

Women in Leadership in Economics: IEA-WE

Overview of the project

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Gender gaps in Econ in the Global South

- Four-year project: focusing on the academe
- 5 planks
 1. Building an evidence base (quantitative): India, South Africa, Ghana, Argentina, Mexico, Colombia.
 - Partial: Senegal
 2. To be complemented by qualitative studies
 3. Research grants on “what works”
 4. Amplifying voices of female economists from the Global South
 5. Institutional change within IEA + building partnerships (e.g. IEA-IAFFE)

Evidence Papers

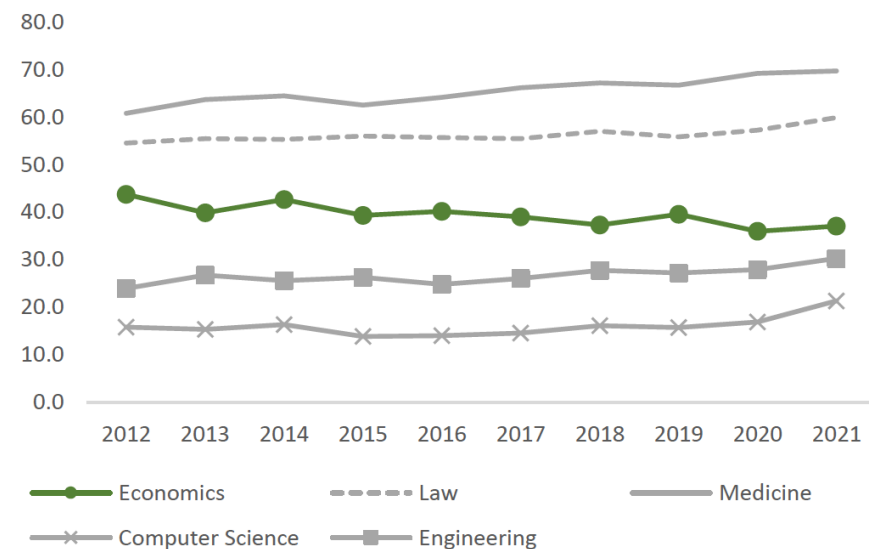
- Combine admin data with web scraping
- Gender gap among students as well as faculty at all levels: UG, PG/grad, junior faculty, senior faculty, senior leadership
- As much as possible: gather data over time to see trajectory of change
- Compare with gender gaps in STEM subjects
- Tracking career trajectories:
 - Web scraping: publicly available CVs to quantify gender gaps in publications, conference participation, promotions

Snapshots of evidence base: Argentina

Student data

Institution level (SPU)

