

Lisa Spantig

LMU Munich

<http://lisaspantig.com>
lisa.spantig@econ.lmu.de
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Placement Officer: Prof. Davide Cantoni
Placement Administration

davide.cantoni@econ.lmu.de
placement@econ.lmu.de

Office Address

Department of Economics
Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1
80539 Munich
Germany

Contact Information

+49 178 1969 073

Research Interests

Behavioral Economics, Development Economics, Experimental Methods

Education

2013 – 2018	Ph.D. in Economics, <i>summa cum laude</i> , LMU Munich <i>Microfinance and Norms: Individual and Group Behavior in the Lab and in the Field</i> Awaiting official certificate
2012 – 2013	M.Sc. in Economics, Lund University
2011 – 2012	M.A. in Applied Economics, University of Houston
2007 – 2011	Diplom in Business, University of Applied Sciences Regensburg
2007 – 2011	Diplôme in International Business, ESC La Rochelle

Employment

2017 –	Laboratory Manager, MELESSA, LMU Munich
2013 – 2017	Research and Teaching Assistant, Department of Economics, LMU Munich

Research Visits

2018	Norwegian School of Economics, FAIR Center
2015	University of Nottingham, Centre for Decision Research and Experimental Economics

References

Prof. Martin Kocher

Department of Economics University of Vienna and
Institute for Advanced Studies
+43 1599 91125
kocher@ihs.ac.at

Prof. Florian Englmaier

Department of Economics
LMU Munich
+49 89 2180 5642
florian.englmaier@econ.lmu.de

Prof. Bertil Tungodden

Department of Economics
Norwegian School of Economics
+47 5595 9261
bertil.tungodden@nhh.no

Working Papers

Cash in Hand and Savings Decisions of the Poor (Job Market Paper)

Savings accounts are a promising tool to reduce poverty, but account usage is often puzzlingly low. In many developing countries, poor households receive their income in cash. Yet, holding on to cash that needs to be physically deposited into a savings account might increase the psychological costs of saving. This study identifies the causal effect of cash in hand on savings deposits of microfinance clients. I pay participants cash to take part in an interview, and then allow them to deposit some of this payment in their existing savings accounts. To identify the effect, I exogenously vary the timing of the payment. Participants who receive their earnings upfront (cash in hand) hand over the cash to be saved, whereas participants in the control group receive their earnings just after verbally stating the amount to be saved. Individuals with cash in hand save the same amount as the control group. I provide evidence that two counter-balancing effects exist when savings decisions are made with cash in hand: an income effect that increases savings and an effect that decreases savings due to the psychological cost of handing over cash.

Maintaining Repayment Discipline while Reducing Peer Pressure in Microfinance: Repayment Flexibility vs. Joint-Liability (w/ Kristina Czura & Anett John), draft available on request

Joint-liability groups and rigid repayment schedules have long been considered essential for guaranteeing high repayment rates in microcredit lending, since they offer mutual insurance and keep repayment discipline high. Yet, both features have been criticized lately: rigid repayment schedules interfere with fluctuating incomes, and joint liability induces excessive peer pressure. We study whether the interaction of both flexible repayment features and joint-liability allows reaping the benefits of joint liability and flexibility – high repayment and shock coping capacity – while keeping their downsides – low repayment morale and excessive peer pressure – at bay. Using data from lab-in-the-field experiments with microcredit borrowers in the Philippines, we find that interacting joint liability with repayment flexibility enhances the responsible use of flexibility and reduces anti-social punishment.

Publications

I lie? We lie! Why? Experimental evidence on a dishonesty shift in groups (w/ Martin Kocher & Simeon Schudy), Management Science (2018), 64(9): 3995-4008.

Unethical behavior such as dishonesty, cheating, and corruption occurs frequently in organizations or groups. Recent experimental evidence suggests that there is a stronger inclination to behave immorally in groups than individually. We ask if this is the case, and if so, why. Using a parsimonious laboratory setup, we study how individual behavior changes when deciding as a group member. We observe a strong dishonesty shift. This shift is mainly driven by communication within groups and turns out to be independent of whether group members face payoff commonality or not (i.e., whether other group members benefit from one's lie). Group members come up with and exchange more arguments for being dishonest than for complying with the norm of honesty. Thereby, group membership shifts the perception of the validity of the honesty norm and of its distribution in the population.

Work in Progress

The Effects of Information Sharing on Moral Hazard in Credit Markets - Evidence from a Randomized Evaluation in the Philippines (w/ Kristina Czura & Matthias Fahn)

We theoretically and experimentally study how the introduction of a credit registry affects investment and repayment decisions of borrowers. Information sharing between lenders can affect repayment rates via two mechanisms, i) better screening by lenders and ii) an additional incentive for borrowers to repay. In contrast to most previous studies, we can exclude selection effect and potential changes in the borrower pool and cleanly identify the incentive effect of information sharing on borrowers. We conduct an information campaign with 6,000 microfinance clients to exogenously vary the knowledge of the credit registry and possible consequences for borrowers. Our design allows identifying both the effects on ex-ante moral hazard (project and effort choice) and ex-post moral hazard (repayment performance).

