

I am a labor economist who works on labor markets in both developed and developing countries. My current research explores three major questions: how local labor markets affect gender inequality, how skill investments affect labor market outcomes, and the relationship between firms and worker sorting. To study these questions, I use a broad set of methodologies that include randomized control trials, difference-in-differences, and structural estimation. Below I summarize my research on these three topics.

### **Gender inequality and local labor markets**

In my job market paper, *The Geography of Women's Opportunity: Evidence from Indonesia*, I study how local labor markets can have permanent effects on women's labor supply. In this paper, I start by documenting that female labor force participation rates are highly dispersed within multiple countries. This dispersion is highly persistent, and it arises in countries with both high and low mean female participation rates. These large within-country differences are not documented in previous literature.

Next, I exploit rich geographic data from Indonesia and argue that these persistent differences in female labor force participation reflect a causal effect of women's birthplace. To isolate the effect of the birthplace, I use a strategy similar to a Difference-in-Difference design that exploits variation in labor supply from internal women migrants who emigrated from their birthplace at different ages.

I find large and persistent effects on adult women's labor supply. By the time they turn sixteen, women born in a location at the 75th percentile of female employment will be 4 to 10 p.p. more likely to work than those born in a 25th percentile location. I go on to examine the potential mechanisms driving these results. I show that my results are not driven by the effects of maternal labor supply or human capital accumulation. However, my results can be consistent with local variation in gender norms or schooling quality.

I also study the interaction of gender inequality and local labor markets in the United States. In ongoing work entitled *Cities, Gender, and the Urban Wage Premium*, I study the evolution of the urban wage premium across genders. Although there is growing evidence that the wage premium in bigger cities has declined since the 80s, there is little evidence of how these trends differ by gender. In this paper, I use data from U.S. Commuting Zones for the period between 1970 and 2020 to document that the decline in the urban wage premium affected men and women very differently. While women were relatively isolated from the premium decline, men with lower education bore the brunt of the impact. This caused a large relative increase in women's urban wage premium: their premium went from being on par with men's in 1970 to being 44% larger in 2010. I go on

to argue that these differential trends result from a combination of gender specialization and the evolution of the urban skill premiums. Urban premiums declined most in those skills low-education men use more intensively.

### **Skill investment and workers' outcomes**

In my second strand of research, I study what determines workers' skill investments and how these investments affect their choices and outcomes in the labor market.

In *The Content of Education, or Who Does What and Why* we study how education influences workers' skill investment and occupation choice in general equilibrium. This is joint work with Costas Cavounidis, Kevin Lang, and Raghav Malhotra where we adopt a structural approach. We develop a general equilibrium model where workers choose their investment in skills and then their jobs. Jobs use workers' skills in a heterogeneous way. Education modifies the acquisition costs of the different skills. We then estimate the model's structural parameters and test its predictions using data from the United Kingdom.

I also study worker's skill investment in a developing country context. In developing countries, the lack of workers' technical skills is often seen as a challenge. In ongoing work with Masyhur Hilmy entitled *Improving the Link between Vocational Schools and Industry: Evaluation of Teacher Training in Indonesia*, we use a reduced-form approach to study the effects of a mass training program tackling this issue. We partnered with the Indonesian Ministry of Education to evaluate an intensive vocational training for high-school teachers. Using administrative and original survey data, we study the effects of the programs on teachers' technical knowledge, and other outcomes. We identify the impact of the program through a combination of a randomized control trial and propensity score matching. We find precise null effects on all outcomes from this program.

### **Firms and worker sorting**

I also study the relationship between firms and worker sorting. Recent research emphasizes that firms are important drivers of earnings inequality. In *Do Elite Universities Overpay Their Faculty?* –joint with Shulamit Kahn and Kevin Lang– we study the importance of universities in explaining researchers' pay inequality in US academia. To do so, we apply the standard model from Abowd, Kramarz, and Margolis (1999) –AKM– to matched employer-employee data from U.S. academia. We find little evidence of pecuniary university premiums in the most prestigious US academic institutions. Unsurprisingly, but in contrast with previous literature, we find substantial positive sorting, that is, the most productive researchers work in the most elite universities. We then examine what our findings reveal about how the AKM model works.