

INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RESEARCH REVIEW

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3rd Annual Paul Streeten Lecture in Global Development Policy



Dani Rodrik (left) engaging in Q&A session moderated by Dilip Mookherjee (right)

The 2022 Paul Streeten Distinguished Lecture which took place on March 23rd featured Professor Dani Rodrik, Ford Foundation Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard's Kennedy School, who presented a thought-provoking perspective on "The Future of Development Strategy." Professor Rodrik's views on strategy echo an earlier tradition of "grand debates" among development economists over contending development strategies, such as balanced vs. unbalanced growth and trade vs. import substitution. This "big picture" approach drew record-breaking audiences, both online and in-person.

While most examples of successful economic development have relied on the manufacturing sector to be the engine for transforming poor agrarian economies into wealthier industrialized economies, Professor Rodrik explained how the shift toward more capital-intensive technologies that require greater education and skill beginning in the 1970s has rendered this

model obsolete and hit LDCs with a "triple whammy." Capital intensity undermines the capacity of the manufacturing sector to generate large numbers of jobs. The bias towards increased education and skill requirements means fewer low skilled and "decent" mid-level jobs. And the high prices and difficulties in adoption technologies have made new technologies more-costly for the developing countries. As a result, the poorer nations are finding it harder and harder to catch up to developed countries and the various "dual economy" gaps between rural and urban workers, formal and informal sectors, and high and low productivity jobs are widening.

These trends, according to Professor Rodrik, are unlikely to be reversed by neoliberal market-based policies for opening new markets or by industrial policies directed at promoting larger-scale manufacturing. Instead, the future path to the development of LDCs will lie in the long-neglected services sector and among small and medium size firms (SME's). The particular challenges of this development strategy are that the service sector in LDCs is mostly dominated by low productivity, low wage jobs, poor working conditions, and employment instability. In addition, fashioning industrial policies for SMEs requires an understanding of much larger and more varied group of firms compared to policies targeted at larger formal sector firms. If service-led growth is to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality, fresh strategies are needed to create more-productive and better-paying service jobs for workers with relatively few skills. Professor Rodrik makes the case for replacing the development policies of the recent past with a "good-firms/good jobs" strategy featuring new types of industrial policies, which are backed by education and training programs linked to firms and jobs, customized government incentives, and grass-roots development collaborations. The lecture concluded with a lively Q & A session focusing on the key themes of Professor Rodrik's agenda for future development strategies. This year's lecture was sponsored by the Institute for Economic Development and the Global Development Policy Center.

(Right) Kevin Gallagher, director of Boston University Global Development Policy Center, introduces Dani Rodrik prior to the lecture



IED HOSTED CONFERENCES

Theoretical Research in Development Economics (ThReD)

IED hosted the annual conference of ThReD (Theoretical Research in Development Economics, <http://thred.devecon.org>) for a second successive year during June 17-10 2022. ThReD is a research network dedicated to the creation as well as application of economic theory to development problems. Since its inception in 2007, ThReD has been hosting conferences in various countries, besides maintaining a working paper collection and pooling useful teaching resources. IED faculty affiliates Dilip Mookherjee and Andy Newman, two of the original co-founders of ThReD, continue to serve on the core committee. With the onset of the Covid crisis in April 2020, the in-person annual conference could not be held. IED stepped in to host the annual 2020 and 2021 conferences as fully remote events on October 29-31, 2020 and June 17-19, 2021. The two conferences featured twelve and nine paper presentations respectively, selected by core committee members from a large number of papers submitted in an open call. The papers covered a wide set of areas, ranging from the Covid crisis, supply chains, informal credit, microcredit, labor markets, networks, social norms, gender discrimination to political economy, social identity, culture and institutions.

One advantage of the remote format was the remarkable increase in attendance from diverse parts of the world, with over 300 economists participating in each event. Moreover, videos of the proceedings were posted online, thus allowing an unprecedented increase in dissemination of the conference proceedings - the relevant links are available at the ThReD website given above.

North-East Universities Development Consortium (<https://neudc.org/>)

IED hosted the 2021 NEUDC (North East Universities Development Consortium) which rotates in successive years across a number of universities in the north eastern corridor of the US. Starting during the late 1960s, it is one of the oldest and best attended development economics conferences in the world. Boston University was among four universities that belonged to NEUDC at its inception; it has now expanded to include six other institutions. In recent years the annual conference has been hosted by IED in 2014, 2008, 2001 and 1996.

The 2021 NEUDC conference was held via Zoom on November 5th & 6th, 2021. It included 180 paper presentations (2021 NEUDC Program and Papers) on a wide range of topics in development economics, spanning 49 different sessions, with over 700 participants worldwide. Fields covered included Family and Gender, Households, Firms, Macroeconomics, International, Labor, Education, Agriculture, Environment, Political Economy, Economic History, Culture and Institutions. The keynote address was given by Joseph Henrich on "The Cultural Evolution of Psychology and Institutions," with comments provided by Nathan Nunn. A virtual post-session Gathertown gathering provided an opportunity for conference attendees to further their discussions with the presenters, friends and colleagues.

The main organizers were IED Faculty Affiliates Martin Fiszbein, Siddharth George and Dilip Mookherjee. They relied on the help of Session Chairs from various universities who helped screen submissions, and the IED admin team - especially IED Manager Kelly Benkert, PhD students Duoxi Li and Yuheng Zhao and many other student monitors who helped ensure a smooth conference from start to finish.

Trade Conference

IED faculty affiliates Stefania Garetto, Yuhei Miyauchi, and Natalia Ramondo organized two mini conferences on international trade on March 25, 2022 and April 15, 2022. Two external and internal speakers from various institutions were featured on each day. Each presenter presented their latest research, followed by extensive discussions among participants.

During breaks and over dinner, BU's faculty and students interacted with external speakers and exchanged research ideas. There was a turnout of about 15-20 graduate students (including several first-year PhD students and MA students) and several faculty members.

PRESENTERS ON 3/25: Sharon Traiberman (NYU) "Precautionary Protectionism," Joan Monras (UPF) "Floating Population: Consumption and Location Choices of Rural Migrants in China"

PRESENTERS ON 4/15: Joaquin Blaum (BU) "Protectionism Unchained: Determinants and Consequences of Discretionary Trade Policy in Argentina," Meredith Startz (Dartmouth) "Cutting Out the Middleman: The Structure of Chains of Intermediation"

**Technology and Local State Capacity:
Evidence from Ghana***James Dzansi, Anders Jensen, David Lagakos,**& Henry Telli***IED WORKING PAPER 364**

Governments in poor countries provide few public goods, partly due to inability to collect sufficient tax revenue. In Ghana, the authors assess the effect of improved technology use on tax collection through a nationally representative survey of local governments, an RCT, and a structural model. Digital record keeping and billing software can double the revenue collected by local governments.

Through a survey of all 216 local governments, the authors show failure to collect taxes occurs at both the “delivery margin,” only 43 percent of bills are estimated to be delivered, and the “collection margin,” the average tax paid conditional on delivery is only \$1.30 USD. High costs permeate the process of tax collection. Local governments must spend \$.64 dollars to collect only \$1 in taxes, making the tax service 200 times less efficient than the IRS.

With robust evidence of the inefficiency of local tax collection, the authors show technology usage is a key determinant of tax collection ability. Only 17% of local governments use either an electronic database of properties or tax billing software. Nonetheless, technology usage is associated with 75% higher taxes collected per capita.

To further understand the effect of technology on tax collection, the authors conduct a randomized controlled trial with a local government in Greater Accra. Out of 56 tax collectors, 28 were given a tablet with a geo-spatial database of residential and business properties, including navigation assistance, and tax collection software. After six weeks of tax collection, officers in the treated group had collected 27% more bills than those in the control group. Not only did they collect more bills, treated officers collected 118% more revenue per bill than control officers. In total, technology usage caused tax revenue to double relative to the control group.

Treated revenue collectors spend less time navigating, freeing them up to conduct more follow-up visits with non-paying households and businesses. In addition, lower navigation costs enabled collectors to better learn which households were able to pay, as measured by a comprehensive household survey conducted by the authors in the collection area.

The authors construct a parsimonious model of tax collection to contextualize their results. In the model, tax collectors need to visit a household to learn whether it is able to pay taxes, and must balance their time between visiting new households and returning to already-visited households to encourage tax payment. They show both learning and efficiency are necessary to produce the observed treatment effects.

**The Economics of Spatial Mobility: Theory
and Evidence Using Smartphone Data***Yuhei Miyauchi, Kentaro Nakajima, & Stephen J.**Redding***IED WORKING PAPER 365**

Travel throughout a city often involves “trip chaining”: stopping for coffee on one’s way to work, or at the grocery store on one’s way home. Trip chaining represents a classic case of externalities and their analysis provides insight into the importance of urban form in the well-being of city residents, yet it has not been incorporated into existing models of the city. With Tokyo as a case study, the authors use original cell phone mobility data to document the pervasiveness of trip chaining and construct a new theoretical model to emphasize its importance.

The authors begin by documenting patterns of spatial mobility using a novel dataset of 545,000 cell phone users in Japan. The location of residents is pinpointed every 5 minutes, resulting in 1.4 billion data points. The authors show non-commuting trips outnumber commuting trips and these trips are frequently the result of trip chaining, visiting almost three distinct locations per trip away from home, on average.

