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PLACEMENT DIRECTORS

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics, University of Maryland at College Park, expected May 2020
M.A. Economics and Statistics, National School of Applied Statistics and Economics, Senegal, 2012
B.S. Mathematics, University of Lome, Togo, 2009

FIELDS OF SPECIALIZATION

Primary: Development Economics
Secondary: Applied Econometrics, Labor Economics

DISSERTATION

Essays on Labor Markets and Agriculture in Developing Countries
Committee: Prof. Jessica Goldberg (Chair), Prof. Guido Kuersteiner, Prof. Sergio Urzua

JOB MARKET PAPER

“The Illusion of a Wage Subsidy: Youth and South Africa’s Employment Tax Incentive”

Young people face unemployment rates two to four times those of older workers. Youth unemployment is particularly severe in South Africa, where 52 percent of those between ages 18 and 24 are unemployed by the standard ILO definition. To address the issue, South Africa has introduced a subsidy that offsets firms’ costs for wages paid to young workers hired after October 2013. Firms could receive tax credits that amount to as much as half the wage paid to a young worker. While similar wage subsidies have been used in other middle-income countries, there is little evidence about their efficacy, especially when implemented at a national scale. I estimate the policy’s effect using a difference-in-differences strategy based on age-eligibility restrictions and the start date. During the first year of implementation, being eligible for the subsidy did not increase employment for age-eligible workers relative to a slightly older cohort. My estimates rule out effects as small as 1 percentage point. This limited result comes despite widespread utilization of the subsidy which was extended twice past its expiration date. As the decrease in firms’ costs did not induce them to hire more young workers, attention should be focused on other constraints that prevent such workers from being employed, for example their skills or labor market regulations.

OTHER RESEARCH PAPERS

“Cheap Talk and Coordination in the Lab and in the Field: Collective Commercialization in Senegal”, NBER Working Paper No. 26045, with Tanguy Bernard and Angelino Viceisza

“Internal Migrants' Ethnic Capital and Labor Market Outcomes in South Africa”, work in progress

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor, Applied Econometrics (undergraduate), University of Maryland, Fall 2016–Spring 2019

Instructor, Econometrics II (core undergraduate), University of Maryland, Summer 2017 and Winter 2018

Lecturer, Introduction to Statistics (undergraduate), National School of Applied Statistics and Economics, Senegal, 2012

Teaching Assistant, Introductory Macroeconomics (undergraduate), University of Maryland, Fall 2014–Spring 2016

RESEARCH AND RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Consultant, USAID, August 2019

Research Consultant, Emanuela Galasso, World Bank, Washington DC, June–August 2016

Research Assistant, Tanguy Bernard and Angelino Viceisza, International Food Policy Research Institute, February 2013–July 2014, Summer 2015

Research Assistant, Central Bank of West African States, Senegal, July 2012–January 2013

Research Intern, Anne-Sophie Robillard, French National Research Institute for Development (IRD), Dakar Office, June–October 2011

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Graduate Teaching Assistantship, University of Maryland, Fall 2014–Spring 2019

Jacob K. Goldhaber Travel Award, University of Maryland, October 2016, May 2019

Travel grant, Annual Bank Conference on Africa, June 2017

Odon Vallet Scholarship, National School of Applied Statistics and Economics, Senegal, 2009–2012

CONFERENCE AND SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

2019: NBER Conference on Transforming Rural Africa; SEEDDEC

2018: Washington DC Area Development Economics Symposium

2017: Annual Bank Conference on Africa

2016: NEUDC Conference, International Food Policy Research Institute Annual Meeting

LANGUAGES

French (fluent), English (fluent)

REFERENCES

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Prof. Sergio Urzua	University of Maryland	surzua@umd.edu	(301) 405-3532