

Sébastien Montpetit

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Languages: French (mother tongue), English (fluent), Spanish (some knowledge)

Citizenship: Canadian; French naturalization demanded (under review)

Research interests: Labor and family economics, public economics, economics of culture

References

Philippe Bontems
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François Poinas
Toulouse School of Economics
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Mohamed Saleh
London School of Economics
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Education

PhD Candidate in Economics	2019 –
<i>Toulouse School of Economics, Toulouse, France</i>	
➤ Research visit – Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Canada	Summer 2023
➤ Research visit – Vancouver School of Economics, Vancouver, Canada	Fall 2022
Master 2 Economics (Economic Theory and Econometrics)	2018 – 2019
<i>Toulouse School of Economics, Toulouse, France</i>	
M. A. Economics (non-thesis)	2017 – 2018
<i>McGill University, Montréal, Canada</i>	
B. Sc. Economics (Applied Economics)	2014 – 2017
<i>Université du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Canada</i>	
➤ International exchange – Université de Liège, Belgium	Winter 2016

Academic awards

TSE Job Market Fellowship – Toulouse School of Economics	2023-2024
Mobility grant – Toulouse School of Economics	Fall 2022
Frontenac Bursary – Fonds de recherche Nature et Technologies Québec	2018
Graduate Excellence Fellowship – McGill University	2017 – 2018
Coop-UQAM academic bursary – UQÀM	2016
Martial Nkamani academic bursary – UQÀM	2015

Working papers

A Welfare Analysis of Universal Childcare: Lessons From a Canadian Reform (joint with Pierre-Loup Beauregard and Luisa Carrer) *Job Market Paper* [[Draft](#)]

Abstract: Recent research shows that early-childhood interventions targeted at disadvantaged households can yield large returns on initial public investment. However, the extent to which such benefits extend to universal programs remains an open question. Leveraging the introduction of universal low-fee daycare in Québec in 1997, this paper evaluates the welfare effect of universal childcare provision. First, using novel data on regional daycare coverage rates within Québec and a difference-in-differences design, we show that the positive impacts on maternal labor supply and childcare use are larger in areas where daycare expanded more. Thus, childcare availability, rather than just the price decrease, is also responsible for the observed behavioral responses. In the second part of the paper, we estimate the benefit-to-net-cost ratio of the policy. We estimate mothers' utility gains using a model of maternal labor supply and childcare choices, incorporating non-pecuniary benefits for mothers, such as non-monetary costs of childcare use, and childcare availability. Structural estimates suggest that mothers' benefits are more than 3.5 dollars per dollar of net government spending - more than twice that obtained when solely focusing on earnings gains. As such, our findings suggest that non-pecuniary benefits for mothers are a key component of welfare gains of universal policies. Counterfactual simulations suggest that channelling more resources towards opening spots, rather than lowering prices, could have led to even larger social returns.

Veiling and Economic Integration of Muslim Women in France (joint with Antoine Jacquet) [[Draft](#)]

Abstract: The economic implications of policies limiting the wearing of the Islamic veil for Muslim women in Western countries are still poorly understood. This paper investigates the relationship between veiling behavior and economic participation using the largest sample of Muslim women in France. Firstly, we present new descriptive evidence about Muslim women in France. We demonstrate a significant negative relationship between veiling and economic participation, which contrasts with the existing economic theory of veiling in Muslim-majority countries. Secondly, we extend this theory by including elements relevant to the Muslim-minority context, such as potentially-reduced economic opportunities for veiled women. In so doing, we are able to rationalize the contrast between the Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority contexts. Thirdly, we develop and estimate a discrete-choice model of veiling and labor force participation to disentangle the various motivations behind the joint decision to veil and to be economically active. Our findings indicate that veiled women are less economically active not due to religious preferences, but rather because the benefits of economic participation are lower for women who veil compared to those who do not. This result echoes previous findings in the literature regarding labor market discrimination against individuals who signal their religious affiliation. Additionally, our results emphasize the significance of personal religious motives in the decision to veil, rather than community-based religious pressure. This calls into question the rhetoric used to justify policies that restrict the wearing of religious symbols in France.

Work in progress

Can Centralized Examinations for Public-Sector Jobs Foster Integration of Minorities?

Revisiting the Economic Impacts of the French Headscarf Ban in Schools

A comment on "Vulnerability and Clientelism" (2022) (joint with Hai Ma and Ardyn Nordstrom), forthcoming in Brodeur et al., "Mass Reproducibility and Replicability: A New Hope" [[Draft](#)]

External workshops, seminars, and conferences

Society for Benefit-Cost Analysis Annual Conference (March 2024, scheduled), Naples School of Economics PhD and Postdoc Workshop (Sept 2023), Canadian Economics Association (June 2023), 18th CIREQ PhD Students' Conference (May 2023), Société Canadienne de Science Économique conference (May 2023), Université du Québec à Montréal (May 2023), Stockholm University (March 2023), ASREC Graduate Workshop (online, April 2022)

Teaching and research experience

Teaching Assistant (travaux dirigés) – <i>Toulouse School of Economics, Toulouse</i>	2020 – 2023
➤ Assistant of Prof. François Salanié for the M2 course <i>Introduction to Economics for Biologists</i> (graduate, Fall 2020 and Fall 2021)	
➤ Assistant of Prof. Lucie Bottega and Michel-Benoit Bouissou for the L1 course <i>Microéconomie 2</i> (undergraduate, Winter 2021 to Winter 2023)	
➤ Assistant of Prof. Augustin Tapsoba and Matteo Bobba for the M2 course <i>Causal Inference with Observational Data</i> (graduate, Fall 2021)	
Research Assistant – <i>ISID, McGill University, Montréal</i>	Summer 2018
➤ Assistant of Prof. Franque Grimard on the project “Building Policy Research Capacity in Myanmar”	
Teaching Assistant – <i>Department of Economics, McGill University, Montréal</i>	2017 – 2018
➤ Assistant of Mr. Noor Muhammad Wasi Uddin for the course <i>ECON 302 - Money, Banking & Government Policy</i> (undergraduate)	
➤ Assistant of Prof. Franque Grimard for the course <i>ECON 314 - Economic Development II</i> (undergraduate)	

Extra-curricular activities

Replicator – Montréal Replication Games (Institute for Replication)	June 2023
Student organizer – ENTER Seminar exchanges (TSE)	2021-2023
Co-organizer – Reading group on the Economics of religion & culture (TSE)	2020-2021
Editor – <i>The TSEconomist</i> student newspaper (TSE)	2018-2019
Chief Editor – <i>Horizons Économiques</i> student newspaper (UQÀM)	2015-2017