To explain these facts, the authors model a city resident who chooses which non-tradeable services (e.g., bars, restaurants, grocery stores) they wish to visit in a day and chooses the best itinerary to visit all of them. Despite the complication, the authors show this decision can be nested within conventional quantitative general equilibrium urban models.

A calibrated version of the authors’ model closely fits both trip itinerary behavior and sales of non-tradeable services, despite neither being targeted in estimation. More concretely, the authors also show the change in consumption behavior in downtown Tokyo following the COVID-19 work-from-home order can be simulated in the model through the change of only two structural parameters, and such a change cannot be predicted by conventional models.

Finally, the authors emphasize the importance of trip chaining when estimating welfare or urban residents. To do so, the authors undertake a counterfactual of eliminating all subway and railway lines built in Tokyo since 1960. Modifications to the authors’ framework which do not account for trip-chaining yield substantially smaller changes in welfare, underscoring the need for a complex understanding of consumer behavior in evaluating public transportation policies.

Global Innovation and Knowledge Diffusion*Nelson Lind and Natalia Ramondo***IED WORKING PAPER 366**

Innovations which improve productivity are continually discovered, yet it can take years for these innovations to spread to new countries and increase their productivity. Understanding innovation, knowledge diffusion, and adoption are important for learning about both growth, international trade, and differences in technology across countries.

The authors present a dynamic Ricardian trade model of invention which is both tractable and formalizes an intuitive process of innovation and diffusion. In the model, countries come across new inventions randomly as time goes on, but their ability to leverage these innovations into increased production may be limited. Similarly, countries may take many years to hear about innovations discovered elsewhere, if they learn about such improvements at all, and may be ill-equipped to benefit from new ideas. The author's simple framework imposes functional form assumptions which allow them to nest work-horse models of international trade. Importantly the predictions enabled by knowledge diffusion depart from those of conventional models in ways that more closely mirror observed trade patterns: countries with high levels of similarity in their ability to incorporate new inventions create highly substitutable goods and thus engage in steep competition. Consequently, evidence of large variations in substitutability across products and countries is evidence in favor of the author's framework rather than existing models.

The insight that innovation and diffusion can be observed through departures from more simple substitution patterns presents a step forward in the measurement of technology adoption. With their model in hand, the authors can back out knowledge flows through easily attainable expenditure data, rather than highly constrained citation and patent counts. As an example, the authors use the US in the past 50 years as a case study to estimate the relative improvements in productivity due to new inventions which are not shared contrasted with those that diffuse across the country as a whole. Their model can replicate intuition about innovation and the spread of knowledge in this setting.

Tasks, Automation, and the Rise in US Wage Inequality

Daron Acemoglu & Pascual Restrepo

IED WORKING PAPER 367

In the past 40 years, wages have grown markedly for highly educated workers, yet have stagnated and declined for the less educated. For example, the real earnings of men without a high-school degree are now 15% lower than they were in 1980. Explanations for these diverging fortunes have focused on diverging productivity between low and high education workers, the ability of high education workers to take advantage of computers, and changing worker power. The authors give a tractable general equilibrium model for a different explanation: automation. 80% of the rise in the college premium over the past four decades can be attributed to capital displacing labor, and existing explanations cannot account for US wage dynamics as effectively.

In the authors' model, goods are made via a production process that combines different tasks which, in turn, can be performed by either machines or different types of workers. Automation is represented as an increase in the productivity of capital in tasks previously assigned to labor. As capital becomes more productive for a given task, workers are displaced, and their wages can fall as they must compete for the smaller set of non-automated jobs. The model predicts displaced workers may see declines in real wages, a feature absent from existing frameworks focusing on diverging productivity or capital-skill complementary.

Turning to empirical analysis, the authors use the American Community Survey to stratify the US population across race, gender, education, age, and native vs. foreign born, generating 500 demographic groups which could be differentially affected by automation. Using a model-generated measure of task displacement derived from BEA industry data, the authors find a 25% increase in task displacement for white American men aged 26-35 with no high-school degree is associated with a 40% decline in relative wages. Overall, the authors' measure of displacement accounts for 67% of the variation in wages between 1980 and 2016. Adjusting for skill based technological change, industry concentration, and import exposure from China do not change these estimates.

Finally, the authors put forth a general equilibrium framework whereby changes from automation can affect other industries, enabling the authors to differentiate "direct" displacement and displacement due to spillovers from re-allocation of capital and workers. A calibrated form of the model shows direct and spillover effects from automation often counteract one another, and underscores how productivity improvements in capital can still lead to real wage declines for large swaths of the workforce.

Evaluating the Distributive Effects of a Micro-Credit Intervention

Pushkar Maitra, Sandip Mitra, Dilip Mookherjee

& Sujata Visaria

IED WORKING PAPER 368

Researchers are increasingly looking beyond the average effects of an intervention. Rather, they seek to evaluate welfare effects at large, including the way that benefits are distributed among members of the relevant community or the distributive effects of an intervention.

Heterogeneity analysis and quantile regressions are the two most common approaches traditionally used for this purpose, however neither approach can fully account for distributional concerns. Heterogeneity analysis reveals which populations benefited most from the intervention, but provides no guidance on the relative welfare importance of different effects. Quantile treatment effects show how the distribution of an outcome was affected by a policy, but is based on restrictive assumptions and does not permit comprehensive welfare assessment incorporating both efficiency and distributive impacts. In this project the authors introduce a new approach for the welfare evaluation of interventions and use it to evaluate the distributional impacts of a microcredit intervention conducted in India.

Influenced by a classic literature in welfare economics pioneered by Anthony Atkinson, the authors estimate impacts of a policy intervention on a welfare metric for a population which aggregates across different groups. A higher welfare weight is assigned to the impact on income of members who are initially poorer. A single parameter of "inequality aversion" determines the progressivity of this evaluation, i.e., how steeply these welfare weights vary with initial income.

The authors first make the point that the impact of a randomized policy intervention on welfare corresponding to any specific "inequality aversion" can be estimated without making any additional assumptions over and above those

required to estimate average impact. Researchers can explore whether and to what extent the estimated welfare impacts are sensitive to distributional weights.

The authors demonstrate how this approach can be applied in practice by contrasting the welfare effects of three policy regimes for enrolling villagers in a microcredit program. In the first, local traders choose who gets access to loans, in the second, an agent appointed by the government chooses who receives loan access, and in the third, the community is incentivized to form savings groups among themselves. They find that for all values of inequality aversion considered, the welfare effects of the trader-based scheme stochastically dominate those of the government and group-based schemes.

The approach has two advantages. First, it is simple to implement, understand, and does not require strong assumptions for a clear-cut interpretation: if the assumptions are met for an average treatment effect analysis, they are met for this approach. Second and in contrast to commonly used approaches that generate a vector of heterogeneous treatment effects for different beneficiary groups, or at quantiles of the outcome distribution, this method provides a single summary quantitative measure of the welfare. It explicitly builds in a consideration of the distributional effects, but does not estimate the effects at different points of the outcome distribution or for different sub-groups. Importantly, the aggregate welfare impact accounts for both the efficiency and equity impacts of the intervention, for any chosen level of inequality aversion.

The Tale of Two Asian Tigers: Comparing Development in Selected Provinces of China and India since 1980

Dilip Mookherjee

IED WORKING PAPER 369

In this essay, the author compares the development paths of India and China over the past 40 years, focusing particularly on the contrast between the Indian state of West Bengal and three Chinese provinces, Anhui, Hunan, and Jiangxi, all selected due to similarity in population, cropping patterns, and per capita income in the late 1970s. The paper elaborates how agricultural production, urbanization, and governance contributed to diverging (and shared) fortunes.

The author begins the analysis in 1977, the year Left parties consolidated control in West Bengal and just before Deng Xiaoping took the reins of the CCP. West Bengal was 50% poorer than comparison Chinese provinces, and in the next 40 years all regions grew at similar rates, approximately 6% per year on average, accelerating after 2005. Inequality declined in West Bengal but increased in China.

Some of this growth can be attributed to improved agricultural performance. Starting in 1978-79 both regions embarked on ambitious programs of land reform and agricultural development. In China, this meant allowing farmers to benefit from their own production, while reforms in West Bengal focused on land redistribution and state-sponsored investments in seeds and irrigation. Both regions saw improvements in agricultural productivity. While West Bengal's increase in productivity was likely due to increased

use of fertilizer and irrigation, China's gains stemmed from successful R&D of hybrid rice varieties. Crucially, the Chinese government successfully distributed new rice varieties to farmers, while take up of Indian programs were unsuccessful.

Urbanization presents the most striking difference between West Bengal and the comparison provinces. In the selected Chinese province, the share of the urban population rose from 10% to 50% since 1970, compared to a modest increase from 25% to 31% in West Bengal. In China, urbanization was accompanied by dramatic increases in factory employment and, importantly, increasing wages for factory workers, both of which stagnated in West Bengal.

The author details how urban growth in both regions is often the result of forced dispossession from ex-urban farmers. In China, forced dispossession of ex-urban land was more systematic and generated substantial revenues for city governments. In West Bengal, by contrast, unfair dispossession was the result of highly imprecise land valuations by local governments, and was significantly curbed after electoral turnover from politically mobilized farmers. In China, popular unrest from evicted farmers has not led to similar changes, contributing to the divergence in urbanization trajectories between the two countries.

