

# Dhanushka Arunasiri Peru

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EDUCATION	<b>Ph.D. in Economics</b> , University of Houston <i>Dissertation Committee: Willa Friedman (Chair), Aimee Chin, Chinhui Juhn</i>	(Expected) May 2020
	<b>M.A. in Economics</b> , University of Houston	August 2019
	<b>Master of Financial Economics</b> , University of Colombo, Sri Lanka	January 2014
	<b>B.S. in Engineering (Electrical)</b> , University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka	June 2009
FIELDS OF INTEREST	Applied Microeconomics, Labor Economics, Development Economics, Health Economics	
WORKING PAPERS	<b>Women's Labor Market Opportunities and Fertility Decisions: Evidence from Sri Lanka [Job Market Paper].</b>	

*Abstract:* Concerns about left-behind children and dangerous working conditions abroad have encouraged some governments to restrict women's labor migration. I examine how women's fertility responds to such restrictions in Sri Lanka. The Sri Lankan government introduced a policy in 2013 prohibiting women from migrating for work based on their age and the age of their youngest child. These restrictions could alter fertility decisions, with women simultaneously choosing between future employment and child-bearing. Using a panel dataset created from the Demographic and Health Survey in a regression discontinuity in time framework, I find that women from poor households, who are most likely to migrate, change their fertility behavior. Young women, who are already restricted from migrating based on their own age increase their fertility. Older women, who are restricted from migrating only if they have young children, reduce their fertility. As a result, new mothers are less-educated and younger, which may have an impact on child outcomes. My findings contribute to the literature on migration policies in developing countries and trade-offs between women's employment and fertility decisions.

## Trends in Wage Inequality in Sri Lanka.

*Abstract:* Stylized facts suggest that wage inequality in Sri Lanka has increased over the 1996-2006 period followed by a significant decrease over the 2006 to 2014 period. Using Labor Force Survey data and a supply and demand framework, I find that an increase in the relative supply of high skilled workers alone does not explain the differential trends in wage inequality. Significant shifts in factor demand in favor of high skilled workers contributed to the increase in wage inequality in the earlier period. Although the shift in demand still favors high skill workers in the later period, the increase in relative supply has the dominant effect contributing to the decrease in wage inequality. Moreover, I find evidence of occupational downgrading towards low skilled workers in the later period.

WORK IN  
PROGRESS

“The Effects of Chronic Disease on Household Labor Supply”

TEACHING  
EXPERIENCE

**Instructor**

Department of Economics, University of Houston

Intermediate Macroeconomics  
Principles of Macroeconomics

Spring & Summer 2019  
Fall 2017, Summer & Fall 2018

**Teaching Assistant**

Department of Economics, University of Houston

Microeconomics Theory II (Game Theory) - Ph.D. Level  
*-Conducted weekly tutorial sessions*

Spring 2017

**Teaching Assistant**

Department of Economics, University of Houston

Behavioral Economics  
Introduction to Economic Data Analysis  
Intermediate Microeconomics

Fall 2019

Spring & Fall 2016

Fall 2015, Spring 2018

**Resource Person**

Center for Banking Studies, Central Bank of Sri Lanka

2012-2015

WORK  
EXPERIENCE

**Assistant Director**

Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Colombo, Sri Lanka

September 2010 - July 2015

- Worked in a team on capital account liberalization of Sri Lanka.
- Analyzed and approved foreign investments based on financial viability.
- Led the Investigation Division of the Department of Foreign Exchange.

**Electrical Engineer**

Ceylon Electricity Board, Colombo, Sri Lanka

February 2010 - September 2010

Bharti Airtel Lanka Ltd., Colombo, Sri Lanka

August 2009 - February 2010

HONORS &  
AWARDS

**Teaching Award**, Department of Economics, University of Houston

2019

**Cullen Fellowship Travel Grant**, University of Houston

2019

**Doctoral Student Tuition Fellowship**, University of Houston

2015 to Present

SKILLS

STATA, R, MATLAB, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X, SPSS, RATS, Microsoft Office

CERTIFICATES

CFA, Passed Level I

2014

SEMINARS &  
CONFERENCES

Texas Health Economics Conference, Waco, TX

December 2019

Graduate Research Showcase, University of Houston

November 2019

Empirical Microeconomics Seminar, University of Houston

October 2019

Missouri Valley Economic Association, Kansas City, MO

October 2019

Stata Texas Empirical Microeconomics Conference, Houston, TX

September 2019

Graduate Student Workshop, University of Houston

May 2018, May 2019

Graduate Student Brown Bag, University of Houston

2017 to Present

LANGUAGES

English, Sinhala (Native)

CITIZENSHIP / Sri Lanka/ F1 Visa (STEM OPT Extension Eligible)  
VISA

REFERENCES

**Prof. Willa Friedman**  
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University of Houston  
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**Prof. Chinhui Juhn**  
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University of Houston  
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**Prof. Aimee Chin**  
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University of Houston  
Phone: 713-743-3761  
E-mail: [achin@uh.edu](mailto:achin@uh.edu)

**Prof. Ruxandra Prodan-Boul (Teaching)**  
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University of Houston  
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