

## VALENTINA CONTRERAS

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### London School of Economics and Political Science

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### CURRENT POSITION

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10/2022 - Research Officer, **London School of Economics and Political Sciences**, International Inequalities Institute.

### DOCTORAL STUDIES

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2018-2022 PhD candidate Department of Social Policy, **London School of Economics and Political Science**. Viva scheduled in December 2022. Thesis title: “Essays on gender and higher education”.  
Advisors: Stephen Jenkins and Berkay Özcan.  
Examiners: Lindsey Macmillan and Almudena Sevilla.

### PRE DOCTORAL STUDIES

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2017-2018 MRes of Economics, **University College London**  
2016-2017 MSc Applied Economics, **Universidad de Chile**  
2011-2016 Civil Industrial Engineering, **Universidad de Chile**  
2011-2015 Bachelor of Engineering Science, **Universidad de Chile**

### FIELDS OF INTEREST

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**Main Field:** Applied microeconomics. **Secondary fields:** Policy Analysis, Gender Inequality, Education Economics

### COMPLETED PAPERS

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#### **JMP:** *“Policy Evaluation of Gender Affirmative Action in Engineering Schools”*

**Abstract:** This paper evaluates the impact of two separate but contemporaneous efforts to increase female participation in engineering schools by two leading universities in Chile (Universidad de Chile and PUC-Chile). I use a difference in difference approach to estimate the effectiveness of the policies and a peer effects model to explore further consequences of the reform on students’ academic performance and drop-out rates. The paper finds that (i) both policies were successful in increasing women’s enrollment and attendance at their engineering courses; (ii) they did not change the average academic ability of accepted students (as measured by their average composite application scores); (iii) The UCH policy led to lower first-year drop-out rates among women; improved performance in collaborative projects by both men and women and had no significant effect on other first-year educational outcomes.

#### *“The Role of Admission Criteria in Reducing Gender Imbalances in Higher Education”*

**Abstract:** This paper exploits the sudden timing of a reform in the Chilean centralized university admission system to analyze the role of structural factors, such as admission criteria, in the gender imbalances in higher education. The reform introduced a new admission criterion that improved the application scores for students who graduate with a GPA higher than their high school average. In addition, the reform lowered the weight

given to high-stakes measures of achievement, such as standardized admission tests. I find that the reform raised the application scores of women relative to men, and impacted students' career choices

***“Effects of team diversity on performance, perceptions, and predictions: Experimental evidence of gender composition and language.”*** with Chiara Orsini, Berkay Özcan, Johann Koehler

**Abstract:** We test how an academic study group's gender composition and its share of non-native English speakers affects students' (1) academic performance, (2) self-perceptions, (3) leadership aspirations and behaviours, and (4) predictions of academic performance. We randomise post-graduate students into study groups at a leading UK university that boasts a significant proportion of non-native English speakers (close to 50%) and a large share of women (80%). Using the university's administrative data and original survey data, we find that an increased share of women in a team improves students' grades and their perception of whether they felt heard during study group deliberations. We also find that non-native speakers outperform their native-speaking counterparts. However, the achievement gap diminishes when more women and non-native peers are in the team. Finally, we find that men in groups with more women are more likely to report taking leadership roles.

#### UNDER REVIEW AND WORK IN PROGRESS

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***Is ‘Employment during Motherhood’ a ‘Value Changing Experience’?*** with Mireia Borrell and Joan Costa-Font. **Revise & resubmit**, *Advances in Life Course Research*

***“Gender Differences in Publicizing Original Work: Evidence from a sample of the elite students from around the World”*** with Chiara Orsini and Berkay Özcan. *With grant from LSE Eden Centre*

#### RELEVANT PAST POSITIONS

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2020 - 09/2022	<b>London School of Economics and Political Sciences, London</b> Research assistant for Francisco Ferreira and project coordinator for LACIR, <a href="#"><u>The Latin America and Caribbean Inequality Review</u></a> (14 hrs per week)
2018 - 2019	<b>London School of Economics and Political Sciences, London</b> <b>Research Assistant</b> for Berkay Özcan and Joan Costa-Font (6 hrs per week)
2017 - 2019	<b>GBA Consulting, Santiago</b> <b>Economic Consultant</b> for the Ministry of Energy and other Public Enterprises ( <i>sporadic</i> )
2016	<b>Central Bank of Chile, Santiago</b> <b>Research Assistant</b> at the Finance Division ( <i>Full-time</i> )
2015	<b>University of Chile, Santiago</b> <b>Research Assistant</b> at the Centre for Applied Economics (6 hrs per week)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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2020-2021	<b>King's College London</b> , Department of Political Economy, London <b>Principles of Economics</b> , Graduate teaching assistant
2015	<b>University of Chile</b> , Engineering School, Santiago <b>Advanced Microeconomics</b> , Teaching assistant (Graduate class)
2015	<b>Labour Economics</b> , Teaching assistant (Graduate Class)
2015-2016	<b>Microeconomics</b> , Teaching assistant
2013-2016	<b>Economics</b> , Teaching assistant
2012	<b>Newtonian Systems</b> , Teaching assistant

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## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS AND INVITED TALKS

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\* *Invited talks*

2022	LSE Seminar series on international and public policy* RC28 “Social Stratification and Social Policy for a Post-Covid19 World” CCA “Workshop on gender and Education” UNU- WIDER Development Conference “Reducing inequality – the great challenge of our time” Interamerican Development Bank, Seminar series on gender inequality* ( <i>Forthcoming</i> ) LSE Centre for academic performance, Education seminars* ( <i>Forthcoming</i> )
2021	CIVICA panel on the future of higher education*
2019	LSE Workshop on Economics of the Family, Gender and Old Age* International Congress on gender and science in Santa Fe, Argentina.

## COMPUTER SKILLS

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Stata, R, LaTeX, Matlab, Python

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

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2020	LSE PhD Poster Exhibition – Runner up
2017-2020	Doctoral Studentship, ANID/CONICYT
2014,2015	Distinguished Student, University of Chile, Engineering School
2011	Irma Salas Merit Scholarship, University of Chile

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

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2019-2022	Student Representative at LSE
2017-2018	Student Representative at UCL
2016	Vice president of the Student Council at the Engineering School - University of Chile ( <i>elected position</i> )
2016	Member of the Engineering School Academic Committee
2013-2014	Member of the gender equality committee - University of Chile

## LANGUAGES

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**Spanish:** Native

**English:** Fluent

## REFERENCES

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**Prof Stephen Jenkins**, Professor of Economic and Social Policy  
Department of Social Policy  
London School of Economics and Political Science  
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**Dr Berkay Özcan**, Associate Professor of Social Policy  
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London School of Economics and Political Science  
Email: [b.ozcan@lse.ac.uk](mailto:b.ozcan@lse.ac.uk)

**Prof Francisco Ferreira**, Amartya Sen Professor of Inequality Studies  
International Inequalities Institute and Department of Social Policy  
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**Dr Chiara Orsini**, Assistant Professor  
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University of Sheffield  
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