The author also draws attention to the role of differences in urban governance. Chinese cities are significantly more organized and effective than those in West Bengal.. Weakness in Indian urban governance can largely be explained by low autonomy: 73% of city revenues in WB come from federal grants, while tax collection infrastructure is weak. But not only are Chinese cities better funded (often through forced land dispossession), urban government officials face strong performance incentives from the central government in a way that has no parallel in India. Poor governance in Indian cities therefore seems to be a major source of slow structural transformation in the region.

Superstition and Risk-taking: Evidence from “Zodiac Year” Beliefs in China

Raymond Fisman, Wei Huang, Bo Ning, Yue Pan,

Jiaping Qiu, & Yongxiang Wang

IED WORKING PAPER 370

Superstitions are present in every culture, and a growing body of work describes the ways beliefs and practices affect individual behavior. The authors move beyond analysis of personal decisions and show superstitions also affect the behavior of large and sophisticated businesses. Ex-ante, one might expect the discipline of the market to temper changes in business strategy stemming from irrational beliefs. Yet, turning to China, the authors show businesses reduce R&D, acquisitions, and experience lower stock volatility in years where their chairman's birth year aligns with the Zodiac calendar.

In China, if an individual is born in, for example, the year of the dog on the Zodiac calendar, every “dog year”, occurring on a 12 year interval, is said to bring bad luck. This “zodiac year” superstition is still taken seriously in China, even among individuals with “modern” beliefs. Consequently, the authors anticipate lower risk-taking behavior for individuals every 12th, 24th, 36th year etc.

Before analyzing firms, the authors first validate that risk preferences are affected by the Zodiac year among ordinary citizens. Using a nationally representative survey on household finances, the authors show matching with the Zodiac year leads to a 4.7% higher rate of self-reported risk aversion.

To study businesses, the authors compile data on the decisions and performance of all firms listed on the Shenzhen Stock exchange between the years 2007 and 2019. Data includes information on the chairmen of firms, most importantly their birth years. They measure risk-taking behavior in three ways: volatility of abnormal daily returns, R&D expenditure, and firms' engagement in mergers and acquisitions.

Even when accounting for firm-level controls and flexible measurements of age, the authors show chairmen of Chinese firms are significantly more risk averse in their Zodiac years. Idiosyncratic volatility is reduced by 5 percent. Similarly, expenditure on R&D is reduced by 5.3%, while acquisitions are reduced 11%. As a placebo exercise, the authors show these effects do not appear when considering state-owned firms, where chairmen have far less influence over business decisions. Non-standard beliefs can influence important decisions even in relatively large and sophisticated organizations.

What Motivates Non-Democratic leadership: Evidence from Covid-19 Reopenings in China

Raymond Fisman, Cong Sun, Yongxiang Wang, & Daxuan Zhao

IED WORKING PAPER 371

Non-democratic governments, by definition, face no immediate imperative to respond to popular will. Nonetheless, social scientists have long noted the ways elites in non-democracies cater to citizen preferences, often to minimize dissent and ensure order. The authors use the Covid-19 epidemic in China, and local governments' reactions to it, to illustrate this dynamic. After February 2020, local bureaucrats had broad authority to open up after Covid lockdowns when they saw fit, but also a mandate from the central government to keep case counts low.

Despite their apparent mandate to control Covid, the authors show social unrest was a large driver in the date local bureaucrats chose to re-open their cities.

To accomplish this, the authors create a measure of social unrest across cities in China by scraping Baidu, a Google-like search engine, for terms such as "strike," "unemployment," and "protest." To measure re-openings, the authors scrape local newspaper announcements for the word "re-open". The authors show cities which experienced a high level of dissent in the past week were significantly more likely to re-open: a doubling of discontent leads to a three percent increase in reopening announcements.

These results provide evidence that authoritarian governments are still attendant to citizen concerns, even if such concerns may be at odds with highly prioritized goals. In the future, the authors will explore whether pressure to

re-open after Covid was "bottom-up," local officials responding to their citizen's concerns in defiance of higher-level ministers, or "top-down," in which local ministers would punish city-level bureaucrats whose cities cultivate malcontent.

Gender and Bureaucratic Corruption: Evidence from Two Countries

Francesco Decarolis, Raymond Fisman, Paulo Pinotti, Silvia Vannutelli, & Yongxiang Wang

IED WORKING PAPER 372

A small literature has shown female government officials are less corrupt than their male counterparts. However existing results rely on cross-country regressions, which cannot account for country-level attributes, survey evidence, which may be plagued by social desirability bias, and quasi-experimental evidence which may not be externally valid and in practice relies on small sample sizes.

The authors buttress the thesis that women officials are less corrupt than male ones by leveraging large data sources from two disparate contexts, Italy and China. In Italy, the authors obtain detailed administrative records on public procurement, while in China, the authors match web-scraped information on mid-level bureaucrats with official reports on corruption investigations. The use of large "real world" data in this study ameliorates concerns of external validity, while the authors' reliance on within-country variation enables them to better pinpoint differences between gender. Additionally, as the authors measure corruption through actual enforcement by Italian and Chinese authorities, they eliminate biases stemming from survey-based metrics.

In Italy, the authors focus on unelected procurement officials across the country between the years 2000 and 2016. In raw differences, male procurement officials are twice as likely to be investigated by the Italian police than female ones. After controlling for regional effects and demographic controls this effect persists, with women shown 22% less likely to be investigated than men. The authors argue this difference is not caused by differences in contract procedures. Men and women handle similar rates of auctions, which are thought to be more vulnerable to corruption. Interestingly, the "gender gap" in corruption is larger in the richer north of Italy.

In China, the authors examine mayors and prefecture-level secretaries between the years 1979 and 2014, with special attention on bureaucrats affected by Xi Jinping's post-2013 corruption crackdown. As in Italy, male bureaucrats are twice as likely to be investigated for corruption than female ones. After adjusting for covariates, women are a striking 81% less likely to be investigated than men.

The authors' analysis is observational, and thus they cannot rule out the possibility omitted factors drive their results. To address this concern, the authors leverage an econometric procedure which articulates the plausibility of this omitted variable bias. In both Italy and China, unobserved factors would need to be extraordinarily predictive to overturn the observed gender effects.

Finally, to better understand differences in behavior across gender which drive lower rates of investigation, the authors analyze a 2020 survey conducted on 500 Italian procurement officials. Faced with hypothetical case studies, women report greater rates of “defensive” decisions, while simultaneously are less likely to insure against the risk of administrative damages. Together, these results show differences in corruption investigations may be in part driven by differences in compliance with formal protocols and a less risky attitude in general.

Corruption and Firm Growth: Evidence From Around the World

Raymond Fisman, Sergei Guriev, Carolin Ioramashvili & Alexander Plekhanov

IED WORKING PAPER 373

There is extensive empirical research documenting how corruption reduces economic growth. Yet though it is easy to understand why firms in corrupt countries would grow more slowly than firms in countries with strong rule-of-law, when we zoom in and focus on firms within a single economy, the relationship is not so clear. A growing firm may be able to “grease the wheels” of local bureaucrats to succeed, bribe-paying firms grow faster. Conversely, firms which pay bribes may do so because they are targeted for punishment by officials, or concentrated in industries with weak rule of law. In this instance, firms which pay bribes may grow slower than other firms in the same country that do not.

There are few studies focusing on the within-nation firm-level relationship between bribe-paying and growth, and research focuses only on a single country or region at a time. The authors emphasize the need for comprehensive documentation of the within-country relationship between corruption and growth to motivate new, realistic, theories and frameworks.

Towards this end, the authors construct a novel cross country firm-level dataset an order of magnitude larger than existing data applied to these questions. By combining enterprise surveys of 141 countries conducted between 2006 and 2020, the authors catalog the bribe amounts paid (in reality, perceived amounts paid by firms “similar” to respondent businesses) for 88,000 firms, a sample size large enough for substantial within-nation analysis.

By running a linear regression with a litany of year and sub-region fixed effects, in addition to firm-level covariates, the authors demonstrate three new facts. First, firms which pay bribes grow faster than those which do not. Second, conditional on paying a bribe, firms paying higher bribes grow more slowly than others which pay lower, but still non-zero, bribe amounts. Third, the extensive margin effect, bribe-abstainers growing slower than bribers, is driven only by high-corruption countries.

To contextualize these facts, the authors present a parsimonious theoretical model of a game between a corrupt bureaucrat and a firm with a new growth opportunity. Bureaucrats can stop the firm’s expansion unless they pay a small fee, while the firm can choose to pay the fee or report the bureaucrat to higher ups for misconduct. In high corruption countries, this report goes unheeded, but in low

corruption countries, the bureaucrat is punished. The authors’ framework account for the countervailing extensive and intensive margin effects of bribes on growth. It also explains the weakened extensive margin effect in low corruption countries. The model presents a promising foundation for future sub-national research on corruption and economic development.

Supply-Side Innovations to Increase Equitable Access to Digital Financial Services: Experimental Evidence from Mozambique

Mahesh Karra, Mindy Hernandez, Catherine Bernnan & Margaret McConnell

IED WORKING PAPER 374

Mobile money, and digital financial services more broadly, have been shown to improve the lives of the poor and especially the lives of poor women, for whom mobile money allows greater control over household finances and can improve financial literacy. Despite greater benefits for women, a gender gap in mobile money usage persists. In low- and middle-income countries, women are 13% less likely to own a cell phone and 37% less likely to have access to mobile internet. In north-eastern Mozambique, the setting of this study, this problem is particularly acute. On the dominant mobile money platform, M-Pesa, men comprise 70% of users.

