

Gender Occupational Segregation in an Equilibrium Search Model

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Abstract

This paper studies an equilibrium search model in which jobs are differentiated on both salary and working hours, and men and women have different preferences for hours. In particular, the marginal disutility of an additional work hour is higher for women than for men. Employers have different production technologies, and they post a tied salary/hours offer that maximizes their steady-state profit (or utility) flow. Even without the presence of discrimination, women crowd into short-hour, lower-paying jobs, whereas men are in long-hour, higher-paying jobs. There are fewer women on the job when employers have a taste for discrimination against women, since these employers make their job offer less appealing to women by requiring more working hours. On the other hand, when women have a disamenity value to working on a job, women choose not to work in that job because of a loss in utility. The prediction on segregation is similar to the case with employer discrimination.

JEL Classification: J16; J64; J71.

Keywords: Burdett-Mortensen equilibrium search model; Jobs as a salary/hours package; Taste-based discrimination; Profitability.