

The playing field in academia: why are women still underrepresented?

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Alessandra Casarico is Associate Professor of Public Economics and Associate Editor of the Journal of Economic Inequality. She is the Academic Director of the World Bachelor in Business, a joint undergraduate program of Bocconi, HKUST and USC. She is CESifo Research Fellow and member of the Scientific Advisory Council of Ifo, Munich. She is a fellow of the Dondena Research Center and part of its management board. She holds a D.Phil in Economics from the University of Oxford and a MSc in Economics and Social Sciences from Bocconi University. Her research interests are in public and gender economics. She has published research in international refereed journals, and contributed to books published by national and international editors. She is active in the policy debate on gender inequality and she is managing editor of the information site lavoce.info.

Women in Economics: the role of gendered references at entry in the profession

Audinga Baltrunaite, Alessandra Casarico and Lucia Rizzica

Abstract

We study the presence and the extent of gender differences in reference letters for graduate students in economics and how these may affect the start of young researchers' careers. To these ends, we build a novel rich dataset covering ten cohorts of academic job market applicants to two top institutions hiring on the international market. We collect information from the application packages and conduct text analysis of reference letters using Natural Language Processing (NLP) techniques in order to measure gender differences in the style and content of the letters. We then combine the resulting measures with information on the applicants' subsequent labor market outcomes as extrapolated from the main online repositories. Our results reveal that male and female candidates receive different support from their sponsors and are described in systematically different terms. While female advisors talk more about personal characteristics, only male advisors do so at a different extent for male and female candidates. Such differences in how candidates are talked about appear to influence career outcomes.

Research similarity and women in academia

Piera Bello, Alessandra Casarico and Debora Nozza

Abstract

We investigate the link between research similarity and female presence in academia. Using data on the universe of job applications for tenure-track assistant professor positions in economics in Italy and exploiting NLP techniques (sentence embeddings) on the abstract of each publication of the scholars in our dataset, we calculate indices of similarity between candidates and members of selection committees. We show that the level of similarity is strongly associated with the winning probability. Moreover, while there are no gender differences in average similarity, women and men differ in terms of maximum similarity. This gender gap disappears when the similarity index is calculated only focusing on female members of the committee. The results suggest that similarity bias in male-dominated environments can have implications for gender and research diversity.

Iga Magda



Iga Magda is PhD in economics, professor at the Warsaw School of Economics and vice president of the Institute for Structural Research. She is a member of the IZA Research Fellows network. She is interested in labor economics, topics of gender inequality in the labor market, family policy and social policy. She has held research internships at the University of Essex (2007/2008) and University College London (2009). She directs research projects on the topic of gender inequality in the labor market in the context of social norms, the topic of wage inequality among college graduates and issues of discrimination in the labor market. She has published in Feminist Economics, Journal of Comparative Economics, IZA Journal of Labor Policy, Empirical Economics, among others.

The gender pay gap at the early stage of an academic career

Iga Magda, Jacek Bieliński, Marzena Feldy and Anna Knapieńska

Abstract

An increasing number of countries have devoted time and attention to establishing gender equality regulations in academia. However, various studies and data reveal that women remain underrepresented among tenured faculty and in senior positions and that female academic staff earns less than men. The reasons behind these gaps, in particular those specific to academia, remain unclear. In our paper, we analyze Polish female and male PhD graduates to measure the pay gap, its progression over time and identify its sources, in particular those specific to researchers. We draw on a dataset that covers the entire population of PhD holders who obtained their degrees and were hired at any Polish university in 2014–2018. The dataset contains histories of individual salaries and research productivity of PhD holders extracted from two administrative registers. Our results reveal a low (5–7%) and stable gender pay gap among early career academics. The gap increases once we account for incomes earned outside academia (13–14%).

Seminar workshop panelists:

Karolina Goraus-Tańska



Karolina Goraus-Tańska is an assistant professor at Faculty of Economic Sciences, University of Warsaw, and Consultant at the World Bank. Her research focuses on labor economics and public finance, with particular interest in inequalities in wages and employment opportunities and distributional effects of taxes and transfers. Her publications cover problems of minimum wage non-compliance in Central and Eastern Europe, gender gaps in the labor markets of the EU member states and non-EU transition countries, inequality and poverty reducing effect of fiscal system in Poland, redistributive power of cash transfers and VAT exemptions in developing countries, and pension systems' analyses with OLG models.

