



How to present your job market paper

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European Job Market
Naples, 6 Dec. 2018

Standard structure

1. Motivation (1-2 slides)
 2. This paper / Research question (1 slide)
 3. Preview of results (1-2 slides)
 4. Literature (1 slide)
 5. Outline (1 slide)
 6. Theory / Conceptual framework
 7. Data / Background
 8. Empirical strategy / Identification
 9. Results
 10. Conclusions / Policy implications
- Introduction
- Core
- End



I. Introduction



1. Motivation

Need to balance 2 things:

- **Importance**: a question the audience wants to know the answer to
 - Creating ENTHUSIASM and interest is the key goal of your first 5 min.
- **«Delivery»**: a question you CAN answer
 - Do not create expectations you cannot satisfy
- I prefer motivations coming from real world problems/ stylized facts, rather than from gaps in the literature. Use graphs when striking.



2. This paper

- State exactly what you do, connecting it to broad motivation
- Give enough info to allow audience to grasp originality of your contribution, but NOT too many details (2 -3 sentences)
- Challenge: not to trigger 20 questions that will block you for 30'
- Pre-empt objections to methodology: «As I will show, this is not driven by...»

Introduction – Example 1

Making Moves Matter

Experimental Evidence on Incentivizing Bureaucrats through
Performance-Based Postings

Adnan Q. Khan, IGC, LSE

Asim I. Khwaja, Harvard Kennedy School

Benjamin A. Olken, MIT

March 2018

Motivation

- ▶ Governments face many constraints in providing incentives to workers, especially in developing countries
- ▶ Transfers are often used by bureaucracies: dole out favors, political pressure, reward/punish staff
- ▶ But many challenges to using transfers as incentives:
 - ▶ workers may have heterogeneous preferences
 - ▶ truthful revelation of preferences
 - ▶ providing incentives throughout the distribution
 - ▶ the re-allocation of people to tasks induced by such a system, and the disruption caused by moving people around, may cost the organization more than the performance gains induced by the incentive effects

This paper

- ▶ Propose a mechanism for using transfers to provide incentives: *performance-ranked serial dictatorship* (PRSD)
 - ▶ Individuals take turns choosing their desired location, with their rank in the sequence based on their performance
 - ▶ Like all serial dictatorship mechanisms, incentive-compatible to reveal true preferences
 - ▶ Incentives come from desire to get a higher rank
 - ▶ Provides incentives throughout the distribution, though not uniform for everyone
- ▶ Evaluate this mechanism using a two-year field experiment with over 500 tax inspectors in Punjab, Pakistan
 - ▶ Groups of inspectors randomly allocated into performance-ranked serial dictatorship or control
 - ▶ Treatment inspectors told at start of year 1 that postings in year 2 will be based on performance (growth in tax revenue) in year 1, allocated via PRSD
 - ▶ Repeat for 2 fiscal years

Introduction – Example 2

Middleman Minorities and Ethnic Violence: Anti-Jewish Pogroms in the Russian Empire

Irena Grosfeld (PSE)

Seyhun Orcan Sakalli (University of Lausanne)

Ekaterina Zhuravskaya (PSE)

November 2018

Motivation

Ethnic minorities that dominate middleman occupations, such as traders and financiers, often become targets of persecution and ethnic violence:

- Chinese in Philippines and Indonesia
 - Igbos in Nigeria
 - Lebanese in Sierra Leone
 - Muslims in India
 - Greeks and Armenians in the Ottoman Empire
 - Jews in Medieval Western and Modern Eastern Europe
-

Motivation: political scientists' view

- Political scientists (e.g., Bonacich 1973; Sowell 2005; Chua 2004) have argued that “middleman minorities” are persecuted because of the very nature of their occupations
 - The middleman minorities are viewed as “unproductive”
 - The majority considers that they earn their living dishonestly through “parasitism” and “exploitation” of the majority
 - According to political scientists, this sentiment could explain why middleman minorities are vulnerable to persecution
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Motivation: economists' view

