

Roberto MOSQUERA

CURRENT POSITION: Assistant Professor, Department of Economics | Universidad de las Americas
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EDUCATION

- 2015-2019 Ph.D in Economics, **Texas A&M University**
Committee chairs: Dr. Steve Puller and Dr. Jason Lindo
- 2006-2008 M.S. in Economics, **Texas A&M University**
Committee chair: Dr. Li Gan
- 1998-2004 B.S. in Economics **Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Ecuador**, Ecuador
Class valedictorian

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Applied Microeconomics, Labor, Health, Public Economics, Transportation, Credit Markets, Development

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

- “The economic effects of Facebook” (with Mofioluwasademi Odunowo, Trent McNamara, Xiongfei Guo, and Ragan Petrie), *Experimental Economics* (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10683-019-09625-y>
- “Contingent valuation of road traffic noise: A case study in the urban area of Quito, Ecuador” (with Luis Bravo-Moncayo, José Lucio Naranjo and Ignacio Pavón García). *Case Studies on Transport Policy*, No. 5 (2017):722–730.
- “Neural based contingent valuation of road traffic noise” (with Luis Bravo-Moncayo, José Lucio Naranjo and Ignacio Pavón García). *Transportation Research Part D*, No. 50 (2017):26-39.

WORKING PAPERS

“Stuck in Traffic: Measuring Congestion Externalities with Negative Supply Shocks”

Traffic is an increasingly complex issue around the world. The fact that most cities do not charge Pigovian taxes on road usage or use other congestion pricing schemes implies that these congestion costs are higher than their socially optimal levels. This paper shows how changing the number of vehicles on the streets of New York City, affects traffic congestion and the substitution patterns to other transportation modes and quantifies the associated welfare changes. I exploit an exogenous reduction in for-hire vehicle supply during the two major Islamic holidays. Supply is affected because 57.5 percent of taxi drivers and 33.1 percent of other for-hire drivers come from countries with large Muslim populations while demand is unaltered since the Muslim population

only represents 3 percent of the total population in the city. The estimates indicate that during Muslim holidays the number of active taxis decreases by 1,000 (9.1 percent of the total), which decreases time per mile traveled (the inverse of speed) by 0.46 minutes. I also estimate substitution patterns towards other modes of transportation. A welfare calibration exercise suggests that an unanticipated reduction of active vehicles in the city results in daily welfare gains between \$8 and \$12 million.

“Vaccines at Work”

(with Manuel Hoffmann and Adrian Chadi)

We study whether getting vaccinated causes a moral hazard problem that could decrease the effectiveness of the vaccine in the context of seasonal influenza. We ran a natural field experiment in partnership with a major bank in Ecuador where we experimentally modified its annual vaccination campaign. We find that vaccination take-up increases 112% by assigning employees to get the flu shot during a workday compared to Saturday, which indicates that opportunity costs play an important role in vaccine take-up. Peers' take-up also increases individual take-up in a meaningful way. Contrary to expectations, we find that the effect of vaccination on flu diagnoses and sick days due to the flu is a precise zero. A rich data set of administrative records and employee surveys allows us to analyze if moral hazard explains the ineffectiveness of flu vaccination. In particular, we look for effects of vaccination on respiratory diseases where the flu vaccine grants no immunity protection, and we check for changes in habits and beliefs related to preventing the flu. We present evidence consistent with a change towards riskier behavior that suggests that vaccinated individuals expose themselves more to viruses and rule out other potential mechanisms.

