respondents

Male	Female
Knows how to drive/with valid license (4 ads)	Computer skills (18 ads)
Willing to travel/do out-of-town work (3 ads)	Pleasing personality (17 ads)
Articulate Computer skills Hardworking Leadership skills Resourceful Troubleshooting skills (2 ads each)	Oral communication skills (14 ads)
	English proficiency (10 ads)
	Hardworking (9 ads)
	Written communication skills (8 ads)
	Able to work with minimum supervision (5 ads)
	Flexible Tagalog/Filipino proficiency (4 ads each)
	Analytical Customer-service orientation Good moral character Organized Responsible Foreign language proficiency (3 ads each)
	Problem-solving skills Willing to work long hours/over time (2 ads each)

### Summary and Conclusions

Based on the content analysis data and the review of relevant statistics and literature, this study proffers the following answers to its research questions:

*What desired characteristics and qualifications do firms specify in their advertisements?*

The majority of the firms opted to include some candidate specification in their ads, such as demographic characteristics, traits, and aptitudes, which are the

observable indicators of productivity. Since data from statistics and existing literature support most of these indicators, the presence of candidate specification in most of the advertisements provides strong support for this study's contention that when choosing prospective employees, firms rationally stereotype.

*What audience groups fit these specifications?* The greatest number of firms preferred educated respondents and candidates with specific proficiencies, skills, and traits. These candidate specifications remain to be the commonly used indicators of productivity and proxies for efficiency in carrying out the demands of the job as well as for ability to harmoniously deal with colleagues.

Firms discriminate to a greater extent when they outline more characteristics and qualifications in the ads because they limit the number of individuals fit to apply for the job. In general, firms that specifically required female applicants demanded more qualifications than companies that stipulated male respondents. These firms, although they prefer women for the job, open their doors to a select pool of women. Hence, while a bigger number of companies that advertised their preferred sex of respondents specified female, most of these firms do not welcome all the employable females in the labor market.

*What are the possible reasons behind such specifications?* Employers, like most people, go through life deciding, judging, and acting on the basis of limited information. Under conditions of imperfect information on actual productivity, employers then opt to stereotype rationally among workers on the basis of easily observable indicators such as age, sex, civil status, education, years of experience, proficiency, skills, traits, and other clues (Altonji & Pierret 1997).

## Implications and Recommendations

The results of the comparison of job ad messages or labor demand specifications *vis-à-vis* the profile of the labor force suggests that, to a certain extent, employment advertisements reflect the patterns in the country's labor force participation, especially in areas where women are concerned.

It is evident in the advertisements that women are preferred in a wide range of industries and occupations. However, these advertisements do not reveal whether women are greatly or at least equally preferred in various segments within industries. Moreover, advertisements do not reflect whether women are comparably paid in occupations where they are mostly preferred. Labor force participation studies show that women dominate only certain segments and they are even concentrated in areas where there is minimal opportunity for career growth (Alonzo, Horton & Nayar 1996; Eviota 1992). If such is the case, skills learned in certain industries or even in segments within the industry may have

limited application in other industries or in other segments. As such, women's mobility to shift across industries or occupations may be impaired.

A number of ads stated preference for certain age and civil status. However, the literature review revealed that women in the country, regardless of age, civil status, and age of children, are fairly able to work because of extended family structure. But until when will this structure hold? If kin networks become strained, there should be other forms of support available to women. In this case, the state may have to share in women's child-caring responsibilities (Eviota 1992).

This role of the state should nevertheless extend beyond providing child-care facilities for mothers (Eviota 1992). The state should also address the problem of high fertility. It has been found that greater access to education by women is a natural deterrent to fertility because higher educational levels are associated with a decrease in the average number of children and increased likelihood of work in the wage sector (Wong 2000).

Then again, a higher level of education does not always translate into suitable level of occupation. The content analysis revealed that some companies specify qualifications that are too high for the position advertised. In a labor surplus economy such as the Philippines, firms can demand higher levels of education for jobs that do not necessarily require highly educated labor and still be able to attract and hire respondents because the market has a considerable number of college-educated workers. In this case, the country has a relatively educated workforce but the economy has limited capacity to absorb them in occupations commensurate to their qualifications.

On the other hand, it may be the case that qualifications of college graduates are only enough to suit clerical and sales work. With such an impression of the quality of the workforce, employers may demand higher levels of educational attainment from the applicants. In both cases, mismatch in occupation and educational attainment greatly challenges the return of investment in education.

