

Laia Navarro-Sola

Languages

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Economics

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| Fields | Development, Labor, Education | | | | |
| Education | Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University *Dissertation: Essays on Human Capital in Developing Countries *Committee: Matthew Notowidigdo (Co-Chair), Christopher Udry (Co-Chair), *Seema Jayachandran, Jonathan Guryan* | | | | |
| | M.A., Economics, Northwestern University M.A., Economics, Barcelona Graduate School of Economics B.A., Economics, Pompeu Fabra University | | | 2016 | |
| | | | | 2014 | |
| | | | | 2013 | |
| Fellowships & | Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award | | | 2018 | |
| Awards | Susan Schmidt Bies Prize for Research on Economics and Public Policy | | | 2017 | |
| | La Caixa Foundation Doctoral Fellowship | | | 2014–2016 | |
| | SEBAP Master Fellowship | | | 2013–2014 | |
| | Caixa Manresa Undergradua | ate Fellowship | | 2009–2010 | |
| Teaching Experience | Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University Economics of Education, Prof. Scott Ogawa Economic Development in Africa, Prof. Christopher Udry Economics of Developing Countries, Prof. Seema Jayachandran | | | Spring 2018 Winter 2018 | |
| | Economics of Developing | ig Countries, Prof. Seem | a Jayachandran | Fall 2017 | |
| Research Experience | Research Intern, Innovations for Poverty Action Ghana | | | Summer 2017 | |
| | Research Assistant, Prof. K | irabo Jackson, Northwest | tern University | Fall 2016–Spring 2017 | |
| | External Consultant, PowerMyLearning | | | 2016 | |
| | Research Assistant, Prof. Caterina Calsamiglia, Autonomous University of Barcelona 20 | | | of Barcelona 2012 | |
| Presentations | 2019: Bank of Mexico (scheduled), NEUDC (scheduled), Northwestern University, APPAM International | | | | |
| Refereeing | American Economic Journal: Economic Policy, Journal of Human Resources | | | | |
| Other | Empirics and Methods in Ec Northwestern University | | | 2016, 2017 | |
| | Development Lunch Seminar Organizer, Northwestern University | | Fall 2017 | | |
| | Member of the Human Capi | • | • | | |

Spanish (native), Catalan (native), English (fluent), French (basic)

Job Market Paper

"Secondary School Expansion through Televised Lessons: The Labor Market Returns of the Mexican Telesecundaria"

The lack of specialized teachers is an important constraint for expanding access to post-primary education, and using technology to deliver instructional content is a promising solution. This paper analyzes the impacts of a large-scale expansion of junior secondary education in Mexico through telesecundarias - schools using televised lessons serving 1.4 million students. I exploit the staggered construction of telesecundarias from its beginnings in 1968 to the present. I find that, for every additional telesecundaria per 50 children, 8 students enroll in junior secondary education, and 2 pursue further education afterward. I show that individuals earn 14.5% higher wages as adults, partly due to participating more in the labor market and to shifting away from agriculture and job informality. The educational attainment beyond junior secondary suggests that telesecundarias are a door to higher levels of education. Due to the sequential nature of the schooling decision, the estimated returns combine the direct effects of telesecundarias and the effects of further schooling. I decompose these two effects by interacting the telesecundaria construction with baseline access to upper secondary institutions. I find that almost 90% of the estimated returns come straight through attending junior secondary education, while the remaining 10% are returns of higher educational levels.

Working papers

"What is a Good School, and Can Parents Tell? Evidence on the Multidimensionality of School Output" with Diether W. Beuermann, C. Kirabo Jackson and Francisco Pardo

Is a school's impact on high-stakes test scores a good measure of its overall impact on students? Do parents value school impacts on high-stakes tests, longer-run outcomes, or both? To answer the first question, we exploit quasi-random school assignments and data from Trinidad and Tobago. We construct exogenous instruments for each individual school and estimate the causal impacts of individual schools on several short- and longer-run outcomes. Schools' impacts on high-stakes tests are weakly related to impacts on low-stakes tests, dropout, crime, teen motherhood, and formal labor market participation. To answer the second question, we link estimated school impacts to parents' ranked lists of schools and employ discrete choice models to estimate parental preferences. Parents value schools that causally improve high-stakes test scores conditional on average outcomes, proximity, and peer quality. Consistent with parents valuing the multidimensional output of schools, parents also prefer schools that increase formal labor market participation and those that reduce crime.

Work in Progress

"Capturing the malleability of social and interpersonal skills in educational and organizational settings" with Caterina Calsamiglia

Brief abstract: It has been demonstrated that good social and interpersonal skills foster academic success and adaptation to the labor market, and help improve the individual's wellbeing throughout life. The main challenge is to find objective measures of these non-cognitive skills that can be used extensively to test the malleability of such traits. The first purpose of this study is to develop a set of measures that can be implemented on large populations and that have predictive power on future schooling and life outcomes. The second objective of this study is to provide evidence on the best performing practices to develop good social and interpersonal skills in educational and organizational environments, both in developed and developing country settings.

"The Effects of School Discipline: Evidence from North Carolina" with Samuel Norris

Brief abstract: Overly harsh discipline practices (particularly zero-tolerance policies) may harm children by reducing instructional time, inducing dropout, and bringing children into contact with law enforcement. Conversely, non-punished students may benefit from fewer classroom distractions. We study the effect of discipline policies using principal moves between schools as an instrument for school discipline levels. We find that harsher principals reduce test scores for students near the margin of punishment, but have no effect on students unlikely to misbehave.

References

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