Percentage of enrolled women in Economics and other programs
Undergraduate level

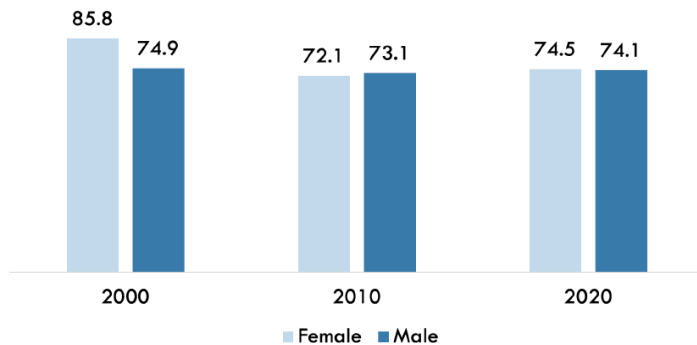


Argentina: Graduation Time & GPA

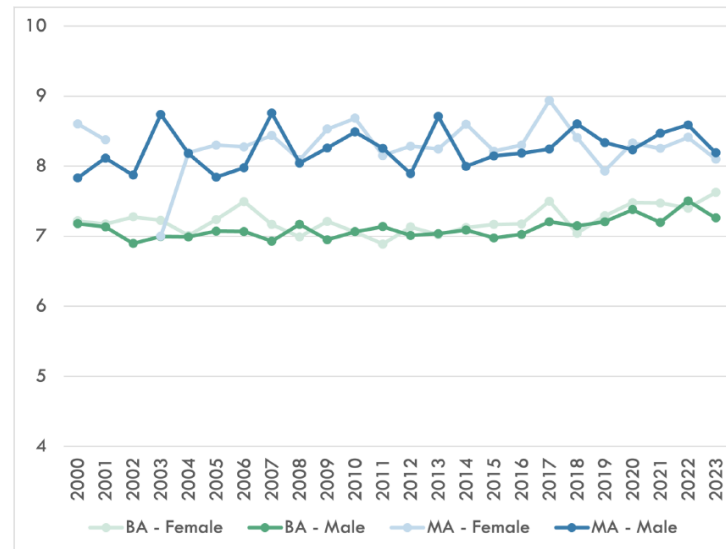
Student data

Individual level (special agreements with universities)

(a) Length to graduation - Undergraduate



(b) Grade Point Average



Note: Computations for BA and Master based on 3 and 2 universities, respectively.

Snapshots: India: Gender gaps at all faculty levels

- India has a large # of higher ed insts
 - State Universities = 478
 - Central Universities = 56
 - Deemed to be Universities = 124
 - State Private Universities = 456
 (Source: University Grants Commission)

But not all have econ departments.

- Of those that do, female proportions are high by international comparisons.
- STEM: women occupy 16.6% of faculty positions in research estabs & 13% in higher ed: lower than global standard of 29.3% (Kaur& Kapoor, 2022)

Academic Designation	Gender				
	Male	Female	Not Determined	Total	% Female
Assistant Professors	141	121	24	286	46.2
Associate Professors	50	31	6	87	38.3
Professors	90	48	27	165	34.8
Others Designation	17	17	11	45	50
Unspecified Designations	8	14	1	23	63.6
Total Faculty	306	231	69	606	43

Qualitative Study Plan

- Research questions guiding the qualitative study:
 - ✓ What are the bottlenecks at each level in the economics career trajectory where women are making choices? That is: from choosing an undergraduate major to pursuing a master's or PhD degree in economics, to securing a job to advancing in academia.
 - ✓ Conversely, what have been the support systems that have helped some women break the glass ceiling?
 - ✓ What are the formal and informal ways that hinder or support women in economics and specifically, women in leadership positions in academia?
- In each of the 6 countries:
 - ✓ Select a set of universities that represent the variation that is relevant to the country context.
 - ✓ Each selected university can be considered as a “case” that represents a particular set of criteria.
 - ✓ The goal is to capture depth rather than breadth.
 - ✓ The approach is to use an intersectional lens: how gender intersects with race, class, caste etc.

Qualitative Study Plan

- Methodology
 - ✓ In-depth interviews with professors (women and men) at different levels of seniority.
 - ✓ Focus group discussions with students (at the undergraduate, master's and PhD levels).
 - ❑ Conduct separate FGs with men and women.
 - ❑ Where there aren't enough women to conduct an FGD, we will conduct in-depth interviews.
 - ✓ Longitudinal component: Follow a set of women in each country who are in "transition" moments and interview them 3 times over 3 years. Examples of transition moments:
 - ❑ Beginning a new job
 - ❑ Completing a Master's and considering whether to pursue a PhD
 - ❑ Returning to a job after maternity leave
 - ❑ Considering leaving academia

***Very preliminary* findings**

In faculty interviews, respondents mentioned several examples of what it felt to be a woman in a male-dominated field.

- *Networking with senior scholars is very important to advance in academia. But compared to other disciplines there are so few women in top positions, and it is always a worry when approaching older male colleagues as a young female researcher. You have to think a thousand times before writing an email to meet for coffee – “how will I be perceived?”*
- *It is intimidating to be interviewed for jobs by an all-male interview panel.*
- *Why are job interviews at top conferences held in hotel rooms, and often with an all-male panel?*
- *My family members look at my conference photos and see me among a sea of men and say, “Why are there so few women? If other women did not go, why did you go?”*
- *“Every job requires people to be present in your job, right? But a woman who takes leave or who has childcare duties often is not able to, and that impression that she is not present it exists. And by definition leadership positions go to those who make their presence felt.”*
- *You can't talk about personal matters at work. It is looked down upon to raise issues of childcare for example. The discipline is too rational. My colleagues in other departments don't have this problem as much.*

Very preliminary findings

Faculty respondents mentioned examples of gate-keeping by men (and sometimes women) in economics.