- Economic literature considers economic competition between ethnic groups as one of the primary drivers of ethnic conflict
 - Since Horowitz (1985), the literature has argued that the likelihood of conflict is higher when minority competes with the majority than when it occupies economic niches complementary to the majority
 - Recent systematic evidence in support of this conjecture:
 - Muslim traders in ports of South Asia (Jha 2013, 2014)
 - Jewish moneylenders during the outbreak of the Black Death in Western Europe (Jedwab et al., 2017)
 - The reformation caused pogroms in the Protestant but not in the Catholic parts of Germany because of the increase in competition in the middleman sector (Becker & Pascali 2018)
-

Puzzle

- Many episodes of violence against middleman minorities occur without any increase in competition
 - The puzzle:
 - Economic segregation in general decreases ethnic violence
 - but segregated middleman minorities are persecuted because they are middlemen
 - To address this puzzle, we study the conditions, under which such violence broke out
 - focusing on anti-Jewish pogroms in the Russian Empire throughout the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century
 - the historical events that brought the word *pogrom* into European languages

This paper

Introduction – Example 3 (unorthodox)

The Entertaining Way to Behavioral Change: Fighting HIV with MTV

Abhijit Banerjee
MIT

Eliana La Ferrara
Bocconi

Victor Orozco
The World Bank

BREAD Conference, Columbia University
May 9, 2018

Motivation

Behavior change and “deep” preferences

- Mixed evidence on effectiveness of behavior change campaigns targeting «deep» preferences, e.g., sexual behavior, fertility, child rearing, gender based violence,...
- HIV-AIDS: govt's have invested millions in behavior change campaigns (e.g., ABC). Yet only 1 in 7 interventions to prevent sexual transmission of HIV works (Padian et al., 2010)
- Information may not be enough: other social and psychological factors are at play (Fishbein & Ajzen 2010)
- Recent move to media-based approaches that mix education and entertainment: «*edutainment*»

Contribution 1

Does edutainment work?

- Despite policy enthusiasm, few well identified studies, and mostly on (i) short documentaries or (ii) TV programs that did not target deep seated preferences

This paper

WHAT WE DO

- We run a RCT to evaluate **MTV series *Shuga*** in Nigeria. Large scale TV production aimed at improving knowledge about HIV/AIDS and changing attitudes & behaviors

Preview of results

- We show that Shuga was effective.
 - 100% increase in probability of testing for HIV after 8-10 mos
 - Reduced STDs
 - Improved knowledge & reduced stigma

Contribution 2

Why does it work?

- Existing studies in econ. of the media do not investigate presumed contribution of “entertaining” program features
- Psychological theory suggests mechanisms related to role modeling, identification & immersion in the narrative

WHAT WE DO

- Measure emotional involvement through indexes from communications literature
- Non-experimental evidence that mechanisms run through emotional connections

Contribution 3

Social effects

- Existing work focuses on transmitting messages to *individuals*
- To the extent that people care about others' opinions (e.g., due to conformism or coordination), effectiveness will depend on how the «new» message fits in with existing social norm

WHAT WE DO

- We take seriously the **information** vs **conformity** channel and test for social effects using several strategies
- We find support for some types of social influence, not others

II. Literature



Literature DON'Ts

- Criticise others
 - ❑ You want to show that what you do DIFFERS, not that the others were wrong
 - ❑ You can IMPROVE also starting from good work!
- List too many strands of lit.
- Explain what every other paper in the lit. does
 - ❑ Your job is not to teach a mini-course!
 - ❑ Just explain what is essential in order to assess the value of your contribution

Literature DO's

- Cite the right papers
 - The essential references for your topic
 - “Competing” work if closely related
- 1 line after each “strand” of lit. / list of papers, to explain how you contribute
- Literature should take as little time as possible!