This study has merely scratched the surface of rational stereotyping in the context of employment advertisements. For instance, this study could extend to accommodate interviews of some firms to get more detailed information about the reasons why they have specified the applicant qualifications that they placed in their job advertisements. This way, the analysis and interpretation of the ad messages will not only be supported by statistics and literature but will also be validated by the employers themselves. Moreover, further inquiry into the topic could include regional and tabloid newspapers to better capture labor market behavior in the Philippines.



It should be made clear that this paper does not attempt to justify or condemn the deep-seated issues inherent in rational stereotyping. Using the theory of statistical discrimination as framework, this research merely explores whether statistics and existing literature support the firms' specification of labor preferences.

This study, along with the other studies on the theory of statistical discrimination, acknowledges that inquiring into the matter of rational stereotyping means dealing with a subject that is "undeniably complicated, multifaceted, and difficult to quantify and as such, any reasonably complete explanation of stereotyping must be interdisciplinary" (Campbell & Brue 1995: 402).

This research is an illustration of an analysis where concepts from the discipline of economics are merged with concepts from the field of communication. This marriage of disciplines facilitates the exploration of the manifest and latent content of employment advertisements so that inferences may be drawn on the relationships among the source of the message, the audience, and the prevailing social, political, economic, and cultural conditions in the country.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Minimum age refers to ads with statements such as "at least" a certain age.
- <sup>2</sup> Maximum age refers to ads with statements such as "not more than" a certain age.

## References

- Abadiano, A. A., & Salvatierra, E. P. (1996). Labor force participation of married women in the National Capital Region. Unpublished undergraduate thesis, University of the Philippines Diliman.
- Altonji, J. G., & Pierret, C. R. (1997). Employer learning and statistical discrimination. National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper.
- Canlas, D. B., & Encarnacion, J. (1976). Income, education, fertility and employment in the Philippines. University of the Philippines School of Economics Discussion Paper.
- Canlas, I., & Espinosa, S. (1976). Women's labor force participation, education and income: 1960-1976. Unpublished undergraduate thesis, University of the Philippines Diliman.
- Encarnacion, J. (1973). Family income, educational level, labour force participation and fertility. *Philippine Economic Journal* XII, 536-549.
- Eviota, E. U. (1992). *The political economy of gender: Women and the sexual division of labor in the Philippines*. London: Zed Books Ltd.

- Hemming, J., Mason, K., & Fisher, D. (1997). *Discrimination in the workplace: A practical guide*. West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Horton, S. (Ed.). (1996). *Women and industrialization in Asia*. London: Routledge.
- National Statistics Office. *Integrated survey of households: Labor force*. January 1996-October 2000.
- Lim, L. L. (2002). *Female labor force participation*. New York: United Nations Secretariat.
- Littlejohn, S. (2002). *Theories of human communication*. California: Wadsworth Group.
- McConnell, C. R., & Brue, S. L. (1995). *Contemporary labor economics*. Singapore: McGraw-Hill, Inc.
- Morada, H. B., & Manzala, T. R. (2001). Mismatches in the Philippine labor market. A country paper presented at the Symposium on Mismatch in Labor Markets.
- Morada, H. B., & Santos, L. Q. (1998). Pre-employment sex discrimination: A three-year period. Presented at the 7<sup>th</sup> National Convention on Statistics.
- Pernia E. E. (2004). *Communication research in the Philippines: Issues and methods*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press.
- Reinard, J. (1998). *Introduction to communication research*. Wisconsin: Brown and Benchmark Publishers.
- Thurow, L. (1975). *Generating inequality*. New York: Basic Books, Inc.
- Wong, E. L. (2000). *Women's work, fertility level and contraceptive use: A synthesis of results from Bolivia, the Philippines and Zimbabwe*. Washington: The Futures Group International.
- United Nations. (2000). *The world's women 2000: Trends and statistics*. ST/ESA/STAT/SER.K/16. New York.

---

*Maria Rosel S. San Pascual is an assistant professor at the Department of Communication Research of the University of the Philippines College of Mass Communication (UP CMC). She graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Research (magna cum laude) from UP CMC and obtained her master's degree in Development Economics from the UP School of Economics. Prof. San Pascual's research interests include communication, mass media, new communication technology, and development economics.*