

January 2020

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IN THIS DIGEST

Dear Colleagues,

Happy 2020! We are starting off the new year with a focus on gender gaps in employment. Across the globe, women face inferior work opportunities compared to men. Women are less likely to participate in the labor market, and when they do work, they are paid less and are less likely to work in formal employment. They also have fewer opportunities for business expansion or career progression. Many factors contribute to the gender “jobs gap”- including bearing a disproportionate share of childcare and domestic work, more limited physical mobility, social norms, having less access to financial services and skills training programs. These are challenges in both high- and low- income settings.

The featured publications highlight new academic work that delves into some of the factors that perpetuate gender jobs gaps and policies to address them. And then we list some essential readings from recent years which include publications that synthesize the global picture on women’s labor force participation and wage gaps, complemented with two deep dives. One summarizes the recent evaluation research on economic empowerment interventions. And the other discusses the challenges and practical solutions for women entrepreneurs in Africa.

Sincerely,



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Lead Economist,
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WOMEN AND WORK

The Gender Gap in Self Promotion

Exley & Kessler | Working Paper
| December 2019

This study found that women systematically provide less favorable assessments of their past performance and potential future ability than equally performing men. Hence, employers need to be cautious and consider gender differences in self-promotion when making hiring decisions and during performance ratings to ensure that all individuals are rated fairly.

Gender Bias in SME Lending Experimental Evidence from Turkey

Alibhai, Donald, Goldstein, Oguz, Pankov & Strobbe | Working Paper | December 2019

The paper studies gender discrimination through an experimental lens conducted on 77 bank loan officers in Turkey. It concludes that helping newly recruited and less experienced loan officers to better discern loan application quality may improve financing of business loans to women and reduce gender gaps in entrepreneurship.

The Long-term Effects of California's 2004 Paid Family Leave Act on Women's Careers: Evidence from US Tax Data

Bailey, Byker, Patel & Ramnath | Working
Paper | October 2019

The study evaluates the impact of California's 2004 Paid Family Leave Act -- the first such policy passed in the U.S.-- on

Gendered Laws

Hyland, Djankov & Goldberg | Report |
December 2019

Using the World Bank's Women, Business and the Law database, this paper examines the associations between improvements in

women's work. The act did not increase their employment, wages or attachment to employers. But for new mothers, perhaps surprisingly, it reduced employment and annual wages.

the law and several labor market outcomes, finding a small, causal positive impact of more equal laws on women's labor force participation.

Workplace Attributes and Women's Labor Supply Decisions: Evidence from a Randomized Experiment

Subramanian | Working Paper | January 2020

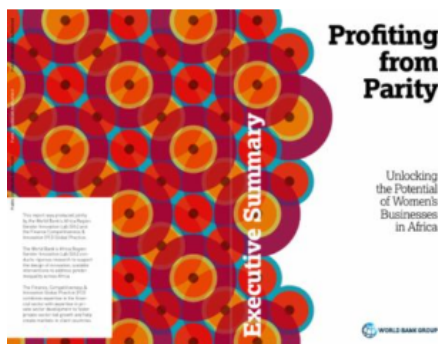
Conducting an experiment on a labor search platform catering to educated female jobseekers in urban Pakistan, the paper shows that the information environment matters for women's job search, and that women face two types of costs: social norms discouraging women working outside the home and segregation of men and women in work and public spaces.

Randomization for Women's Economic Empowerment? Lessons and Limitations of Randomized Experiments

Pieters & Klasen | Journal Article | January 2020

A short paper from the latest World Development which has a suite of papers discussing many aspects of RCTs (in light of the 2019 Nobel Prize). This review emphasizes that women face multiple barriers to economic empowerment which cannot be removed by a single intervention.

ESSENTIAL READINGS



Profiting from Parity: Unlocking the Potential of Women's Business in Africa

World Bank | Report | March 2019



Global Wage Report 2018/19: What Lies Behind Gender Pay Gaps

ILO | Report | 2018

The report presents rigorous evidence on the barriers to growth and profitability faced by women entrepreneurs in Africa. It offers policy makers evidence-based guidance on designing programs to target multiple obstacles and improve the performance of these women.

The sixth of the ILO's Global Wage report series, this report presents a detailed examination of gender wage inequalities.

What Explains Uneven Female Labor Force Participation Levels and Trends in Developing Countries?

Klasen | Journal Article
| August 2019

Klasen reviews the varying trends across regions in women's labor force participation and discusses the research on these "puzzling regional developments".

Gender Matters in Economic Empowerment Interventions: A Research Review

Buvinić & O'Donnell | Journal Article | May 2019

This paper is a broad review of the latest evaluation research on both gender-related constraints that women face and the role that economic empowerment interventions can play to overcome them.