III. Empirical strategy



Identification

- Clearly explain **source of variation** you exploit
- Clearly state **identifying assumptions**: “Effect of X on Y can be interpreted as causal under the assumption that....”
- Provide **evidence** in support of your identifying assumptions
 - This is where the audience decides whether to listen to believe everything else you will say

Empirical specification

- Panel data model with year and state fixed effects

$$y_{it} = \alpha_i + \delta_t + \beta x_{it} + \varepsilon_{it}$$

with

Unit of observation must be clear!



- y_{it} = average wage in state i , year t
 - α_i = state fixed effect
 - δ_t = year fixed effect
 - ε_{it} = error term
- Identification comes from exogenous law changes

Be upfront about limitations

- If your approach is susceptible to critiques, be upfront about it
 - No kamikaze of course
- Argue (and provide evidence for it) that these limitations are not a problem



IV. Results



What to show

- 1 finding per slide
- Most important findings first
- Logical path from one finding to the next
- Robustness checks: Appendix!

Tables

- Legible font size!
 - 2-3 dec digits
 - Intuitive variable names (“wealth”, not “tot_assts”)
 - Main coefficients only
 - Dep. Var. on 1st line of table!
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How to show

- Use figures when possible:
 - More immediate
 - Easier to remember
 - Use tables for key magnitudes and to show different specifications
 - Slide titles: instead of “Table 1” say “Treatment increases savings and consumption”
-

