

Summary of Research

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Time-Intensity and the Composition of Consumption. (Resubmitted with minor revisions (second round) to the *Review of Economics of the Household*)

Becker's theory of home production was the first to systematically incorporate time in economic models, and the theory generated much empirical research in a wide variety of areas. However, the direct applications of Becker's home production theory in empirical research are scarce because of the innate immeasurability of commodities. In this paper, I recover unobservable commodities from the cost functions under certain assumptions about production technologies. Then, using the Philippine Bukidnon panel study of rural households, I test for the core of the Becker model: negative substitution effects between a time-intensive and a goods-intensive commodity arising from wage increases. The estimates of the structural form as well as the reduced form relative demand between childcare, which represents a time-intensive commodity, and meal consumption, which represents a goods-intensive commodity, support the major predictions of the model (*JEL: D13, J13, J22*).

Male Backlash, Bargaining, or Exposure Reduction?: Women's Working Status and Physical Spousal Violence in India. (Job Market Paper)

The purpose of this study is to identify the causal relationship between women's working status and the risk of spousal violence against them. In India, working women tend to be more subject to physical spousal violence than non-working women. Given that there is virtually no option outside marriage for women in India, more spousal violence against working women can be understood as a result of male backlash. However, there are concerns that the positive relationship between women's labor force participation and physical spousal violence might be driven by reverse causality or omitted variable bias. In this paper, I address these issues by exploiting plausibly exogenous variations in rural women's working status driven by rainfall shocks and the rice-wheat dichotomy. The IV regression results indicate that women's working status has a significant negative effect on the incidence of physical spousal violence. The findings suggest that the positive relationship between women's working status and the physical spousal violence is likely to be a result of endogeneity rather than the male backlash. Further, women's working without major compensation significantly decreases violence incidence, whereas degree of women's contribution to household income conditional on working does not significantly affect the violence incidence. The findings suggest that women's working status decreases violence experience through exposure reduction rather than through higher bargaining power.

Domestic Violence and HIV among Women in Sub-Saharan Africa (Work in Progress)

The purpose of this study is to establish the effect of gender inequality on feminization of HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although the epidemic mostly affected men at the initial stage, about half of the HIV infected now is women. It is generally believed that fast feminization of HIV is not only driven by physiological reasons but also by cultural reasons: women's inability to make decisions on sexual matters under unequal and violent relationships increases sexual coercion and decreases condom use, which increases the risk of infection. However, solid quantitative evidence on the relationship between gender inequality and HIV infection is rare in recent literature. Using multi-country data on HIV and domestic violence in Sub-Saharan Africa, I investigate the role of gender inequality in feminization of HIV.

Access to Credit and Spousal Violence in Bangladesh (Work in Progress)

Existing empirical evidence in Bangladesh establishes a negative relationship between women's micro-credit receipt and violence experience, supporting marital bargaining theory: increases in women's financial independence (relative to men's) are likely to reduce spousal violence against them by improving their bargaining power. However, the existing evidence in Bangladesh is mostly based on female reported violence experience as is conventionally the case in any other countries. The innovation in the current study is that analysis is based on male reported violence against women. Using data on male reported violence against women of nationally representative samples, I investigate whether the empirical results are sensitive to the gender of the reporters.