



RESEARCH NEWSLETTER

Gender and Development | September 2020

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

WORKING PAPERS

✓ [Gender Bias and Intergenerational Educational Mobility: Theory and Evidence from China and India](#)

M. Shahe Emran, Hanchen Jiang, and Forhad Shilpi, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 9250, May 2020

A new model of intergenerational educational persistence captures multiple sources of gender bias against girls in the family, the school, and the labor market. This model is used to analyze the gender gap in education in both rural and urban contexts in China and India. One key finding among many: girls in India face lower mobility irrespective of location when born to fathers with low schooling, but the gap between girls and boys closes when the father is college educated.

✓ [Female Business Leaders, Business and Cultural Environment, and Productivity around the World](#)

Sheng Fang, Chorching Goh, Mark Roberts, L. Colin Xu, and Albert Zeufack, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 9275, June 2020

Firm-level data from more than 100 countries show female-headed firms occur more frequently in countries with better rule of law, gender equality, and individualistic cultures. The productivity disadvantage relative to male-headed firms exists mainly in the manufacturing sector.

✓ [Gender Pension Gaps in a Private Retirement Accounts System: A Dynamic Model of Household Labor Supply and Savings](#)

Clément Joubert and Petra Todd, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 9322, July 2020

A model of labor supply, savings, and retirement decisions by individuals and couples is used to analyze the reform of the privatized pension system in Chile in 2008 and how it affected gender pension gaps. The design features that reduced pension gaps include expanding minimum pension benefit eligibility, providing a per-child pension bonus, and increasing women's retirement age to that of men.

✓ [Gender Empowerment, Supply-Chain Linkages and Foreign Direct Investment: Evidence On Bangladesh](#)

Ana Margarida Fernandes and Hiau Looi Kee, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 9340, July 2020

This paper examines how foreign direct investment (FDI) affects gender-related labor outcomes. A unique firm-to-firm dataset on Bangladesh's apparel and textiles sectors from 2005 shows that domestic firms connected with FDI firms through backward and forward supply chain linkages have similar gender hiring practices as those FDI firms.

✓ [Political Reservation and Female Labor Force Participation in Rural India](#)

This paper explores whether random reservation of village leadership for women in rural areas affected women's access to jobs, among other outcomes. Political reservation increased women's participation in public works, labor markets, income, and household decisions, but with a lag.

✓ [On the Quantity and Quality of Girls: Fertility, Parental Investments, and Mortality](#)

[S Anukriti](#), Sonia Bhalotra, and Hiu Tam, World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 9390, September 2020

Prenatal sex-detection technologies have led to a substantial rise in the abortion of female fetuses in India. According to data from 1973 to 2005 access to these technologies substituted postnatal with prenatal gender discrimination, leading to a decline in the gender gap in under-5 mortality.

GENDER AND PAY AT THE WORLD BANK

✓ [Women in the Pipeline: A Dynamic Decomposition of Firm Pay Gaps](#)

Jishnu Das and [Clément Joubert](#), World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 9295, June 2020

A new dynamic decomposition method that accounts for pipeline effects and a changing firm environment can help shed light on pay gaps within a firm. This method is applied to 27 years of personnel records from the World Bank Group and finds that 77 percent of the current aggregate gender pay gap comes from historical differences in the types of positions for which men and women were hired.

Also see: Salaries Diversity, and Inclusion at the World Bank Group: [Video](#) | [Presentation](#)

JOURNAL ARTICLES

✓ [Unheard voices: The challenge of inducing women's civic speech](#)

[Nethra Palaniswamy](#), [Ramya Parthasarathy](#), and [Vijayendra Rao](#), *World Development* 115 (March): 64-77, 2019 | [Working Paper Version](#)

Text-as-data methods have documented increased participation by women in village assemblies (*gram sabhas*) following an intervention in rural Tamil Nadu to induce women's civic participation. But the findings suggest that discussions may have shifted away from the organic topics raised by citizens and toward project-specific activities, thus crowding out discussion of issues broadly relevant to the community.

✓ [The social lives of married women: Peer effects in female autonomy and investments in children](#)

[Eeshani Kandpal](#) and [Kathy Baylis](#), *Journal of Development Economics* 140 (September): 26-43, 2019 | [Working Paper Version](#) | [Blog](#)

Primary data on women's social networks in north India show that women have few friends and limited interactions with them. Peer effects exist on some aspects of women's autonomy — investments in children, in particular — but the network-based spillover is small. Interventions targeting child welfare through women's empowerment may thus affect household decision-making, but with substantial decay rates.

✓ [Girl Empower — A gender transformative mentoring and cash transfer intervention to promote adolescent wellbeing: Impact findings from a cluster-randomized controlled trial in Liberia](#)

Berk Özler, Kelly Hallman, Marie-France Guimond, Elizabeth A. Kelvin, and Marian Rogers Esther Karnley, SSM Population Health 10, April 2020, 100527 | [Working Paper Version](#)

This evaluation of adding cash transfers to a mentoring intervention was targeted to girls in early adolescence. It shows that cash transfers tied to program attendance enhanced impacts on child marriage, teen pregnancy, and risky sexual behavior, but was ineffective in protecting girls from sexual violence.

To access the latest Policy Research Working Papers from the Development Research Group, click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **October 27:** [Policy Research Talk: Taxation, Inequality, and Development](#)
- **November 17:** [Policy Research Talk: Making Banks Work for Development](#)
- **December 8:** [Policy Research Talk: The Implications of Behavioral Economics for Public Utility Policies](#)

To see more events, please click [here](#).

