

Abu Shonchoy

Personal Details

Position: PhD (Economics) candidate.
University Address: School of Economics, Australian School of Business,
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Thesis advisor: Professor Kevin Fox.

Education

PhD in Economics, University of New South Wales (UNSW), Australia. *Submitted March 2010*
Master of Economic Policy, The Australian National University, Australia. *2005*
Bachelor of Social Sciences in Economics (honors), University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. *2003*

Research Interests

Primary: Labor Economics and Migration, Development Economics and Public Policy.
Secondary: Macroeconomics and Economic Growth.

Teaching Interests

Development Economics, Labor Economics, Public Finance and Applied Econometrics.

Working Papers

Job Market Paper: *Seasonal Migration and the Effectiveness of Micro-credit in the Lean Period: Evidence from Bangladesh.*

This paper investigates the relationship between access to micro-credit and temporary seasonal migration, an issue which is largely ignored in the standard rural-urban migration literature. Seasonal migration due to natural disasters or agricultural downturns is a common phenomenon in developing countries. Using primary data from a cross-sectional household survey from the northern part of Bangladesh, this study quantifies the factors that influence such migration decisions. Seasonal migration is a natural choice for individual suffering periodic hardship. However, due to strong loan repayment rules, those who have prior access to micro-credit have no such option. I find that there is no significant difference in income in lean period between those who have access to micro-credit and those who do not. Households that take the decision to migrate while having access to micro-credit earn significantly more than households who only have micro-credit in the lean period. In addition, this paper finds that network effects play a significant role influencing the migration decision, with the presence of kinsmen at the place of destination having considerable impact. The results have numerous potential policy implications, including the design of typical micro-credit schemes.

Second Paper: *A Theoretical Note on Seasonal Migration.*

This note develops a model of rural-urban seasonal migration with special reference to lean period shocks. Agricultural lean periods occur in rural areas due to natural disasters or agricultural downturns which take place quite regularly in developing countries. This paper shows that as the probability of lean period increases, overall seasonal migration decreases but the proportion of agricultural workers undertaking seasonal migration increases. Furthermore, this paper studies the link between the informal credit market and seasonal migration.

Third Paper: *The Determinants of Government Consumption Expenditures: A Panel Data Study.* This paper focuses on the recent pattern of government expenditure in developing countries and estimates the determinants which have influenced government expenditure. Using a panel dataset for 111 developing countries from 1984 to 2004, this study finds evidence that political and institutional variables, as well as governance variables, significantly influence government expenditure. Among other results, the paper finds new evidence of Wagner's law which states that peoples' demand for service and willingness to pay is income-elastic, hence the expansion of public economy is influenced by the greater economic affluence of a nation (Cameron 1978). Corruption is found to be influential in explaining the public expenditure of developing countries. By contrast, size of the economy and linguistic fractionalization are found to have significant negative association with government expenditure. In addition, the study finds evidence that public expenditure significantly shrinks under military dictatorship compared with other form of governance.

Forth Paper: *The Dynamics of Spending and Absorption of Aid: Panel Data Analysis.*

In September 1999, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) established the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) to make the reduction of poverty and the enhancement of economic growth the fundamental objectives of lending operations in its poorest member countries. This paper studies the spending and absorption of aid in PRGF-supported programs, verifies whether the use of aid is programmed to be smoothed over time, and analyzes how considerations about macroeconomic stability influence the programmed use of aid. The paper shows that PRGF-supported programs permit countries to utilize all increases in aid within a few years, showing smoothed use of aid inflows over time. Our results reveal that spending is higher than absorption in both the long-run and short-run use of aid, which is a robust finding of the study. Furthermore, the paper demonstrates that the long-run spending exceeds the injected increase of aid inflows in the economy. In addition, the paper finds that the presence of a PRGF-supported program does not influence the actual absorption or spending of aid.

Experience

Lecturer-in-charge

February 2008 to present

School of Economics, UNSW. Course instructor for graduate Introductory Data and Statistics in the Master of Commerce (MCom) degree.

Number of student: 157 (1st semester, 2010).

Teaching Evaluation: 5.24 out 6 (2nd semester 2009). Teaching evaluations for other semesters can be found at my website.

Lecturer-in-charge

July 2009 to present

School of Finance and Economics, University of Technology Sydney (UTS). Course instructor for Economics for Management in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree. Number of student: 88 (1st semester, 2010).

Teaching Evaluation: 4.23 out 5 (2nd semester 2009). Teaching evaluations can be found at my website.

Associate Lecturer

July 2006 to July 2009

School of Economics, UNSW.

Internship

November 2007 to February 2008

Policy Development and Review Unit (PDR), International Monetary Fund (IMF), Washington DC, USA.

Lecturer

July 2005 to February 2006

Department of Economics and Social Sciences, BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Publications

Spending and Absorption of Aid in PRGF Supported Programs (With Berndt Markus, Paolo Dudine and Jan Kees Martijn) *IMF Working Paper WP/08/237*. June 2008

Seasonal Migration pattern of Labor: evidence from Kurigram district, Bangladesh (With A.Z.A Shahriar and Sakiba Zeba), *ESS Working Paper Series 007*. Department of Economics and Social Sciences, BRAC University. Dhaka, Bangladesh. November 2006

Conferences

European Society for Population Economics (ESPE 2009), Seville, Spain. June 2009

5th Australasian Development Economics Workshop, Melbourne, Australia. June 2009

Fourth IZA/World Bank conference on Employment and Development, Bonn, Germany. May 2009

Royal Economic Society Fourth PhD Presentation Meeting, London, UK. January 2009

Bangladesh in the 21st Century, a conference on Bangladesh at Harvard University, Cambridge, USA. June 2008

Journal Referee

Empirical Economics, Journal of Resources, Energy and Development

IT skills

Windows and Macintosh Operating Systems, Microsoft Office utilities, L^AT_EX, Scientific Workplace, STATA, E-views, SPSS and MATLAB.

Recognitions

Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship, The Tokyo Foundation 2009

3rd Meetings of the Winner of the Bank of Sweden Prize of Economic Sciences by the council for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings from 20th to 24th August. 2008

University International Postgraduate Scholarship (UIPA), UNSW. 2006

Australian School of Business (ASB) Supplementary Scholarship, UNSW. 2006

Neil Vousden Memorial Scholarship for Master's studies in Economics at the Australian National University. 2004

Faculty Scholarship, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh. 2003-04

References

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