

Eliciting women's willingness to take a job. Evidence from displaced and extremely poor women in Cali, Colombia*

Susana Martínez-Restrepo**
Juan Camilo Mejía
Erika Enríquez

Abstract

This paper presents a laboratory experiment about labor market preferences for formal and informal jobs among women living in extreme poverty and displaced by violence in Cali, Colombia. In this experiment we elicit the choices that these women make regarding a constant daily income from working at home in small and low-productivity businesses (such as cooking or sewing) against increasing their daily income by working outside the home as an employee. Their income choice is subject to the number of hours away from home, the price of transportation and cost of care or supervision for children and/or adolescents, and between formal and informal jobs. A total of 255 women participated in the laboratory experiment. To elicit intra-household bargaining on labor choices, the Treatment group was composed of married women with their husbands present in the experiment, and the control group of married women without their husbands present at the site. Couples were invited to negotiate when given the different scenarios. Results indicate no significant differences among the treatment and control group for informal jobs. Women with their husbands present were less likely to accept a job for the lower wage options in the formal sector, and more likely to stay at home than their counterparts without their husbands present. Labor preferences also vary according to the cost of childcare and the number of children under the age of 18.

Resumen

Este documento presenta un experimento de laboratorio sobre las preferencias de mujeres desplazadas por la violencia y en condición de extrema pobreza, residentes en Cali, Colombia, en el mercado laboral formal e informal. En este experimento se obtienen las decisiones que estas mujeres toman respecto al ingreso constante diario, obtenido de trabajar en casa en un negocio pequeño y de baja productividad (como cocinar o coser), contra la opción de aumentar su ingreso diario trabajando fuera de casa, como empleados. El salario elegido está sujeto al número de horas lejos de casa, el precio del transporte y el costo del cuidado de los niños y/o adolescentes, y adicionalmente de si el empleo es formal o informal. Un total de 225 mujeres participaron en este experimento. Para obtener las negociaciones sobre las opciones de trabajo al interior de los hogares, el grupo de tratamiento estaba compuesto por mujeres casadas con sus esposos presentes en el experimento, y un grupo de control conformado por mujeres casadas sin que sus esposos estuvieran presentes. Se invitaron parejas para negociar en diferentes escenarios. Los resultados muestran que no hay diferencias significativas entre los grupos de tratamiento y de control, en el caso de los empleos informales. Mujeres teniendo a sus esposos presentes eran menos propensas a aceptar empleos con un menor salario en el sector formal, y más propensas a quedarse en casa, que sus contrapartes que no tenían a sus maridos presentes. Las preferencias de trabajo también varían de acuerdo a los costos del cuidado y del número de hijos menores a los 18 años.

Keywords: Displaced and extremely poor women, Labor Market preferences, Intra-household bargaining, Willingness to Accept a Job (WTA), Cali, Colombia

Palabras clave: Mujeres desplazadas y en extrema pobreza, Preferencias en el mercado de trabajo, Negociaciones al interior del hogar, Voluntad de aceptar un empleo, Cali, Colombia

Clasificación JEL: D12, J30, J46

Primera versión recibida el 13 de junio de 2016; versión final aceptada el 3 de agosto de 2016

Coyuntura Económica. Volumen XLVI, No. 1, Junio de 2016, pp. 149-173. Fedesarrollo, Bogotá - Colombia

* We would like to thank the IDRC of Canada, particularly Carolina Robino, for her support on this study. Many thanks to Hugo Nopo, Laura Abramovsky, Kai Barron, Peter Bergman, and Juan Camilo Cárdenas for their feedback during the experiment design.

** Ph.D. Fedesarrollo; Fedesarrollo and Los Andes University and Fedesarrollo correspondingly.

I. Introduction

Despite significant reductions in poverty in the last decade, by 2013 it was estimated that 9.1% of Colombia's population (4.4 million) lived under extreme poverty; 52% of whom (2.3 million) were women (DANE, 2013). Furthermore, 8% of the population, or 3,943,500 individuals were displaced by violence; 51% being women (UNHCR, 2012). This population, forced to leave their villages due to the loss of property, threats on their lives, with family members assassinated in local massacres and having become poor or extremely poor in urban areas, and in need of special government assistance.

The fact that women are more likely to be extremely poor greatly reflects gaps in the labor markets. While labor force participation in urban areas is 57.8% among women, it is 74.5% among men (ECV, 2013). This difference is even more acute with regards to the quality of the employment, since 52.4% of women have informal jobs¹, compared to 46.7% of men (DANE, 2014). When looking at the extremely poor population, we observe that only 31.9% of women in urban areas participate in the labor market and more than 90% do so in informal jobs (ECV, 2013).

Under this context we wonder what the factors are that impede women under extreme poverty or

forced displacement to increase their labor participation and obtain formal jobs? What is the role played with respect to the distance to working centers, access and cost of transportation, and access and quality of childcare and their household bargaining power with husbands or partners?

To respond to these questions, this paper displays an experimental analysis of labor market preferences and decisions among married women living in extreme poverty or displaced by violence in Cali, Colombia. To elicit the labor preferences and choices of these women we measured their willingness to take a job, given several constraints: the cost of child care, the cost of transportation, hourly wages and number of hours worked.

A total of 255 women participated in the experiment, with 70 percent having arrived in Cali due to displacement by violence, and 30 percent being considered extremely poor. The Treatment group was composed of 123 married women with their husbands present in the experiment, and the control group of 132 married women without their husbands present at the site. Couples were invited to negotiate when given the different scenarios.

Results indicate that women that negotiated with their husbands are less willing to take a job outside their homes despite offers of increased

¹ Poverty and extreme poverty in Colombia is measured by DANE, which is done according to the monetary income and ownership of a house.

wages and free childcare. Increasing childcare costs also lowers women's probability to take a job. Interestingly, in formal jobs, women that benefit from the program, Más Familias en Acción, are less likely to accept any job and prefer to stay at home.

Not only is reducing gender labor gaps a matter of fairness, the gap is also inefficient and expensive. A recent study estimated that if the gender labor gap was closed, Colombia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita would be 16% higher (Cuberes & Teignier, 2015). This suggests that, more important than social protection programs, it is crucial to close the gender labor and pay gap to reduce poverty and inequality (Lustig, Lopez-Calva, & Ortiz-Juarez, 2013).