Results – Example 1

Goals and Gaps: Educational Careers of Immigrant Children

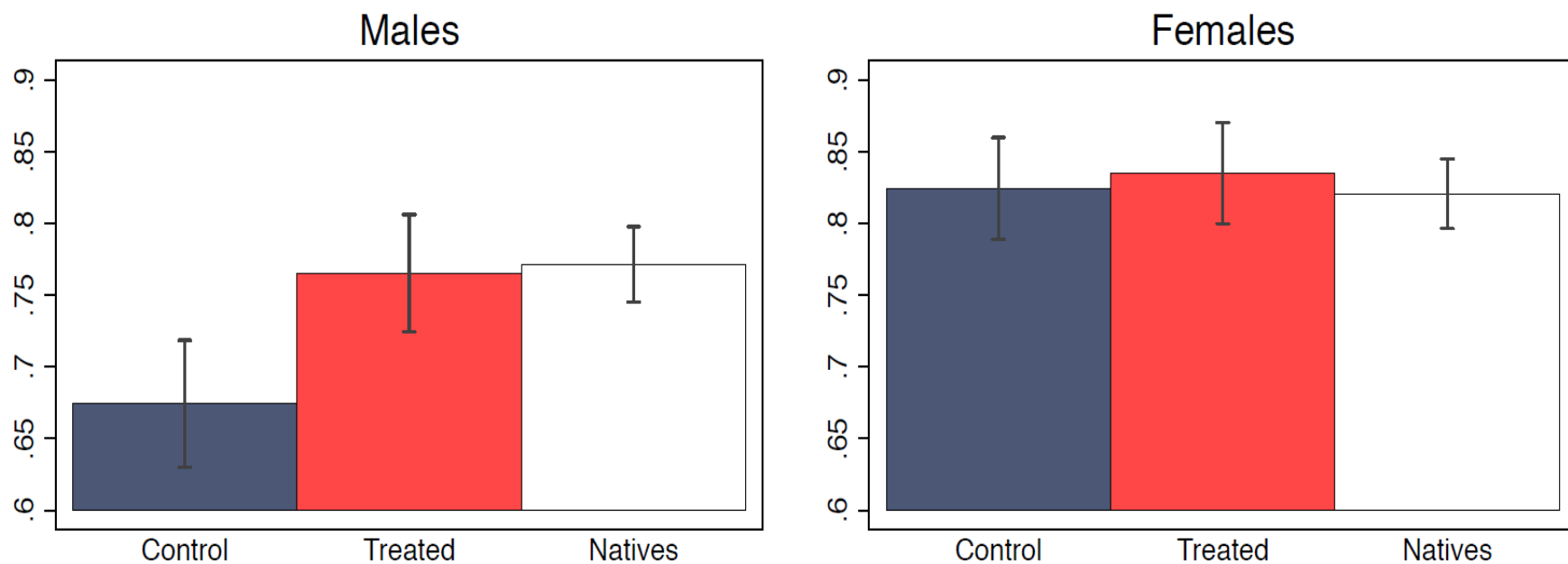
Michela Carlana
Bocconi

Eliana La Ferrara
Bocconi, IGER &
LEAP

Paolo Pinotti
Bocconi, fRDB &
Dondena

	(1)	(2)
Dep Var:	Probability of choosing the high track	
	Males	Females
Treat	0.091** (0.035)	0.011 (0.031)
Comparable Italians	0.097*** (0.030)	-0.004 (0.026)
Constant	0.674*** (0.025)	0.824*** (0.022)
Obs.	1253	1274
R^2	0.009	0.000

Panel A: Probability of choosing the high track



Results – Example 2

Tackling Youth Unemployment:

Evidence from a Labor Market Experiment in Uganda

Livia Alfonsi [BRAC], Oriana Bandiera [LSE]

Vittorio Bassi [USC], Robin Burgess [LSE]

Imran Rasul [UCL], Munshi Sulaiman [BRAC], Anna Vitali [UCL]

