Felix RUSCHE
Ph.D. Candidate in Economics, University of Mannheim

🌐 felixrusche.github.io   🐦 felix_rusche   in felix-rusche   📱 +49 (0) 171 7736801

@ felix.rusche@uni-mannheim.de   📍 L7 3–5, 68161 Mannheim, Germany   🆔 0000-0002-3593-583X

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Development Economics, Labor Economics, Political Economy

EDUCATION

present September 2019	**UNIVERSITY OF MANNHEIM,** Mannheim, Germany Economics, Ph.D., Course Phase GPA : 1.4
June 2023 January 2023	**POMPEU FABRA UNIVERSITY,** Barcelona, Spain Research Stay
February 2019 September 2016	**UNIVERSITY OF MANNHEIM,** Mannheim, Germany Economics, M.Sc., GPA : 1.3
July 2018 February 2018	**BOCCONI UNIVERSITY,** Milan, Italy Visiting Student
March 2016 September 2012	**OSNABRÜCK UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES,** Osnabrück, Germany Applied Economics, B.A., GPA : 1.37
November 2014 July 2014	**NELSON MANDELA UNIVERSITY,** Port Elizabeth, South Africa Visiting Student

WORKING PAPERS

Broadcasting Change : India's Community Radio Policy and Women's Empowerment
Job Market Paper
ESEM Award for the best applied paper – Econometric Society Europe Meeting (ESEM) 2024

In poor countries, the interaction of early marriage, early motherhood, and low education attainment disempowers women and limits their life opportunities. Even as countries grow richer, gender inequality is often sustained by social norms, thereby limiting welfare gains from women's empowerment. I investigate the use of media as a cheap and scalable policy to empower women. In 2006, India enacted a community radio policy that grants radio licenses to NGOs and educational institutions with the aim to foster local development. I collect original data on the content and coverage areas of all 250+ radios. I uncover women's empowerment as a key theme through topic modeling and GPT-based analyses of radio show recordings. For identification, I exploit topography-driven variation in radio access and develop a novel econometric approach to deal with randomly displaced geolocated household data. The results show that women exposed to radio gain an additional 0.3 years of education and are 4.1pp (10%) more likely to obtain a secondary degree. In line with increased education, exposure reduces child marriages by 1.4pp (37%) and fertility of young women by around 10% while they are 11pp more likely to exhibit autonomy in household decisions. The findings demonstrate that community media can effectively address gender inequality.

Linked Out ? A Field Experiment on Discrimination in Job Network Formation
with Yulia Evsyukova and Wladislaw Mill
Accepted at Quarterly Journal of Economics

We assess the impact of discrimination on Black individuals' job networks across the U.S. using a two-stage field experiment with 400+ fictitious LinkedIn profiles. In the first stage, we vary race via A.I.-generated images only and find that Black profiles' connection requests are 13 percent less likely to be accepted. Based on users' CVs, we find widespread discrimination across social groups. In the second stage, we exogenously endow Black and White profiles with the same networks and ask connected users for career advice. We find no evidence of direct discrimination in information provision. However, when taking into account differences in the composition and size of networks, Black profiles receive substantially fewer replies. Our findings suggest that gatekeeping is a key driver of Black-White disparities.

WORK IN PROGRESS

Dissecting Media Bias : Daily Stock Market Performance in the News
with Antonio Ciccone

How large a bias can news selection by the media generate? We address this question using high-frequency data on daily stock market performance and news reports. We start with Germany's most watched and highly trusted nightly news. The program includes a segment from the main stock exchange, which often reports the daily performance of the main stock market index (DAX). Over the 2016-2024 period we examine, the DAX increased by 75 percent. On average, the daily change was around +4 index points. By contrast, the average daily change reported in the news was -7.6 points. Such a daily decline would have led the DAX to drop below zero in the period of interest. The media bias we find is well accounted for by two types of news selection. First, news reports are more likely on days the DAX declines. However, negativity bias only accounts for 25% of total news bias. Second, the news are more likely to report the DAX performance on days with larger absolute changes. This accounts for around three quarters of the media bias, as relatively large DAX changes were more frequently negative than small DAX changes. We find that the latter bias is a more general phenomenon, finding the same pattern for benchmark stock indices in France, Italy, Spain, the UK, and the US.

Multi100 - Estimating the Analytic Robustness of Social and Behavioural Sciences
with >450 co-authors; manuscript under preparation

Crowd-sourced replication study of 100+ studies in the social sciences. Organized by the Open Science Foundation (OSF).

PUBLICATIONS

Few Voices, Strong Echo : Measuring Follower Homogeneity of Politicians' Twitter Accounts
New Media & Society, 2024 (online first 2022)

Politicians have discovered Twitter as a tool for political communication. If information provided by politicians is circulated in ideologically segregated user networks, political polarization may be fostered. Using network information on all 1.78 million unique followers of German Members of Parliament by October 2018, follower homogeneity across politicians and parties is measured. While the overall homogeneity is low, politicians of the AfD - a right-wing populist party - stand out with very homogeneous follower networks. These are largely driven by a small group of strongly committed partisans that make up around 7 percent of the party's but around 55-75 percent of the average AfD politician's followers. The findings add to the literature by showing potentially unequal distributions of network segregation on Twitter. Further, they suggest that small groups of active users can multiply their influence online, which has important implications for future research on echo chambers and other online phenomena.