One of the problems is that most labor policies in Colombia do not necessarily have a gender component and have focused traditionally on the demand rather than on the supply side. This is why understanding how vulnerable women bargain their labor decisions with their husbands, and the roles played by childcare, transportation, job quality and protection could help governments design more efficient programs and the right incentives that promote women's work and income generation strategies rather than social program dependence.

This evidence is extremely relevant due to recent government efforts to increase the share of formal workers within the working population, particularly of domestic employees. This study fills the existing information gap that assumes that labor participation job informality is mainly a result of market distortions such as high minimum wages, the "Parafiscal taxes"² paid by companies for each employee and existing legal holes. Furthermore, critics of social protection programs argue that social grants generate dependence, disincentives to work and can reinforce traditional gender roles (Levy, 2008).

II. Previous Studies about Intra-household Bargaining and Labor Market Decisions

According to Agarwal (1997), what determines the equality or inequality of bargaining power is the fallback position of individuals. In the context of intra-household bargaining, an individual's fallback position is largely determined by access to economic assets, which is directly tied to the capability of being able to survive outside of the household (Sen, 1981). This suggests that there is general agreement that the integration of women into the labor market is a key element in the mea-

² In 2010, the Colombian government launched a proposal to lower and at some point eliminate the earmarked taxes on the payroll to finance welfare programs for the entire population in the areas of training, childhood development and other subsidies. Another effort to encourage formalization was the establishment of norms to regulate social security payments for domestic employees hired for less than a month, most of whom are female workers (Ministerio del Trabajo, 2013).

surement of women's intra-household bargaining power (Sen, 1999, p. 191; Kabeer, 2005; Kabeer *et al.*, 2011).

It is not easy to collect information on how decision-making power is allocated between different members of the household and most studies and methodologies do not allow for understanding preferences or details on how the decision is made (Ashraf, 2009). Quantitative studies that measure household decision-making do so by asking who makes the decisions over children's activities (education, health and clothing) and household purchases (Martinez-Restrepo, *et al.*, 2015). First, these questionnaires do not include questions about job related decisions. Second, survey results tend to be biased since they indicate that all decisions are made jointly. Finally, it is important to take into account that in Colombia and Latin America, since the role of caregiving is solely concentrated on the mothers, controlling income and making decisions about the education of children and household expenses is not necessarily a good proxy for intra-household bargaining power.

Recently, experiments have emerged as an alternative and novel method for studying household decision-making and intra-household bargaining; this, because experiments allow for the collection of data of individual and joint decisions under controlled conditions (Carlsson, He, Martinsson, Qin, & Sutter, 2012). Most intra-household decision-making experiments, such as

the Becker–DeGroot–Marschak method (BDM), focus on "Willingness To Pay" (WTP) and control over household resources among husbands and wives. In WTP, experiments often measure the maximum amount an individual is willing to sacrifice to procure a good or avoid something undesirable (Becker, DeGroot, & J., 1964). One example is Ashraf's (2009) analysis of the effects of information and communication on financial choices of married couples in the Philippines. In his experiment, the author found that making the couple's financial choices public prevents husbands from allocating money for their own consumption, thus leaving more for their wives' and children's needs (Ashraf, 2009).

Similarly, Carlson *et al.* (2012) conducted an experiment in rural China to estimate the relative influence of husbands and wives on each other's individual preferences on household decisions. The authors found that both spouses have an influence on joint decisions but that husbands have a stronger influence over wives decisions than the other way around. Bateman and Munro (2004) developed an experiment where couples were asked to make choices individually and jointly and were further asked to make predictions about their partner's choices. They found that couples are more risk averse when making decisions jointly compared to making individual choices. Gender is not a direct determinant of power in joint decisions, but female economic dependence significantly reduces women's decisiveness in joint decisions.

Mani (2011) uses an experimental approach to analyze intra-household decisions in India. She finds that both men and women are willing to sacrifice much efficiency for greater personal control over household income. Surprisingly, the author finds that inefficiency persists, even when spouses' control over household income is exogenously assigned: as a wife's assigned share increases, husbands undercut their own income to reduce hers (Mani, 2011). For example, Iversen *et al.* (2006) tested core theories of household unitary and cooperative models using experimental data from 240 couples willingness to control income and bank accounts in rural Uganda. They concluded that couples do not maximize surplus from cooperation and realized a greater surplus when women are in charge.

Another framework used in experiments, mostly in marketing and other social research areas, is the "willingness to accept" (WTA) something. While the "willingness to pay" (WTP) usually measures the maximum amount individuals are willing to pay for controlling resources, the "willingness to accept" measures the amount that? person is willing to accept or to abandon to get something in return (a 'good' in the case of marketing studies, a job, and so on) (Horowitz & McConell, 2003). One example of this method is Bursztyn and Coffman's (2012) experiment in order to see a household's willingness to accept a monthly government transfer conditional on the guarantee of their adolescent child attending

school, or higher amounts of unconditional transfers. Their results show that a majority of parents are more willing to accept a conditional transfer to larger unconditional transfers, unless they are offered text message notifications whenever their child misses school.

Instead of measuring household decision-making by the willingness to control resources, we modeled our experiment on Bursztyn and Coffman's design (2012), but focusing on women's willingness to accept a formal and informal job. While formal jobs are often seen as more stable and of higher quality, they also allow less time for flexibility and require long displacements across the city. With this experiment we look for information regarding the minimum monetary amount that women are "Willing to Accept" (WTA) for selling their labor. WTA is a more pertinent methodology when trying to understand decisions among extremely poor women. Indeed, one important difference between WTA and WTP is that WTA is not constrained by an individual's wealth. Therefore, WTA can be higher than the individual's wealth, and it will depend on the amount the individual wants to accept as compensation for what he or she is selling, or for the acquisition of something desirable.

III. The Experiment

To elicit the labor preferences and choices, we performed an experiment in which women had to

establish their willingness to accept a job given a wage, number of hours worked, the cost of child care and transportation. For each hypothetical scenario, married women needed to take into consideration the following: 1) An increasing wage, given an increasing number of hours away from the home, inclusive of commuting time; 2) A constant USD \$1.5 cost of transportation; and 3) The cost for care and supervision. In the first hypothetical round, all of the outside "home jobs" are informal, and in the second hypothetical round, all of the jobs are formal and include health and pension benefits (see Tables 1 to 3).

