

Thiago Scarelli

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Research Fields

Labor Economics; Development Economics; Experimental Economics.

Education

Ph.D. candidate in Economics, Paris School of Economics (2019-24, *expected*)

Thesis title: Occupational Choice and Liquidity Constraints in Developing Countries

Supervisor: David N. Margolis

M.A. Economics, Paris School of Economics (2017-19)

B.A. Economics, Universidade de São Paulo (2009-14)

B.A. Journalism, Universidade de São Paulo (2003-07)

Academic Visiting Positions

University of Chicago, visiting researcher under the supervision of John List (2023)

Goethe-Universität Frankfurt, undergraduate exchange program in Sociology (2005-06)

Job Market Paper

Worker's Preferences over Payment Schedules: Evidence from Ridesharing Drivers [[file](#)]

This paper investigates the importance of quick remuneration for gig workers. To explore this question, I run a large-scale survey experiment with ridesharing drivers in Brazil. The main finding is that the median driver would be willing to forgo a third of their potential earnings to be paid on the same day of their rides, compared to the alternative of being paid a month later. Such a strong preference for quick pay seems to be associated with liquidity constraints, as drivers under heavier financial stress are more likely to prioritize same-day remuneration. I also document that priming drivers to think about their personal budget makes them more inclined to favor larger (instead of faster) payments, suggesting that pay-me-now can be a default choice for this population. These results advance the literature on job attributes by showing that payment timing is a relevant aspect of an occupation. This paper also contributes to the gig work debate by emphasizing that digital platforms are best positioned to offer agile pay schemes, which help workers address liquidity shortages in the short run but might induce poverty traps over the long run.

Publications

Occupations and Wealth in Developing Countries [[file](#)]

Revue d'économie du développement (2022)

To what extent is the workers' occupational category (whether someone is an employer, an employee, an own-account worker, or an unpaid family worker) associated with their material living conditions? This short paper looks at the distribution of employment categories over different wealth levels in 1,313 regions from 46 low- and middle-income countries. We find that, despite a wide diversity in the composition of those markets, own-account and family workers are consistently overrepresented among the poorest members of the employed population, as measured by household assets.

Selected Research in Progress

When You Can't Afford to Wait for a Job: The Role of Time Discounting for Own-Account Workers in Developing Countries, with David N. Margolis [[file](#)]

R&R, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*

Frictional labor markets impose a fundamental trade-off: individuals may work on their own at any time, but can only take a potentially better-paid wage job after spending some time looking for it, suggesting that intertemporal considerations affect how people choose their occupation. We formalize this intuition under the job search framework and show that a sufficiently high subjective discount rate can justify the choice for own-account work even when it pays less than wage work. With this simple model, we estimate a lower bound for the discount rate that is implicit in the occupational choice of urban own-account workers in Brazil. We find that at least 65 percent of those workers appear to discount the future at rates superior to those available in the credit market, which suggests constrained occupational choice. Finally, we show that the estimated time preference lower bound is positively associated with food, clothing, and housing deprivation.

Referee Service

Journal of International Development (2022, 23), *Revue d'économie politique* (2022).

Research Conferences

- *Society of Labor Economists (SOLE) Annual Meeting*, Portland (2024)
- *IZA Summer School in Labor Economics*, Berlin (2023)
- *PSE-CEPR Policy Forum*, Paris (2023)
- *European Association of Labor Economists (EALE) Annual Conference*, Padova (2022)
- *International Conference on Development Economics (ICDE)*, Clermont-Ferrand (2022)
- *Journées de Microéconomie Appliquée (JMA)*, Rennes (2022)
- *Society of Labor Economists (SOLE) Annual Meeting*, Minneapolis (2022)
- *IZA/World Bank Jobs and Development Conference*, Warsaw (2020)

Research Seminars

- *University of Valencia, Applied Economics Seminar*, Valencia (2024)
- *Paris School of Economics, Labour and Public Economics Seminar*, Paris (2023)
- *IESEG School of Management, IFLAME Seminar*, Paris (2023)
- *Paris School of Economics, Behavior Seminar*, Paris (2023)
- *University of Chicago, Experimental Seminar*, Chicago (2023)
- *University of Chicago, Development Meeting*, Chicago (2023)
- *Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Behavior Workgroup*, Paris (2021)
- *Paris School of Economics, Casual Friday Development Seminar*, Paris (2020, 21, 23)

Conference Organization

- *Panthéon-Sorbonne's Doctorissimes Conference*, Paris (2020, 22)

Research Grants

International mobility grant, Paris School of Economics (2023)

Research grant, Paris School of Economics (EUR PgSE, ANR) (2022-23)

Full Ph.D. scholarship, French Minister of Higher Education and Research (2019-22)

General Audience Media

– *The Issue of Payment Timing*, PSE's Economics for Everybody (2024)

– *The Next Generation of Research*, VoxEU Podcast (2023)

Teaching Experience

Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Teaching Assistant

– *Introduction to Econometrics*, undergraduate, in English (Spring 2020, 21, 24)

– *Statistics*, undergraduate, in French (Fall 2019, 22, 23)

– *Applied Econometrics*, masters, in French (Fall 2020, 21)

– *Descriptive Statistics*, undergraduate, in French (Fall 2020, 21)

Sciences Po, Adjunct Professor

– *Statistics Applied to Social Sciences*, undergraduate, in English (Spring 2020, 21)

Other Professional Experience

Consultant, World Bank, Social Protection and Labor, Global (2023-24)

Credit analyst, Moody's Investors Service, Financial Institutions Group, Latin America (2013-17)

Macroeconomic research intern, Banco Bradesco, Brazil (2012-13)

Research analyst, Frost & Sullivan, Brazil (2011-12)

Journalist, Universo Online, Brazil (2009-11)

Journalist, Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata, Brazil (2008-09)

Languages

Native proficiency in **Portuguese**

Full working proficiency in **English, French** and **Spanish**

Intermediate working proficiency in **Italian** and **German**

Programming Languages and Software

Full working proficiency with Stata, R, LaTeX, Qualtrics, Github.

References

David N. Margolis, Paris School of Economics

Luc Behaghel, Paris School of Economics

John List, University of Chicago

Last updated on May 21, 2024