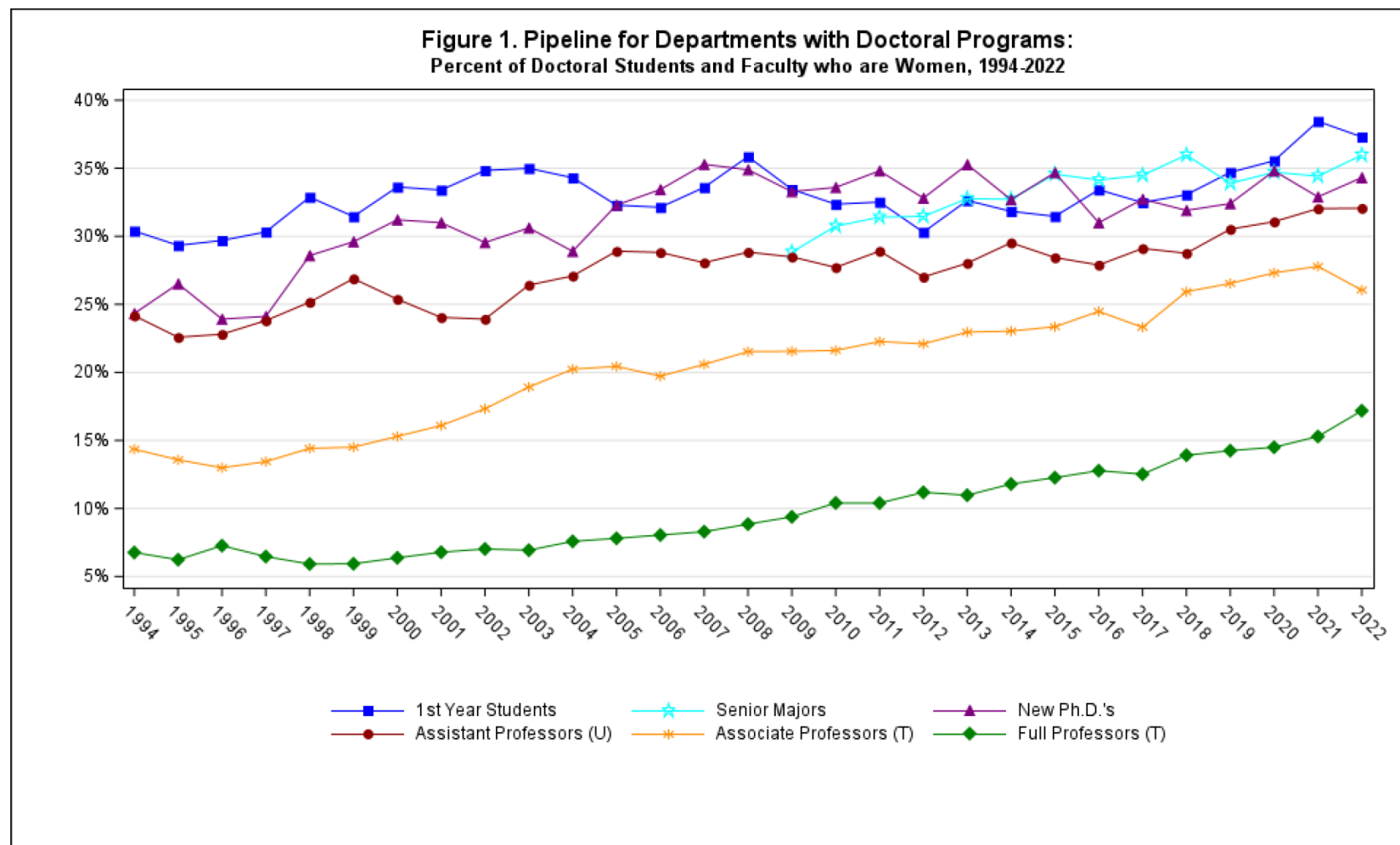
- *“Some male colleagues will say – “we have already increased the number of women in our department. We don’t need more. They say this even though the total number is very skewed and equally qualified women are dismissed because some invisible quota has been filled*
- *“Women will get pregnant and go on maternity leave, causing problems.*

Student respondents mentioned examples of how they perceived gender differences.