The process was the following. First we explained the game, stating that they would have to choose between a constant wage of 6 USD per day for a low productivity job staying at home (selling food, weaving, etc.) or accept a job taking into

account different scenarios with a constant rate of transportation (1.5 US) and increasing price of child care (free, or \$1.5 US to 3.5 US). The experiment was repeated both for an informal and a formal job. This process was achieved through each of the different salaries offered until the breaking point appeared; that is, until each woman said she preferred to leave the house at a certain income level instead of staying at home and earn 6 USD. If the breaking point did not appear even at the highest possible salary, we considered that she would not accept any job.

To simplify the experiment, both formal and informal jobs had the same constraints and offered the same wage per hour. When starting the formal job "offer", it was stated the following: "Now we are going to decide whether you want to take a job, but this time it is a formal job. This means you would be

Table 1
EXPERIMENT, SCENARIO WITH FREE CHILDCARE FOR A FORMAL AND INFORMAL JOB

Willingness to accept		Time outside home		Transportation cost	Childcare cost	Available Available money		Decision
Work at home	Work outside your home	hours worked	Hours of transportation	Constant	Scenario 1/4	Staying home	Leaving home	Accept why
6 USD	6 USD	4	2	1.5 USD	Free	6 USD	4.5 USD	
6 USD	8 USD	5	2	1.5 USD	Free	6 USD	6.5 USD	
6 USD	10 USD	6	2	1.5 USD	Free	6 USD	8.5 USD	
6 USD	12 USD	7	2	1.5 USD	Free	6 USD	10.5 USD	
6 USD	14 USD	8	2	1.5 USD	Free	6 USD	12.5 USD	
6 USD	16 USD	9	2	1.5 USD	Free	6 USD	14.5 USD	

offered and pay into a pension plan, paid vacation days, paid sick leave and health insurance with an EPS instead of an SISBEN³. The treatment group,

women with their husbands, were encouraged to talk and negotiate the decision. After each choice, we asked why (see Figures 1 and 2).

Table 2

EXPERIMENT, SCENARIO WITH CHILDCARE = \$1.5 USD FOR A FORMAL AND INFORMAL JOB

Willingness to accept		Time outside home		Transportation cost	Childcare cost	Available money		Decision	
Work at home	Work outside your home	Hours worked	Hours of transportation	Constant	Scenario 2/5	Staying home	Leaving home	Accept	why
6 USD	6 USD	4	2	1.5 USD	1 USD	6 USD	3.5 USD		
6 USD	8 USD	5	2	1.5 USD	1 USD	6 USD	5.5 USD		
6 USD	10 USD	6	2	1.5 USD	1 USD	6 USD	7.5 USD		
6 USD	12 USD	7	2	1.5 USD	1 USD	6 USD	9.5 USD		
6 USD	14 USD	8	2	1.5 USD	1 USD	6 USD	11.5 USD		
6 USD	16 USD	9	2	1.5 USD	1 USD	6 USD	13.5 USD		

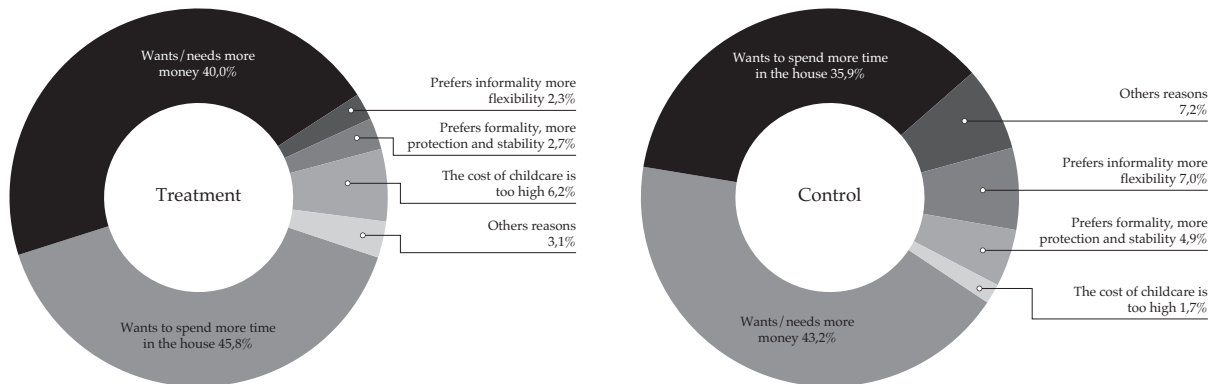
Table 3

EXPERIMENT, SCENARIO WITH CHILDCARE = \$3.5 USD FOR A FORMAL AND INFORMAL JOB

Willingness to accept		Time outside home		Transportation cost	Childcare cost	Available money		Decision	
Work at home	Work outside your home	Hours worked	Total time (back and forth)	Constant	Scenario 3/6	Staying home	Leaving home	Accept	why
6 USD	6 USD	4	2	1.5 USD	3.5 USD	6 USD	1 USD		
6 USD	8 USD	5	2	1.5 USD	3.5 USD	6 USD	3 USD		
6 USD	10 USD	6	2	1.5 USD	3.5 USD	6 USD	5 USD		
6 USD	12 USD	7	2	1.5 USD	3.5 USD	6 USD	7 USD		
6 USD	14 USD	8	2	1.5 USD	3.5 USD	6 USD	9 USD		
6 USD	16 USD	9	2	1.5 USD	3.5 USD	6 USD	11 USD		

