

Ami Ichikawa Hara

saichikawa@arizona.edu

McClelland Hall ◊ 1130 E. Helen St. ◊ Tucson, AZ 85721

Citizenship: Peruvian

EDUCATION

University of Arizona

Ph.D. in Economics. Advisor: Juan Pantano

M.S. in Economics

Tucson, US

2020 - 2025 (expected)

Universidad del Pacífico

Coursework

B.S. in Economics

Lima, Peru

2018 - 2020

2012 - 2017

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Primary Field Development Economics

Secondary Fields Education, Inequality, Political Economy

RESEARCH

Educational Investments Mistakes and Skill Disparities Among Children

Job Market Paper

This paper examines how parents' preferences and beliefs about their children's academic performance shape educational investment decisions and skill disparities. Using detailed data on parental beliefs and a randomized information intervention in Malawi, I develop and estimate a model of parental investments that embeds beliefs distortions. This approach allows me to assess the cost of information frictions in terms of skill formation and their effect on within and between households skill inequality. Policy simulations from the model suggest parents attempt to use a subsidy on educational inputs to compensate for differences in siblings' academic performance, leading to a reduction in within household skill inequality. This compensating behavior reflects both parents' efficiency considerations and preference for equality. Second, distortions in parental beliefs interfere with their intended compensating strategy: while they believe they target lower-performing children, widespread optimistic biases lead to underinvestment in this population. Correcting information frictions increases investments significantly for students at the bottom of the score distribution and is twice as effective at reducing within household inequality compared to a subsidy alone.

De-penalizing Voter Abstention: Effects on Electoral Participation

This paper examines the effect of de-penalizing abstention in the democracy of Peru, where voting is mandatory and abstention is penalized with a monetary fine. I use data from local elections and a field experiment designed by Leon (2017) that introduced exogenous variation in perceived abstention penalties to estimate a model of turnout. In this model, citizens first update their beliefs about the monetary cost of abstention and compare it to the net benefit from voting. I use the estimated model to quantify the effect of eliminating the abstention fine. The counterfactual experiment suggests that this policy would reduce turnout among the sample from 90 to 66 percent, a similar rate to countries where voting is voluntary. In contrast to theoretical predictions, I find that the composition of moderate vs. more extreme voters would not change significantly.

Commodity Price Shocks and Voters Preferences: Evidence from Peru

I study how commodity price shocks influence who voters elect, focusing on the local democracy of Peru during a mining boom period. I use a difference-in-differences strategy that exploits exogenous time variation from international metal prices and variation across municipalities based on their exposure to mining. I find that, when prices rise, the probability of electing a left-wing mayor is higher. To understand why and among which populations a resource boom is a shock to voters' interests, I construct a georeferenced data set that matches electoral outcomes at the polling place level to nearby mines and exploit a fixed rule of distribution of mining income taxes. The evidence suggests that the shift to left leaning parties is stronger among voters for whom externalities from metal extraction are potentially more costly, although it is not clear whether environmental or rent seeking concerns are driving support left-wing parties among this population.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Sole Instructor of Record

University of Arizona

Microeconomic Analysis for Business Decisions
(Undergraduate, Online)

Summer 2023, Summer 2024

Teaching Assistant

University of Arizona

Econometrics (Ph.D)
Econometrics and Machine Learning (Master)
Econometrics (Master)
Intermediate Macroeconomics
Intermediate Microeconomics
Microeconomic Analysis for Business Decisions
Economics of Strategy
Principles of Economics

Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022
Spring 2024
Spring 2023
Fall 2024
Spring 2024
Fall 2023, Spring 2023
Fall 2022, Spring 2021
Fall 2021

Econometrics
Advanced Microeconomics

Universidad del Pacífico
Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Spring 2019, Fall 2019
Fall 2019

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE AND OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE

Universidad del Pacífico

2018 - 2020

Research assistant to Prof. Pablo Lavado

Peruvian Ministry of Education

2017 - 2018

Economic Analyst

SKILLS

Software Stata, R, Python, Matlab

Languages English (fluent), Spanish (native), German (basic proficiency)

REFERENCES

Juan Pantano (Chair)
University of Arizona
Email: jpanta@arizona.edu

Tiemen Woutersen
University of Arizona
Email: woutersen@arizona.edu

Christian Cox
University of Arizona
Email: christiancox@arizona.edu