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DOCTORAL STUDIES

Ph.D. Economics, Deakin University, Expected: April 2024
Dissertation: Essays on Conflict, Education, and Women's Empowerment

RESEARCH FIELDS

Primary: Development Economics, Economics of Education and Health Economics
Secondary: Gender Economics, Program Evaluation and Applied Spatial Econometrics

REFERENCES

Jinhu Li
Research School of Population Health
Australian National University
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Aydogan Ulker
Department of Economics
Deakin University
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Ha Vu
Department of Economics
Deakin University
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Prasad Bhattacharya
Department of Economics
Deakin University
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PRIOR EDUCATION

M.Sc. Economics, The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, 2019

B.A. Economics, Makerere University, 2009

OTHER TRAINING

2022 "Geospatial Tools for Development: Data and Inference" Summer School, Barcelona School of Economics.

"Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Evaluation" Summer School, Barcelona School of Economics.

2016 "Quantitative Finance" The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

2016 "Management of Biological Resources" The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

RESEARCH

Job Market Paper

“Universal Secondary Education, Schooling and Women’s Empowerment: Evidence from Uganda” (joint with Jinhu Li) (Revise and Resubmit, **Journal of Development Economics**)

With aid agencies’ support, Sub-Saharan African governments have prioritized improving access to post-primary education after the widespread adoption of free primary education. In this paper, we investigate the long-term impact of the 2007 Universal Secondary Education (USE) program in Uganda on women’s educational achievements and empowerment. The USE program is a government-led secondary education expansion program that abolished fees and increased school capacity at the community level. We exploit both birth cohort variation and regional variations in the exposure to the program and employ a difference-in-differences model to identify the causal effects of the policy. The results show that the program enhanced women’s educational attainment and improved women’s empowerment, particularly in the domain of human and social assets. We also examine the potential mechanisms and find that the improvements can be attributed to better labour market outcomes and increased exposure to mass media. These findings establish the potential for governments in SSA to leverage secondary education investments in generating sustained improvement in women’s empowerment.

Working Papers

“Violent Conflicts and Educational Outcomes: The LRA Insurgency in Northern Uganda Revisited” (Under Review)

In this paper, I revisit the Lord’s Resistance Army insurgency in northern Uganda and examine its consequences on the educational outcomes of individuals exposed to the conflict. I employ an identification strategy that exploits variations in conflict intensity across birth cohorts and geographic locations using a Difference-in-Differences (DiD) model. I find that individuals exposed to the conflict experience a decline in completed years of schooling and literacy. There are differential effects between gender and place of residence, but not between duration of exposure. Additionally, I examine the possible supply and demand transmission mechanisms explaining the main result. Evidence shows that conflict-induced degradation of school infrastructures, increases in school size, and the teacher-student ratio due to displacement, as well as the reduction in household education expenditure due to direct exposure to violent events, exacerbate educational outcomes. These key mechanisms are vital in formulating effective policy interventions that address the critical supply and demand barriers to education and improve access to education during and in the post-conflict period.

Works in Progress

“Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence in Uganda: The Role of Education”

“Impact of Agricultural Shocks on Human Capital Development in Ethiopia” (joint with Jinhu Li)

“State Capacity and the Provision of Public Goods: Evidence from District Splitting in Uganda”

“Early Life Economic Shocks and Child Health Outcomes: Evidence from Kenya”

PRESENTATIONS

2023 “Australian Health Economics Society Conference.” The Australian Health Economics Society. Adelaide, South Australia. Sept 21–22.

“The Africa Meeting of the Econometric Society.” The Econometric Society. African Economic Research Consortium. Nairobi, Kenya. Jun 1–3.

“Western Economic Association International (WEAI) International Conference.” University of Melbourne, Melbourne, Australia. Apr 12–15.

- 2022 “Australian Gender Economics Workshop.” Curtin University. Perth, Australia. Feb 9–10.
- 2022 “The Australasian AID Conference.” Development Policy Centre, Australian National University. Canberra, Australia. Nov 28–30.
- 2022 “Australian Development Economics Workshop.” The University of Sydney. Sydney, Australia. Jun 9–10.
- 2012 “8th International Conference on Environment, Cultural, Economics and Social Sustainability.” On Sustainability Research Network. University of British Columbia. BC, Canada. Jan 10–12.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

Research

- 2023 Deakin University
Research Assistant for Xueli Tang, Department of Economics, Deakin Business School
- 2022-2023 The Australian National University
Research Assistant for Jinhua Li, Department of Health Economics Wellbeing and Society, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health
- 2022 Deakin University
Research Assistant for Jeffrey Rotman, Department of Marketing, Deakin Business School
- 2021 Deakin University
Research Assistant for Chris Doucouliagos, Faculty of Business and Law

Teaching

- 2024 Macroeconomic Theory, Monash University, Australia (*Teaching Associate*)
- 2024 The Global Economy–Intermediate Macroeconomics, Deakin University, Australia (*Teaching Associate*)
- 2023 Macroeconomic Theory, Monash University, Australia (*Teaching Associate*)
- 2023 Labour and Health Economic, Deakin University, Australia (*Teaching Associate*)

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Grants and Scholarships

- 2020 PhD Scholarship, Australian Research Council
- 2022 Travel Grant, DevPol (Australia)
- 2022 Travel grant, 17th ADEW - University of Sydney

AFFILIATIONS

- 2023– Households in Conflict Network

LANGUAGES

Languages: English (fluent), Luganda (native)

SOFTWARE & TOOLS

Stata, R, ArcGIS, QGIS, LATEX, MS Office

NON-ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

- 2024–24 Consultant, AFRCE, World Bank, Washington, D.C, USA
- 2019–20 Research Analyst, RE Equity Partners AB, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2013–16 Country Coordinator, African Network for Policy, Research & Advocacy for Sustainability, Port Louis, Mauritius
- 2012–12 Compliance & Risk, Centenary Bank, Kampala, Uganda
- 2011–11 Logistics Officer, Seashore International Limited, Nairobi, Kenya

Updated February 2024