- *Men tend to network more and participate in informal gatherings outside of the classroom than women.*
- *Students are exposed to fewer women in leadership roles - for example, very few women guest speakers and guest lecturers.*
- Respondents spoke of support systems as well
 - Supportive colleagues and senior leadership at universities (both men and women) – who are trying to create change.
 - Supportive spouses, without whom it would have been difficult to balance work and home.

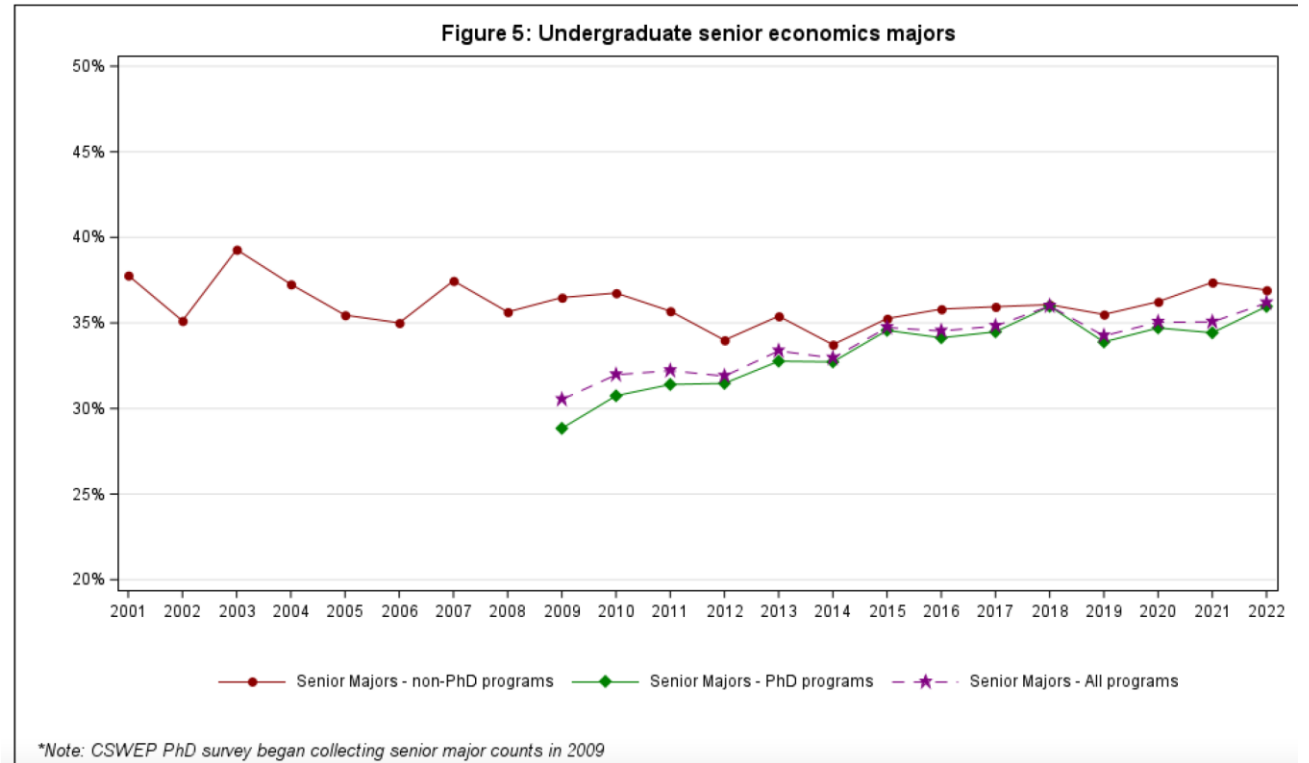
Heterogeneity

- Heterogeneity across countries
- Size of the higher ed sector differs widely across countries
- Gender gaps are *not* uniformly high in the Global South
- Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP): standing committee of the AEA since 1971: 2022 report →



% Female Students

Committee on the Status of Women in the Economics Profession (CSWEP): standing committee of the AEA since 1971: 2022 report



Evidence for Policy



Early findings reinforce the need for context-specific policies



Work in progress



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Feedback, suggestions welcome!



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