

Matías Villalba Ortega

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Recent graduate with a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Universidad del Pacífico (Perú), where I was advised on my thesis by Alberto Chong and researched the impact of COVID-19 policies on the efficiency of public procurement. Currently working as an RA to Manuel Barron at CIUP. With a passion for academia and research, particularly in topics of development economics, machine learning, and political economy.

EDUCATION

- **Massachusetts Institute of Technology** Online
■ *MicroMasters Program in Data, Economics, and Development Policy* Feb 2022 - To Date
■ *Courses: Data Analysis for Social Scientists, Designing and Running Randomized Evaluations, Microeconomics*
- **Universidad del Pacífico** Lima, Perú
■ *School of Economics and Finance - Economics Major* Mar 2017 - Jul 2024
■ *Courses: Causal Inference and ML, Machine Learning for Economists, Econometrics II, Mathematics IV, Real and Convex Analysis*
- **Colegio de la Inmaculada** Lima, Perú
■ *Primary and Secondary Level* Mar 2004 - Dic 2016

SKILL SUMMARY

- **Software:** Stata, Python, Julia, R, EViews, LaTeX, Git, Office 365, Power BI, Power Automate, MS Azure
- **Languages:** Spanish (Native), English (Advanced)
- **Soft Skills:** Writing, Public Speaking, Adaptability, Organization, Critical Thinking

PUBLICATIONS

- **El efecto de la flexibilización de la contratación pública sobre su eficiencia: evidencia del caso peruano durante la pandemia.**
To be published in *Economía Aplicada: Ensayos de Investigación Económica 2023*. Universidad del Pacífico, 2026.
 - Selected as one of the top undergraduate theses for inclusion in an annual book highlighting exceptional research.
 - Advisor: Alberto Chong (Georgia State University)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

- **Research Assistant to Manuel Barrón*** Lima, Perú
■ *Centro de Investigación de la Universidad del Pacífico* Sep 2023 - To Date
 - **Details:** Assisted with the development of a randomized control trial studying the effect of homophily on academic outcomes within student social networks. *Researcher at CIUP and full time professor at Universidad del Pacífico. PhD in Agriculture & Resource Economics at UC Berkeley.
 - **Achievements and responsibilities:**
 - Designed and conducted baseline and endline surveys, critical for the project's data collection.
 - Utilized Stata for rigorous cleaning and analysis of survey and large administrative datasets (+250k observations).
 - Created comprehensive tables in LaTeX, along with insightful figures.
- **Research Assistant to Edgar Castro[†]** Remote
■ *George Mason University and Inter-American Development Bank* Feb 2023 - Dec 2023
 - **Details:** Assisted with multiple concurrent projects in political economy, primarily focusing on impact evaluation studies analyzing the effects of extreme COVID-19 policies in Colombia and Chile. [†]Doctoral student at GMU and Research Fellow at the IDB.
 - **Achievements and responsibilities:**
 - Utilized Stata and Python for web-scraping and complex data cleaning of massive government datasets (+2M observations).
 - Used OCR tools in Python for large-scale text extraction.
 - Fine-tuned and applied LLM for systematic entity identification and extraction, crucial to the project's methodology.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

- **Financial Planning Intern** Lima, Perú
■ *Alicorp S.A.A.* Aug 2022 - Apr 2023
- **Lift Operator (Part-time)** California, EEUU
■ *Boreal Ridge Corporation* Dec 2018 - Mar 2019

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

- **APE 2024 Congress** Lima, Perú
Presenter *Aug 2024*
 - **Details:** Selected to present my thesis in the Junior Researchers session of the 2024 Annual Congress of the Peruvian Economics Association (APE in spanish)
- **Lima ‘2023 Summer School in Economics** Lima, Perú
Participant *Mar 2023*

Courses: *Machine Learning for Economics, Diff in Diff: foundations and new methodology, Advanced Mathematics for Economics*

 - **Details:** Organized by the Lima School of Economics (LimaSE) and UBC Vancouver School of Economics (VSE)
- **Forum: How to tackle corruption? Reflections and proposals from university students** Lima, Peru
Invited panelist *Nov 2021*
 - **Details:** Organized by the Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility (CERS), the Cultural Center of Universidad del Pacífico, and the Embassy of Sweden.