November 2017

Figure 3: Tasks Performed by Vocationally Trained and Firm Trained Workers

Panel A: Manufacturing

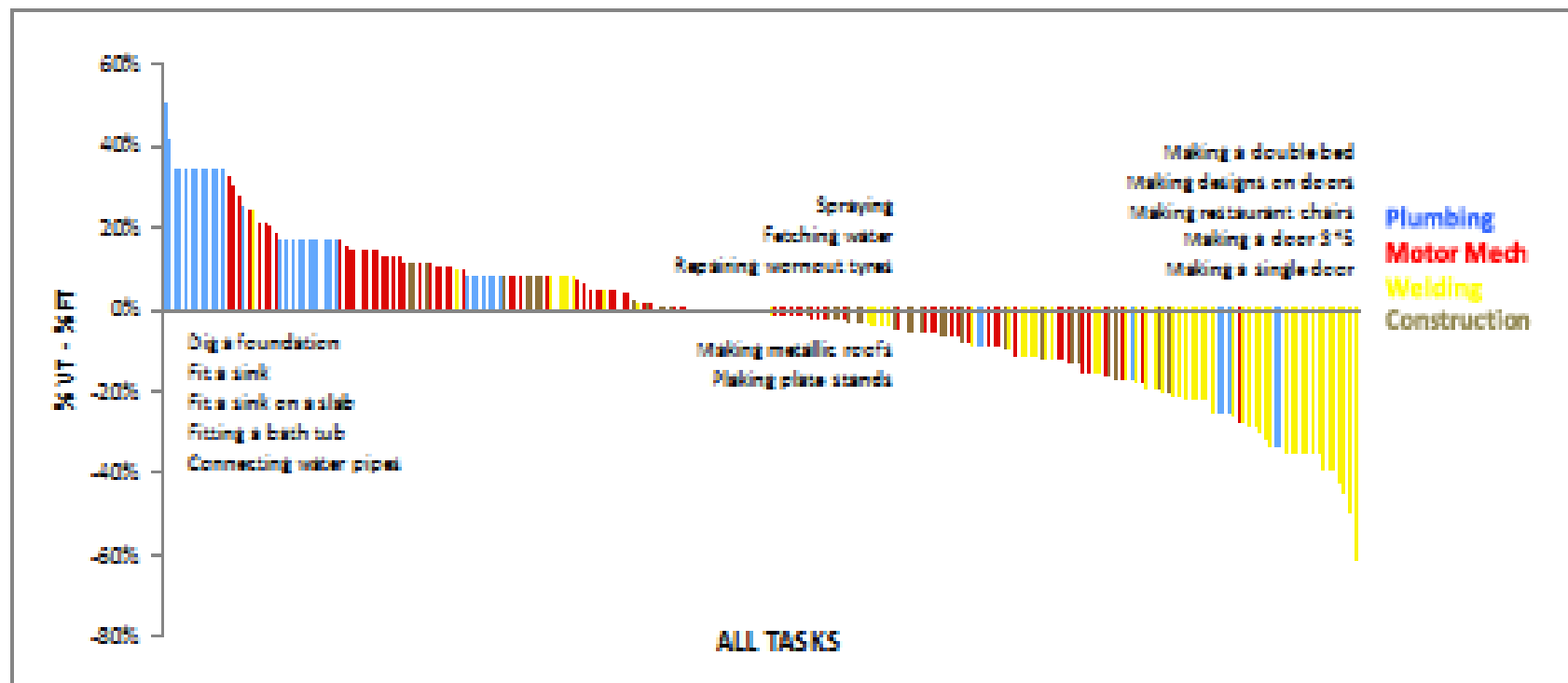
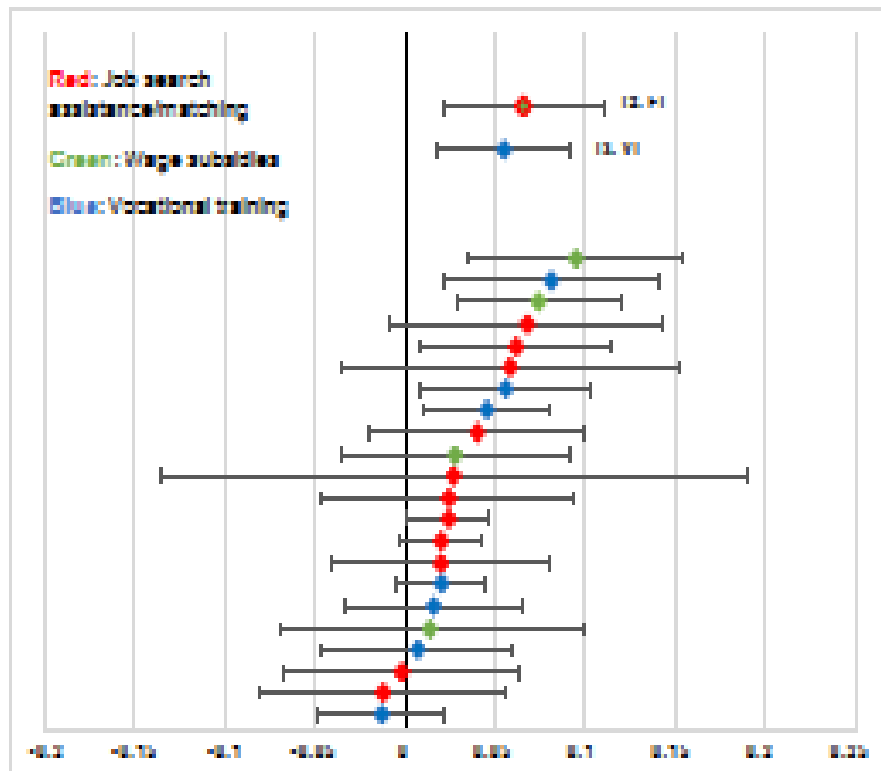
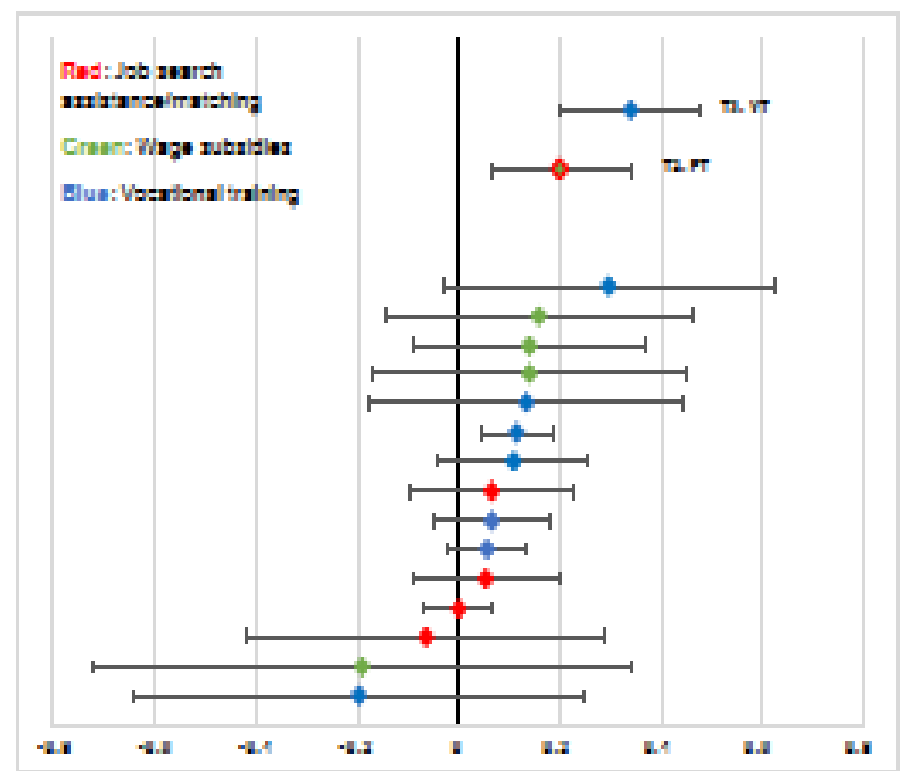