To reduce this disparity, the authors zero-in on two policies both focused on the “supply” of mobile money – sales representatives from the cell phone company who sells SIM cards and sign individuals up for M-Pesa.

In Mozambique, 90% of mobile money representatives are men. So, as the first intervention, the authors hired 12 sales representatives and organized representatives into 4 teams of 3 representatives each. Teams were organized by gender, where 50% of teams were comprised entirely of women sales representatives, as female representatives might be more willing and able to attract women customers. In the second intervention, the authors gave all representatives a monetary incentive to sign up more women clients, running a lottery every 3 weeks in which representatives who attracted the most women (rural women especially) to M-Pesa were more likely to receive a monetary award.

The authors randomized which of 10 markets a team of representatives was assigned to on a given day, meaning markets received random exposure to the “gender” treatment. The “incentive” treatment began mid-way through the study period.

Over a 22-week period, the teams of representatives registered 6,564 new clients for a SIM card and 3,465 new clients for both a SIM card and M-Pesa. Male representatives attracted 4.5 more customers per day on net than female representatives. Conditional on selling a SIM card, however, female representatives were 7.4% more likely to convert clients to M-Pesa. As a result, net M-Pesa conversions were the same by gender. The teams of women representatives were not more likely to attract women clients than the teams of male representatives.

More dramatically, introducing the lottery incentive tripled the number of SIM-card and M-Pesa conversions of female and rural clients. Together the two results show gender parity alone may not increase the rate of female mobile money adoption, while changing direct incentives of the “supply” of mobile money is a low-cost way to increase mobile money access of poor women.

Family Planning and Children’s Human Capital: Experimental Evidence from Urban Malawi

Daniel Maggio, Mahesh Karra, & David Canning

IED WORKING PAPER 375

Approximately 74 million unwanted pregnancies occur in the developing world each year. Coupled with the rate of unwanted pregnancies is the global prevalence of child under-nutrition, which has been linked to lower educational attainment and higher poverty rates as children grow up.

Conventional economic theory predicts contraceptive usage can reduce both unwanted pregnancies and under-nutrition. Directly, by preventing pregnancy through family planning tools, women can spread scarce resources across a smaller number of children. More subtly, by reducing uncertainty about when they will next become pregnant, women can allocate resources to their children today instead of saving for a potential new child tomorrow.

Unfortunately, modern contraceptives are costly and inaccessible for many poor mothers, significantly reducing their usage. In this work, the authors implement a randomized controlled trial of a comprehensive family planning intervention consisting of postpartum family planning counseling, free transport to a clinic, and financial reimbursement for family planning methods. 2,100 women were enrolled in the trial, of which half were pregnant at time of enrollment and the rest were already raising young children.

Motivated by economic theory, the authors focus on already born children and children conceived before the start of the intervention, rather than those born after the treatment began, with the hypothesis that the children of treatment mothers will have better outcomes, broadly defined, than the children of control mothers. This hypothesis is born out in the data: the children of treated mothers have .23 standard deviations higher height after 1 year, corresponding to 6 percentage points lower rates of stunting. After two years, children of treated mothers had .1 standard deviations higher cognitive development, as measured by a well accepted psychological exam.

To better understand the role family planning services played in the observed improvement in children’s outcomes, the authors use mediation analysis to test whether results stemmed from increased healthcare usage or increased birth spacing. The authors find increased healthcare usage explains 20-25% of the treatment effect on children’s heights. Birth spacing, by contrast, cannot explain the observed effects. While the mediation analysis is informative, it cannot disaggregate health care usage for the mother, child, or ways the intervention led to increased comfort with formal health care at large.

Overall, the authors show, consistent with economic theory, that family planning services are effective at improving the well-being of already-conceived children. While these spillover effects are often not incorporated into cost-benefit analyses of family planning interventions, the authors argue for wider consideration of the positive effects of such programs.

User-Centered Counseling in Contraceptive Decision-Making: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Urban Malawi

Mahesh Karra & Kexin Zhang

IED WORKING PAPER 376

In most health care settings, positive patient outcomes are easy to identify. Family planning presents an exception to this rule: in contraceptive choice and fertility decisions, women and couples attempt to fulfill a complex set of preferences about their current well-being and goals for the future. While in conventional health settings the health provider takes a leading role in determining which treatment is best for a patient, in family planning, patient choice is paramount.

Despite wide agreement on the importance of user-centered family planning, effective family planning counseling remains elusive. It is difficult to elicit a patients’ true preferences, unbiased by cultural norms or the opinions of the counselor. Additionally, a patient’s preferences may change in the future. To counter this, counseling must be comprehensive and forward looking, running the risk of cognitive overload. There is limited systematic research into the effectiveness of counseling strategies which avoid these pitfalls, and at current costs existing strategies will not scale.

To fill the need of effective user-centered counseling, the authors design an experiment which compares two counseling strategies. First, motivated by behavior economics’ findings on cognitive overload, the authors compare a strategy presenting the full menu of family planning options with a strategy presenting a tailored subset of choices, determined through a brief elicitation exercise. Second, the authors assess the importance of male involvement in family planning. Women are encouraged to invite their husbands to the counseling session in the hopes that, with a husband at the session, women’s family planning decisions at the counseling appointment align better with actual ability to enact those decisions at home. The session provides a platform for the couple to discuss their fertility and method preferences, while also teaching the husband about family planning at large.

The authors test the cross of both interventions, yielding 4 treatment arms. They conduct their experiment in urban Malawi, where despite high use of contraceptives, women are frequently unsatisfied with current methods, indicating existing family planning strategies are not meeting women’s preferences. In addition to counseling, the authors provided all women with transportation to a health clinic and financial reimbursement for any family planning services used.

In the end, neither approach gives strictly preferred outcomes for women. Women in the tailored menu group are more likely to change their family planning preferences, but their

actual contraceptive use is less likely to align with their ideal strategy. By contrast, the joint counseling intervention leads to more stable preferences over time and less discordance between actual and ideal use, but this could be due to internalization of their husband's preferences. As with all family planning, determining whether this program succeeded relies on a complicated understanding of women's preferences and goals.

Women's Political Representation and Intimate Partner Violence

S. Anukriti, Bilge Erten & Priya Mukherjee

IED WORKING PAPER 377

Roughly 35 percent of ever-partnered women in South Asia report experiencing physical or sexual abuse by their partners. Globally, the cost of intimate partner violence (IPV) is estimated to exceed the combined costs of civil wars, terrorism, and homicides. Understanding the dynamics and causes of this violence is crucial for policy intervention to reduce its harms.

To better understand intimate partner violence, the authors investigate the relationship between female political representation and IPV. As rates of women's political representation rise, there is reason to be optimistic this could lead to a reduction in IPV, either through a change in norms or a strengthening of women's bargaining power through improved education or employment opportunities for women. Alternatively, women's political representation may trigger backlash as men face a loss of status.

The authors use a regression discontinuity design on Indian district election to test the relative strength of these countervailing forces on IPV. To construct the independent variable of women's political representation, the authors leverage close elections between a man and a woman such that the gender of the winner is plausibly exogenous to factors related to IPV. As a dependent variable, the authors incorporate a nationwide survey which asks women about incidence of intimate partner violence, but also probes for attitudes on IPV and assesses employment outcomes. The authors show the "backlash" effect dominates: women living in constituencies which had one more female representative due to a close election saw .07 standard deviations more IPV, driven exclusively by IPV reported in rural areas.

The authors next test which mechanisms drove the increase in IPV. They find women's political representation did not change attitudes towards intimate partner violence or affect employment opportunities of women. However, women's political representation did drive improvements in access to family planning services for the same rural women population which reported increased IPV. Beyond simply increased access, this same population also saw increases in modern contraceptive use and birth spacing. Using a subgroup analysis, the authors show the increase in intimate partner violence is concentrated among rural women who disagree with their partners about the ideal number of sons in their family. The authors argue this evidence suggests a causal chain whereby women's political representation leads to increased access and use of contraceptives against the wishes of their husbands, who commit violence against their

wives in retaliation. Pushes to increase women's political representation may need to be accompanied by policies addressing these unintended consequences.

Syrian Refugee Inflows, Health Care Access, and Childhood Vaccination in Turkey

Bilge Erten, Pinar Keskin, Miray Omurtak & Ilhan

Can Ozen

IED WORKING PAPER 378

Since its inception in 2011, the Syrian civil war has caused 3.7 million Syrian refugees to settle in Turkey. While this sum presents an astounding flow of migrants, Turkey currently hosts the largest refugee population in the world, Syrians in Turkey represent only a small portion of global refugee flows. In 2020 26.4 million people fled from one country to another as a result of armed conflict. This paper studies the effect of Syrian refugees in Turkey on the prevalence of infectious diseases in the country, and its lessons have global implications.

The arrival location of Syrian refugees in Turkey is determined by economic and cultural factors, making it difficult to measure the effects of refugee inflows. To overcome this, the authors implement an instrumental variable analysis, using the population-weighted travel time from Syrian regions to each of Turkey's 81 provinces as a proxy for that province's refugee population. To measure disease prevalence, the authors incorporate child-level data from repeated Turkish health surveys spanning 2003 to 2018. In addition to health outcomes, the authors also observe vaccination completion of children as well as a host of demographic information on their families.

