

KATHERINA THOMAS

Postdoctoral Researcher | University of Barcelona

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ABOUT ME

Passionate about evidence-based policy and global development, I translate academic research into policy recommendations and excel in collaboratively creating solutions for development challenges. With a PhD in Economics and first-hand project management experience, I specialize in applying quantitative methods to address inequalities in child development. My proactive strategy led to the successful planning and implementation of a large parenting intervention and its impact evaluation. Committed to effective communication, I foster collaborative relationships between international teams and implementation partners and mentor students. Combining adaptive, empathic, and clear communication with critical thinking and problem-solving skills, I guide interdisciplinary teams through challenging project phases and enhance client engagement.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA | POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCHER

since 09/2023

- **Managing the implementation of a context-relevant parenting intervention** involving 2,300 families in Ghana: coordination and development of theory of change, two pilot studies, survey questionnaires, survey experiment, pre-analysis plans, power calculations, data cleaning and analysis, impact evaluation and monitoring implementation process.
- **Supervising fieldwork in Ghana**, actively encouraging practitioner feedback, coordinating with the research team, improving survey design and addressing practical challenges.
- **Stepping up to lead the project** during principal investigators' maternity leaves, ensuring smooth project continuation and alignment with strategic objectives.
- **Mentoring a master student and supervising research assistant team** in executing data analyses tailored to project needs.
- **Leading and restructuring team meetings**, fostering a collaborative environment and facilitating interactions between partners and researchers, enhancing process efficiency.
- **Executing research on education and child development:**
 - Development of innovative lab-in-the-field experiment to inform design of parenting training programs, including co-authoring of successful grant proposal.
 - Engagement with potential collaborators resulting in research project investigating the foundations of skill formation and estimating long-term effects of pre-school education.
- **Drafting papers, presenting results at international conferences** (two papers submitted)

BARCELONA SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS | PHD RESEARCHER

09/2019-07/2023

- **Independently developing PhD thesis on how to reduce inequalities in child development with policies** as subsidies, cash transfers and parenting training:
 - Quantitative data analysis: data visualization and cleaning, structural modeling, panel data estimation, impact evaluation pooling data across countries and policy simulations.
 - Deepening expertise in child development focusing on education, parenting and nutrition.
 - Initiating and managing multiple collaborative research projects.
- **Guiding and teaching graduate students** as Teaching Assistant, providing feedback fostering an engaging learning environment, teaching materials, designing problem sets.
- **Coordinating research group meetings**, improving meeting quality and outcomes by identifying time management issues and enhancing meeting structures with team input.
- **Disseminating research findings** by presenting at international conferences.
- **Supporting four different research projects** as Research Assistant, integrating into new projects rapidly and effectively executing data preparation, visualization and analysis.

THE WORLD BANK SHORT-TERM CONSULTANT, RESEARCH DEPARTMENT	07/2021-06/2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying data sources, executing data analysis and visualizing results, culminating in two independent research projects on the impact of cash transfer programs on households' nutrition choices and food prices across Asia, Latin America, and Africa (paper submitted). 	
THE ECONOMIC JOURNAL ASSISTANT TO DATA EDITOR	01/2020-12/2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuring quality of conditionally accepted articles by performing replication checks. 	
BASF SE WORKING STUDENT, TRADE AND BANK RISK MANAGEMENT	08/2016-08/2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing new country risk evaluation concept ensuring project objectives, assessing financial institutions' creditworthiness, preparation of presentations for senior management. 	
GERMAN FEDERAL FOREIGN OFFICE IN COLOMBO (SRI LANKA) INTERN	07/2017-09/2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafting economic and political reports, participating in and documenting diplomatic meetings, gaining insights into international relations. 	
MISEREOR INTERN	02/2016-04/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing and drafting policy briefs, conducting detailed research on pastoralism-focused development programs and analyzing impacts on communities. 	

EDUCATION

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona School of Economics	2019-2023
PhD in Economic Analysis	
University of Minnesota (Visiting student, Spring 2022)	
Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Università Ca' Foscari Venezia, Universität Bielefeld	2017-2019
Joint Master in Models & Methods of Quantitative Economics	
Universität Bayreuth	2013-2017
Bachelor in Economics	
University of New South Wales (Exchange student, Fall 2015)	

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Co-Principal Investigator, Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, Proyectos de Generación de Conocimiento (~ EUR 116.000)	2024
4-year FPI Grant, Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation	2020-2023
QEM Consortium scholarship, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne	2017-2019

SKILLS

Languages: German (native), English (fluent), French (proficient), Spanish (advanced), Polish (basic)
Software: STATA, LaTeX, MS Office (all proficient), Python (intermediate), R, Git (both basic)

VOLUNTEERING

CorrelAid - Data4Good, Project coordination team	since 03/2024
Connecting volunteers to NPOs: identifying organizational needs, managing expectations, drafting application calls, selecting suitable volunteers and organizing projects kick-off meetings.	
Econisers, Co-founder and Co-organizer	07/2020-09/2022
Initiating and organizing webinar series for PhD candidates on research and career advice to overcome entry barriers into the profession.	
Fundació Gavina	11/2019-07/2022
Providing childcare for NGO in Barcelona supporting disadvantaged children.	
Ferrando Children's Home	06/2018-07/2018
Supervising children and designing and teaching English classes in Mysore, India.	
VUB e.V., Bayreuth, Germany	10/2013-02/2017
Mentoring first-year students, organizing events to create welcoming and inclusive environment.	
Universität Bayreuth, Bayreuth, Germany	01/2015-01/2016
Student representative for Economics degree program.	