

Roberto MOSQUERA

CURRENT POSITION: Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Universidad de las Americas Redondel del Ciclista, Antigua Via a Nayon, Quito, Ecuador
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EDUCATION

2015-2019 Ph.D in Economics, Texas A&M University
2006-2008 M.S. in Economics, Texas A&M University
1998-2004 B.S. in Economics Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Ecuador

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Applied Microeconomics: Labor, Discrimination, Development, Health, Information

ACADEMIC PUBLICATIONS

- **“Age and the Labor Market for Hispanics in the United States”** with Joanna Lahey, *Journal of Population Economics* (2024).
- **“Stuck in Traffic: Measuring Congestion Externalities with Negative Supply Shocks”** *Regional Science and Urban Economics* (2024).
- **“The Political Divide: The Case of Expectations and Preferences”** with Trent McNamara, *Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics* (2024).
- **“The Long-term Effect of Resource Booms on Human Capital”** *Labour Economics* (2022).
- **“The Economic Effects of Facebook”** with Mofioluwasademi Odunowo, Trent McNamara, Xiongfei Guo, and Ragan Petrie, *Experimental Economics* (2019).

WORKING PAPERS

“Signaling on the Labor Market: Evidence from College Scorecards” with Melissa Miranda - student (JOB MARKET PAPER under review RESTAT)

Theoretically, individuals select which university to attend to signal their abilities to employers. We study these signaling effects by exploiting a change in Ecuador’s governmental university ranking system that lowered employers’ perceptions of the quality of college graduates. Using data matching college graduation, employment, wages, and graduate degrees, we show that the ranking change decreased salaried employment and wages for inexperienced individuals who had newly entered the labor market and whose universities decreased in ranking. This effect fades over time as individuals reveal their productivity, and it is driven by employer types that rely on signaling to infer employee productivity.

“Vaccines at Work” with Manuel Hoffmann and Adrian Chadi (*R&R Management Science*)

Health campaigns in firms could be a cost-effective approach to reduce sickness absence and to mitigate negative economic consequences of ill-health among employees. Low participation rates, however, may prevent firms from realizing such private economic benefits. Moreover, employees may overestimate the effects of the campaign and engage in risky behaviors that could be detrimental to their health, thereby reducing the potential benefits of the intervention. We ran a natural field experiment with a bank in Ecuador, where we employed a randomized encouragement design by experimentally manipulating incentives to participate in a campaign to get vaccinated against influenza. This allows us to study the determinants of on-site vaccination and the consequences of increased participation in a firm campaign for employees, thereby informing about the private incentives for firms to run such interventions. Using rich administrative records merged with employee survey data, we find strong evidence that opportunity costs to participate in the campaign and peer behavior in the firm matter to increase vaccination take-up. Contrary to the firm’s expectation, increased participation in the campaign did not imply reduced sickness absence during the flu season. As we observe no relevant health benefits or externalities via co-worker vaccination, our comprehensive analyses indicate that the campaign most likely was not economically beneficial for the firm. Finally, we find evidence consistent with the notion that a vaccination campaign can influence the behavior of employees concerning their health, which could limit the economic promise of such interventions.

“The Impact of Government Transparency on Tax-Paying Beliefs and Tax Reporting: Evidence from an Artefactual and Natural Experiment” with Trent McNamara (under review JEO)

Effective tax policy requires understanding behavioral decision-making. We investigate reciprocity and whether misperceptions about how the government allocates funds impacts taxpaying behaviors. In a combined survey and natural experiment with 2,000 self-employed workers, preferences and beliefs on government spending are elicited. In the case when revealing the actual distribution improves beliefs, government support increases (0.30 s.d.), views on taxes improve (0.24 s.d.), and affective polarization decreases (0.40 s.d.). However, there is no effect on reported income tax. When beliefs are worsened, there is no significant response on stated outcomes, but we find an increase in reported income tax.

“Effects of Political Leaders’ Speech on Violence Against Women” with Mikaella Herrera - student

This paper studies the unintended effects of a political leader’s speech on violence against women. It examines the effects of the derogatory treatment of women by former Ecuadorian President Rafael Correa during his TV and radio program, Enlace Ciudadano. Using administrative data from Ecuador’s 911 Integrated Security Service we found a 2.6 to 5 percent increase in such crimes on Saturdays when Correa hosted the show. These estimates are robust across different specifications and falsification tests. We present additional evidence suggesting that the President’s derogatory speech may have bolstered cultural acceptance of violence against women and shifted societal norms, thus validating violence against women and contributing to increased incidents.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“Effect of conditional cash transfers of labor supply decisions” with Daniela Santillan - student

Stage: Preparing working paper

We study the effects of Ecuador’s conditional cash transfer programs on labor supply decisions.

