

MARCO ALFANO

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

Placement Director: Andrew Chesher
Graduate Coordinator: Daniella Harper

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Fields:

Applied Microeconomics: Development Economics, Family Economics, Labour Economics

Current Position

British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Economics,
University College London (2012 – 2015).

Previous Position

Research Officer, Centre for Research and Analysis of Migration, Department of Economics,
University College London (2010 – 2012).

Graduate Studies:

PhD in Economics, University of Warwick, UK, 2012.

Advisors: Prof Wiji Arulampalam, Prof Robin Naylor

Thesis Title: “Female and Child Welfare in India: An Empirical Analysis”

Undergraduate Studies:

MSc Economics (Merit), London School of Economics and Political Science, UK, 2005

BA Philosophy, Politics and Economics (Hons.), University of Oxford, UK, 2004

References

Prof Christian Dustmann
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Prof Uta Schönberg
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University College London
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Prof Wiji Arulampalam
Department of Economics
University of Warwick
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Phone: +44 (0)24 7652 3471

Teaching Experience:

2012 – 2013 Economics, Brilliant Club Charity, Volunteer Lecturer

2011 – 2013 Migration Economics, University College London, MSc Dissertation Supervisor

2008 – 2009 Development Economics, University of Warwick, Teaching Assistant

2006 – 2008 Economics II, University of Warwick, Teaching Assistant

Research Papers:

- **Job Market Paper: Islamic Law and Parental Behaviour towards Children: Evidence from the Sharia Introduction in Nigeria**

Islamic law lays down detailed rules regulating the upbringing of children. This study examines the effect of these rules on parental behaviour by exploiting a unique natural experiment: the introduction of Sharia law in northern Nigeria. Both triple differences and spatial regression discontinuity estimates show that the Sharia has had a positive effect on fertility rates and the duration of breastfeeding. Empirical evidence further suggests that the Sharia has impacted on parental behaviour by increasing the economic returns to sons and by raising the value of conspicuous adherence to Islamic laws and customs. Moreover, duration analysis estimates show that the Sharia has increased the survival rate of newly born children. By contrast, it has had a negative impact on the survival rate of children aged 1 to 4. This latter effect is particularly pronounced for girls.

- **Daughters, Dowries, Deliveries: The Effect of Marital Payments on Fertility Choices in India (Revise & Resubmit at Journal of Development Economics)**

This paper investigates the effect of the differential pecuniary costs of sons and daughters on fertility decisions. The focus is on dowries in India, which increase the economic returns to sons and decrease the returns to daughters. The paper exploits an exogenous shift in the cost of girls relative to boys arising from a revision in anti-dowry law. The reform is found to have attenuated the widely documented positive correlation between daughters and their parents' fertility. The observed patterns can be explained by a simple model of sequential fertility decisions where the gender composition of children determines future dowry payments.

- **Widening the Gender Gap: The Unintended Consequences of Conditional Cash Transfers in India (with Wiji Arulampalam and Artemisa Flores)**

This paper investigates the unintended consequences of the introduction of a large conditional cash transfer programme (Janani Suraksha Yojana) aimed at improving maternal and neonatal mortality in India. We concentrate on two outcomes not targeted by the scheme: sex ratios at birth and gender gaps in neonatal survival. We exploit the incremental implementation of the programme using the District Level Household Survey data to estimate these effects in a difference-in-differences framework, which compares districts treated in the first year of the scheme with districts treated in subsequent years. The results suggest that the programme significantly suppressed sex ratios at birth, especially in areas characterised by strong preferences for sons. We also provide evidence that the introduction of the programme increased pregnant women's exposure to ultrasound scans.

- **Maternal Autonomy and the Education of the Subsequent Generation: Evidence from Three Contrasting States in India (with Wiji Arulampalam and Uma Kambhampati) - IZA Discussion Paper 6019**
- **Formulating effective policies for health worker recruitment to rural areas: an estimation of preferences, costs, and attitudes in Liberia (with Marko Vujicic and Mandy Ryan)**

Publications:

In refereed Journals:

Vujicic, M., Shengelia, B., Alfano, M. and H. B. Thu (2011): Physician shortages in rural Vietnam: using a labor market approach to inform policy, *Social Science and Medicine*, 73(7), 970 – 977.

Gupta, N. and M. Alfano (2011): Access to non-pecuniary benefits: does gender matter? Evidence from six low- and middle-income countries, *Human Resources for Health*, 9(25).

Policy Reports:

Alfano, M., Battisti, M., Clarke, C., Cornelissen, T., Dustmann, C., Fasani, F., Frattini, T., Gorchach, S., Minale, L., Okatenko, A., Preston, I., and J. Wadsworth (2014): What do we know about migration? Informing the debate, *available as CReAM Discussion Paper*.

Vujicic, M., Ryan, M., Alfano, M., Wesseh, C. S. and J. Brown-Annan (2010): Policy options to attract nurses to rural Liberia: evidence from a Discrete Choice Experiment, *available as HNP Discussion Paper*.

Academic Work Experience:

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| 2013 | University College London, Member of local organizing committee for “Migration: Global Development, New Frontiers” |
| 2012 | University College London, Member of local organizing committee for “Norface Migration Conference” |
| 2011 | University College London, Member of local organizing committee for “Migration: Economic Change, Social Challenge” |

Other Employment:

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| 2014 – 2015 | The World Bank, Consultant “Service Delivery Indicators in Mozambique” |
| 2012 – 2013 | Family Health International, Consultant “Experiments in Uganda” |
| 2009 – 2010 | The World Bank, Resident Consultant “Discrete Choice Experiments in Liberia” |
| 2009 | The World Bank, Consultant “Determinants of Child Survival in Benin” |
| 2009 | The World Health Organisation, Intern “Payment of Health Workers” |
| 2008 | European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Intern “Microfinance in Mongolia” |

Grants and Awards:

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| 2012 – 2015 | British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship, Value £252,381 |
| 2003 | Domus Exhibition in Economics, Pembroke College, University of Oxford |
| 2002 | Collection Prize in Economics, Pembroke College, University of Oxford |

Presentations:

2015: Royal Economic Society, Annual meeting, Manchester, UK; EALE/SOLE World Meeting, Montreal, Canada; Labour Economic Aspects in Developing Countries, Bonn, Germany; OXDEV Workshop, University of Oxford, UK; Seminar, University of Reading, UK; Seminar, University of Exeter, UK; Seminar, University of Middlesex, UK; Seminar, University of Manchester, UK. **2014:** School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London, UK; European Association of Labour Economists, Ljubljana, Slovenia; Labour Economic Aspects in Developing Countries, Lima, Peru; European Society for Population Economics, Braga, Portugal; IFS Workshop on Risk and Family Economics, London, UK; Institute for Social and Economic Research, Essex, UK; Economic Aspects of Public Policy, Kolkata, India. **2013:** Brucchi Luchino Workshop, Rome, Italy; National Institute for Social and Economic Research, London, UK; International Institute for Economic Sciences, Stockholm, Sweden

Languages:

German (mother tongue), Italian (native speaker), English (level of native speaker), Spanish (fluent)