The authors find provinces with high shares of refugees also experience higher rates of infectious diseases: A one standard deviation increase in a province's refugee share results in a 4.5 percentage point increase in a child's probability of having an infectious disease. Convincingly, the authors do not observe impacts for non-infectious diseases, such as cancer or diabetes, nor do they observe impacts in placebo analyses using pre-war infectious diseases as an outcome.

The authors argue high rates of infectious diseases occur because the supply of health care is stretched thin in provinces with many Syrian refugees. First, they show children in provinces with high rates of migrants are also less likely to be fully vaccinated, with a one standard deviation increase in refugee share leading to a 7% decline in the number of full vaccinations. The authors show this is not due to any economic consequences of Syrian immigration. The amount of time mothers spend with their children is unchanged, as are their levels of wealth.

Second, the authors argue that despite increased health expenditure in areas with Syrian inflows, these expenditures did not keep up with population growth. As a result, provinces with many Syrian migrants saw a decline in doctors, midwives, and nurses per capita. This lack of investment may be driving both reduced vaccination rates as well as lack of care for infectious diseases, allowing their spread. Overall, the authors' findings emphasize the need for greater public

health spending and infrastructure investment in response to refugee inflows.

Anticipation and Consumption

Neil Thakral & Linh T. Tô

IED WORKING PAPER 379

Cash transfer payments are an increasingly popular tool for policymakers in both rich and poor countries. They are used for short term objectives such as boosting consumer spending, as well as long term objectives such as poverty alleviation. As governments increasingly rely on direct transfers, economists must pay increasing attention to the finer details in their implementation, and consider: what is the most effective amount to transfer, and how should the transfer be timed?

The authors explore a previously unexamined feature of cash transfers: the time between the announcement of the transfer and its disbursement. When a consumer learns about an upcoming direct transfer, the quicker it arrives to their account, the more likely they are to spend, rather than save the funds transferred. The authors analyze three separate cash transfer policies to demonstrate this: direct payments from the US Economic Stimulus Act of 2008, and two cash transfer experiments in Kenya and Malawi.

In the US, the authors examine the spending data of 29,000 households who received direct deposits averaging \$1,000. Due to implementation constraints, in 2008 the US government effectively randomized the timing of payments, enabling the authors to compare those who received their transfers earlier versus later after the announcement, by up to three weeks. Contrary to conventional behavioral economics theories, those who received their payment first spent \$50 more of their transfer than those who had to wait an extra two weeks to receive the payment.

The authors found the same effect in Kenya, where economists randomized the timing of \$350 cash grant payments but did not analyze differential propensities to consume caused by this timing. Those who received their cash transfer further from its announcement were more likely to save it. In Malawi economists randomized whether recipients received a \$176 payment immediately or after 8 days. Those who were required to wait longer saved more than those who received the payment immediately, just as had happened in Kenya.

Having shown that the “excess anticipation dependence” effect is qualitatively large and exists around the world, the authors next argue that existing behavioral frameworks describing consumption’s response to windfalls cannot explain their results. Importantly, to describe the observed anticipation behavior, existing models require anticipatory changes in consumption patterns before the cash transfer, which are not found in the data.

The authors develop a new model of mental accounting which not only explains their new anticipation effect, but also ties existing behavioral responses to direct transfers found in other contexts. By parameterizing their model to US data, the authors provide a framework for policymakers. The time passed between the announcement of a cash transfer

and the transfer itself is a crucial lever to determining cash transfer policy. A \$346 payment today is equivalent to a \$757 payment in one week. The correct policy choice is dependent on the goal of the transfer. When the goal is to increase consumer spending, the cash transfer should be immediate and unexpected. When the goal is for people to save money and build wealth, the cash transfer should be announced in advance, before it’s disbursement.

Understanding how spending responses vary with time to anticipate receiving a windfall can also inform the design of other public policies that involve payments anticipated over different time horizons. This includes policies such as universal basic income, automatic stabilizers, tax refunds, social security, and unemployment insurance, among many others that would have important welfare implications.

Political Organizations and Political Scope

Ajay Shenoy & Laura V. Zimmerman

IED WORKING PAPER 380

Vertical integration is a key way by which firms increase profits. Samsung, for instance, may purchase a computer chip company to optimize how chips interact with the rest of its user-facing cell phones. In this paper, the authors apply the same logic to politics in India. The authors present a case study on how the dominant party in West Bengal, the AITC, allocates welfare payments at the local level to maximize overall support.

The authors focus on West Bengal due to its unique local governance structure. Local officials in charge of administering anti-poverty programs are elected in a Westminster-like system, and as a consequence, all politicians are formally aligned with a political party. This idiosyncrasy allows the authors to observe party behavior directly. In the rest of India the same dynamics undoubtedly exist but are invisible to researchers. In this way, the authors can distinguish between a party’s full control of a jurisdiction and mere coalitional control, which, in turn, allows them to distinguish their vertical integration framework from existing models of clientelism and political favoritism.

To conceptualize vertical integration, the authors develop a simple model in which a state-level official allocates welfare funds to local jurisdictions so as to maximize welfare as well as their own political future. The local-level official, in turn, assigns welfare funds to individuals in their jurisdiction with the same welfare-re-election trade off.

When the state-level and local-level politicians are of the same party, electorally motivated distribution of welfare payments by local officials also improves the electoral odds of the state politician. To take advantage of this alignment, the state-level politician allocates more funds to same-party local jurisdictions in a way that may deviate from the allocation which helps citizens the most. Moreover, like firms, the state party will also attempt to “acquire” new local jurisdictions currently held by the opposition in order to expand the scope of this cooperation.

The authors show this dynamic plays out in West Bengal between the years 2014 and 2016 by examining close elections in a regression discontinuity design. In this way, the

authors compare local jurisdictions where the AITC wins an outright majority, and thus can allocate funds strategically as in their model, with local jurisdictions where the AITC narrowly fails to obtain a majority. The “funds” which officials dole out are NREGA jobs, NREGA being a workfare program and the largest anti-poverty initiative in India. In accordance with their model, local governments which align with the AITC receive more NREGA job allotments.

A household in an AITC locality receives 11% more NREGA job days than a household in a near-identical locality not AITC controlled. Party alignment also causes an electoral boost for the AITC: places wholly controlled by the AITC are 2 percentage points more likely to vote for the AITC candidate in the national parliamentary elections, a difference far larger than what can be accounted for by vote shares in the highly close elections studied.

The authors document NREGA disbursements to citizens

are not the only way vertical integration causes electoral gains. NREGA payments, which can be mapped to specific recipients, are given strategically to individual politicians to reward behavior, and vertical integration lets state-level AITC officials turn a blind eye to this corruption. Politicians are rewarded when they switch parties to the AITC, as well as when they effectively mobilize votes in favor of the party. A local politician gets paid an extra 1 day of labor for every additional 6.6 percentage points in support for the national AITC candidate.

NREGA is an effective anti-poverty tool, but its discretionary distribution, which was designed to prevent corruption as politicians counterbalance one another, does not always lead to a welfare maximizing allocation of funds. The strategies employed by the AITC in West Bengal take advantage of political alignment in a sophisticated way, circumventing these checks and blunting NREGA's positive impact.

FACULTY PROFILES

Andrew Newman is currently engaged in several research agendas pertaining to organizational economics, industrial organization, institutions, inequality, and the economics of the household. Recent work involves a unifying organizational- and industrial-economics theory of endogenous market structure. Other work develops testable theories of how firms' internal organization decisions such as outsourcing or vertical integration interact with markets and how those decisions in turn affect product market performance, particularly in the face of globalization. He has been contributing to the economic theory of matching markets and applying that to affirmative action policies. He is also exploring how the processes by which people learn about their economic environment can lead to organizational dysfunction and change.

Christophe Chamley's research is on social learning, coordination of expectations and markets in macroeconomics, and in the history of states' finances from 5000 BC to the 19th century.

Daniele Paserman specializes in labor, applied microeconomics, political economy and behavioral economics.

David Lagakos conducts research in the fields of macroeconomics and development economics, focusing on the determinants of sectoral productivity levels, human capital accumulation, structural transformation, and cross-country differences in labor market outcomes, among other topics. His research has appeared in the *American Economic Review*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* and other prominent academic journals. He currently serves as an editor of the *Review of Economic Dynamics* and a co-editor of the *Journal of Development Economics*. Since 2016 he has worked as the lead academic for the International Growth Centre in Ghana, helping to foster policy-relevant academic research on economic growth. Lagakos is a research affiliate at the NBER and is a co-organizer of the annual NBER conferences on Economic Growth and Macroeconomics Across Time and Space.

Dilip Mookherjee (IED Director) works on a combination of theoretical and empirical topics related to development economics. Current empirical projects focus on various Asian countries, addressing topics such as political clientelism and delivery of welfare programs, middlemen and marketing supply chains, and the role of local community networks in financial intermediation and entrepreneurship. His theoretical interests include effects of automation on income distribution, and control of collusion in hierarchies. He is a member/fellow/affiliate of BREAD, CEPR, EDI and the NBER Development groups, and Lead Academic of the IGC India Program.

Ivan Fernandez-Val specializes in theoretical and applied econometrics. He has recently been working on nonlinear panel data and distributional methods with applications to labor and development economics. He has recently been working on applications of machine learning to estimate heterogeneous treatment effects in development policy experiments.

