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Citizenship: USA

Fields of Concentration:

Development Economics
Labor Economics

Desired Teaching:

Development Economics
Labor Economics
Applied Econometrics

Comprehensive Examinations Completed:

2004 (Oral) Development Economics and Labor Economics
2003 (Written) Microeconomic and Macroeconomic Theory

Dissertation Title:

Identity Matters: Ethnic Networks in the Labor Market and Mandated Female Political Representation

Committee:

Professor Mark Rosenzweig
Professor Christopher Udry
Professor Rohini Pande

Expected Completion Date: May 2007

Degrees:

Ph.D., Economics, Yale University, Expected May 2007
M.Phil., Economics, Yale University, 2005
M.A., Economics, Yale University, 2004
B.A., (*departmental honors*) in Economics, Northwestern University (*Magna Cum Laude*), 1999

Fellowships, Honors and Awards:*Research Grants*

UNICEF Grant for field work in West Bengal, India on “Women Policymakers, Gender Bias, and Child Development in Rural India”, with E. Duflo, R. Pande, P. Topalova, and R. Chattopadhyay, 2006

Economic Growth Center, Yale University, Graduate Student Research Support, 2005

Academic Fellowships and Awards

Yale University Dissertation Fellowship, Fall 2006

John F. Enders Fund, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, Yale University, Summer 2006

Ryoichi Sasakawa Fellowship, Yale University, 2003-2004

Economic Growth Center Prize, Yale University, 2002-2006

Yale University Doctoral Fellowship, 2002-2006

Phi Beta Kappa, 1999

Frederick S. Deibler Award for Superior Honors Thesis, Northwestern University, 1999

Teaching Experience:*Teaching Assistant:*

Economics of Developing Countries (undergraduate), Yale University, Fall 2005

Development Economics Policy (undergraduate/MA), Yale University, Scheduled Spring 2007

Research and Field Experience:

Research Assistant, Rohini Pande, Yale University, 2003-2004

Research Assistant, Christopher Udry, Yale University, Summer 2004

Research Assistant, Ann Huff Stevens, Yale University, Summer 2002

U.S. Peace Corps, Mali, West Africa, *Small Business Volunteer*, August 1999-November 2001

Collaborated with large micro-finance institution and NGO to facilitate training of employees on marketing principles, participatory needs analysis and feasibility studies.

Provided technical expertise to women’s associations and entrepreneurs on business management, accounting and marketing. Partnered with NGO to train and help implement income generating projects for local women’s associations.

Papers:

“Social Networks and the Dynamics of Labor Market Outcomes: Evidence from Refugees Resettled in the U.S.,” September 2006. (Job Market Paper)

“Powerful Women: Female Politicians and Gender Bias in Indian Villages”, with Esther Duflo, Rohini Pande and Petia Topalova, Work in Progress.

“Women Politicians: Children's Outcomes and Gender Bias in India,” with Esther Duflo, Rohini Pande and Petia Topalova, forthcoming *Background paper for 2007 State of the World's Children Report, UNICEF*.

“Consumption Seasonality in Mali: The Role of Price Variability,” *Mimeo*, April 2005.

Conference/Workshop Presentations:

Northeast Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC) at Cornell, September 2006

CEPR/IZA European Summer Symposium in Labor Economics (ESSLE), September 2006

Wesleyan University, Department of Economics, August 2006

Referee Service: *Journal of Development Economics*

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References:

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Dissertation Abstract

How does the economic success of refugees depend on the existence and the structure of a network of refugees from the same country? How is political representation of women curbed by discrimination, and what are the effects of affirmative action in the political arena? This dissertation examines how group identity, as captured by ethnicity and gender, becomes important in the face of market imperfections. I use both theoretical and empirical methods to address these two questions.

I. Social Networks and the Dynamics of Labor Market Outcomes

The existence of social networks which influence labor markets is generally viewed by economists as a response to informational problems or other market frictions. It is difficult, however, to characterize their role simply, since there are numerous mechanisms through which networks impact labor markets. In this paper I develop and test predictions from a job-information transmission model regarding the relationship between the structure of a network, as measured by its size and the tenure of its members, and employment rates and wages.

