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Current Position

Aug. 2016 — Research Fellow, WSD Handa Center, Stanford University

Education

- 2013 – **Ph.D. candidate in Political Science**, University of Wisconsin–Madison
Dissertation: “The Great Development Tradeoff: Corruption vs. Public Goods”
Committee Members:
Scott Gehlbach (advisor), Rikhil R. Bhavnani, Teppei Yamamoto, Noam Lupu
Fields: Comparative Politics, Political Methodology
- 2013 – 2014 M.A. in Political Science, University of Wisconsin–Madison
- 2003 – 2006 Ph.D. in Economics, University of Nottingham
- 2001 – 2002 M.Sc. in Development Economics, University of Oxford
- 2000 – 2001 M.Ec. in Economics, Macquarie University
- 1993 – 1997 B.S. in Business Economics, University of the Philippines, cum laude

Research Interests

Political Economy, Development, Institutions, Corruption, Law and Economics

Dissertation Chapters

“Corruption in Public Good Provision: Measuring Theft and Bribery” (job market paper).

Corruption in the provision of public goods can occur from both the revenue and the expenditure side – a public official can steal government revenues or receive bribe payments in exchange for spending those revenues. The marginal rents from theft and those from bribes can cancel each other out because additional revenues that are stolen are therefore not spent on providing more public goods and services from which additional bribe payments could have been extracted. Thus, without decomposing total marginal rents into those from theft and those from bribery, it might appear that there is no change in corruption, even when the rents from theft have increased. To provide evidence of this, I propose a structural approach in which the direct effect of government revenues on the public official’s accumulated wealth measures the marginal rents from theft, while its indirect effect through spending measures the

marginal rents from bribery. I demonstrate the method using municipal-level data from the Philippines. Results initially suggest that an increase in government revenues has a negative impact on corruption. However, decomposition of this effect reveals that higher revenues actually increase marginal rents from theft, but the foregone spending decreases marginal bribe payments to a sufficiently large extent such that total marginal corruption decreases.

“Public Goods, Corruption, and the Political Resource Curse”

Does corruption increase or decrease with public goods spending? I develop a model of public good provision by a rent-seeking political agent who can obtain rents by stealing government revenues and/or extracting bribes from the private sector in exchange for public goods. I show there is a threshold level of revenues below which the agent cannot steal, and therefore can obtain rents only from bribes. Higher revenues unambiguously increase public spending because nothing is stolen, and can decrease corruption (in the form of bribes) if the marginal social value of the public goods from which the bribes are extracted is sufficiently high. Above this threshold, the agent can increase her rents by stealing revenues. Revenues have no effect on public spending, but unambiguously increases corruption (in the form of theft). Hence, a political resource curse always emerges when resources provide politicians with ‘too much’ revenues – that is, beyond a threshold level that she could credibly spend on public goods.

Publications

1. “Formal Models of the Political Resource Curse,” 2018. *Economics of Governance* 19(3): 225-259.
2. “What Resource Curse? The Null Effect of Remittances on Public Good Provision,” 2018. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*. doi.org/10.1177/0951629818791033.
3. “Prohibition vs. Taxation in Corrupt Environments” (with John V.C. Nye), 2017. *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, 173(2): 239-252.
4. “Judicial Independence: Evidence from the Philippine Supreme Court (1970-2003),” 2015, in *The Political Economy of Governance: Institutions, Democratic Performance and Elections*, eds. Norman Schofield and Gonzalo Caballero. Springer.
5. “Investment Pricing and Social Protection: A Proposal for an ICESCR-adjusted Capital Asset Pricing Model” (with Diane A. Desierto), 2017. *ICSID Review* 28(2): 405-419.
6. “Stimulating Investment and Growth in the Philippines: The Need for First-Order Market Reforms” (with Geoffrey Ducanes), 2013, in *Asia Rising: Growth and Resilience in an Uncertain Global Economy*, eds. Hal Hill and Ma. Socorro Gochoco-Bautista. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.
7. “2D:4D Asymmetry and Gender Differences in Academic Performance” (with John V.C. Nye, Grigory Androuschak, Garrett Jones, and Maria Yudkevich), 2012. *PLoS ONE* 7(10): e46319.