Two features make Ecuador's setting well-suited to study this question. First, we have access to the universe of Ecuador's cash transfer beneficiaries. Second, Ecuador uses a poverty index to define the cash transfer beneficiaries, and this index is reset every four years. The data includes the 2018 poverty index, cash transfer assignment in 2018, and cash transfer assignment in 2014. We used the 2018 index to check for manipulations using the 2014 cash transfer assignment and found no evidence of manipulation. Our findings show a reduction in labor supply among working-age adults in households with children and elderly adults living alone, while child labor remained unaffected. These results stand in contrast with the experimental evaluation of cash transfer programs. Our findings suggest that experimental results do not hold when these interventions expand to the entire population, suggesting the presence of experimenter demand effects in the experimental evaluations.

“Measurement-induced Biases in Instrumental Variable Applications: The Case of Return to Education Estimates”

Stage: Finishing estimations

Economic theory postulates that increasing human capital accumulation should result in higher income. Several empirical papers support this result, many of which employ an instrumental variables strategy (IV). However, this paper demonstrates that if the observed measure of treatment is more discrete than the actual variable that affects the outcome, then IV methods will overestimate the effect. This bias affects estimates of education returns because years of education are a discrete measure of the human capital accumulation process through schooling. This paper shows how to use nonparametric bounds to assess the magnitude of this bias. I replicated four papers that estimate the returns to education using years of education and IV methods. I find that the IV estimates of the returns to education exceed the upper bounds, indicating that IV yields an overestimate of the returns. This measurement-induced bias is present in any application where the observed measure is more discrete than the actual treatment that affects the outcome.

“Measuring Welfare in the Presence of Repugnance: A Field Study in the Firearms Market” with Marco Castillo, Trent McNamara, and Ragan Petrie

Stage: Design completed, securing funding. Submitted to NSF

Conventional consumer surplus measures overlook the ethical disutility experienced by individuals who find certain goods repugnant. Our research aims to provide a more comprehensive measure of societal welfare by integrating other-regarding preferences into welfare calculations. By considering the repugnance some individuals feel towards certain goods, we seek to estimate a more accurate societal welfare measure, especially in markets viewed by a non-negligible share of the population as repugnant. We plan to conduct a field experiment focusing on the firearms market, known for its varying views on repugnance, to gather incentive-compatible measures of individuals' willingness to pay for the market's existence. These measures will help quantify the bias in conventional welfare estimates when other-regarding preferences are not considered.

PRESENTATIONS AND WORKSHOPS

AEA/ASSA Annual Meeting (2024), Southern Economic Association Annual Meetings (2023), Southern Economic Association Annual Meetings (2021), Western Economic Association Annual Conference (2021), AEA/ASSA Annual Meeting (2021), Southern Economic Association Annual Meetings (2020), NBER Workshop on Longer Working Lives and Labor Demand (2020), Working Longer and

Retirement Conference SIEPR-Stanford (2020), Western Economic Association Annual Conference (2020), AEA/ASSA Annual Meeting (2020), 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)

REFEREE EXPERIENCE

Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Health Economics, Journal of Population Economics, Economics of Education Review, Review of Economics of the Household, Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization, Economic Inquiry, Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics, Inter-American Development Bank.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Universidad de las Américas–Department of Economics (masters)

SEP 2019– | Statistics (Instructor of Record)
Econometrics I (Instructor of Record)
Applied Economics (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

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

MAY 2020–	Chief Business and Analytics Officer at Gestiona GTX I lead the team designing financial products to help people severely in debt pay their delinquent loans. These products include calibrating discounts tailored to fit an individual's repayment capacity. My team is also in charge of evaluating the impact of the different projects executed by Gestiona by using field experiments and quasi-experimental methods.
JAN 2009-2019	Consultant at TNK Economics Lead consultancy team in multiple projects related to macroeconomic analysis, financial analysis, consumption behavior and public policy analysis. Worked in several projects with the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. 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.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- “Traffic Noise and Property Values: An Instrumental Variable Strategy for hedonic valuation” (with Luis Bravo-Moncayo, Virginia Puyana-Romero, Michelle Romero, José Lucio-Naranjo and Enrique Suárez), *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management* (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1080/09640568.2022.2079079>
- “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. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cstp.2017.08.003>
- “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. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2016.10.020>

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2018-PRESENT American Economic Association
2019-PRESENT Southern Economic Association

LANGUAGES

SPANISH: Mother tongue
ENGLISH: Fluent
FRENCH: Basic Knowledge

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE

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

REFERENCES

Dr. Steven Puller
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Texas A&M University
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Dr. Ragan Petrie
Department of Economics
Texas A&M University
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Dr. Joanna Lahey
The Bush School of Government
& Public Service
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