

ECONOMICS/INFORMATION SCIENCE



Abdelrasaq Na-Allah

Tshwane University of Technology

Mentor: Prof M Muchie

Broad research area: Trade and development

Specific research field: Trade preferences, economies of scale and dynamic productivity upgrading in African manufacturing firms: the production technology-institutional context nexus

Purpose of study:

The prospect for dynamic productivity gain from preferential access to market is argued in this paper as being linked to economies of scale potentials in a targeted sector. Under the assumption that these potentials do not accrue in a random manner it is claimed that striking the right kind of complementarity between attributes of production technology and the institutional context of their application is the key to unlocking them. A framework is presented in which a production technology with strong potentials for internal (firm level) economies, requires the availability of highly skilled and competent professionals in the management of large-scale concerns for successful appropriation. On the other hand if potential is revealed to be strong only at industry or external level then success in actualising it will ultimately be determined by the efficiency of institutional support structures to obtain it in the wider macro level environment.

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Vimal Ranchhod

University of Cape Town

Mentor: Prof M Leibbrandt

Broad research area: Economics

Specific research field: Empirical studies in labour economics and the economics of education

Purpose of study:

My current work involves empirically estimating several key economic relations in the South African labour market. We investigate the impact of the domestic worker minimum wage law on employment and wages of domestic workers. We find that wages have increased significantly but employment decreased only by a small and statistically insignificant amount. We also investigate the effect of adolescent fertility on educational attainment in Cape Town. Being a teen mother reduces the chance of finishing secondary school by age 22 by about 10%, after controlling for several observable characteristics. A third paper investigates

the effects of school progression on sexual debut. African girls who pass a given year are more likely to become sexually active than their peers who failed. We attribute this to peer effects due to mixing with older students. A fourth paper investigates how poorer South African households who were receiving a state old age pension cope when the pensioner leaves or dies. Coping mechanisms involve sending children away, an immigration of middle-aged females, and an increase in labour supply, particularly among older adults. Newer projects I am working on include making use of census data to estimate the effect of immigration on the labour market experiences of native South Africans, as well as a broader agenda surrounding the high levels and stubborn persistence of income inequality in South Africa.

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