James Feigenbaum is an economic historian and labour economist whose research explores the roots of economic inequality and intergenerational mobility. Recent projects include studies of the negative effects of the Great Depression on economic mobility, the short- and long-run effects of wartime capital destruction during the US Civil War, and estimating the effect of lead exposure and violent crime in the early 20th century.

Jianjun Miao continues to work on three lines of research. The first concerns macroeconomic implications of financial frictions, specifically business cycle and growth implications of bubbles and credit constraints. The second involves new models of ambiguity sensitive preferences and applications to macroeconomics and finance. The third line studies theory and applications of decision making under rational inattention.

Kevin Lang's research concerns education and labor markets, with a particular focus on discrimination. While his work is primarily centered on the United States, he is currently involved in projects in Singapore on the market for illegal money-lending and on incentives in the retail illegal drug market.

Laurence Kotlikoff specializes in fiscal policy, macroeconomics, money and banking, computational economics, climate economics, inequality, automation, healthcare, and personal finance. The author or co-author of 20 books (the most recent is *Money Magic*) and hundreds of journal articles, Kotlikoff is also a prolific columnist and a #1 NY Times Best Seller author. His columns have appeared in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg, Forbes, PBS.org, VOX, Seeking Alpha, and many of the other top media outlets in the U.S. and abroad. His recent work has focused on carbon taxation, lifetime spending inequality and lifetime fiscal progressivity, work disincentives and labor supply, marriage taxation, Upside Investing, the causes of the Great Recession, the future of global economic power, computing large-scale life-cycle models with aggregate shocks, and modeling the economic impact of artificial intelligence.

Linh Tô works on topics in labor, public, and behavioral economics. Her work combines methods ranging from quasi-experimental to structural and experimental to analyze preferences of workers, employers, and consumers, and their consequences for public policy. She is also interested in the economics of gender.

Mahesh Karra is Assistant Professor of Global Development Policy at the Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies and Associate Director of the Human Capital Initiative at the Global Development Policy Center. His academic and research interests are broadly in development economics, health economics, quantitative methods, and applied demography. His research utilizes experimental and non-experimental methods to investigate the relationships between population, health, and economic development in low and middle-income countries.

Marianne Baxter's research is in the fields of macroeconomics and international economics. In research related to her prior work on macroeconomic consequences of home production, she has been engaged in a large-scale econometric analysis of household expenditures and household time use as they pertain to home production. She is also working with a data set using IKEA catalogs from many countries and up to twenty years to study the determinants of departures from the law of one price.

Martin Fiszbein works in the fields of economic growth, development, history, and urban economics. His research examines the determinants and the effects of structural change, technology adoption, skill acquisition, and cultural formation. To address open questions in the fields of growth and development, his projects often leverage rich subnational data, new empirical strategies, and a long-run historical perspective.

Natalia Ramondo is a trade economist whose research is focused broadly on issues of globalization, particularly with respect to the role of multinational firms. She belongs to a new wave of economists using quantitative models and detailed datasets to understand the welfare gains (and losses) from various forms of economic openness.

Pankaj Tandon concentrates on technological change, microeconomics, public enterprises, and food policy. He has worked on evaluating privately financed infrastructure projects and privatization programs. His main field experience has been in Egypt, India, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Pascual Restrepo's research interests span labor and macroeconomics. His current research examines the impact of technology, and in particular of automation, on labor markets, employment, wages, inequality, the distribution of income, and growth. Recent empirical projects include a study of the impact of industrial robots on US labor markets, a study of how the decline of routine jobs interacted with the great recession, and a study on how ageing and shortages of labor induce firms to automate their production process. His theoretical work centers on developing micro-founded models of technology choice to think about the short and long-run implications of different technologies and whether the resulting growth process is balanced.

Rachel Brulé is an Assistant Professor of Global Development Policy at Boston University's Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies, Graduate Faculty with BU's Department of Political Science, and a Core Faculty at the Global Development Policy Center. Her research expertise is in comparative politics focusing on gender, South Asia, the political economy of development, political representation, and institutions. Her research combines careful causal identification with innovative theory building to understand the conditions under which policies intended to improve equality may deepen inequality, as well as when, how, and why crises may mobilize long-term support for improving equality.

Randall Ellis' research focuses on how health care payment systems affect consumers, health care providers, and health plans. He is actively using billions of health insurance claims to develop clinically rich predictive models that can be used to pay health plans and reward high quality. He is currently completing work on a grant from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality entitled "Advanced Risk Adjusters and Predictive Formulas for IDC-10 Based Risk Adjustment". He is also working on health care innovation, COVID-19, feasible strategies for universal health insurance, and children with medical complexity. He is currently collaborating with researchers in the US, Netherlands, France, and Australia.

Raymond Fisman works in two main areas of political economy - corruption, and the causes and consequences of inequality. His recent work on the consequences of social ties in Indian banking was recently published in the *American Economic Review*, and his research on social ties and favoritism in Chinese science in the *Journal of Political Economy*. His book on corruption, with political scientist Miriam Golden, was published in April 2017, and his forthcoming book on insurance markets, *Risky Business* (with Liran Einav and Amy Finkelstein), is coming out in February 2023.

Robert A. Margo's recent publications include "Industrialization and Urbanization in Nineteenth Century America," (with J. Atack and P. Rhode), *Regional Science and Urban Economics* (May 2022), and "Mechanization Takes Command? Powered Machinery and Production Times in Late Nineteenth Century American Manufacturing," (with J. Atack and P. Rhode), *Journal of Economic History* (September 2022).

Robert King focuses his research on monetary policy and macroeconomics. Particular areas of current interest are the nature of price dynamics, the influence of reputation and credibility on optimal monetary policy, and the history of banking markets.

Robert Lucas has recently completed two books. *Crossing the Divide: Rural to Urban Migration in Developing Countries* was published by Oxford University Press in December 2021. This volume includes critiques and summaries of the existing literature on migration between the rural and urban sectors of developing countries and presents fresh analyses of micro data from 75 countries on various aspects of these migrations, contradicting the conventional wisdom in some cases, supporting it in others, but also addressing several topics not previously examined. Portions of this book were presented in Abu Dhabi and the UK in the spring of 2020 before the pandemic curtailed further international presentations. *Migration and Development: The Role for Development Aid* was published in 2019 by the Swedish Ministry of Justice and presented in Stockholm. This report critically examines aid policies in the context of global, cross-border migrations and refugee flows, with recommendations on the future role of aid in fulfilling the objectives of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Lucas has now gone on to examine the connections between short-term migration, food security, and child health in seven countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Stefania Garetto is a trade economist whose work is centered around the study of foreign direct investment and the activities of multinational corporations, both from a real and from a financial perspective. Stefania's current research combines empirical analysis and structural dynamic modeling to understand the creation of multinational firms via mergers and acquisitions, and their expansion in space over time. She is a research associate of NBER, a research fellow of CEPR, and a coeditor of the *European Economic Review*.

Tarek A. Hassan's research focuses on international finance, macro-finance, and social factors in economic growth. Some of his recent papers study the effects of uncertainty on firm behavior and on the allocation of capital across countries. Another set of papers studies the effect of social structure on economic growth and the effect of historical migration and ethnic diversity on foreign direct investment.

Yuhei Miyauchi's primary research interest is to understand how socio-economic activity is shaped within cities and across regions. Yuhei tackles these questions using a combination of theory and new sources of granular data, such as cell phone, smartphone transaction data and firm-level transaction data.

Professors Emeriti: Peter Doeringer, Shane Hunt, and Gustav F. Papanek.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

Manuel Abdala Award and IED Summer Fieldwork Grant Recipients

The Abdala program was created in 2019 to fund research fieldwork of graduate students.

These grants are made possible by a generous gift from alumnus Manuel Abdala. These are supplemented by fieldwork grants awarded by IED. Fieldwork is broadly defined to include conduct of surveys, interviewing, collecting archival/historical data, or performing laboratory experiments, along with associated activities necessary to carry out a research project.

The 2022 grants provided funding to four PhD students: Selene Cueva Madrid, Yunus Kurt, Laura Aquino, and Peter Deffebach.



Selene Cueva Madrid

Selene Cueva Madrid work is set in Chile & Peru, and is titled:

'Understanding the gender bargaining gap in Latin America'

Summary:

In my research I estimate if there is a gender gap in the bargaining process of an un-centralized informal service market in two Latin American countries: the plumber's market in Chile and Peru. I implement a field randomized trial where the bargaining process occurs via online texting through WhatsApp. The gender gap is evaluated in the initial offer, but also in the result of the bargaining process and the required times to change a result. If there is a gender gap in bargaining, I will capture its direction and quantify the gap. Additionally, I will explore the causes of the gap using different bargaining strategies and follow-up questions to the plumbers.



Yunus Kurt

Abdala award winner Yunus Kurt spent two months this summer in Malawi doing research for his joint paper which is titled: *‘Exploring Medium-Term Impacts of User-Centered Counseling in Contraceptive Decision-Making: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Urban Malawi’*

Summary:

In this Malawi-based Randomized Controlled Trial with a sample of 782 women, I am working with Kexin Zhang, and Professor Mahesh Karra. We study how a woman-centered counseling tailored to stated preferences impact family planning decisions. We further explore the effect of male involvement at the time of counseling. This summer, we launched the third wave of data collection through follow-up surveys in Lilongwe-Malawi which is going to help us understand longer term effects of targeted counseling and male involvement on women’s family planning decisions.