“A Blessing or a Curse? The Long-term Effect of Resource Booms on Human Capital and Living Conditions” (under review)

Is natural resource abundance a blessing or a curse for a country? An important concern is the possibility that resource booms reduce human capital accumulation. These booms favor low-skill jobs, which increases the opportunity cost of education making it optimal for some cohorts to interrupt their education. If these individuals do not resume their education, they may lose pecuniary and non-pecuniary benefits of education in their lifetime. For a country, lower human capital may constrain its long-term growth. I use proprietary individual-level data to study the long-term effects of exposure to the 1970s oil boom on human capital accumulation in the context of a developing country. I exploit variation in the timing of the shock and geographic differences in the cost of college attendance and find that exposure to the boom decreased college completion and increased low-skill occupation among affected individuals. I show evidence consistent with the hypothesis that individuals shift into highly remunerative low skilled employment and away from college because the boom decreased the returns of a college education. In line with this, despite the reduction in educational attainment, I find no effects on wealth accumulation.

“Rate Caps, Competition and Welfare: Evidence from Ecuador’s Consumer Credit Market”

(with Luis Antonio Vaca)

The dynamics of the credit market make the welfare implications of rate caps theoretically ambiguous. On the one hand, it is true that a sufficiently low interest rate ceiling will ration credit. On the other hand, if banks have market power then interest rate caps may be welfare enhancing. In this paper we exploit a natural experiment in Ecuador to analyze the effects of interest rate ceilings on access to consumer loans and on economic welfare. In August 2007, Ecuador switched from a regime that in practice implied no ceilings to a regime of increasingly binding interest rate caps. This policy change is an exogenous source of variation that potentially excluded some

individuals from the consumer credit market. Our preferred estimates suggest that access to banks decreased between 0.5 and 1.1 percentage points in a country where access to consumer loans was 10.8% before the adoption of the policy.

“An Empirical Study of the Credit Market with Unobserved Consumer Types”

(with Li Gan)

National Bureau of Economic Research, NBER Working Paper No. 13873

This paper proposes an econometric model to identify unobserved consumer types in the credit market. Consumers choose different amounts of loan because of differences in their time or risk preferences (types). Thus, the unconditional probability of default is modeled using a mixture density combining a type-conditioning default variable with a type-determining random variable. The model is estimated using individual-level consumer credit card information. The parameter estimates and statistical tests support this kind of specification. Furthermore, the model produces better out-of-sample predictions on the probability of default than traditional models; hence, it provides evidence of the existence of types in the consumer credit market.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Age and the labor market for Hispanics in the United States” (with Joanna Lahey)

“Effects of Political Polarization on Political Preferences, Support, and Political Engagement” (with Trent McNamara)

“The Effects of Information Shocks on the Labor Market: Evidence from the Disclosure of College Rankings”

“Making Saving Appealing: Evidence from a Field Experiment”

“Tropical Diseases and the Timing of Pregnancies”

“Discrete Measures and IV Estimates”

PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

NBER Workshop on Longer Working Lives and Labor Demand (2019)

Applied Economics Research Symposium (2019)

AEA/ASSA Annual Meeting (2019)

Southern Economic Association Annual Meetings (2018)

APPAM Fall Research Conference APPAM (2018)

AHEC Conference (2018)

Advances in Field Experiments Conference (2018)

STATA Texas Empirical Microeconomics Conference (2018)

APPAM DC Regional Student Conference (2017)

Jóvenes Investigadores Ecuatorianos en Economía, Interamerican Development Bank (2010)

PERC Applied Microeconomics seminar Texas A&M University (2008)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Universidad de las Américas-Department of Economics (masters)

SEP 2019- | Statistics (Instructor of Record)

Universidad de las Américas-Department of Economics (undergraduate level)

SEP 2019- | Econometrics I (Instructor of Record)

Texas A&M University

SUMMER 2018 | Game Theory (ECON 459) (Instructor of Record)
Course Evaluations: 4.36/5

Universidad de las Américas-MBA program

JAN 2009-JULY 2015 | Quantitative Analysis (Instructor of Record), Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2012, Fall 2012, Spring 2013, Fall 2013, Spring 2014, Fall 2014, Spring 2015

Universidad de las Américas-Department of Economics (undergraduate level)