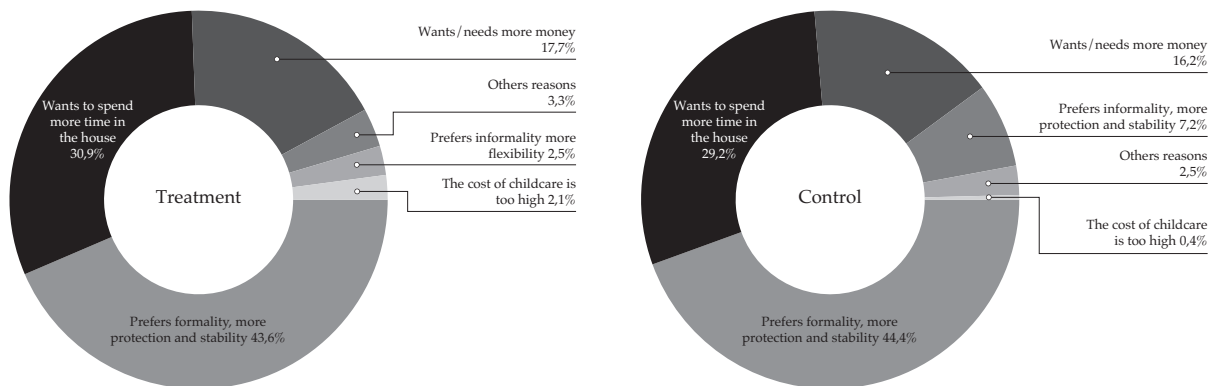
³ EPS refers to the contributory health care system in Colombia and SISBEN to one subsidized. Because of their condition of extreme poverty and forced displacement, and the fact of being beneficiaries of Red UNIDOS, these women had access to the SISBEN subsidized system.

Figure 1
INFORMAL JOB SCENARIOS



Source: Author's estimations.

Figure 2
FORMAL JOB SCENARIOS



Source: Author's estimations.

Although this is a hypothetical scenario, it was made as close to their real life as possible. First, the cost of daily average wages for displaced women and women under poverty was calculated from the Cali Household Survey (Ministerio de Trabajo, 2013). Childcare and transportation costs were

taken from government administrative information and from the qualitative work performed some months before the experiment⁴. The price of care went from "0" or a subsidized care facility, to \$1 US per day, which is the prize of the "Madres Comunitarias" to \$3.5 US, which is the prize of pri-

vate care in low income neighborhoods⁵. Women had to consider therefore whether they wanted to leave their kids in free or paid public or private childcare services.

A. Data and sample characteristics

The experiment was created among randomly selected women beneficiaries of Red UNIDOS. A total of 255 women participated in the experiment. Among these women, 124 were the head of a household, 123 were married women who had their husbands or partners present during the experiment, and 132 were married women who did not have their husbands or partners present during the experiment. All women had to be either married or in a partnership and had children younger than 18 years of age.

As seen in Table 4, women are on average between 35 and 37 years old. A high percentage of the sample are women displaced by violence (between 67% and 69% according to the group)⁶. Wives

and husbands' education is similar, rounding out around basic secondary school (between the 6th and 9th grades). We included variables related to the number of children and individuals living in the household since the economics of care literature has proven to be a crucial determinant for women's labor participation (Chioda, 2012). Furthermore, we considered it important to include whether women were participating in the Conditional Cash Transfer Program (CCT), *Más Familias en Acción*, since studies have shown that it can negatively affect female labor participation (Nunez, 2008). Women's education was included since it is also considered a key determinant of women's empowerment, intra-household bargaining power and labor participation (Sen, 1999; Keeber *et al.*, 2008). Job formality was integrated since women with formal jobs might enjoy a greater knowledge of labor market wages and therefore make more informed decisions. Finally, it was crucial to take into consideration whether the husbands were working, since the availability of another income

⁴ Indeed, the idea of this experiment was born during the qualitative work done for the impact Evaluation of Red Unidos. See Martínez *et al.* (2015). During the qualitative work performed some months before the experiment, we asked women what kind of informal daycare centers were available to them and what were their prices. This was crucial since this information rarely appears on household surveys and prices vary significantly across cities. Most informal or private daycares have a cost of 7,000 Colombian pesos per day, or \$3.5 US, and are provided by female neighbors that invite children to their own, often overcrowded, homes.

⁵ By public care, we refer to services provided by the government through its ICBE, such as Madres Comunitarias. Madres Comunitarias are only accepting children before they enter primary school between the ages of 5-6. The specific example of what care service was free was given during the experiment.

⁶ This is because Red UNIDOS has a special priority to provide services to people migrating to cities due to violence. Furthermore, this number is higher than the national Red UNIDOS average, due to the fact that Cali is the main receiving city in the south west of Colombia.

Table 4
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Variables	Treatment Married women with husband	Control Married women without husband
Displaced by violence	0.671 (0.055)	0.663 (0.047)
Age (of women)	35.246 (1.067)	35.624 (0.757)
Number of kids younger than 18	2.274 (0.165)	2.128 (0.121)
Number of people in the household	4.466 (0.335)	4.327 (0.251)
Beneficiary of Más Familias en Acción ¹	0.931 0.030	0.949 0.022
Education (of women)	6.205 (0.470)	6.546 (0.398)
Job Informality (of women)	0.493 (0.059)	0.426 (0.049)
Husband has a job	0.644 (0.056) (0.038)	0.822 *
Observations	123	132

Mean/Std. Error.

Income is codified by using the mean of each of the intervals in the questionnaire. The intervals from which women choose their income start in between 0 and 20,000 pesos, between 20,001 and 50,000, etc., up to over a million pesos.

¹ Más Familias en Acción (FEA) is a CCT sponsored by the government that helps people with children aged between 0 and 18 years with monetary transfers conditional to two aspects; nutrition and education.

could affect women's or a couple's decision on accepting a job at a given income. Husbands' incomes and SISBEN scores (socio-economic) were not included due to the high number of missing observations (40% and 30%, respectively).

The difference in means estimation revealed that the only variable with a significant difference between treatment and control groups was whether the husband had a job. This could be explained by the compliance challenge we faced in husbands assisting with the experiment. Indeed, these had perhaps a lower opportunity cost, since they were not working or had flexible (informal) jobs. It is important to mention that the selection of the treatment and control group was randomly assigned so that we did not allow for women selected under the treatment group to participate in the experiment if the husband was not present.

B. Empirical specification and identification strategy

We estimated women's willingness to take a job with an Ordered Probit. Outcomes are measured in money, and the amount varies according to the scenario. The Ordered Probit uses a categorical variable, in which the lowest value (1) is given to the lowest salary, representing four hours worked, and 6 to the highest salary, representing 10 hours worked. A value of seven is given to women that are not willing to accept any job, expressing the highest opportunity cost.