Laura Aquino

Abadala award winner Laura Aquino spent two months this summer in Malawi doing research. Her paper is titled: *‘An evaluation of the relative efficacy and effectiveness of written and verbal contracts: Lessons from a field experiment in urban Malawi’*

Summary:

Designing and enforcing the optimal contract is a complex task, particularly in settings where formal contracts are not the norm. In this study, we conduct a field experiment within the printing industry in Malawi, in which we test the relative effects of introducing and enforcing a written contract on outcomes related to compliance, levels of effort exerted by contracted agents, and service quality. The study is conducted among a sample of 160 print shops, kiosks, and firms in Lilongwe, Malawi. We particularly are interested in testing the extent to which introducing certain imposing conditions (e.g. tight completion deadlines, strict printing specifications, penalties, etc.) along with a formal contract impact firm performance.



Peter Deffebach

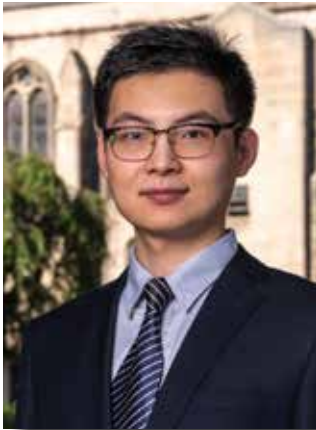
Peter Deffebach spent the month of April in Ghana conducting field work. His paper is titled: *‘The Origins of Distorted Beliefs about Job Prospects in Ghana’*

Summary:

This project measures job-seekers’ beliefs about their prospects in the labor market, expansively defined. I attempt to measure how job seekers form beliefs about their prospects, which existing studies have taken as given. I am accomplishing this with a household survey of 450 job-seekers in Accra, Ghana. My survey will paint a clear picture of how individuals search for jobs in Ghana, measuring both formal search methods as well as the the depth and breadth of their social networks used in job search. To get a complete picture of the labor market, I am supplementing my survey of job-seekers with a smaller interview with hiring managers at 150 firms. By studying the search frictions faced by firms and job-seekers separately, I hope to develop new policy interventions to reduce under-employment in Accra.

Rosenstein-Rodan Prize 2022

The Rosenstein-Rodan prize is awarded annually for the best paper(s) in a development-related area written by a PhD student. This year we had a large number of high-quality submissions. The 2022 Rosenstein-Rodan Prize was awarded to Kewei Zhang, with runner-up Masyhur Hilmy.



Kewei Zhang

Kewei Zhang's paper is titled: *'Finding Credit at the Bottom of the Pyramid: Chinese State Lending and Corporate Investment in Impoverished Areas'*

Abstract

I study how firms' participation in development programs influences credit allocation by state banks, focusing on China's Targeted Poverty Alleviation (TPA) scheme. To identify the causal effect of firms' participation, I develop an IV strategy based on the share of a firm's senior managers born in poor counties. I find that TPA participation improves firms' credit access and reduces borrowing costs. Firms use new loans to finance production, leading to higher sales and profits. I argue that these results are best explained by favor exchange between governments and firms, in which firms help governments achieve political goals and earn rents in return. Productive firms are more likely to participate in TPA, so state banks' preferential treatment for TPA firms improves the quality of credit allocation. My findings provide evidence of a novel positive effect of favor exchange between governments and private firms, realized through higher, potentially welfare-improving investment.



Masyhur Hilmy

Masyhur Hilmy's paper is titled: *'Migrant Remittances and Public Goods: Evidence from Indonesia'*

Abstract

Remittances, money sent by overseas migrants, hold great potential to spur development in their area of origin. However, whether remittances result in local development remains an open question. I investigate the impact of remittances on public goods in Indonesian districts. I exploit variation in the share of migrants from each district, their destination countries, and shifts in the currency exchange rate of the Indonesian rupiah over time to obtain a plausibly exogenous proxy of remittances to migrant-sending regions. Using data of overseas Indonesian workers, I found that a typical 2% appreciation of the host country's currency against the rupiah results in the migrants sending US\$36 more per transfer. At the district level, exposure to positive shocks of remittances improved the delivery of key public goods: public schools, safe water, and asphalt roads. These improvements likely operate through two channels: local governments economizing the construction of education facilities and crowd-in of community contributions for infrastructure.

MA RESEARCH FELLOWS

The IED recently established the Summer MA-Research Fellowships program that awards a \$3,500 prize to three students and a \$1000 stipend to their respective faculty mentors. The 2022 MA Research Fellowship awardees are: Gabriel Rourke, Atibhi Sharma and Jonas Tzabi.



Jonas Tzabi

Jonas Tzabi, mentored by Professor Daniele Paserman. His work is titled:

‘US-Emigration and Brain Gain in Central America’

My research investigates the effect of the “brain gain” in select Central American countries for which substantial immigrant populations exist in the United States. An analysis will be conducted to determine whether labor participation in select industries for specific immigrant groups from Central America (Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and El Salvador – “GHNE”) results in the growth of those same industries in the country of origin. The proximity of GHNE to the United States and the history of immigration policies has resulted in a dynamic where many immigrants retain strong ties to their country of origin and can travel back and forth freely. This relationship invites the question of whether immigrants to the United States are leveraging their skills and knowledge to develop business and grow industry in their countries of origin.



Atibhi Sharma (right)

Atibhi Sharma, mentored by Professor Bahar Erbas, is working on

‘Building an Accessible Urban Space for Sustainable, Just and Inclusive Development: Experience from Mumbai, India’

While India passed a new law in 2016 to promote effective participation of people with disabilities, little has been done in terms of achieving this objective. Lack of incentives, improper coordination between ministries and poor implementation have been widespread. My research aims to identify key issues, current trends and social welfare aspects of accessibility and mobility conditions in governance of urban transport systems in Mumbai. Using successful examples of improvement in accessibility in Ankara (Turkey), cities of Africa, South Africa, Indonesia, Spain, United Kingdom, I analyze the social benefit of the potential improvements to formulate a set of policy recommendations for decision makers in charge of urban development and transport provision in urban areas of Mumbai.



Gabriel Rourke

Gabriel Rourke, mentored by Professor Daniele Paserman, his work is titled:

‘J-1 Visas Restrictions and the Labor Market Impact of Immigration’

A longstanding question in the economic literature is: what effect does immigration have on the wages and employment of native workers? This is not only an actively debated question of research, but one that has important implications for national policy. I attempt to add to previous research by analyzing an exogenous shock to seasonal immigration created by visa restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic. The J-1 Summer Work Travel visa, a particularly affected program who saw participation decreased from 108,301 workers in 2019 to only 4,952 workers in 2020, provides a unique opportunity to estimate the labor market impact of immigration in a ‘quasi-experimental setting’ as some communities who historically relied on a high J-1 workforce faced a sudden labor shock while others did not. Utilizing a difference-in-differences estimation with a synthetic control group, I analyze the change in labor market outcomes in such affected communities. This analysis contributes to further understanding whether temporary low-skilled immigrants actually suppress the wages and employment levels of native workers and assessing the magnitude of any potential effect.

STUDENT PLACEMENT

We are proud to announce the placements of our latest graduating PhD cohort. Thirty-three PhD students, working on topics across many fields of economics, have successfully concluded their job searches. They are excited at the prospect of starting their new jobs. Our newly minted PhD graduates will join the ranks of 15 universities and colleges in North America, Europe, and Asia, three central banks, three government agencies and nine private sector firms.

Yiming	Cao	Stanford University (Postdoctoral Fellow), and the University of Hong Kong (Assistant Professor)
Shuowen	Chen	Bates White (Economist)
Yiwen	Chen	Facebook (Data Scientist)
Enrico	De Magistris	Cornerstone Research (Associate)
Mengqi	Deng	Indiana University, (Visiting Assistant Professor)
Vittoria	Dicandia	Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Program on Economic Inclusion (Economist)
Chen	Gao	Amazon (Economist)
Pablo	Guzman-Pinto	Amazon (Economist)
Laurie	Hakes	Analysis Group (Associate)
Alex	Hoagland	University of Toronto, Institute of Health Policy, Management and Evaluation (Assistant Professor)
Elias	Ilin	Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta (Assistant Policy Adviser and Economist)
Md. Deen	Islam	University of Dhaka, Bangladesh (Assistant Professor)
Sung-Yup	Jung	Analysis Group (Associate)
Enjar	Lkhagvajav	Moody's Analytics (Assistant Director - Research)
Max	McDevitt	The Fontana Group (Economist)
Ian	Meeker	Federal Trade Commission (Economist)
Thomas	Pearson	Syracuse University, Department of Economics (Assistant Professor)
Stefano	Pica	Bank of Italy (Research Fellow)
Alden	Porter	Department Of Justice, Antitrust Division (Economist)
Anlong	Qin	ZheJiang Gongshang University (Assistant Professor)
Hanna	Schwank	Bonn University (Assistant Professor)
Martin	Shu	The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shenzhen, China (Assistant Professor)
Joe	Simmons	U.S. Security and Exchange Commission, Division of Economic and Risk Analysis (Financial Economist)
Dongling	Su	Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, China (Assistant Professor)
Jingye	Wang	Renmin University of China, School of Finance, China (Assistant Professor)
Meng	Wu	Xiamen University, China, (Assistant Professor)
Fangning	Yan	Keystone Strategy (Economist)
Guangzhi	Ye	Sun Yat-sen University, China (Assistant Professor)
Victor Yifan	Ye	Opendoor Technologies (Research Scientist)
Yoshifumi	Yokota	Hokkaido University, Japan (Assistant Professor)
Kewei	Zhang	Renmin University of China (Assistant Professor)
Kexin	Zhang	Renmin University of China, School of Agricultural Economics and Rural Development (Assistant Professor)

Annual Distinguished Alumni Reception and Dinner

The Institute for Economic Development in conjunction with the Economics Department continued the annual award to honor a distinguished alumnus. The Department Chair and the IED Director, along with a few senior faculty established this award to recognize the remarkable accomplishments of our alumni and to inspire and motivate current students in the department. The 2022 Distinguished Alumni Award was awarded to Lisa Emsbo-Mattingly, MA '96 Alumnus.