JAN 2009-JULY 2015 | Econometrics I (Instructor of Record), Spring 2009, Fall 2009, Spring 2010, Fall 2010, Spring 2011, Fall 2011, Spring 2015
Econometrics II (Instructor of Record), Spring 2012, Spring 2013, Spring 2014
Econometrics III (Instructor of Record), Fall 2012, Fall 2013, Fall 2014, Spring 2015
Intermediate Macro I (Instructor of Record), Fall 2012, Fall 2013
Intermediate Macro II (Instructor of Record), Spring 2013, Spring 2014
Advanced Microeconomics (Instructor of Record), Fall 2014
Research seminar (Instructor of Record), Spring 2011

REFEREE EXPERIENCE

Economic Inquiry, Journal of Health Economics

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

JAN 2009-2019	Consultant at TNK Economics Lead research team in multiple projects related to macroeconomic analysis, financial analysis, consumption behavior and public policy analysis. Estimated risk scoring models, collection models and CRM analytic models for major Ecuadorian banks.
JUN-DEC 2008	Project Leader at Reis Datum Estimated predictive models of individual income, consumption and savings behavior.
OCT 2004-MAY 2006	Credit Analyst at DINERS CLUB of Ecuador Estimated predictive models of credit card fraud behavior and credit scoring models. Designed and implemented a new procedure for monitoring and managing fraud risk
JAN-JUN 2003	Financial Control Assistant at Produbanco Compiled financial reports, budget reports and performance reports.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

SEP 2016-MAY 2019	Research Assistant Dr. Marco Castillo.
2016	Teaching Assistant Dr. Daniel Fragiadakis.
SEP-DEC 2015	Teaching Assistant Dr. Tatevik Sekhposyan.
JAN-DEC 1999	Teaching Assistant Dr. Juan Paz y Mino.

FELLOWSHIPS, HONORS AND AWARDS

MARCH 2019	Best Paper Presentation, Applied Economics Research Symposium
JUN-AUG 2017	E. Ralph Daniel Scholarship awarded by the Private Enterprise Research Center, Texas A&M University.
SEP 2015-PRESENT	Graduate Assistantship awarded by the Department of Economics, Texas A&M University.
JUN 2014	Citi Journalistic Excellence Award, granted by Citibank.
2006-2008	Fulbright Scholarship
2003	Gold Medal for Outstanding Academic Performance in Economics, Economics Association of Pichincha, Ecuador.
2003	Class Valedictorian, Department of Economics, Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Ecuador.
1998	President's Award for Educational Excellence, awarded by William Clinton, President of the United States.
1998	Class Valedictorian, American School of Quito, Ecuador.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

“Ciclicalidad de la política fiscal ecuatoriana desde la dolarización” (with Simon Cueva and Maria Caridad Ortiz). In *Reforma y Desarrollo en el Ecuador Contemporaneo*, edited by Javier Díaz-Cassou and Marta Ruiz Arranz, 2018, Interamerican Development Bank.

“Jugando al Monopolio: Paradojas de la Competencia en los Mercados Ecuatorianos” (with Daniel Godoy). *Revista Gestión*, No. 253 (2015) (Publication in Spanish).

“Desarrollo económico y lactancia materna, ¿se tiene la fórmula correcta?” (with María Alexandra Castellanos). *Revista Gestión*, No. 237 (2014) (Publication in Spanish).

“¿Cómo será el 2014? Un análisis de prospectiva económica” (with María Caridad Ortiz). *Revista Gestión*, No. 234 (2013) (Publication in Spanish).

“La era Correa: evaluación macroeconómica 2006-2012 y perspectivas” (with Luis Vaca). *Revista Gestión*, No. 229 (2013) (Publication in Spanish).

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2018-PRESENT American Economic Association

2017-PRESENT Southern Economic Association

2017-PRESENT APPAM

LANGUAGES

SPANISH: Mother tongue

ENGLISH: Fluent

FRENCH: Basic Knowledge

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

STATA, MATLAB, Dynare, Microsoft Office, Microsoft Windows.

REFERENCES

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