The identification strategy using the Ordered Probit regression has the following form:

$$Pr(y)_{g=i} = Pr(\beta)_0 + \beta_1 Treat_i + \beta_2 X + \varepsilon$$

Where y_g is the dependent categorical variable for each of the "g" scenarios. Treat i as each of the treatments given to the participants, 1 and 2, and X is a vector of covariates related to personal characteristics of the participant. The two treatments that were implemented in the experiment made were: women who attended the experiment with their husband and did the experiment with them in a discussion, as household decisions to be taken, versus women who were married but did not go to the experiment with their husbands; and women who were married and went to the experiment with their husbands, versus all of the other women who went to the experiment, including married women who did not go with their husbands to the experiment and women who were not married and were heads of the household.

IV. Treatment Effects

As pointed out previously, the treatment group constituting the husband as present in the experiment and control group, is composed of married women not having their husbands present. We measured the difference between their willingness to accept a job given that they negotiated the decision with their husband, and given the varying scenarios of the cost of child care and job formality.

Tables 5 to 7 show the informal jobs scenarios, and Tables 8 to 10 the formal ones. Tables 5 to 7 show no significant differences among the treatment and control group in their willingness to accept an informal job at any given wage and regardless of the cost of childcare. It is interesting to note that the number of children under 18 has a negative effect on a woman's willingness to take a job, particularly as the cost of childcare increases, working 6 to 7 hours a day.

Interestingly, the number of children younger than 18 also increases the likelihood of not accepting any job at all and staying at home when the cost of care is 2 and 3.5 USD per day (Tables 6 and 7). These results seem to suggest that when offering an informal job, intra-household bargaining doesn't share the effect on labor's choice that the cost of child care does.

On the contrary, Tables 8 to 10 show that women that negotiated with their husbands were less likely to take a job for the lower wage options in the formal sector, and were more likely to stay at home than their counterparts. Labor preferences also vary according to the cost of childcare. For example, there are no significant differences between the treatment and the control when childcare is free, but as the childcare cost increases from zero to one and to 3.5 USD, women that negotiated with their husbands are less likely to accept any given job and income unless full time (Tables 9 and 10).

Table 5
**TREATMENT: MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE WITH THEIR HUSBANDS VS. CONTROL:
 MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE NOT WITH THEIR HUSBANDS**

Ordered probit estimates	Scenario No. 1 Informal job Free child care						
	Income offered						
	(\$6USD)	(\$8USD)	(\$10USD)	(\$12USD)	(\$14USD)	(\$16USD)	(Stays at home)
Treatment	-0.00676 (0.00592)	-0.0310 (0.0228)	-0.0312 (0.0228)	-0.0143 (0.0106)	-0.00185 (0.00184)	0.000829 (0.00134)	0.0843 (0.0598)
Displaced by Violence	0.000002 (0.000002)	0.000107 (0.000106)	0.000109 (0.000107)	5.05e-05 (0.000005)	0.0000006 (0.000008)	-0.0000002 (0.0000004)	-0.000293 (0.000286)
Age	-0.000324 (0.000340)	-0.00151 (0.00139)	-0.00154 (0.00142)	-0.000714 (0.000676)	-0.000009 (0.000112)	0.0000035 (0.000006)	0.00414 (0.00377)
Number of kids under 18	-0.00302 (0.00252)	-0.0141 (0.00988)	-0.0143 (0.0101)	-0.00666 (0.00481)	-0.000896 (0.000887)	0.000340 (0.000582)	0.0386 (0.0263)
Number of people in the household	0.000798 (0.00104)	0.00372 (0.00455)	0.00378 (0.00464)	0.00176 (0.00217)	0.000237 (0.000331)	-0.000008 (0.000179)	-0.0102 (0.0124)
Belongs to <i>Familias en Acción</i>	0.00156 (0.00912)	0.00746 (0.0449)	0.00779 (0.0482)	0.00378 (0.0243)	0.000579 (0.00415)	-0.000103 (0.000317)	-0.0211 (0.130)
Education of the women	-0.000482 (0.00126)	-0.00225 (0.00578)	-0.00228 (0.00588)	-0.00106 (0.00274)	-0.000143 (0.000382)	0.000005 (0.000163)	0.00617 (0.0158)
Informality	0.00576 (0.00561)	0.0265 (0.0227)	0.0267 (0.0224)	0.0123 (0.0104)	0.00158 (0.00172)	-0.000708 (0.00118)	-0.0720 (0.0597)
Husband labor participation	0.00164 (0.00518)	0.00775 (0.0245)	0.00800 (0.0257)	0.00381 (0.0125)	0.000552 (0.00197)	-0.000144 (0.000430)	-0.0216 (0.0694)

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table 6
**TREATMENT: MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE WITH THEIR HUSBANDS VS. CONTROL:
 MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE NOT WITH THEIR HUSBANDS**

Ordered probit estimates	Scenario No. 2 Informal job Childcare cost = \$1US						
	Income offered - Free childcare						
	(\$6USD)	(\$8USD)	(\$10USD)	(\$12USD)	(\$14USD)	(\$16USD)	(Stays at home)
Treatment	-0.00544 (0.00572)	-0.00455 (0.00478)	-0.0299 (0.0272)	-0.0179 (0.0165)	-0.0103 (0.00956)	-0.000696 (0.00101)	0.0688 (0.0619)
Displaced by Violence	0.000001 (0.000002)	0.000001 (0.000002)	0.000009 (0.000126)	0.000006 (0.000007)	0.000003 (0.000004)	0.000002 (0.0000004)	-0.000230 (0.000289)
Age	-0.000385 (0.000356)	-0.000324 (0.000307)	-0.00215 (0.00169)	-0.00130 (0.00104)	-0.000752 (0.000622)	-0.000005 (0.000007)	0.00496 (0.00386)
Number of kids under 18	-0.00453 (0.00308)	-0.00381 (0.00272)	-0.0252** (0.0124)	-0.0152* (0.00786)	-0.00883* (0.00485)	-0.000633 (0.000778)	0.0583** (0.0276)
Number of people in the household	0.00114 (0.00112)	0.000960 (0.000968)	0.00635 (0.00554)	0.00384 (0.00339)	0.00223 (0.00200)	0.000159 (0.000225)	-0.0147 (0.0126)
Belongs to <i>Familias en Acción</i>	-0.00642 (0.0147)	-0.00512 (0.0112)	-0.0316 (0.0628)	-0.0174 (0.0314)	-0.00850 (0.0124)	0.0000007 (0.00167)	0.0690 (0.130)
Education of the women	-0.000917 (0.00135)	-0.000771 (0.00114)	-0.00511 (0.00713)	-0.00309 (0.00434)	-0.00179 (0.00253)	-0.000128 (0.000229)	0.0118 (0.0164)
Informality	0.00483 (0.00549)	0.00404 (0.00471)	0.0266 (0.0273)	0.0159 (0.0163)	0.00913 (0.00945)	0.000617 (0.000945)	-0.0611 (0.0619)
Husband labor participation	0.00344 (0.00517)	0.00294 (0.00458)	0.0199 (0.0298)	0.0124 (0.0192)	0.00758 (0.0124)	0.000696 (0.00146)	-0.0470 (0.0715)

