

Alex Johann

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Economics

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

Expected May 2023

M.A., Economics

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

December 2018

B.A., Mathematical Economics

Pomona College, Claremont, CA

May 2014

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Labor Economics, Public Economics, Economics of Education

WORKING PAPERS

Johann, A. *In the School, Down the Block: Achievement Effects of Peers in the School, Neighborhood, and Cohort*. Working Paper. (Job Market Paper)

I estimate the effect of mean peer ability on students' test scores using data on all Michigan public school students over thirteen years. I consider peers in the same cohort at school—as well as peers in adjacent cohorts, and peers living on the same block. I contribute two novel findings to the literature. First, school peer effects are much stronger than block effects. For peers in the same cohort, the school effect is 10 times larger. Second, cohort membership plays a substantial role in determining peer influence in schools but not in neighborhoods. For students in the same school, the adjacent-cohort peer effect is 40-80% smaller than the same-cohort effect. Meanwhile, for students living on the same block, peer effects are similar, regardless of cohort. These results are robust to a regression discontinuity design focusing on students near the birthdate cutoff for entry into kindergarten. I also find evidence that peers in the older cohort matter more than peers in the younger cohort, particularly in the school context, suggesting that relative age also plays a role in determining peer influence.

Johann, A. *Equalizing Inputs, Enduring Gaps: Examining Changes in Levels and Correlates of Gender Gaps in Noncognitive Skills Over Time*. Working Paper.

Johann, A. *Raising Boys, Raising Girls: Modeling Gender Differences in the Dynamic Process of Early Childhood Skill Formation*. Working Paper.

PUBLICATIONS

Person, A. E., Thomas, J., Bruch, J., Johann, A., & Maestas, N. (September 30, 2016). *Outcomes of competency-based education in community colleges: Summative findings from the evaluation of a TAACCCT grant*. Report submitted to Sinclair Community College. Oakland, CA: Mathematica Policy Research.

Borkum, E., Cheban, I., Fortson, J., Johann, A., & Morgan, S. B. (September 8, 2016). *The Access to Agricultural Finance Loan Program in Moldova: Findings from an End-of-Compact Analysis*. Oakland, CA: Mathematica Policy Research.

Borkum, E., Morgan, S. B., Fortson, J., Johann, A., & Fortson, K. (October 23, 2015). *Evaluation of the Transition to High-Value Agriculture Project in Moldova: Baseline Findings from the 2013-2014 Farm Operator Survey*. Oakland, CA: Mathematica Policy Research.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Course Instructor

Michigan State University Department of Economics

- Economics of Developing Countries (EC 310), Spring 2021
- Social Science of Sports (ISS 328), Summer 2022

Teaching Assistant

Michigan State University Department of Economics

Tutor

American Economic Association Summer Training Program (AEASP)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant

Education Policy Innovation Collaborative at MSU College of Education

August 2018– August 2019

Research Assistant/Programmer

Mathematica Policy Research

June 2014 – August 2017

Research Assistant

Pomona College Department of Economics, with Professor Eleanor Brown

June 2013– August 2013

AWARDS

Red Cedar Award

Michigan State University Department of Economics

- Awarded for best third-year paper and presentation among Economics Ph.D. students

March 2020

Staff Recognition Award: Innovation Award

Mathematica Policy Research

- Awarded to staff who implement innovative solutions to difficult problems.

January 2015

PRESENTATIONS

Southern Economics Association

Annual UM/MSU/UWO Labo(u)r Economics Day

Midwestern Economics Association

Missouri Valley Economic Association

November 2022

May 2022

March 2022

October 2021

REFERENCES

Scott Imberman (Chair)

Professor
Department of Economics
and College of Education
Michigan State University
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Todd Elder

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Ben Zou

Assistant Professor
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