

Research Statement

I am an applied microeconomist. My research interests encompass a broad area of topics in labor economics and the economics of gender. Currently, my work focuses on maternal labor supply, labor market discrimination, and intimate partner violence. I have additional working projects under development in these fields.

In my job market paper, “What is the effect of Salary History Bans on the Employment Status of Mothers?” I estimate the effect of a labor market policy, Salary History Ban (SHB), which prohibits employers from acquiring or using salary history in any stage of the hiring process, on the employment rate among mothers. Using a pseudo-panel approach constructed from Current Population Survey data, I employ the estimator developed by Callaway and Sant’Anna for staggered policy implementation and find that, while state-level SHBs have little effect on maternal employment rate, they increase the employment rate of mothers with young children by 2.12 percentage points. This paper contributes to literatures on labor supply of mothers and on effects of Salary History Bans. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first paper to find that SHBs have a positive effect on employment for women, particularly for mothers.

My research agenda is largely in this area, and I have plans to develop projects in this field for the future. A lot of my interests relate to the labor supply behavior of women, with an emphasis on the behavior of partnered women and mothers. I would like to expand the scope of my current job market paper to study the effect of SHBs on other outcomes that measure labor supply, including hours of work, full-time versus part-time work, and labor force participation. I want to study labor supply of women in other contexts, as well; I am very interested in the Added Worker Effect, or the phenomenon where at-home mothers increase their labor supply in response to their husband’s unemployment as a form of insurance. I have a project under development which exploits the exogenous nature of a legislative episode in New Jersey, wherein unemployment insurance benefits duration was doubled for a short while. I would like to explore the effect of the UI benefits extension on the labor supply behavior of wives and understand whether unemployment insurance is a substitute for wives’ labor supply. In another project, I aim to investigate a county-by-county rollout of universal pre-kindergarten in the state of New York on the effect of maternal labor supply using the Callaway and Sant’Anna estimator.

I have a project under development in labor economics, as well. In a co-authored project, we employ a two-way fixed effects design to estimate the effect of a 2018 Supreme Court decision – ruling in favor of forced individual arbitration employment contracts over protecting the right to collective action – on wage theft violations. Using the measurement error in the earnings variables in the Current Population Survey, we measure underpayment for overtime work which we use as the main outcome. We plan to explore heterogeneity across industry of employment and demographics.

Another focus of my research agenda is on female health outcomes, specifically intimate partner violence. Motivated by an anti-domestic violence campaign in India which shows images of Hindu goddesses with signs of having endured physical abuse, I authored a working paper entitled “The

Relationship between Female Deity Temple Exposure and the Status of Women.” In this paper, I investigate the effect of exposure to female deities on intimate partner violence outcomes. In order to measure the exposure to female deities, I collected data on historic temples in the south Indian state of Tamil Nadu and determined the gender of each temple’s deity. I observe intimate partner violence outcomes using the Indian National Family and Health Survey data from 2015-2016 in India, and employ an OLS specification. I find that female deity exposure is associated with poorer intimate partner violence outcomes. I hope to add context to this finding by including other outcomes in this analysis regarding attitudes towards women.

In a co-authored project under development, I have the chance to expand on this area of my research agenda. We explore the effect of Green Card processing time periods in the United States on the effects of intimate partner violence (IPV). Wives of many working, male immigrants are in the United States as dependents and are not authorized to work until they and their husbands achieve a permanent residency status (Green Card). The longer the time of financial dependence on their husbands, and the longer financial burdens on the household, the more opportunity for intimate partner violence. We plan to exploit differences in processing times for applications of immigrants from India and immigrants from China to understand how longer periods of financial dependence and hardship can affect IPV.

My work in these fields and topics allows me to exploit rapidly evolving methodology at the frontier of applied econometrics. I leverage my willingness to collect data and embrace new methodology to contribute to topics in labor economics and the economics of gender.