Figure 7: Comparison of Treatment Impacts to Meta-analysis by McKenzie [2017]

Panel A. Employment impacts



Panel B. Earnings impacts



V. Conclusions



How to conclude

- **Summarize** main contribution and results, NOT as repetition but stressing the bottom line
 - Give qualitative & quantitative take-aways
 - “What did I learn?”

 - Conclude w/ lessons and **implications**
 - For policy
 - For future research
 - Your last line must be one that says “it matters!”
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Conclusions - Example

Are the Referees and Editors in Economics Gender Neutral?

David Card, UC Berkeley

Stefano DellaVigna, UC Berkeley

Patricia Funk, Università della Svizzera Italiana

Nagore Iriberry, University of the Basque Country

NBER Labor Studies – November 8, 2018

Conclusions

- Wrap up. The *good* news:
 - Journals on economics chose transparency (other disciplines?)
 - M and F referees assess M and F papers the same
 - Editors gender neutral: No differential delays, same weight to F and M refs, positive weight in desk-rej
- The *bad* news:
 - Refs of both genders more negative about F papers → F papers get 22% more cites controlling for referee views
- Interpretations:
 1. (*Discrimination*) Higher bar for women, also explains higher quality at submission
 2. (*Characteristics*) Women send in papers with different chars, say more innovative, that referees undervalue
 3. (*Citation Gap*) Women wait on submitting, accumulate more citations early on -- implausible given results for earlier submissions

Conclusions

- How to lower the hurdle for female authors?
 - Assigning more female referees does not help female authors and adds low-promotability tasks to females (see Babcock, Recalde, Vesterlund and Weingart, 2017)
 - Track gender-specific stats of submissions, matched to cites
 - Publicizing results may be enough to make it go away (eg, Pope, Price, and Wolfers, 2018)
- Better than double-blind reviews (costly, hard to implement, and does not address interpretation 2)

References



Some great advice on how to present

Oriana Bandiera

- <https://www.orianabandiera.net/teaching>

Jesse Shapiro

- https://www.brown.edu/Research/Shapiro/pdfs/applied_micro_slides.pdf