



SEEKING THE JOB MARKET

GAN Yiqing



How to give yourself a proper research niche is one of the most critical issues in job seeking. It would help if you could identify yourself as a rising scholar in one (or two) competitive research field(s) and demonstrate your capability with related research output.

I once engaged in four different research fields when I was a Ph.D. student. I conducted some re-search in each field, but it was still inadequate. Another negative factor is that some of these fields can be connected while others cannot. I, therefore, met some difficulties in introducing my research in an organized and coherent way to interviewers. After one failed

and one successful job interview, I puzzled out two pieces of suggestions that might be helpful for peers facing the same issue as I did.

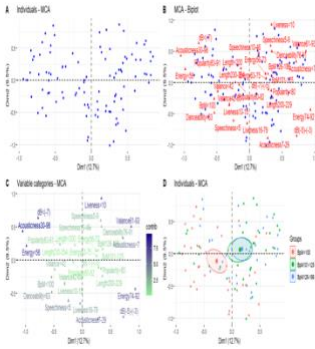
First, try to integrate your research and do not waste any of your prior work. Before joining the job market, you need to figure out at least one way to organize your previous studies. This can be drawn from the interactions between the development histories of two seemingly separate fields. For example, we may connect urban poverty with migration studies with the help of the Chicago school's tradition that values the relationship between people and space.

The second suggestion is to connect your research experience with your dream position. Job openings oftentimes have specific requirements for research fields. It would be helpful if your research niche could match well with the requirement. Your diversified research experience, in this sense, may lead to greater flexibility in the matching; that is, you might be able to adjust the "labels" attached to yourself according to what they ask for.

The author graduated in 2020 and is now working at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences of Fudan University as a senior lecturer and research fellow (Assistant Professor).

Exploratory Analyses: An Example Using Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA)

Raphael DUERR



When dealing with large amounts of data for statistical analyses, it is often - or always - advised to explore its structure and patterns, and to check basic descriptive parameters, such as point estimates and distributions. For datasets with a huge number of categorical variables, a multiple correspondence analysis (MCA) is a relatively easy way to apply to visualize the correlations between variables, its contributions to the explained variance, and to detect clustering of variables and individual observations units in your data.

Using data from the top 100 most streamed songs on Spotify, below are some of the visual features of an MCA. Reduced to a two-dimensional space like principal components, plot **A** gives us an idea of the clustering of the song along the two major explanatory dimensions. In plot **B**, we see several variable categories describing the song - such as beats per minute (*BpM*) or danceability. The distribution of the variables categories gives us an idea how the variables are correlated relatively. The distance between categories shows which values appear more often together for a song for example fewer than 100 bpm and low danceability.

Plot **C** further gives us an impression of which variables contribute most to creating the reduced space. The way we classify those axes is still however, decided by us. Finally, in Plot **D**, using beats per minute as an example, we can construct confidence and concentration ellipses that give us an idea in which area most songs belonging to one category are positioned and if the areas are significantly different from each other.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

✓ Job Ads

- Full time/ Part time Research Assistant I/II, The Hong Kong University. **Deadline for Applications: March 03, 2023** [[See the ad](#)]
- Lecturer I/II, The Education University of Hong Kong. **Deadline for Applications: Review of applications will start from 30 January 2023, and will continue until the position is filled** [[See the ad](#)]