

GEDEON J. LIM

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Student, Economics, Boston University, Boston MA, 2020 (expected)

Dissertation Title: *Essays on Development Economics*

Main Advisor: Samuel Bazzi

Dissertation Committee: Samuel Bazzi, Dilip Mookherjee and Robert A. Margo

B.Soc.Sci. Economics, *First Class Honors*, National University of Singapore, Singapore 2014

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Development Economics, Political Economy, Economic History

WORKING PAPERS

"Why Pay the Chief? Land Rents and Political Selection in Indonesia (Job Market Paper)"

WORK IN PROGRESS

"The Effects of Long-Run Ethnic Segregation in Southeast Asia"

CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

Northeast Universities Development Conference. Evanston, IL 2019

Economic History Association Meeting, Poster Session. Atlanta, GA 2019

Southeast Asia Research Group N.A. Meeting. Vancouver, Canada 2019

17th Nordic Conference on Development Economics. Helsinki, Finland 2018

Summer School in Development Economics. Prato, Italy 2017

GRANTS

Manuel Abdala Gift Grant Spring 2019

Boston University Initiative on Cities, Seed Funding Fall 2018

Graduate Research Abroad Fellowship (Short-Term) Fall 2018

Economics Department Summer Research Grant Summer 2018

Global Development Policy Center, Summer in the Field Summer 2018

WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant for S. Bazzi, Boston University, 2015-Present

Visiting Researcher, AKATIGA, Indonesia, 2018

Visiting Junior Researcher, SMERU Research Institute, Indonesia Summer 2015, 2016

Research Assistant for R. Arunachalam & A. Shenoy, University of Michigan, MI Summer 2013

Communications & Research Intern, Centre for Microfinance, India Summer 2012

Non-Commissioned Officer, Singapore Armed Forces, Singapore 2009-2011

LANGUAGES:

English (native), Mandarin Chinese (native), Bahasa Indonesia (intermediate)

COMPUTER SKILLS: ArcGIS, Stata

CITIZENSHIP: Singapore/F1

REFERENCES

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GEDEON J. LIM

Why Pay the Chief? Land Rents & Political Selection in Indonesia (Job Market Paper)

Much of modern development efforts are channeled through traditional local governance. Yet, despite their importance as politician-bureaucrats, traditional chiefs are rarely paid a living wage. This paper studies the effect of awarding chiefs in rural Indonesia control over rice land during their term of office. Using a novel data set tracing the electoral history of 931 chiefs in 193 villages, I show that higher land rents lead to positive political selection. Candidates are more educated and more likely to be ex-civil servants. Higher rents also increase barriers to political entry: Campaign costs are higher and fewer candidates run for office. Positive selection translates into performance. Chiefs raise more funds and construct more public goods, translating into a positive effect on historical and contemporary development outcomes. These findings suggest that paying chiefs from a stable source of local revenue can be an efficient tool when top-down monitoring by the state is limited.