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table 7
**TREATMENT: MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE WITH THEIR HUSBANDS VS. CONTROL:
 MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE NOT WITH THEIR HUSBANDS**

Ordered probit estimates	Scenario No. 3 Informal job Childcare cost = \$3.5US							
	(\$6USD)	(\$8USD)	(\$10USD)	(\$12USD)	(\$14USD)	(\$16USD)	(Stays at home)	
	Income offered							
Treatment	-0.00659 (0.00629)	-0.00186 (0.00238)	-0.00514 (0.00504)	-0.0262 (0.0215)	-0.0255 (0.0209)	-0.0129 (0.0107)	0.0781 (0.0629)	
Displaced by Violence	0.00002 (0.00002)	0.000006 (0.000001)	0.00002 (0.000002)	0.000113 (0.000009)	0.000112 (0.000009)	0.000005 (0.000005)	-0.000341 (0.000289)	
Age	-0.000315 (0.000358)	-0.000008 (0.000125)	-0.000248 (0.000285)	-0.00127 (0.00131)	-0.00125 (0.00129)	-0.000640 (0.000676)	0.00382 (0.00388)	
Number of kids under 18	-0.00405 (0.00305)	-0.00115 (0.00130)	-0.00319 (0.00250)	-0.0163* (0.00981)	-0.0160* (0.00972)	-0.00821 (0.00523)	0.0490* (0.0283)	
Number of people in the household	0.00102 (0.00115)	0.000289 (0.000410)	0.000800 (0.000929)	0.00409 (0.00427)	0.00403 (0.00420)	0.00206 (0.00218)	-0.0123 (0.0126)	
Belongs to <i>Familias en Acción</i>	-0.00632 (0.0154)	-0.00173 (0.00429)	-0.00470 (0.0108)	-0.0228 (0.0489)	-0.0207 (0.0410)	-0.00925 (0.0156)	0.0655 (0.135)	
Education of the women	-0.00137 (0.00154)	-0.000389 (0.000538)	-0.00108 (0.00122)	-0.00551 (0.00560)	-0.00542 (0.00553)	-0.00277 (0.00289)	0.0165 (0.0166)	
Informality	0.00573 (0.00597)	0.00162 (0.00220)	0.00448 (0.00484)	0.0228 (0.0216)	0.0223 (0.0208)	0.0113 (0.0106)	-0.0682 (0.0628)	
Husband labor participation	0.00111 (0.00582)	0.000317 (0.00169)	0.000877 (0.00463)	0.00452 (0.0238)	0.00448 (0.0239)	0.00232 (0.0126)	-0.0136 (0.0723)	
Standard errors in parentheses, *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1								

Table 8
**TREATMENT: MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE WITH THEIR HUSBANDS VS. CONTROL:
 MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE NOT WITH THEIR HUSBANDS**

Ordered probit estimates	Scenario No. 4 Formal job Free childcare						
	Income offered						
	(\$6USD)	(\$8USD)	(\$10USD)	(\$12USD)	(\$14USD)	(\$16USD)	(Stays at home)
Treatment	-0.0908* (0.0546)	-0.0126 (0.00812)	-0.00532 (0.00393)	0.000120 (0.00141)	0.00427 (0.00349)	0.00523 (0.00377)	0.0990* (0.0587)
Displaced by Violence	0.00783 (0.00746)	0.00112 (0.00111)	0.000495 (0.000519)	0.0000007 (0.000122)	-0.000349 (0.000387)	-0.000443 (0.000459)	-0.00866 (0.00822)
Age	-0.00300 (0.00344)	-0.000431 (0.000509)	-0.000190 (0.000238)	-0.0000002 (0.000004)	0.000134 (0.000170)	0.000170 (0.000207)	0.00332 (0.00381)
Number of kids under 18	-0.0172 (0.0234)	-0.00247 (0.00344)	-0.00109 (0.00159)	-0.000001 (0.000269)	0.000767 (0.00113)	0.000973 (0.00139)	0.0190 (0.0259)
Number of people in the household	0.00156 (0.0119)	0.000224 (0.00171)	0.000009 (0.000752)	0.0000001 (2.64e-05)	-0.000006 (0.000532)	-0.000008 (0.000673)	-0.00172 (0.0131)
Belongs to <i>Familias en Acción</i>	-0.222 (0.144)	-0.0130* (0.00670)	0.00362 (0.0126)	0.00851 (0.0103)	0.0198 (0.0179)	0.0167 (0.0133)	0.187** (0.0915)
Education of the women	0.00316 (0.0142)	0.000455 (0.00204)	0.000200 (0.000899)	0.000002 (0.000005)	-0.000141 (0.000639)	-0.000179 (0.000806)	-0.00350 (0.0157)
Informality	-0.0257 (0.0547)	-0.00369 (0.00791)	-0.00163 (0.00352)	-0.000002 (0.000402)	0.00115 (0.00252)	0.00146 (0.00314)	0.0284 (0.0604)
Husband labor participation	-0.0170 (0.0627)	-0.00237 (0.00854)	-0.00100 (0.00876)	0.000002 (0.000340)	0.000802 (0.00316)	0.000982 (0.00373)	0.0185 (0.0676)

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table 9
**TREATMENT: MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE WITH THEIR HUSBANDS VS. CONTROL:
 MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE NOT WITH THEIR HUSBANDS**

