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Fields

Primary Fields: Labor Economics, Gender Economics
Secondary Fields: Development Economics

Education

Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University (anticipated) 2022
Dissertation: Essays in Labor and Gender Economics
Committee: Prof. Matthew Notowidigdo (Chair), Prof. Lori Beaman, Prof. Jonathan Guryan, Prof. Seema Jayachandran
M.A., Economics, Northwestern University 2017
B.A., *magna cum laude*, Economics with Honors, Mathematics Minor, Dartmouth College 2014

Fellowships & Awards

NBER Pre-Doctoral Fellowship Program in Gender in the Economy, with Francesca Truffa (\$27,000) 2021–2022
Dissertation University Fellowship, Northwestern University 2021–2022
11th UniCredit Foundation Best Paper Award on Gender Economics, with Menaka Hampole and Francesca Truffa (\$2,966) 2021
Dissertation Fellowship from the Boston College Center for Retirement Research and the Social Security Administration (SSA), with Francesca Truffa (\$28,000) 2020–2021
Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award 2018–2019, 2019–2020, 2020–2021
Buffett Institute Graduate Student Dissertation Research Travel Award, Northwestern University (\$2,000) 2019–2020
Susan Schmidt Bies Prizes for Doctoral Student Research on Economics and Public Policy for best third-year Ph.D. student research paper 2019–2020
Buffett Institute Graduate Student Dissertation Research Travel Award, Northwestern University (\$3,000) 2018–2019

Grants

JPAL Jobs and Opportunity Initiative, with Edward Asiedu, Monica Lambon-Quayefio, and Francesca Truffa (\$49,979) 2020–2021
The Weiss Fund for Research in Development Economics, with Edward Asiedu, Monica Lambon-Quayefio, and Francesca Truffa (\$24,480) 2020–2021
PEDL Exploratory Research Grant, with Edward Asiedu, Monica Lambon-Quayefio, and Francesca Truffa (\$51,331) 2020–2021
J-PAL Post-Primary Education Initiative, with Francesca Truffa (\$48,510) 2019–2023
The Weiss Fund for Research in Development Economics, with Francesca Truffa (\$39,452) 2018–2019
Graduate Research Grant, Northwestern University (\$3,000) 2018–2019

Teaching Experience	Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University	
	Econ 359: Economics of Nonprofit Organizations	Winter 2021
	Econ 339: Labor Economics	Fall 2020
	Econ 309: Public Finance	Spring 2020
	Econ 327: Economic Development in Africa	Winter 2019, Winter 2020
	Econ 201: Introduction to Macroeconomics	Fall 2019
	Econ 326: Economics of Developing Countries	Fall 2018
	Econ 340: Economics of the Family	Spring 2018
Research Experience	Research Assistant, Prof. Seema Jayachandran, Northwestern University	2019
	Research Assistant, Prof. Matthias Doepke, Northwestern University	2017–2018
Employment	Associate Economist, Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, Microeconomic Research Group, Chicago, IL	2014–2016
Conferences	6 th IZA Workshop: The Economics of Education	2021
	University of Michigan, H2D2 Research Day (Poster Session)	2020
Refereeing	<i>American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, American Economic Journal: Applied Economics</i>	
Other Professional Activities	Graduates Mentoring Undergraduates Student Group, Northwestern University	2020–Current
	Economics Ph.D. Mentorship Program, Northwestern University	2019–Current
	Applied Micro Workshop, Organizer, Northwestern University	2019
	Graduate Affiliate, Buffett Institute for Global Studies, Northwestern University	2018–Current
	Graduate Affiliate, Institute for Innovations in Developmental Sciences (DevSci), Northwestern University	2018–Current
	Graduate Associate, Shepard Residential College, Northwestern University	2018–Current
	Empirics and Methods in Economics Conference (EMCON), Organizer, Northwestern University and University of Chicago	2018–2019
Working Papers	<p>“Undergraduate Gender Diversity and Direction of Scientific Research” [<i>Job Market Paper 1</i>] with Francesca Truffa</p> <p><i>Abstract:</i> Can diversity lead to greater research focus on populations underrepresented in science? Diverse researchers can bring new questions and perspectives, but exposure to diversity may also inspire scientists, regardless of demographic identity, to pursue new topics. This paper studies a new determinant of research ideas: the diversity of the academic environment. Between 1960 and 1990, 76 all-male US universities, including many elite and prominent research institutions, transitioned to coeducation. Using a generalized difference-in-differences design, we document a 42% increase in the number of gender-related research publications authored by scholars at newly coed universities. This increase is explained by a combination of a more diverse researcher pool in terms of gender and prior research interests, as well as a shift in the research focus of individual scientists towards more gender-related topics. A bounding exercise suggests that the direct effects of the policy on scientists’ research focus can account for more than half of these gains. These findings suggest that a diverse academic environment can influence the direction of scientific research.</p> <p>“Peer Effects and the Gender Gap in Corporate Leadership: Evidence from MBA Students” [<i>Job Market Paper 2</i>] with Menaka Hampole and Francesca Truffa</p> <p><i>Abstract:</i> Women continue to be underrepresented in corporate leadership positions. This paper studies the role of social connections in women’s career advancement. We investigate whether access to a larger share of female peers in business school affects the gender gap in senior managerial positions. Merging administrative data from a top-10 US business school with public LinkedIn profiles, we first document that female MBAs are 24 percent less likely than male MBAs to enter senior management within 15 years of graduation. Next, we use the random assignment of students into sections to show that a larger proportion of female MBA section peers increases the likelihood of entering senior</p>	

management for women but not for men. This effect is driven by female-friendly firms, such as those with more generous maternity leave policies and greater work schedule flexibility. A larger proportion of female MBA peers induces women to transition to these firms where they attain senior management roles. We find suggestive evidence that some of the mechanisms behind these results include job referrals and gender-specific information transmission. These findings highlight the role of social connections in reducing the gender gap in senior management positions.

