

Alexandra Opanasets

email: alex.opanasets@bc.edu

website: alexopanasets.com

cell: +1 646 241 4695

EDUCATION

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA
Ph.D. Economics (expected) 2024
Committee: [Lucas Coffman \(chair\)](#), [Hanno Foerster](#), [Theodore Papageorgiou](#)
M.A. Economics 2019

New York University Shanghai, Shanghai, China & New York, NY
B.A. Economics (with Honors) 2017

FIELDS

Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Microeconomic Theory, Instructor F2021, S2022, F2022, S2023
Received 2023 Donald J. White Teaching Excellence Award from Boston College.
Invited Panelist at 2022 Boston College Graduate Student Teaching Conference.

Principles of Economics, Teaching Assistant S2020, F2020, S2021
for Professors Can Erbil & Chandini Sankaran

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Carroll School of Management, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA
Lab Manager, Consumer Insights Panel 2023 - present

Department of Economics, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA
Research Assistant to Claudia Olivetti 2018 - 2019
Research Assistant to Can Erbil 2017 - 2018

U.S. International Trade Commission, Washington, D.C.
Economist Student Trainee Summer 2016

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Gender Differences in Response to Application Costs on the Job Market (JMP)
Project funded by the National Science Foundation, Award #2215332.
AEA RCT Registry ID #0011182.

Research shows that women are less willing than comparable men to put themselves forward for competitive opportunities such as high-paying jobs. Through a novel experiment in an online labor market, I investigate the conditions under which a “gender application gap” arises. I randomly vary the cost of applying for a high-paying job, with subjects either facing no marginal cost, paying a fee, or writing a cover letter. Men are significantly more likely than women to apply for the job only when the marginal cost of applying is zero; introducing any application cost shrinks the gender application gap. This result comes primarily from the behavior of the least skilled workers: women prefer not to apply when unskilled regardless of costs, whereas unskilled men only drop out of the applicant pool when costs are introduced. Women in the “no-cost” group behave as if facing some unobserved psychological cost of applying. I discuss possible sources of a women-specific psychological application cost, including unwillingness to compete and sensitivity to rejection.

What Are My Chances? Measuring Job Market Beliefs using Incentives

I gather a new data set of resumes, search activities, and search outcomes of business school undergraduates looking for summer internships. I document that women apply for fewer

internships than men and spend less time applying, but are similarly efficient in terms of offers received per unit of effort, implying a “quality-over-quantity” approach to job search. In a lab study, I use my outcomes data to elicit students’ beliefs regarding the correlation between resume qualifications and the likelihood of receiving an offer. I incentivize true reporting of these beliefs using a “crossover mechanism” (see, e.g., Mobius et al. 2014) that has respondents bet on the outcomes of other students’ job searches. In one study, I find that women perceive a stronger correlation between resume qualifications and success compared to men, and that this result cannot be explained by gender differences in willingness to rate a resume as “qualified”. This result could help explain why previous experimental evidence shows that women pay more attention than men to the qualifications listed in a job ad.

Demand- and Supply-side Selection in the Provision of "Baby-Friendly" Care

I study the allocation of “Baby-Friendly” hospital practices developed by the World Health Organization to promote exclusive breastfeeding. Using data from the CDC Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) survey for years 2007-2018, I find mothers who were ex-ante more likely to breastfeed (educated or/and white) were also more likely to experience a “Baby-Friendly” birth, even though prior research finds that they are least likely to change their behavior in response to such practices. One possible contributor to this gap is more-educated parents choosing birthing centers that promote Baby-Friendly practices. Another possible contributor is birthing centers themselves choosing to offer Baby-Friendly care more often to white and Hispanic mothers than to Black mothers, a phenomenon previously documented in small observational studies. I examine whether a special “Baby-Friendly” certification, which requires hospitals to implement all recommended practices for the vast majority of births, helps close the racial gap in exposure to practices by reducing hospitals’ incentive to deny Baby-Friendly care to Black mothers.

PRESENTATIONS

North American Economic Science Association Annual Meeting, Pitt Experimental Economics Brown Bag Seminar (2023)
Boston College Graduate Student Teaching Conference (2022)
Boston University WEOrg Virtual Mentoring Workshop (2020)
U.S. International Trade Commission Seminar Series (2016)

AWARDS

Boston College Center for Teaching Excellence
Donald J. White Teaching Excellence Award for Graduate Teaching Fellows 2023
National Science Foundation, Division of Social and Economic Sciences
Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (\$23,475) 2022

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Whence the Beef: The Effect of Repealing Mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) Using a Vertically Integrated Armington Model with Monte Carlo Simulation, with Ross Hallren. *Southern Economic Journal*, November 2017, 84(3): 879-897.

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

International Trade Theory and Evidence: A Survey, with Francisco L. Rivera-Batiz and Can Erbil. In F. L. Rivera-Batiz & C. Erbil (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of International Economics and Global Trade* (2020, Vol. 3, pp. 85-144). World Scientific.

MISC INFORMATION

I am a U.S. citizen and a native speaker of both English and Russian.