

**CSWEP Sessions at the Southern Economic Association Meetings, San Antonio, TX,
November 21-23, 2009**

Women in the Labor Market: Choices and Outcomes

Session Chair: M. Melinda Pitts (Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta)

Discussants: Jill Janocha (American University), Sarah Hamersma (University of Florida), Phani Wunnava (Middlebury College)

Screening for Commitment: The Effect of Maternity Leave Use on Wages

Colleen Manchester (University of Minnesota), Lisa Leslie (University of Minnesota), and Tae-Youn Park (University of Minnesota)

Using a screening model, two conditions are identified that differentiate screening from human capital depreciation in explaining the impact of taking maternity leave on wages: If firm use the policy as screening, the wage penalty from usage will increase with monitoring costs and with the quality of the screening technology. Screening is confirmed using the NLSY79.

Career Interrupted: Job Interruptions and Their Effects on the Gender-wage Gap

Jill Kearns (University of Kentucky)

The analysis shows that the types of job interruptions that men and women take do not explain wage differences between men and women, which is consistent with the basic human capital model where only the length of interruption matters in its effect on wages.

Gender Pay Gap in the U.S. over 1980-2005

Kusum Mundra (Rutgers University)

Using PSID it is determined that women on average earned wages 17% lower than men's and earned 6% more in the nineties than in the eighties. We also find that women earn 2 – 4% less than men with similar levels of intermittent labor supply, and that the wage gap, as well as the intermittent wage penalty, is higher at the upper end of the wage distribution.

Issues in Health and Education

Presiding: Susan L. Averett (Lafayette College)

Discussants: Jeffrey DeSimone (University of Texas at Arlington), Gary Fournier (Florida State University), Joe Sabia (American University), Angela Fertig (University of Georgia)

The Effect of Mental Illness on Household Spending Behavior

Arati Dahal (University of Georgia) and Angela Fertig (University of Georgia)

Noting that mental illness may increase a person's discount rate, thus can affect the marginal utility of consumption, this analysis makes use of the PSID to find empirical evidence that the marginal utility of consumption falls as health deteriorates, particularly for single women over age 50.

Does Sorry Work? Apologies in Medical Malpractice: The Impact of 'Apology' Laws
Benjamin Ho (Cornell University) and Elaine Liu (University of Houston)

Using data from the National Practitioner Databank (NPDB), and a differences in differences framework, the authors find that apologies (protected by law as inadmissible as evidence of liability in court) speed up resolution time, reduce the size of payments by up to 20% for the most severe injuries, and reduce the number of claims for insignificant injuries by 17-18%

Is there Gender Bias in Participation in Early Childhood Education Programs in Developing Countries?

Sharmistha Self (Missouri State University) and Richard Grabowski (Southern Illinois University)

Using data from India in 1997 and 1998, the analysis finds that a mother's education positively influences the probability of a child under the age of six attending pre-school, and that among poor households, there appears to be a consistent bias in favor of males attending early childhood education programs.

A Menagerie of Topics and Why

Presiding: Kathryn H. Anderson (Vanderbilt University)

Discussants: Serena H. Huang (University of Kansas), Anita Alves Pena (Colorado State University), Aniruddha Bagchi (Kennesaw State University), Jenny Minier (University of Kentucky)

Women's Work in the AER Papers & Proceedings

With the objective of understanding factors that facilitate and impede women's ability to participate fully in the production of economic knowledge, this paper analyzed women's patterns of contributions to the AER Papers and Proceedings from 1911 to the present. They found that the contributions from women are clustered in labor, health, education, and welfare; they remain underrepresented in fields like macroeconomics, international finance and trade, and cross-cutting theory.

The Role of Immigrants' Legal Status in Homeownership

Catalina Amuedo-Dorantes (San Diego State University) and Kusum Mundra (Rutgers University)

The analysis found that the probability of homeownership is 41 percentage-points higher for legal immigrants in Spain than for undocumented immigrants, and immigrants who adjusted their legal status enjoyed a 56 percentage-points higher likelihood of purchasing a home while in the host country than their counterparts who did not. Legal status was found to be an important determinant of home ownership.

Competition and Cost Pass-through in Differentiated Oligopolies

Paul R. Zimmerman (U.S. Federal Trade Commission) and Julie A. Carlson (U.S. Federal Trade Commission)

This analysis examined how the level of competition, in the presence of product differentiation, affects the extent to which firms pass through changes in their marginal cost to price. In the case of Cournot competition, the rate of pass-through initially decreases and then increases in the number of firms beyond some critical value. In the case of Bertrand competition, the rate of pass-through is always decreasing in the number of firms.

Modelling Conflict in the Empirical Macroeconomic Framework: a Sensitivity Analysis
Daria Sevastianova (University of Southern Illinois) and Solomon Polachek (State University of New York at Binghamton)

The authors found that wars (high-intensity conflict) are more damaging to economic growth than non-violent disputes (low-intensity conflict) which are found to slightly increase growth in high-income and OECD economies. International war brings the largest decline in annual growth (6-7%) in low-income and African countries, while civil war is more damaging to middle-income and democratic countries.