GRANTS, SCHOLARSHIPS, AND AWARDS

2023 - 2026	Add-on Fellowship for Interdisciplinary Research in Economics, Joachim Herz Foundation (12,500€ research grant)
2024	Award for best applied paper by a young researcher (up to 10 years after PhD) at the Econometric Society's Europe Meeting (ESEM) 2024
2024	CRC TR 224 Research Grant (4,000€)
2021	CRC TR 224 Research Grant (>4,000€)
2019 - 2021	PhD Scholarship, Freudenberg Foundation & ZEW
2020	Second Prize - Goldmedia Award for innovative theses in Media Economics
2014 - 2019	German National Merit Foundation (Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes)- Scholarship for 'academic excellence, interdisciplinary expertise, and social responsibility'
2016	StudyUp-Award for excellent bachelor's theses, Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Presentations	2024 : ASSA Annual Meeting (San Antonio), Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Economic Seminars, Asia Meeting of the Econometric Society (Hangzhou), Europe Meeting of the Econometric Society (Rotterdam), Royal Economic Society Annual Conference (Belfast), ifo Digital Transformation & Innovation Seminar (Munich), Joachim Herz Foundation (Hamburg), CRC TR224 YR Workshop (Bonn & Mannheim), FHM+ Workshop in Development Economics (Mannheim); 2023 : NBER Summer Institute : Labor Studies, Advances with Field Experiments (University of Chicago), Discrimination and Diversity Workshop (University of East Anglia), Institute of Labor Economics (IZA), Pompeu Fabra University (PhD Seminar & Internal Applied Seminar), London Business School Transatlantic Doctoral Conference, Nordic Conference in Development Economics (Gothenburg), German Development Economics Conference, German Economic Association Annual Conference, Barcelona School of Economics PhD Jamboree, HeiKaMaXY Workshop (Heidelberg), CRC TR224 Retreat (Bonn & Mannheim); 2022 : CRC TR224 YR Workshop (Bonn & Mannheim), Frankfurt-Mannheim PhD Workshop; 2020 : Bonn-Mannheim PhD Workshop; 2019 : ZEW Conference on the Economics of Information and Communication Technologies

Field Research	Independent field research on community radios across northern India (03/2022 - 04/2022)
Event Organization	**2023 :** Co-organizer of the 1st Frankfurt-Mannheim-Bonn Ph.D. Conference (90 presentations, 160 participants) **2022 :** Co-organizer of the 1st Frankfurt-Mannheim Ph.D. Workshop (43 presentations, 100 participants)
Summer Schools	**2024 :** Add-on Meeting on Science Communication (Joachim Herz Foundation) ; **2023 :** CRC Media Training (EconNewsNetwork), Data Science Summer School 2023 (Hertie School) ; **2022 :** Network Analysis Workshop (LMU Munich), Natural Language Processing for Economists Workshop (Uni Heidelberg), Data Science Summer School 2022 (Hertie School) ; **2021 :** Unstructured Data in Empirical Economics (CEMFI), Data Science Summer School 2021 (Hertie School)
Referee	Information, Communication & Society ; New Media & Society

TEACHING EXPERIENCE AND RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

2021 - present	Research assistant to Antonio Ciccone, University of Mannheim & Fellow at Collaborative Research Center Transregio 224 (Universities of Bonn and Mannheim)
2021	Microeconomics B (B.Sc.), teaching assistant, University of Mannheim
2021	Introduction to Econometrics (B.Sc.), teaching assistant, University of Mannheim
2019	Master's thesis student/ intern, Digital Economy Research Department, Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research (ZEW), Mannheim, Germany

EXTRACURRICULARS

2019 - present	Ph.D. Cohort Representative
2019 - 2023	Elected member of the Department Council
2021 - 2022	Mentor, Graduate Applications International Network (GAIN) : support of an African student in Economics applying for graduate studies at European and North American universities
2015 - 2019	Seminars of the German National Merit Foundation : [1] Two-year Social Science Research Seminar 2017-19 - Digitization, Ethics, and Society : An Integrative Analysis, [2] Weekend Seminar 2017 - Effective Altruism : Risks of Artificial Intelligence, [3] Weekend Seminar 2016 - Freedom vs. Security : The Internet as a new Space for an Enduring Conflict, [4] Summer School 2015 - Narratives of the Future : Visionary Utopia or Botch ?
2018 - 2019	Board Member of 'Nice to Meet You' at Uni Mannheim - a student refugee-integration project.
2015 - 2016	Campus Without Borders in Osnabrück : setup of a student refugee integration project.

NON-ACADEMIC PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

03/2015 - 07/2015	Internship, Political Department, German Embassy Beijing, China
07/2013 - 09/2013	Internship, Strategic Finance, Deutsche Börse AG, Frankfurt am Main, Germany
07/2011 - 09/2011	Internship, Various Business Departments, Frimo Inc, Detroit, USA

MISCELLANEOUS

Citizenship	German
Languages	German (native), English (fluent - TOEFL 2019 : 114 of 120 points / Top 3%), Spanish (B1)
Technical Skills	R, Python, Stata, Qualtrics, LaTeX, QGIS

REFERENCES

Antonio Ciccone, PhD
Professor of Macroeconomics
Department of Economics
University of Mannheim
ciccone@uni-mannheim.de
+49 621 181 1828

Wladislaw Mill, PhD
Assistant Professor of Behavioral Economics
Department of Economics
University of Mannheim
mill@uni-mannheim.de
+49 621 181 1897

Philipp Ager, PhD
Professor for Applied Macroeconomics
Department of Economics
University of Mannheim
philipp.ager@uni-mannheim.de
+49 621 181 1854

Ruben Enikolopov, PhD
ICREA Research Professor
Department of Economics and Business
Universitat Pompeu Fabra
ruben.enikolopov@upf.edu
+34 935 42 2886