Ordered probit estimates	Scenario No. 5 Formal job Childcare cost = \$1US							
	(\$6USD)	(\$8USD)	(\$10USD)	(\$12USD)	(\$14USD)	(\$16USD)	(Stays at home)	
Treatment	-0.104** (0.0491)	-0.0162* (0.00876)	-0.0156* (0.00826)	-0.00426 (0.00352)	0.00397 (0.00362)	0.00368 (0.00250)	0.132** (0.0607)	
Displaced by Violence	0.00820 (0.00664)	0.00133 (0.00114)	0.00131 (0.00111)	0.000392 (0.000399)	-0.000277 (0.000330)	-0.000282 (0.000268)	-0.0107 (0.00858)	
Age	-0.00243 (0.00304)	-0.000393 (0.000503)	-0.000388 (0.000500)	-0.000116 (0.000167)	8.22e-05 (0.000124)	8.36e-05 (0.000112)	0.00316 (0.00396)	
Number of kids under 18	-0.0176 (0.0207)	-0.00285 (0.00344)	-0.00281 (0.00341)	-0.000843 (0.00115)	0.000596 (0.000861)	0.000606 (0.000772)	0.0229 (0.0269)	
Number of people in the household	0.00672 (0.0105)	0.00109 (0.00174)	0.00107 (0.00171)	0.000322 (0.000546)	-0.000227 (0.000407)	-0.000231 (0.000380)	-0.00874 (0.0137)	
Belongs to <i>Familias en Acción</i>	-0.239* (0.141)	-0.0197*** (0.00739)	-0.00878 (0.0109)	0.0106 (0.0162)	0.0231 (0.0197)	0.0122 (0.00943)	0.221** (0.0934)	
Education of the women	0.00670 (0.0125)	0.00108 (0.00205)	0.00107 (0.00201)	0.000321 (0.000626)	-0.000227 (0.000469)	-0.000231 (0.000446)	-0.00872 (0.0163)	
Informality	-0.0218 (0.0482)	-0.00353 (0.00786)	-0.00348 (0.00774)	-0.00105 (0.00239)	0.000736 (0.00175)	0.000750 (0.00170)	0.0284 (0.0627)	
Husband labor participation	0.00500 (0.0538)	0.000814 (0.00881)	0.000807 (0.00877)	0.000247 (0.00275)	-0.000163 (0.00169)	-0.000170 (0.00181)	-0.00654 (0.0706)	

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Table 10
TREATMENT: MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE WITH THEIR HUSBANDS VS. CONTROL:
MARRIED WOMEN WHO WERE NOT WITH THEIR HUSBANDS

Ordered probit estimates	Scenario No. 6 Formal job childcare cost = \$3.5US per day						
	Income offered						
	(\$6USD)	(\$8USD)	(\$10USD)	(\$12USD)	(\$14USD)	(\$16USD)	(Stays at home)
Treatment	-0.0543* (0.0297)	-0.0201* (0.0119)	-0.0268* (0.0152)	-0.0166* (0.00957)	-0.00625 (0.00449)	0.00272 (0.00295)	0.121* (0.0628)
Displaced by Violence	0.00472 (0.00370)	0.00179 (0.00147)	0.00242 (0.00194)	0.00153 (0.00124)	0.000613 (0.000556)	-0.000208 (0.000275)	-0.0109 (0.00835)
Age	-0.000714 (0.00176)	-0.000271 (0.000664)	-0.000366 (0.000901)	-0.000232 (0.000575)	-9.26e-05 (0.000235)	3.14e-05 (8.34e-05)	0.00164 (0.00403)
Number of kids under 18	-0.00599 (0.0121)	-0.00227 (0.00462)	-0.00308 (0.00624)	-0.00195 (0.00398)	-0.000777 (0.00164)	0.000264 (0.000599)	0.0138 (0.0279)
Number of people in the household	0.00447 (0.00619)	0.00170 (0.00239)	0.00229 (0.00322)	0.00145 (0.00204)	0.000580 (0.000853)	-0.000197 (0.000343)	-0.0103 (0.0142)
Belongs to Familias en Acción	-0.106 (0.0957)	-0.0310 (0.0231)	-0.0355* (0.0213)	-0.0159** (0.00661)	0.00180 (0.0113)	0.0119 (0.0146)	0.174 (0.115)
Education of the women	0.00791 (0.00733)	0.00300 (0.00293)	0.00406 (0.00386)	0.00257 (0.00244)	0.00103 (0.00106)	-0.000348 (0.000491)	-0.0182 (0.0167)
Informality	-0.00271 (0.0278)	-0.00103 (0.0105)	-0.00139 (0.0143)	-0.000881 (0.00902)	-0.000352 (0.00361)	0.000119 (0.00123)	0.00625 (0.0640)
Husband labor participation	-0.0160 (0.0332)	-0.00592 (0.0121)	-0.00789 (0.0158)	-0.00486 (0.00951)	-0.00177 (0.00326)	0.000860 (0.00220)	0.0355 (0.0712)

Standard errors in parentheses, *** p < 0.01, ** p < 0.05, * p < 0.1

Interestingly, women who are part of Más Familias en Acción have a higher probability of choosing not to leave and this decreases the probability of choosing any of the other possible offers the women had. In this case as well, the number of kids under 18 in the household has an impact in the same direction.

We observed that first, negotiating with their husbands impacts women's decision making, particularly when considering the quality of a job (formal vs. informal) and the cost of childcare (free, one dollar vs. three dollars). Second, the number of children under 18 also and benefiting from a Conditional Cash Transfers affects women's willingness to take a job.

How to explain these results? On the one hand, these couples might be making better informed decisions due to the fact that husbands might be more exposed to the labor market and the opportunity cost of leaving the children with child care services they do not trust, is too high. On the other hand despite their poverty levels, men's chauvinistic culture could be impeding women to take jobs outside their homes with higher incomes since that would make them economically independent while increasing their domestic bargaining power.

This is consistent with evidence from the qualitative component of the impact evaluation of Red Unidos among extremely poor and displaced women performed by the same authors (Martinez-

Restrepo *et al.*, 2015). Women reveal that their husbands or partners think that they will cheat or neglect their children and households if working outside their homes. Finally women suggest that their husbands believe that by working and having a greater income, they will gain autonomy and more bargaining power, and will no longer dependent on them (Martinez-Restrepo *et al.*, 2015). According to the traditional family structures and roles, women stay at home taking care of children and men go to work bringing in money.