“The Spillover Effects of Maternity Leave Extensions on Unemployment Insurance” with Francesca Truffa

Abstract: This paper examines the fiscal externality of maternity leave extensions on unemployment insurance using German administrative data. We exploit a reform in Germany to show that extensions of maternity leave reduce mothers’ UI take-up by 20% and total unemployment benefits by 22% in the first five years after childbirth. The timing of the reduction suggests the use of UI as a substitute for income replacement in the absence of paid leave. Importantly for welfare calculations, the reduction in UI benefits is substantial and represents almost half of the increase in maternity leave benefits. However, while this reduces the cost of extending maternity leave, it also reduces the mothers’ willingness to pay for the policy as the additional maternity leave benefits are offset by the reduction in UI payments. Incorporating effects on UI substantively reduces the implied marginal value of public funds (MVPF) of the policy. We also document considerable heterogeneity of these estimates by pre-birth earnings.

Works in Progress

“Business Collaborations and Female Entrepreneurship” with Edward Asiedu, Monica Lambon-Quayefio, and Francesca Truffa

Abstract: Search and contracting frictions can hinder the creation of business partnerships and the effectiveness of business collaborations. In developing countries, these relationships are often informal and conducted with family members and friends, suggesting that search costs and contracting frictions can be important barriers to firm growth. We conduct an RCT in Ghana on a sample of 1,772 female entrepreneurs to investigate the effect of an online matching service combined with access to legal information and advisory services on collaborations and firm performance. Specifically, we hypothesized that access to the matching service can alleviate search frictions. In addition, access to legal advisory may help mitigate contracting frictions by formalizing interfirm relationships and lowering risks of collaboration. The results of this study will shed light on the potential collaboration barriers faced by female entrepreneurs.

This study is registered in the AEA RCT Registry and the unique identifying number is: AEARCTR-0006439. *Data collection in progress.*

“Pension Caregiver Credits and the Gender Gap in Old-Age Income” with Fabio Blasutto and Francesca Truffa

Abstract: We study a 2001 pension insurance reform in Germany that introduced additional caregiver credits for working mothers with children between the ages of 3 and 10. Using administrative social security data from Germany combined with a difference-in-differences design, we find that the reform leads to a 66.5% increase in yearly retirement contributions during the eligibility period. 66% of the total effect can be explained by a change in the labor market outcomes of eligible mothers, while the remaining 34% is the mechanical effect of the reform. We find a significant increase in employment earnings, driven by both an increase in employment and a switch from marginal to employment subject to social security contributions. This translates into a 9.1 percentage point (18.3%) reduction in the gender gap in lifetime non-marginal earning points. Finally, a simple life-cycle model predicts that the pension reform leads to a 9.8% increase in retirement income and a 12% reduction in the gender gap in old-age income.

Publications

“Intergenerational Mobility in Self-Reported Health Status in the US” with Timothy Halliday and Bhashkar Mazumder, *Journal of Public Economics*, Volume 193, 2021

Abstract: We present estimates of intergenerational mobility in self-reported health status (SRHS) in the US using data from the PSID. We estimate that the rank-rank slope in SRHS is 0.26. We show that including both parent health and income in models of intergenerational mobility increases the explanatory power of child outcomes. We construct a monetary metric for health and then use this to combine income and health into a measure of welfare and estimate the rank-rank slope to be about 0.4

for this new measure. Finally, we document striking health mobility gaps by race, region and parent education.

“The Effect of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Medicaid Expansions on Financial Wellbeing”, with Luoia Hu, Robert Kaestner, Bhashkar Mazumder and Sarah Miller, *Journal of Public Economics*, Volume 163, 2018, Pages 99–112

Abstract: We examine the effect of the Medicaid expansions under the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) on consumer financial outcomes using data from a major credit reporting agency for a large, national sample of adults. We employ the synthetic control method to compare individuals living in states that expanded Medicaid to those that did not. We find that the Medicaid expansions significantly reduced the number of unpaid bills and the amount of debt sent to third-party collection agencies among those residing in zip codes with the highest share of low-income, uninsured individuals. Our estimates imply a reduction in collection balances of approximately \$1,140 among those who gain Medicaid coverage due to the ACA. Our findings suggest that the ACA Medicaid expansions had important financial impacts beyond increasing health care use.

“The ACA Medicaid Expansion in Michigan and Financial Health” with Luoia Hu, Robert Kaestner, Bhash Mazumder and Sarah Miller, *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Volume 40, Issue 2, Spring 2021, Pages 348–375

“The Intergenerational Transmission of Health in the United States: A Latent Variables Analysis” with Timothy Halliday and Bhashkar Mazumder, *Health Economics*, Volume 29, Issue 3, 2020, Pages 1–15

Other Research

“The Effects of Academic Calendar on Faculty Outcomes” with Valerie Bostwick, Stefanie Fischer, and Francesca Truffa

“Effect of Beliefs and Gender Roles on Girls’ Math Education” with Francesca Truffa

This study is registered in the AEA RCT Registry and unique identifying number is: AEARCTR-0003054. *Data collection completed*

References

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