THE BROADER JOBS AGENDA

FROM THE WORLD BANK

How Technology Adoption and Trade Are Shaping Indonesian Labor Markets

Viollaz, Darko & Mason | Working Paper
| December 2019

This paper analyzes the simultaneous impacts and interplay of exports and technology adoption in Indonesia over a period characterized by a commodity boom (2005–10) and a period of declining exports (2011–15).

The Jobs That Youth Want and the Support They Need to Get Them: Evidence from a Discrete Choice Experiment in Kenya

Assy, Ribeiro, Robalino, Rosati, Puerta & Weber | Working Paper | December 2019

The paper finds that youths prefer to work in jobs that have the attributes of formal employment regardless of the tasks involved.

Decline in Wage Inequality in Brazil: A Survey

Firpo & Portella | Working Paper | December 2019

The paper argues that the favorable economic environment in the period, combined with increases in the minimum wage, higher formalization, and a larger supply of skilled workers led to a compression in wages.

The Medium-Term Impact of Entrepreneurship Education on Labor Market Outcomes: Experimental Evidence from University Graduates in Tunisia

laref, Brodmann & Premand | Journal Article | January 2020

Entrepreneurship education induces some lasting impacts on business knowledge, but not on business networks or employment outcomes.

Using Labor Supply Elasticities To Learn About Income Inequality: The Role of Productivities versus Preferences

Bergstrom & Dodds | Working Paper | January 2020

The paper shows that we can use information encoded in labor supply elasticities to learn about the extent to which labor income inequality is driven by heterogeneity in productivities versus heterogeneity in preferences for consumption relative to leisure.

The Spillovers of Employment Guarantee Programs on Child Labor and Education

Li & Sekhri | Working Paper | January 2020

The paper focuses on India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGA) to study its effects on enrollment in schools and child labor. The introduction of MGNREGA results in lower relative school enrollment in treated districts, driven by primary school children.

FROM AROUND THE WORLD

Unpacking Skill Bias: Automation and New Tasks

Acemoglu & Restrepo | Working Paper | January 2020

The paper shows that factor prices depend on the set of tasks that factors perform, and that automation: (i) powerfully impacts inequality; (ii) can reduce real wages; and (iii) can generate realistic changes in

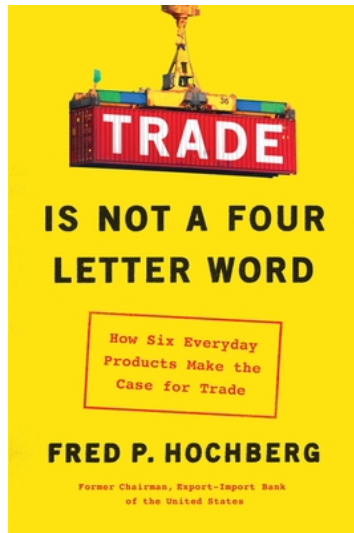
A Jobseeker Assessment & Intervention Model

Coppin, Ciarrochi, Sahdra & Rosete | Working Paper | January 2020

The paper studies the impact of psychosocial intervention (PSI) on employment rates and finds that the intervention is more effective than traditional interventions, especially for

inequality with small changes in productivity.

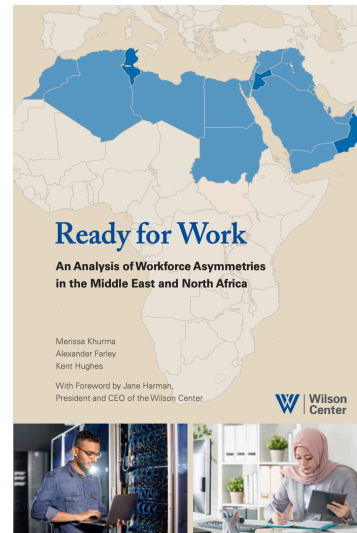
jobseekers who were proactively searching a job.



Trade is Not a Four Letter Word

Hochberg | Book |
January 2020

Using case studies on six (6) everyday products: taco salad, Honda Odyssey, banana, iPhone, college degree, and the HBO series "Game of Thrones", the book explains how trade can be used to build a better future.



Ready for Work: An Analysis of Workforce Asymmetries in the Middle East and North Africa

Khurma, Farley & Hughes | Report |
December 2019

The report presents an analysis of workforce development in Jordan, Tunisia, and Oman and breaks down the workforce challenges into a set of supply and demand side factors.

Microentrepreneurship in Developing Countries

Jayachandran |
Working Paper |
January 2020

This article reviews the recent literature in economics on small-scale entrepreneurship in low-income countries.

Is Parental Leave Costly for Firms and Coworkers?

Brenøe, Canaan, Harmon & Royer |
Working Paper | January 2020

The study finds that employees who go on parental leave impose negligible costs on their firm and coworkers.

CONTRIBUTORS

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Want to share your recent publication or event? Email kpela@worldbank.org



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