

# Rocío Valdebenito

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Citizenship: Chilean

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## EDUCATION

<b>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</b> <i>PhD Agricultural and Applied Economics</i> <i>Fields: Applied Microeconomics, Development Economics</i>	Illinois, USA 2024 ( <i>Expected</i> )
<b>Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez</b> <i>Master of Science, Management</i>	Santiago, Chile 2014
<b>Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez</b> <i>Bachelor's Degree, Business Administration and Economics</i>	Santiago, Chile 2013

## WORKING PAPERS

- Peer Influence and College Major Choices in Male-Dominated Fields *Job Market Paper*
- High School Graduates and Education Migration Decisions. *with Sandy Dall'Erba, Mary Arends-Kuenning, and William Ridley.*

## PUBLICATIONS

- Anukriti, Herrera-Almanza, Karra, Valdebenito (2022). Convincing the Mummy-ji: Improving Mother-in-Law Approval of Family Planning in India. *AEA Papers and Proceedings*, 112, 568-72.
- Aroca, González, Valdebenito (2017). The heterogeneous level of life quality across Chilean regions. *Habitat International*, 68, 84-98.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

- Quality Certification in Higher Education: A Policy Evaluation from Chile. *with Cristhian Molina.*
- Assessing the Effect of Commuting on School Performance: Evidence from Chile. *with Esteban López and Patricio Aroca.*
- The effect of Vocational Education on Outcomes in Higher Education. *with Patricio Aroca and Juan Eberhard.*

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

### Research Assistant

- Agricultural and Consumer Economics, University of Illinois 2021 – Present
- Social Networks and Women's Reproductive Outcomes: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment in Rural India. PIs: S. Anukriti, Catalina Herrera-Almanza, Mahesh Karra.

### Short-term Consultant World Bank

- Development Economics Research Group. Task team lead: S Anukriti 2021, 2023
- Informational Barriers to Female Employment in India: Experimental Evidence from Vocational Training Students PI: S Anukriti.

### Associate Researcher

- Center of Regional Economics and Policy, Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez 2015 – 2018
- Competitiveness Index of the Chilean Regions. Ministry of Interior and Public Security, Chile.
  - Regional Economic Elements of the Chilean Educational Policy. PI: Patricio Aroca, Professor, Universidad Andrés Bello, Chile.
  - Methodology to Assess the Establishment of New Administrative Divisions. Ministry of Interior and Public Security, Chile.

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Instructor (Full responsibility)

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Applied Statistics Lab using R, (Fall 2023)

Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, Business School

- Microeconomics (2016, 2017)
- Econometrics Laboratory (2017, 2018)
- Industrial Organization (2018)

### Teaching Assistant

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

- Applied Statistical Methods and Data Analytics II (Fall 2022)
- Data Science for Applied Economics (Python) - Graduate Level (Spring 2021)
- Applied Statistical Methods (Fall 2020).

Universidad Adolfo Ibañez, Chile

- Statistics I, Statistics II (2012)
- Operations Research (2013)

## SCHOLARSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

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**Becas-Chile Scholarship 2018–2022:** for Doctoral Studies. Chilean National Commission of Scientific and Technological Research (ANID).

**Graduate Student Fellowship 2018–2019:** Jean M and John F. Due Fellowship, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS & SOFTWARE

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**Softwares:** R, Stata, Python, qGIS

**Languages:** Spanish (Native), English (Fluent)

## PRESENTATIONS: CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

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**2023** North East Universities Development Consortium\*, *Harvard University* | Southern Economic Association\*, *New Orleans, LA*. | Department of Human Sciences, The Ohio State University | Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, *Washington DC*. | International Policy and Development Seminar, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign | Midwest Economics Association, *Cleveland, OH*. | Association For Education Finance and Policy, *Denver, CO*.

**2022** Population Association of America, *Atlanta, GA*.

**2020** Regional Economics Applications Laboratory Seminar | North American Regional Science Council, *Online*.

**2014–2017** North American Regional Science Council, *Vancouver, Canada*. Chilean Society of Regional Studies, *Chillan, Chile*. | **2016** Chilean Society of Regional Studies, *Santiago, Chile*. | **2015** Regional Economics Applications Laboratory Seminar | **2014** Chilean Society of Regional Studies, *Chile*.

\* Scheduled

## SERVICE AND OTHER ACTIVITIES

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Abstract Reviewer: Agricultural and Applied Economics Association 2021–2022.

Local Organizing Committee of the Annual Midwest Graduate Student Summit: Applied Economics, Regional and Urban Studies, 2019.

Local Organizing Committee of the Pacific Regional Science Conference Organization, 2015.

## REFERENCES

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### **Mary Arends-Kuenning**

Associate Professor  
Associate Dean, International Programs Office  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
[marends@illinois.edu](mailto:marends@illinois.edu)

### **Catalina Herrera-Almanza**

Assistant Professor  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
[cataher@illinois.edu](mailto:cataher@illinois.edu)

### **S Anukriti**

Senior Economist  
World Bank  
[sanukriti@worldbank.org](mailto:sanukriti@worldbank.org)

## JOB MARKET PAPER

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### **Peer Influence and College Major Choices in Male-Dominated Fields**

This paper investigates the causal effect of high school peers' choices on individuals' college major choices and explores whether the gender of the individuals and their peers is a relevant mediating factor on these effects. The empirical approach employs a regression discontinuity design, using student-level data from 2005 to 2019 from the centralized admission system of Chilean universities, where admission cutoffs are unpredictable and defined each year for each program-university combination. This paper analyzes peers exposed to different fields of study, such as comparing individuals whose peers were enrolled in male-dominated fields with a counterfactual option in a female-dominated one. The main finding shows a positive and significant impact of having a peer enrolled in a technology and engineering program on an applicant's enrollment and application to the same field only when the counterfactual alternative of the peers' admission is classified in the field of humanities, social sciences, and education. The results suggest substantial heterogeneity by gender. While male students exhibit a higher inclination towards technology and engineering fields when influenced by peers who have opted for male-dominated disciplines, female students are less likely to pursue that field when exposed to such peers.