Discussion of:
Women and Men at Work: Fertility, Occupational Choice and Development

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Basic Idea and Main Results

- The paper studies the LFP of women when fertility and occupation decisions are taken into account:
  - Documents empirical facts regarding LFP, occupation, fertility of women in the US and India
  - Develops a model of endogenous decisions on all margins
  - Backs up labor market barriers for women as wedges in the spirit of Hsieh et al. (ECTA, 2019)
- Main results:
  - Key role of barriers' decline in women's LFP
  - Large contribution of women's LFP as input factor
  - Heterogeneous welfare consequences, huge gains for women
  - Remarkably different results for US and India

Takeaway Lessons and Strong Suits

- ▶ Takeaway Lessons:
    - ▶ Wedges (barriers) decline substantially from 1960 through 2010
    - ▶ Labor market barriers decline dominate child time penalty
    - ▶ The latter percolates through aggregates and welfare
    - ▶ Closure of wedges in India was feeble and results follow the pattern

- ▶ Strong Suits:
    - ▶ Tractable, simple, elegant, and useful model to recover wedges
    - ▶ Great model fit to the data on occupation sorting
    - ▶ Framework can be applied "off-the-shelf" to other countries
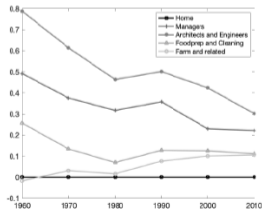   - ▶ Clear takeaway message regarding strength of τ_w
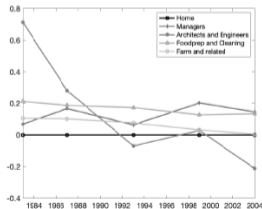
Main Figure of the Paper

(a) Labor market barrier (τ^w): US
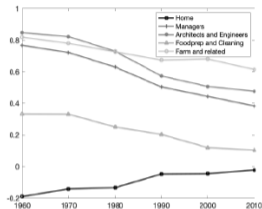
(b) Labor market barrier (τ^w): India
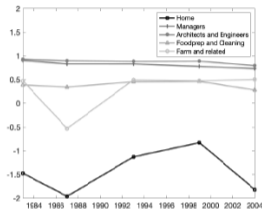
(c) Child barrier (τ^n): US

(d) Child barrier (τ^n): India

Discussion of the Paper: Major and Minor Points

- ▶ Major discussion points:
    - ▶ Overall purpose of the paper: growth, labor, or development?
    - ▶ How novel is the question and methodology?
    - ▶ Technical: role of decision variables and allocations
    - ▶ Depth of comparison with India
- ▶ Minor discussion points:
    - ▶ Connection with structural labor literature
    - ▶ Stayers and switchers
    - ▶ Occupation coding

Major Points - First Batch

- ▶ Growth, Labor, or Development?
    - ▶ Methodology is macro: stylized facts + back up of parameters via model
    - ▶ Question is labor: wedges/frictions/barriers for women's LFP
    - ▶ Empirical approach maybe development: US vs. India
    - ▶ Results seem more focused on growth: not much emphasis on mechanism behind welfare effects
- ▶ Novelty of methodology:
    - ▶ Roy model with channels that distort occupation choice
    - ▶ Extension of Hsieh et al. (ECTA, 2019), adding fertility choice and associated women's labor market barrier
    - ▶ Suggest emphasizing more, focusing on mechanism and intuition behind the added choice

Major Points - Second Batch

- ► Model technicalities:
  - ► Timing: occupation first, then all other allocations $\{e, s, n\}$. What disciplines the choice?
  - ► Some occupations are better suited to on-the-job-learning human capital. How's s sorting by occupation?
  - ► Fertility choice has extensive and intensive margins and are continuous. What's the allocation of n by year? Does it track (average in) the data?

- ► Comparison with India:
  - ► Why India and why the comparison?
  - ► Mechanism aside from mechanical role of wedges directly informed by the data
  - ► Token LATAM question: what about informality? Seem all loaded in the home sector

Minor Points

- Structural labor literature:
  - Lack of dialogue with the literature - include simultaneous and endogenous occupation and fertility decisions for women
  - Usually not tractable nor yield analytic results, but include full life-cycle + extensive and intensive margins
  - Two recent WPs: Amano-Patino et al. (2022), Wang (2022)
- Stayers and switchers: only mentioned at the end of the paper
- Occupation coding:
  - Work by vom Lehn and et al. (JOLE, 2022) using CPS show that occupational mobility has been declining
  - Measurement error in longitudinal measures is large