Social Punishment in Social Dilemmas (w/ Florian Diekert & Peter Martinsson)

Using Referrals to Increase Retention (w/ Kristina Czura, Florian Englmaier & Hoa Ho)

Communicating Complex Incentives (w/ Kristina Czura, Florian Englmaier & Hoa Ho)

Teaching Experience

Winter 2016	Colloquium <i>Behavioral Aspects of Poverty</i> , 3rd year undergraduate level, Munich Tutorial <i>Empirical Economics</i> , 2nd year undergraduate level, Munich
Summer 2016	Colloquium <i>Experimental Political Economy</i> , 3rd year undergraduate level, Munich Tutorial <i>Public Finance and Economic Policy</i> , 2nd year undergraduate level, Munich
Summer 2015	Tutorial <i>Microeconomics I</i> , 1st year undergraduate level, Munich
Winter 2014	Tutorial <i>Microeconomics I</i> , 1st year undergraduate level, Munich
Summer 2014	Tutorial <i>Microeconomics II</i> , 1st year undergraduate level, Munich
Summer 2011	Tutorial <i>Introduction to Economics</i> , 1st year undergraduate level, Regensburg
Winter 2011	Tutorial <i>Introduction to Economics</i> , 1st year undergraduate level, Regensburg

Grants, Scholarships, and Awards:

2018	SABE/IAREP/Elsevier Best Ph.D. Student Paper Award EEA Student Travel Grant
2017	Departmental grant for a research project: EUR 6,000 Elite Network of Bavaria research grant: EUR 4,000
2013 – 2018	Fellow of the Elite Network of Bavaria
2011 – 2012	Fulbright Fellow
2009	Josef-Stanglmaier-Prize for outstanding first year results Scholarship by the French region Poitou-Charents
2008 – 2011	Fellow of the Foundation of German Business
2008 – 2009	Scholarship by the German-French University

Summer Schools

2017	16th Summer School in International and Development Economics (University of Milan)
2016	Spring School in Behavioral Economics (UC San Diego/NHH Bergen), Winter Experimental Social Sciences Institute (NYU Abu Dhabi), CEAR-CSAE Eliciting Subjective Beliefs and Risk and Time Preferences in Developing Countries (Georgia State/University of Oxford)
2015	Coping with difficult decisions (University of Bonn), Field Experiments – Topics and
2014	Methodological Approaches (LMU Munich)

Seminar & Conference Presentations

2018	MGSE Colloquium Munich, VfS Freiburg, EEA/ESEM Cologne, SABE/IAREP London, ESA World Berlin, ECBE Bergen (discussant), FAIR Inaugural NHH, FAIR Brown NHH, Bergen Seminar in Development Economics, Ph.D. Workshop in Economics Bergen, IMEBESS Florence, SEEDEC Wageningen, Micro Workshop LMU, SFB-TRR190 Workshop Berlin, CSAE Conference Oxford, Behavioral Economics Seminar LMU
2017	Micro Workshop LMU, DENeB Ph.D. Workshop, Economic Seminar TU Munich, NCBEE Gothenburg, Development Workshop LMU, AFE Chicago, ESA Europe Vienna, TIBER Tilburg, Behavioral Economics Seminar LMU, Ohlstadt Workshop (poster), NCDE Gothenburg, AEL Göttingen (poster), Finance and Development Workshop DIW Berlin
2016	Bavarian Micro Day Munich, EEA/ESEM Geneva, EBE Summer Meeting, WESSI NYUAD, Micro Workshop LMU
2015	LPEX Royal Holloway, CeDEx Brown Bag Nottingham, Coping with difficult decisions workshop Düsseldorf, Moral Behavior Workshop CAS Munich

Service to the Profession

Refereeing German Economic Review, Journal of Economic Psychology, Management Science (3)

2016 – Co-Founder and coordinator of the Munich Development Economics Group
2016 Co-Organizer of the Evidence-based-Economics Summer Meeting
2014 – 2016 Women’s Representative of the Economics Department

Miscellanea

Field Work Philippines: experimental, quantitative and qualitative data collection (6 months)
Morocco: preparation of qualitative and quantitative data collection (2 weeks)
India: initial visit of partner organization and local research team (1 week)

Other Work Experience The World Bank, Short-Term Consultant
German Federal Foreign Office, Intern
German Embassy San José, Intern
German-Tunisian Chamber of Commerce, Intern

Languages German (native), English (fluent), French (conversational), Spanish (conversational)