Kensuke Maeba (Last updated: 12/07/2022, Click here for the latest version)

Northwestern
Economics

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Citizenship: Japanese

Research Fields

Primary: Development Economics

Secondary: Industrial Organization, Economics of Education

Education

Ph.D., Economics, Northwestern University, 2023 (Expected)
   Dissertation: Essays on education policies in developing countries
   Committee: Seema Jayachandran (Co-Chair), Lori Beaman (Co-Chair), Christopher Udry, Vivek Bhattacharya

M.A., Economics, Northwestern University, 2018

M.A., Economics, The University of Tokyo, 2017

B.A., Economics, Keio University, 2015

Fellowships, Grants, & Awards

2022-2023: TGS Conference Travel Grant

2022-2023: Graduate Dissertation Fellowship

2021-2022: Distinguished Teaching Assistant Award

2017-2020: WCAS External Fellowship

2017-2020: Japan Student Service Organization (JASSO) Student Exchange Support Program (Graduate Scholarship for Degree Seeking Students)

Teaching Experience

Teaching Assistant, Northwestern University
   2022 Winter: Introduction to Microeconomics (Prof. Scott Ogawa)
   2021 Fall: Microeconomics (Prof. Scott Ogawa)
   2021 Winter: Introduction to Microeconomics (Prof. Sara Hernández-Saborit)
   2020 Fall: Introduction to Applied Econometrics (Prof. Daley Kutzman)

Teaching Assistant, The University of Tokyo
   2017 S1: Case Study (Poverty and Development I) (Prof. Yoshito Takasaki)
   2016 S2: Development Economics: Microeconomic Approach (Prof. Yoshito Takasaki)

Research Experience

Research Assistant, Northwestern University
   2021 Spring: Prof. Frank Limbrock

Research Assistant, The University of Tokyo
   2017-2018: Prof. Malek Mohammad Abdul
   2016-2017: Prof. Hiroyuki Nakata
   2016-2017: Prof. Hideo Owan
   2016-2017: Prof. Yasuyuki Sawada

Conferences

2022: Development Day

2017: GRIPS-UTokyo Empirical Workshop, International Association for Applied Econometrics Conferences

Job Market Paper   "Extrapolation of Treatment Effect Estimates Across Contexts and Policies: An Application to Cash Transfer Experiments"

Predicting the effects of a new policy often relies on existing evidence of the same policy in other contexts. However, when those contexts are not comparable, one might want to make predictions based on similar policies in one's own context. This paper compares the performance of these approaches in the case of conditional cash transfers (CCTs). Using cash transfer programs in Malawi and Morocco, I predict the average treatment effects of Moroccan CCTs on school enrollment rates based on either Malawi CCTs or Moroccan labeled cash transfers (LCTs). I show that predictions based on the Moroccan LCTs (across policies) are more accurate than the Malawi CCTs (across contexts). To shed light on what causes the difference, I estimate a dynamic model of schooling decisions under each of these interventions separately and compare the estimated parameters across the interventions. I find that the perceived returns to schooling relative to outside options explain the differential predictions. I suggest that the perceived relative returns to schooling are heterogeneous across the contexts due to outside options so that it is difficult to predict schooling decisions across the contexts.

Working Papers   "Is Workfare a Good Anti-Poverty Policy? An Assessment Based on Household Welfare, School Enrollment, and Program Expenditures"

A workfare program is a common anti-poverty policy in developing countries, which hires the unemployed for public construction work. While other anti-poverty policies such as cash transfer programs select participants based on a proxy-mean test, participants self-select into a workfare program, which could improve the efficiency of the program and participants' welfare by reducing inclusion and exclusion errors. On the other hand, a workfare program induces school dropout among the participants' children, which would potentially increase poverty rates in the future. This paper evaluates a large workfare program in India against hypothetical cash transfer programs by quantifying these aspects. Our empirical results show that under the equivalent program expenditures, the workfare program increases household welfare and enrollment rates less than the cash transfer programs. We further show that to achieve the levels of household welfare under the cash transfer programs, the workfare program needs to yield unreasonably high rates of social returns, suggesting that the cash transfer programs are preferred in terms of our evaluation metrics.

Work in Progress   "How the Political Power of Teacher Unions Affects Education" (joint with Eduardo Campillo Betancourt)

This project studies the clientelism between corporatist teacher unions and their members, and this relationship's impact on education outcomes. Focusing on the biggest teacher union in Mexico around the 2006 presidential election, we compare schools in municipalities before and after the election, and use cross-sectional variation in the degree of the union's support for the winning party. Our difference-in-differences estimates show an increase in the number of public school teachers both incorporated into and promoted within a pay-for-performance program, a known patronage tool that the union uses to reward teachers for their grass-roots political campaigns. We also show evidence of lower test scores on national standardized exams among public schools in more affected municipalities after the election, consistent with the fact that only public school teachers were eligible for the program. These results present evidence of the deleterious consequences of large, politically-motivated unions in the Mexican context.

"Net Influences from Polling Officers"

In developing countries, election officers can influence voting outcomes, which deteriorates the value of democracy. However, little is known about to what extent they change voting outcomes. This paper proposes a way to quantify such an influence using voting outcomes in the 2019 India's national parliamentary election and administrative data on polling station officers. I construct a discrete choice model of voting, where a voter chooses a candidate based on his characteristics, including the influence of polling officers as an unobserved trait. The identification of the influence exploits a random assignment of the officers to polling stations. I argue that conditional on voters' and candidates' characteristics, the residual variation in vote shares at the polling station level captures the influence of the polling officers. I show the robustness of this measure by controlling for a local political

environment and granular location fixed effects.

Other Papers   "Birth Order Effect Under a Cash Transfer Program", Available at SSRN, July 2019, pre-Ph.D. thesis

Professional Services   2020: A committee member & a discussant for EMCON
2019: A committee member for Empirics and Methods in Economics Conference (EMCON)

Languages   English (fluent), Japanese (native)

References

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