8. “When Do Formal Rules and Informal Norms Converge?” (with John V.C. Nye), 2011. *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* 167: 613-629.
9. “Why Do Weak States Prefer Prohibition to Taxation?” (with John V.C. Nye), 2011, in *The Political Economy of Institutions, Democracy and Voting*, ed. Norman Schofield and Gonzalo Caballero. Berlin: Springer-Verlag.
10. “Is It Worth Taxing Pirated Products? The Case of Optical Media Discs in the Philippines” (with Karen Annette D. Lazaro and Kevin Thomas G. Cruz), 2010. *Asian Economic Papers* 9(2): 79-112.

Teaching Experience

Graduate: Microeconomics, Mathematical Economics,
Econometrics, Development Economics (University of the Philippines)

Undergraduate: Political Choice and Strategy, Understanding Political Numbers,
Research Methods in Political Science (UW-Madison);
Microeconomics, Mathematical Economics,
Econometrics, Development Economics (University of the Philippines);
Macroeconomics (University of Nottingham)

Previous Academic Positions

Aug. 2014 – May 2016	Teaching Assistant, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Jan. 2013 – May 2013	Associate Professor, University of the Philippines
June 2007 – Jan. 2013	Assistant Professor, University of the Philippines
Nov. 2006 – May 2007	Senior Lecturer, University of the Philippines
Oct. 2005 – Oct. 2006	Postdoctoral Researcher/Visiting Scholar, University of Cambridge and University of the Philippines
June 2005 – May 2006	Senior Lecturer, University of the Philippines
2003 – 2004	Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Nottingham

Fellowships and Awards

2016 –	Research Fellowship, WSD Handa Center, Stanford
2013 – 2014	Gordon Hoxie Graduate Fellowship, University of Wisconsin-Madison
2011 – 2012	UPD Faculty Centennial Grant, University of the Philippines
2005 – 2006	Robert Solow Postdoctoral Fellowship, Cournot Centre for Economic Studies
2005 – 2006	Visiting Scholarship, St. Edmund’s College and Faculty of Economics and Politics, University of Cambridge
1993 – 1997	University and College Scholarship, University of the Philippines

Presentations

- 2018 Seminar, WSD Handa Center, Stanford University
- 2017 Seminar, University of the Philippines School of Economics
- 2014 Workshop on Institutional Analysis (Faculty), Ronald Coase Institute (RCI);
Conference, International Society for the New Institutional Economics (now SIOE);
3rd International Conference on Political Economy and Institutions (ICOPEAI)
- 2012 Philippines Update, Australian National University;
2nd International Conference on Political Economy and Institutions (ICOPEAI);
Lecture, Institutions and Development (Discussant), Asian Institute of Management
- 2011 Workshop on Sustaining Asia's Growth and Investment, Asian Development Bank;
Asian Development Review Workshop (Discussant), Asian Development Bank
- 2010 Philippine Economics Society (PES) Meetings, BSP (Central Bank of the Phils.)
Workshop on Health, Institutions and Development, University of the Philippines;
1st International Conference on Political Economy and Institutions (ICOPEAI)
- 2009 Workshop on Institutions and Development, University of the Philippines;
Conference, International Society for the New Institutional Economics (now SIOE);
The Probabilism Sessions, Cournot Centre for Economic Studies;
Conference, European Society for the New Institutional Economics (ESNIE)
- 2008 13th Conference, Dynamics, Economic Growth and International Trade (DEGIT);
Spring Meeting of Young Economists (SMYE);
Workshop on Institutional Analysis, Ronald Coase Institute (RCI)
- 2004 Conference, Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Growth,
KTH Royal Institute of Technology;
Conference, Growth and Distribution: On the Nature and Causes
of the Wealth of Nations, Lucca, Italy

References

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