Table 10, shows the main reasons provided that women after stating their choice during the experiment. For the informal job scenarios, it is possible to observe that although they both suggested needing more money, 45.8% of women that negotiated with the husbands or partners suggested wanting to spend more time in the house compared to 35.9 of the control group.

Interestingly Figure 2 shows that the main reason to accept or not a formal job was, a preference for "formality, protection and stability". The second more frequent explanation was "wanting to spend more time at home" which would reflect to choice of those that stayed at home at did not accept any given wage offered. This preference is 15 percentage points under the one for an informal job among treated women and 7 percentage points for the control group. Formality seems to matter more than money since only 17.7 and 16.2% of the treatment and the control groups reported that reason to accept a job.

Although the cost of childcare does not seem to be a very important reason to accept a job, the high cost, the low quality and the lack of trust of childcare institutions is often associated with the women's preference of staying at home and taking care of their own children (Martínez-Restrepo *et al.*, 2015). This is consistent with evidence suggesting that the number of hours women dedicate to childcare and domestic duties negatively impacts women's labor participation (Chioda, 2011; Fernandez, 2013; Duflo, 2012).

Indeed, women interviewed for this study mentioned their lack of trust of private childcare – basically neighbors taking care of children in their living rooms, as well as the "Madres Comunitarias" or Community Mothers, government provided childcare in peoples homes (Martínez-Restrepo *et al.*, 2015). Violent deaths among adolescents are also a major concern for these mothers living in urban slums where children and adolescents are exposed to gang violence, drug traffic and drug consumption.

Indeed, by 2011, Colombia had the second highest rate of youth homicide in the world (73.4%), ranking just below El Salvador (92.3%) and followed by Venezuela (64.2%) (WHOSIS, 2011), with Cali reported to be the city with the highest number of violent deaths in the country (Ricaurte, 2011). Consequently, women with children under 18 prefer to stay at home if possible earning occasional income from work they do there, such as

selling food, doing laundry, and selling catalogs. These activities allow them to manage their time while simultaneously looking after their children (Martínez-Restrepo *et al.*, 2015).

V. Policy Implications and Concluding Remarks

The integration of women into the labor market and increasing their earnings are key (although not the only aspect) to the reduction of extreme poverty in Colombia. This is why it is crucial to understand the intra-household decision-making process to adequately assess how labor decisions are made and what determines how women under vulnerable conditions choose or are constrained to not work or to only work just a few hours a day from their home.

In this experiment we elicited the choices that women under extreme poverty and forced displacement make regarding a constant daily income from working at home in small and low-productivity businesses (such as cooking, sewing, and so on) against increasing their daily income by working outside the home as an employee. This decision is subject to the number of hours away from home, type of job (formal or informal), and the cost of transportation and childcare.

Our results indicate that intra-household negotiation has a strong impact on women's willingness to take a job at different earning rates per day, particularly when it is a formal job with benefits. Results

of this laboratory experiment show that women with their husbands present during the experiment were less likely to take a job with the lower wage options in the formal sector, and more likely to stay at home than their counterparts without husbands present. Very importantly, labor preferences also vary according to the cost of childcare.

Although this experiment presents results of hypothetical scenarios of women, it provides crucial evidence on intra-household bargaining of job decisions and formal job preferences, particularly for families with children facing income, transportation and access to childcare constraints.

Several implications and policy recommendations can be drawn from this study. First, it is important to achieve cultural changes, where domestic chores and the care of children is shared among men and women (Chioda, 2012; Duflo, 2012). Indeed, currently, studies reveal that on average, women under extreme and moderate poverty in urban areas dedicate 7.2 hours of the day to domestic duties and child-care. Their male counterparts only do so for 3.3 hours per day (Martinez-Restrepo, 2015).

Secondly, access to free and high quality childcare in deprived urban areas that women can trust

can have a high impact on women's labor participation and therefore poverty reduction (when measured solely by income), than for example other regulatory policies, or labor matching programs offering jobs to these women. In this sense, one could wonder if the construction of high quality childcare and early childhood development facilities in deprived neighborhoods such as those being built currently in Medellín⁷ "Buen Comienzo" or "Good Beginnings", could have a greater impact, increasing women's labor participation and wages than CCTs.

Nevertheless, as evidence has pointed out, it is not enough to think that care is needed only under the age of five until most Colombian children enter primary school. Gang recruitment and high mortality rates among adolescents due to gang wars in ages 13 to 18 remain a barrier for women in accepting or looking for jobs outside of their homes, as the supervision of teenagers is even more challenging than that of children. This implies that "Care" must be defined most broadly, since teenagers also need supervision after school (which in Colombian public schools lasts only 4 hours per day. Care for adolescents must include extracurricular activities and support for sports and cultural activities that have demonstrated a lower probability of incurring risky behaviors.

⁷ To our knowledge, this is not an impact evaluation about the effects of "Buen Comienzo". For more information see: <https://www.medellin.gov.co/irj/portal/ciudadanos?NavigationTarget=navurl://031784ae4ee1f3003874306b01391da3a>

Small informal entrepreneurship at home remain therefore the best option for these women, since they can work while supervising their underage children. Although income-generating strategies (such as microcredits) often reinforce informality and precarious jobs, without the necessary access to care services, transportation, and changes in cultural patterns, it remains the best option that women under extreme poverty have.

Further research needs to be done, taking into consideration that each woman who participated in the experiment answered to all the scenarios at once, and this might have caused a response bias because women might predict the next scenario where wages would increase as well as costs of care. This bias might have been overcome due to

the relationship given to wages and hours worked. Wages would only increase by working more hours, simulating an opportunity cost.

Ideally, each woman should have answered to one scenario only, but this could have considerably increased the sample size and therefore the budget. The experiment could also be improved by randomly assigning the scenarios using a computer program such as the one used by Vyrastekova and Garikipati (2005). Nonetheless, it is important to take into account that due to security concerns in the places where our experiment took place, it would have been difficult to have access to computers. In addition, participants declared having difficulties operating computers and some of them were even illiterate.

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