Andrea Salvati

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Employment

Research Fellow, Department of Economics, University College London (UCL) 2022-Present

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, Rice University 2022
M.Sc in Economics, University of Bologna, Italy 2014
B.Sc. Economics and Finance, University of Cagliari, Italy 2011

Research Fields

Primary: Economics of Education
Secondary: Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics

Working Papers

"Teacher Instruction, Classroom Composition, and Student Achievement" **(Job Market Paper)**
This paper explores teachers' instructional decisions and their implications for the distribution of student achievement. Canonical models of student performance often assume that teacher effectiveness is independent of the classroom environment. In practice, however, teachers can endogenously adapt instruction based on the composition of the classroom. This can have implications for the design of education policies whose impact is likely mediated by teachers' behavior. I exploit unique data from US elementary schools with rich information on teacher instruction to develop and estimate an equilibrium model of endogenous teacher instructional choices, student effort, and student achievement. Teachers are heterogeneous in their teaching ability and choose instructional effort and the allocation of class time across topics. Students vary by initial ability and choose study effort. Student achievement depends on both teacher and student inputs. The model specification allows me to assess whether teachers value unequally the achievement of students with different levels of ability. I find that teachers place a higher value on the achievement of students at the bottom of the ability distribution. I then perform a counterfactual analysis where I reallocate students to classrooms based on prior test score performance (ability tracking) and teachers to classroom based on teaching ability (assortative matching). Results show that tracking has heterogeneous effects on students with different levels of ability, and that the distribution of these impacts depends on how teachers endogenously adjust their instructional choices to the composition of the classroom. Moreover, the combination of tracking with assigning high-ability teachers to low-ability students would benefit students both at the top and at the bottom of the ability distribution. High-ability students would benefit from spillovers from high-ability peers, while low-ability students would gain from the higher quality and better tailored instruction provided by high-ability teachers.

"An Evaluation of the Alief Independent School District Jump Start Program: Using a Model to Recover Mechanisms from an RCT", with Flávio Cunha and Kenneth I. Wolpin. (R&R at *Journal of Political Economy*)
Recent research shows that the substantial differences in school readiness observed at the beginning of Kindergarten across socio-economic groups are partly due to disparities in the quality of children's early environment. Theory, consistent with a wide range of data, suggests that early interventions that target

malleable, fundamental skills during sensitive periods of development in early childhood could help close these gaps. Indeed, empirical evidence shows that small-scale parenting interventions implemented by high-quality staff can lead to an improvement in parental investments and a boost in child development. Evidence about the impact of large-scale parenting interventions is more mixed. This paper reports the results of the evaluation of a parenting intervention developed and implemented by the Alief Independent School District in Texas. The goal of the intervention is to encourage and train parents to teach their children foundational skills for Pre-K. The results of a randomized controlled trial based on three yearly cohorts show that the program impacted parental investments and child development as measured by two different tests of school readiness. We go beyond reporting program impacts by building and estimating a model of parental choice of input levels. Our model allows for a production function of knowledge that features individual-specific coefficients that capture the marginal productivity of parental inputs. We find that the mechanism we posit for the program's impact is validated by the model estimates.

"Early Home Visits Improve Health in Mothers and Daughters: 18-Year Follow-Up of a Randomized Trial", with Gabriella Conti, Harriet Kitzman, Joyce Smith, Elizabeth Anson, Susan Groth, Michael Knudtson, and David Olds. (R&R at *JAMA Network Open*)

Work in Progress

"An Evaluation of a Food Scholarship Program on College Graduation", with Flávio Cunha and Kenneth I. Wolpin.

"Understanding the Production of Child Development in Home Visiting at Scale: Experimental Evidence from England", with Gabriella Conti, Riccardo D'Adamo, Michael Robling, and Rebecca Cannings-John

"Social Interactions and the Effect of Bullying on Skill Development", with Qinyou Hu.

Publications (Pre-PhD)

"Incentives to Local Public Service Provision: An Evaluation of Italy's *Obiettivi di Servizio*", with G. Barone, G. de Blasio, and A. D'Ignazio, *Papers in Regional Science*, 98, 1195-1213, 2019

Research Experience

Research Intern, Bank of Italy 2014-2015

Research Assistant

Professor Kenneth I. Wolpin, Rice University 2016-2020
Prof. G. Bellettini, Prof. C. Berti Ceroni, and Prof. C. Monfardini, University of Bologna 2014-2015
Professor Giorgio Bellettini and Enrico Cantoni, University of Bologna 2013

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Rice University 2015–2022

Graduate: Computational Economics (2017), Macroeconomics I (2016)

Undergraduate: Economics of Human Capital (2017), Mathematical Economics (2020-2021), Political Economy (2018), International Economics (2016-2018,2021), Principles of Economics (2015-2016).

Teaching Assistant, University of Bologna 2015

Economics Statistics (Spring 2015)

Other Experience

Summer School in Dynamic Structural Econometrics, University of Chicago 2019

Project Assistant, Gene Campaign NGO (New Delhi, India) 2014
Summer School in Advanced Econometrics, London School of Economics 2013
Erasmus Exchange Program, Bogazici University (Istanbul, Turkey) 2013

Grants, Scholarships, Honors, and Awards

British Academy\Leverhulme Small Research Grant 2023
The Jennifer and Purvez Captain Award for Outstanding Economics Dissertation, Rice University 2022
Rice Fellowship, Rice University 2015-2022
Bonaldo Stringer Particularly Deserving Award, Bank of Italy 2015
Erasmus Scholarship, Bogazici University 2013

Conferences and Seminars

2023: SEHO Annual Meeting, Economics of the Healthcare Workforce Workshop, ESA World Meeting, EALE conference, USI Lugano, University of Bergen, University of Stavanger (Synapse Lab), IFS Human Capital Seminars, CESifo Workshop on the Economics of Children (scheduled), University of Cagliari (scheduled)

2022: SEHO Annual Meeting, WEAI Annual Conference, EEA-ESEM Conference, New York University, Tecnologico de Monterey, Nazarbayev University

2021: SSES Annual Congress, ESPE Annual Conference, EEA-ESEM Conference, Labor Econometrics Workshop (Monash University), EALE Annual Conference, SEA Annual meeting, GEEZ seminar

2020: Rice Economics Department Seminar

Skills

Languages: Italian (native), English

Programming skills: R, Fortran, Stata, Julia, MATLAB, LaTeX, C (beginner), C++ (beginner)

References

Professor Kenneth I. Wolpin
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University of Pennsylvania

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