Gender inequalities in scientific careers: the case of Poland

Karolina Goraus-Tańska, Jacek Lewkowicz and Krzysztof Szczypiński

Abstract

Women continue to be underrepresented in science, especially at the top level. There is also some evidence on gender differences in scientific productivity over the life cycle, but the empirical evidence is scarce, partially due to data limitations. This paper focuses on the careers of women and men in science in Poland and aims to verify whether there are gender differences in career paths and publications intensity in the years following the PhD defense. We utilize a unique digital data source on scientists' career milestones (e.g., obtaining subsequent academic titles) and their publication records. Controlling for academic field, universities' quality, and year of PhD defense, we first analyze gender gaps in timespan between obtaining subsequent academic titles. Adding to this picture information on publications, we also analyze whether total amount and quality of publications (as assessed using the rankings of journals) obtained before reaching a subsequent academic title is different for women and men.

Anne Sophie Lassen



Anne Sophie Lassen is a postdoctoral fellow at the department of economics at Copenhagen Business School. Her research is primarily concerned with the mechanisms behind and implications of gender differences in labor market choices. This include time allocation and outcomes parenthood, adjustment following job loss, and occupational choices.

The Lost Ester Boserups: The Impact of Parenthood on Academic Careers

Anne Sophie Lassen

Abstract

Women continue to be underrepresented in the field of economics, particularly among permanent faculty. This paper asks how fertility impacts women's academic careers in economics by estimating child penalties for women and men economists' likelihood of staying in academia, receiving promotions, and publishing research papers. Our analysis relies on administrative data from Denmark covering individuals enrolling in Ph.D. programs in economics from the early 1980s to the mid-2010s. We link data on labor market outcomes, such as whether individuals work in academia, with information on fertility, and high-quality publication data. By studying the population entering Ph.D. programs, we focus on the early pipeline into the profession. Our research provides three insights. First, we document that most of both men and women have children, and we find no evidence that those who remain in academia delay or reduce their fertility compared to those who leave. This indicates that academic economists in Denmark do not internalize the potential career costs associated with parenthood. The arrival of children does not influence graduation rates, and parents are equally likely to publish as non-parents. Second, we show that the mothers publishing before parenthood are positively selected on prior academic performance compared to fathers and compared to other women. Third, our event study estimates show that parenthood persistently reduces women's likelihood of staying in academia by 10 percentage points relative to men. While both new mothers and fathers leave universities, new mothers are more likely to leave the broad research sector. Among those who stay in academia, women are less likely to obtain tenured positions during the three years following parenthood, after which the gender gap diminishes. The gender gap in the number of publications is insignificant across specifications, and controlling for publications does not influence the gender gap in promotions.

Diana Terrazas-Santamaria



Diana Terrazas-Santamaria received her BSc in Actuarial Science from Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Mexico), her MSc in Economics from El Colegio de México (Mexico), and obtained her Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Essex (England). Since 2017, she has been an Assistant Professor at El Colegio de México in Mexico City. Her main research areas are Science of science, Technological Change, and Strategy. Her work has recently focused on gender disparities in Mexican academia and within the Economics profession.

Gender differences in collaboration patterns among Mexican researchers

Aurora Ramirez-Alvarez, Daniela Aguirre-Guerrero and Diana Terrazas-Santamaria

Abstract

The paper explores an author's impact using a Scopus dataset of scientific publications and citation counts for the Mexican National System of Researchers (SNI) and their co-authors. We focus on three SNI disciplines to explore whether gender differences arise due to women's representation within each (Engineering 22%, Economics 34%, and Health Sciences 55%). We examine how much of the citation gap between genders can be explained by differences in observable characteristics or endowments (including collaboration patterns) and how much is due to differences in the effects of those endowments. Using an Oaxaca-Blinder Decomposition, we consistently find that the differences in endowments explain the citation gap between women and men: we observe an increase in women's citations if they had the same characteristics as men in the three areas. Furthermore, we find that the number of publications and career length positively and significantly affect the number of citations, but the effect of the number of co-authors and the maximum of the co-author's H-Index differ among areas and between genders.