BLOGS AND BRIEFS

COVID-19 pandemic shows the need to strengthen digital safety nets for women

[Leora Klapper](#) | Future Development | July 31, 2020

Governments are scrambling to contain the economic damage. As of June 12, [World Bank](#) data indicates that 195 countries have planned, introduced or adapted more than a thousand safety net payments and other social protection measures for the most vulnerable populations.

There's a strong case to be made that these payments should be offered digitally. Compared to cash, digital safety net transfers can [cut costs and avoid leakage](#). And digital transfers can help beneficiaries — especially women — [strengthen their household decisionmaking power](#) and [bolster their labor force participation](#).

[Read the blog](#)

How can digital financial services help a world coping with COVID-19?

[Margaret Miller](#), [Leora Klapper](#), [Ghada Teima](#), and [Matthew Gamser](#) | Private Sector Development Blog | August 3, 2020

This year, the Global Partnership for Financial Inclusion (GPFI) developed [High-Level Policy Guidelines \(HLPGs\) on Digital Financial Inclusion for Youth, Women and SMEs](#), which were recently endorsed at the meeting of G20 Finance Ministers. The World Bank Group produced background reports that informed these guidelines — for [women's financial inclusion](#) with the Better Than Cash Alliance and Women's World Banking, and [innovations in small- and medium-enterprise \(SME\) finance](#) with the SME Finance Forum — leveraging insights from country advice and operations as well as from extensive empirical research. Two issues raised in these documents are: the importance of access to digital technology and infrastructure, and the opportunity to accelerate digital financial inclusion through large volume payments. Both are highly relevant today as the world copes with COVID-19.

[Read the blog](#)

Informality, consumption taxes and redistribution

[Pierre Bachas](#), [Lucie Gadenne](#), and [Anders Jensen](#) | VoxDev | August 7, 2020

Taxes on consumption help governments in developing countries redistribute thanks to the presence of large informal sectors. Consumption taxes rarely get good press. Consumers think they make products more expensive; politicians believe they will cost them votes; retailers maintain they deter clients. Moreover, in Western economies, they are often found to have no — or in fact, negative — redistribution effects (Warren 2008).

[Read the blog](#)

Development in an era of deglobalisation

[Pinelopi Goldberg](#) and [Tristan Reed](#) | VoxDev | August 10, 2020

In an era of deglobalisation, developing countries need more equality within their borders

Many of the success stories of economic development in the past century coincided with growth in exports and trade surpluses, especially in East Asia (Stiglitz 1996). Advances in technology, however, threaten the comparative advantage offered by cheap labour. Moreover, protectionism is now on the rise in advanced economies, imperilling the relevance of the export-led model. This observation has led policymakers to ask: What is the pathway to development in a world with less international integration?

[Read the blog](#)

Survey methods — curated blogs

[Florence Kondylis](#) and [David McKenzie](#) | Development Impact | August 20, 2020

This list is a companion to our curated list on technical topics. It puts together our posts on issues of measurement, survey design, sampling, survey checks, managing survey teams, reducing attrition, and all the behind-the-scenes work needed to get the data needed for impact evaluations. updated through August 20, 2020.

[Read the blog](#)

A curated list of our postings on technical topics – your one-stop shop for methodology

[Florence Kondylis](#) and [David McKenzie](#) | Development Impact | August 20, 2020

This is a curated list of our technical postings, to serve as a one-stop shop for your technical reading. I've focused here on our posts on methodological issues in impact evaluation – we also have a whole lot of posts on how to conduct surveys and measure certain concepts [curated here](#). In lieu of our regular links this week, it is updated up to August 20, 2020.

[Read the blog](#)

A banking sector pandemic

[Asli Demirguc-Kunt](#), [Alvaro Pedraza](#), and [Claudia Ruiz](#) | All About Finance | August 21, 2020

In a recent [paper](#), we use daily stock prices and other balance sheet information for a sample of banks in 53 countries to take a first look at this issue. Our contribution is twofold. We first assess the impact of the pandemic on the banking sector and investigate whether the shock had a differential impact on banks versus corporates, as well as by different bank characteristics. Second, using a global database of financial sector policy responses and an event study methodology, we investigate the role of different policy initiatives in addressing bank stress as perceived by markets, in the aggregate, as well as across different banks.

[Read the blog](#)

Recovery from the Pandemic Crisis: Balancing Short-Term and Long-Term Concerns

[Norman V. Loayza](#), [Apurva Sanghi](#), [Nurlina Sharuddin](#), and [Lucie Wuester](#), Research and Policy Brief 38, World Bank,

September 7, 2020

What can be expected for recovery from the pandemic crisis across the world? This brief assesses the projections of economic activity in 2020 and 2021 and the domestic and international conditions that will constrain and drive a possible recovery, the potential shapes of the recovery (or lack thereof) for specific country conditions, and explores the need to balance short-term and long-term concerns, arguing in favor of policies that focus on sustained recovery, rather than quick but debt-fueled and short-lived gains.

[Read the brief](#) | [Full list of Research & Policy Briefs](#)

Learning by doing in time taken to conduct a phone survey

[David McKenzie](#) | *Development Impact* | September 8, 2020

It is hard to keep phone surveys short, but this blog post shows that at least some learning by doing shortens the time taken to conduct a survey after several days of enumerators working.

[Read the blog](#)

Decentralized targeting during the pandemic

[Berk Özler](#) | *Development Impact* | September 16, 2020

[H]aving spent an earlier part of my career studying the targeting of regular safety net or anti-poverty programs, one idea kept gnawing at me, although I was hesitant to propose it. What if you got money to communities fast, hopefully using existing structures, and then let the communities take care of the targeting themselves? This would allow geographic targeting that can be fairly progressive, and then rely on idiosyncratic information at the local level to target households as needed.

[Read the blog](#)

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