The paper develops a theoretical framework which embeds the structure of Calvo-Armengol and Jackson (2004) within an overlapping generations model to examine the dynamic relationship between network structure and labor market outcomes. The model derives the testable prediction that an increase in the size of a given cohort will first increase competition within the network for job information, thereby decreasing the employment rate and average hourly wages of cohorts who arrive close in time to the large cohort. As the large cohort gains experience in the labor market over time, however, it becomes a net provider of job information to new arrivals and improves outcomes for later cohorts.

In order to test this non-monotonic relationship between network size, the tenure of network members and labor market outcomes, I compiled a dataset on refugees resettled in the U.S. between 2001 and 2005 using administrative records from a large resettlement agency. The empirical strategy exploits the special institutional environment of refugee resettlement and uses variation in the relative size and structure of refugee social networks across cities and ethnic groups over time. The key feature of the resettlement process is that refugees who do not already have family in the U.S. are precluded from sorting into localities, since they are placed by a resettlement agency. All individual characteristics known to the agency at the time of placement are also available in the data. To address the possibility that the

resettlement agency makes placement decisions based on unobserved ethnic group and city level factors, I include city-year, ethnic group-year and city-ethnic group fixed effects.

The empirical analysis provides evidence that an increase in network size has heterogeneous effects across network members, as predicted by the dynamic job-information transmission model. A one standard deviation increase in the number of network members who arrive in the U.S. one year ago lowers the probability of employment for a new arrival by 4.9 percentage points. Conversely, more tenured network members improve the labor market outcomes for recently arrived refugees. The influence of networks on wages is also consistent with the model's predictions. A static analysis of social networks using the stock of immigrants as the measure of network size misses important heterogeneity in the effects of network-based job information flows. As demonstrated in this paper, ignoring the structure of a social network and estimating the effect of total network size can mask the presence of network effects completely.

These results have policy implications for the debate over the optimal resettlement of refugees. The existence of ethnic networks which facilitate labor market access in the short run is one factor to be considered when choosing resettlement locations for refugees.

II. Female Politicians and Gender Bias in Indian Villages (Joint with Esther Duflo, Rohini Pande and Petia Topalova, work in progress, draft anticipated by 12/2006)

In this paper we exploit the randomized implementation of political affirmative action for women in Indian villages to examine whether gender bias is reduced or exacerbated by affirmative action. A number of studies suggest that the political under representation of women is in part linked to gender bias. If policy preferences differ by gender and politicians can not credibly commit to policies prior to elections, then the lack of women leaders will lead to a policy mix which disproportionately reflects the preferences of men. Chattopadhyay and Duflo (*Econometrica*, 2004), for example, show that political reservation for women in India affects the types of public goods provided.

Since the mid-1990s, India has implemented a policy that randomly reserves one third of Village Council chairperson positions for women. Combining individual level data with independent assessments of the quality of public facilities, we compare measures of public good quantity and quality and villagers' evaluation of the performance of male and female leaders. We also assess the impact of female leadership on local political participation by transforming qualitative transcripts of village meetings into quantitative data.

Overall, female leaders appear to perform as least as well as their male counterparts in observable outcomes. In particular, villages reserved for women leaders have more public goods and the measured quality of these goods is at least as high as in non-reserved villages. Villagers are also less likely to pay bribes in villages reserved for women. Furthermore, according to village meeting transcripts, female leaders encourage women to participate in village meetings and are more responsive to their needs.

Despite evidence that women appear to be as effective leaders as men, residents in villages headed by women are less satisfied with the public goods, including goods that are beyond the jurisdiction of the village council. Therefore, we have nearly completed the compilation of a large household dataset to test for the presence of gender bias in the appraisal of the competence and performance of women by administering a series of psychology tests proven effective to detect both explicit and implicit discrimination. We test whether the extent of gender bias has changed in reserved villages relative to unreserved villages as a result of a random increase in exposure to female leaders. This project provides insights into the long-run capability of reservation systems to strengthen women's political influence.