



Providing Advice to Job Seekers at Low Cost: An Experimental Study on On-Line Advice

Michèle Belot (University of Edinburgh)

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We investigate experimentally the effects of a web-based information intervention on employment prospects. We invited 300 job seekers to search for jobs in our computer facilities at the University of Edinburgh for 12 consecutive weekly sessions. They searched for real jobs using our web interface. After 3 weeks, we introduced a manipulation of the interface for half of the sample: instead of relying on their own search criteria, we displayed relevant other occupations to them and the jobs that were available in these occupations. These suggestions were made using background information from readily available labor market data. We find that such an intervention exposes job seekers to vacancies from a broader set of occupations, and significantly improves job interviews. These effects are predominantly driven by job seekers who are searching relatively narrowly in the absence of the intervention and especially if they have been unemployed for several months.