Marc Rysman and Distinguished Alumni Awardee, Lisa Emsbo-Mattingly



Chair of the Economics Department, Marc Rysman introduces Lisa Emsbo-Mattingly as the Distinguished Alumni Awardee and Economics commencement speaker with a champagne toast before dinner.

Lisa Emsbo-Mattingly received a Master of Arts in Economics from Boston University in 1996, after taking courses in econometrics, industrial organization, and labor. Catching the early wave of opportunity in finance, she began her career at DRI/McGraw-Hill (now IHS Global Insight) and worked at the Eastern Research Group before joining Fidelity Investment as an economic analyst in the international forecasting division. At Fidelity, she was promoted to become Director of Economics Research and then advanced again to become Director of Research, Global Asset Allocation. In this role she leads the development of asset allocation and macro investment recommendations for Fidelity's portfolio managers and investment groups. Doing this well entails constructing models and conducting fundamental economic research, and effectively communicating the results. Lisa was very generous with her time and prior to the dinner met with a selected group ten of Master's students for a round table discussion. We were thrilled to be able to resume the Annual Distinguished Alumni Reception and Dinner after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic. This year's reception and dinner resumed in person on May 20th, 2022, providing numerous alumni, students and friends and opportunity for a convivial evening at the BU Castle as part of Commencement weekend.



Master's and PhD students enjoying the reception

ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

IED works in close partnership with the MA Alumni Council and newly formed PhD Alumni Council to foster a cohesive relationship between the department, current students, and alumni. Through the organization of academic and social events, the IED aims to provide collaborative experiences to our vast network of alumni.

MA ALUMNI COUNCIL

After a 2 year hiatus imposed by the pandemic this past academic year saw the MA alumni council slowly resume its activities supporting our MA Students, largely virtually. They participated online in MA Orientations in both Fall 2021 and Spring 2022, and the Virtual Visit Days for admitted students in May 2022. They also conducted mock interviews for students on the job market, and kept up the vibrant MA alumni and placement networks via the social media platforms they host. We continue to be most grateful for their ongoing contributions.

The Master's Alumni Council members for the past year were Kelly Colden (BA/MA 2014, Global Account Finance Advisor, Assistant Director – Ernst & Young), Prithvi Hingorani (BA/MA 2015, Research Associate – Cornerstone Research), Caroline Margiotta (BA/MA 2017, Health Analyst – Mathematica Policy Research) and Jessica Nicholson (MA 2003, with the US Dept of Commerce).

PHD ALUMNI COUNCIL

The PhD Council works in collaboration with IED and the GEA to plan networking and career development events throughout the academic year. During 2021-22 the PhD Alumni Council held a virtual panel event and offered ongoing support for job market candidates. They look forward to hosting more events this year, including events of interest to students earlier in the program and finding more ways to productively engage our global network of alumni from the PhD program.

The PhD Alumni Council members were Chair Paul Karner '12 (Horizon Data Science), Jesse Bruhn '19 (Brown University), Emily Rose Gee '15, Jee-Yeon Kim Lehmann '12 (Analysis Group), Dara Lee Luca '11 (Amazon), Aditi Mehta '08 (DOJ-ATR), and Silvia Prina '08 (Northeastern University).

STAFF NEWS



Jay and Kimberly in front of the Economics Building

Jay Aung joined the IED team in September of 2021 as the IED Coordinator. Prior to coming to work for BU Jay worked for the United Nations as a program coordinator. As IED Coordinator Jay's role is to assist with planning and coordination of travel arrangements, lectures and all IED activities. Kimberly Huskins joined the IED team as Manager of Administration in April 2022. Kelly Benkert left her role as IED Manager of Administration in November of 2021 for a different position within Boston University, so she is still in touch with many fellow staff members. Prior to joining the Economics department Kimberly worked at BU as a supervisor of the asymptomatic student testing site at 808 Commonwealth Avenue. In her current role she is responsible for the Distinguished Visitor program, the IED budgets and all of the Economic Department's special events. Jay and Kimberly are located on the 5th floor and are really enjoying their new roles.

IED RESEARCH VISITORS 2022

This past year IED welcomed three long-term visitors: Bilge Erten, Ajay Shenoy and Yingyue Quan



Bilge Erten

Bilge Erten is an Associate Professor of Economics and International Affairs and a Faculty Scholar at the Institute for Health Equity and Social Justice Research at Northeastern University.

She was a Visiting Scholar at the Institute of Economic Development from September 2021-June 2022. Her research interests lie in development economics, with a focus on gender, health and education. Most of her recent work explores the causes and consequences of domestic violence and mental health conditions in developing countries. Recent projects focus on how COVID-19 lockdowns affect the risk of mental distress among older adults in Turkey, and how lockdowns across states in the U.S. influence the reporting of domestic violence to the police. Bilge is an Associate Editor at Feminist Economics, and Research Fellow at the Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA). Her work has been featured in the Financial Times, the Huffington Post, the Bloomberg View, the NPR Marketplace, and the Western Producer. Prior to joining Northeastern faculty, she was a postdoctoral research scholar of the Committee on Global Thought at Columbia University. She received her PhD in Economics from the University of Massachusetts Amherst.



Ajay Shenoy

Ajay Shenoy is an Associate Professor of Economics at University of California, Santa Cruz.

His research interests include development, growth, and political economy. Ajay was a Visiting Scholar at the Institute for Economic Development from September 2021- December 2021. He presented his paper titled "The Workforce of Clientelism: The Case of Local Officials in Party Machine" at the IED Seminar on September 13th, 2021. His presentation can be found here: https://people.ucsc.edu/~azshenoy/files/wb_permalink.pdf



Yingyue Quan

Yingyue Quan is a PhD student from National School of Development, Peking University. She is visiting from January through December 2022. Her research focuses on the spatial pattern and organizational form of manufacturing firms in countries' early stage of development. Her previous research topic was the resilience of industrial clusters amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Currently she is working on how China's accession to the WTO impacted the spatial distribution and organizational form of garment manufacturers in the Pearl River Delta.

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

The following distinguished visitors spent a few days in the Economics department each, giving a seminar and two lectures in their field of expertise for the benefit of our graduate students and faculty:

Ilyana Kuziemko from Princeton University visited from Nov 1-4, 2021 (Empirical Micro)

Federico Echenique from California Institute of Technology visited remotely Nov 16-18, 2021 (Theory)

Ginger Jin from the University of Maryland visited March 22-24, 2022 (Industrial Organization)

Amit Khandelwal from Columbia University visited March 28-April 1, 2022 (Development)

Stefanie Stantcheva from Harvard University visited remotely April 26-28, 2022 (Macro)

Bryan Graham from the University of California, Berkeley visited May 2-5, 2022 (Econometrics)

SEMINARS

IED organizes a weekly seminar during the academic year where visiting speakers present their research. The following is the list of seminars for the 2021-2022 year:

FALL 2021

10/18/2021	Paul Rhode	Slave Productivity in Cotton Picking
10/25/2021	Ernesto Dal Bo	From Rivals to Partners: The Alignment of Capital and State Coercion in the Rise of Modern Economic Growth
11/1/2021	Tavneet Suri	Effects of Universal Basic Income in Kenya
11/8/2021	Diego Restuccia	Land Security and Mobility Frictions
11/15/2021	Daniela Scur	Measuring and explaining management in schools: New approaches using public data
12/6/2021	Natalia Ramondo	Firm Embedded Productivity and Cross-country Income Differences
12/13/2021	Marc Rysman	Branch Location Strategies and Financial Service Access in Thai Banking

SPRING 2022

2/28/2022	Chris Blattman (Chicago)	Gang rule: Understanding and countering criminal governance
3/14/2022	Nilesh Fernando (Notre Dame)	Regulation by Reputation? Intermediaries, Labor Abuses, and International Migration
3/21/2022	Brian Dillon (Cornell)	How Important is the Yellow Pages? Experimental Evidence from Tanzania
3/28/2022	Amit Khandelwal (Columbia)	Language Barriers in Multinationals and Knowledge Transfers
4/4/2022	Rick Hornbeck (Chicago)	Identifying Agglomeration Shadows: Long-run Evidence from Ancient Ports
4/11/2022	Michela Giorcelli (UCLA)	Social Contract at the Front: The Determinants of Civilian Killings in WWII Italy
4/20/2022	Gerard Roland (UC Berkeley)	Hobbesian Wars and Separation of Powers
4/25/2022	Alessandra Voena (Stanford)	Maternal Mortality Risk and Spousal Differences in the Demand for Children

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