

JUAN ESTEBAN SAAVEDRA
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Personal

Dual U.S. and Colombian citizen; married, one child.

Education

2004-2009 Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
Ph.D. in Public Policy.
Dissertation Title: *The Role of Resources and Incentives in Education Production*
Committee: Lawrence Katz, Caroline Hoxby, Alberto Abadie, Richard Murnane
Primary Domains: Labor Economics, Development Economics, Economics of Education.

2001-2003 Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
Master of Public Administration in International Development.

1997-1999 Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia.
MA in Economics.

1992-1997 Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia.
BA in Economics.

Current Appointments and Affiliations

2023- Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School (Visiting Lecturer 2021-2023).
2021- Faculty Affiliate, The Harvard Center for International Development.
2021- Faculty Affiliate, Evidence for Policy Design, Harvard Kennedy School.
2017- Invited Researcher, Jameel Poverty Action Lab.
2016- Faculty Research Fellow, National Bureau of Economic Research.
2014- Research Affiliate, Innovations for Poverty Action.

Editorial Positions

2023- Editorial Board Member, Education Finance and Policy

Publications (Google Scholar Citations = 2,058, h-index = 22)

Peer Reviewed Publications

Premium or Penalty? Labor Market Returns to Novice Public Sector Teachers (with Dario Maldonado, Lucrecia Santibañez and Luis Herrera), *Journal of Human Resources*, forthcoming [[LINK](#) to online pre-print; [LINK](#) to NBER working paper #24012].

Long-Term Educational Consequences of Vocational Training in Colombia: Impacts on Young Trainees and Their Relatives (with Adriana Kugler, Maurice Kugler and Luis Herrera), *Journal of Human Resources*, 57(1), January 2022 [[LINK](#)] [previously circulated as Long-Term Direct and Spillover Effects of Job Training, [LINK](#) to NBER working paper #21607].

Publications (cont.)

Peer Reviewed Publications (cont.)

Comprehensive Private Schooling for Low-Income Children: Experimental Case-Study Evidence from Mexico, (with Lucrecia Santibañez, Raja B. Kattan and Harry Patrinos), *International Journal of Educational Development*, 87(11), November 2021 [[LINK](#)].

Remedial Inquiry-Based Science Education: Experimental Evidence from Peru (with Emma Naslund-Hadley and Mariana Alfonso), *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 41(4): 483-509, December 2019 [[LINK](#)]. [[LINK](#) to NBER working paper #23050; [LINK](#) to IPA Evidence Review on Improving Learning Outcomes].

Medium- and Long-Term Educational Consequences of Alternative Conditional Cash Transfer Designs: Experimental Evidence from Colombia (with Leigh Linden and Felipe Barrera), *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 11(3): 54-91, July 2019 [[LINK](#)]. [[LINK](#) to NBER working paper #23275].

The Persistent Effects of Youth Savings Reminders: Experimental Evidence from Text-Message Campaigns in Colombia (with Catherine Rodriguez), *Journal of Development Economics*, 139(4): 135-156, June 2019 [[LINK](#)]. (Previously circulated as Nudging Youth to Develop Savings Habits, CESR/Schaeffer working paper 2015-018, [[LINK](#)]).

Educational Impacts and Cost-Effectiveness of Conditional Cash Transfer Programs in Developing Countries: A Meta-Analysis (with Sandra Garcia), *Review of Educational Research*, 87(5): 921-965, October 2017 [[LINK](#)]. [[LINK](#) to NBER working paper # 23594].

The Big Sort: College Reputation and Labor Market Outcomes (with W. Bentley MacLeod, Evan Riehl and Miguel Urquiola), *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 9(3): 223-261, July 2017 [[LINK](#); AEA [VIDEO](#) highlight]. [[LINK](#) to NBER working paper #21230].

Disentangling Disadvantage: Can We Distinguish Good Teaching from Classroom Composition? (with John Engberg, Jennifer Steele and Gema Zamarro), *Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness*, 8(1): 84-111, January 2015. [[LINK](#)].

Resource Constraints and Educational Attainment in Developing Countries: Colombia 1945-2005, *Journal of Development Economics*, 99(1): 80-91, September 2012. [[LINK](#)].

Can Colleges Cultivate Critical Thinking, Problem Solving, Writing and Interpersonal Skills? (with Anna Saavedra), *Economics of Education Review*, 30(6): 1516-1526, December 2011. [[LINK](#)].

Are Educational Vouchers Only Redistributive? (with Eric Bettinger and Michael Kremer), *The Economic Journal*, 120(546): F204-F228, August 2010. [[LINK](#)].

Fiscal Governance in Colombia (in Spanish) *Planeación y Desarrollo*, 30, October 1999.

Handbook and Book Chapters

Conditional Cash Transfers for Education (with Sandra Garcia), Chapter 7 in Eric Hanushek, Stephen Machin and Ludger Woessmann (editors), *Handbook of the Economics of Education*, North-Holland: Elsevier, Volume 6: 499-590, 2023. [[LINK](#) to NBER working paper # 29758].

Publications (cont.)

Handbook and Book Chapters (cont.)

Earning and Learning: An Approximation to College Value Added in Two Dimensions (peer reviewed, with Evan Riehl and Miguel Urquiola), in *Productivity in Higher Education*, edited by Caroline Hoxby and Kevin Stange. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2019. [[LINK](#) to NBER working paper #22725; [LINK](#) to pre-print book].

Job Training in Colombia (peer reviewed, in Spanish, with Carlos Medina), in *Equidad y Movilidad Social*, compiled by Armando Montenegro and Marcela Melendez. Bogota: Universidad de los Andes, 2014. [[LINK](#)].

Education Vouchers in Colombia (with Eric Bettinger and Michael Kremer) in *Emerging Evidence on Vouchers and Faith-based Providers in Education: Case studies from Africa, Latin America and Asia*, edited by Felipe Barrera-Osorio, Harry Anthony Patrinos and Quentin Wodon. Washington D.C.: The World Bank, 2009. [[LINK](#)].

Books

In Pursuit of Teaching Excellence: Improving Educational Quality in Colombia by Improving the Quality of the Teacher Workforce (in Spanish as “Tras la Excelencia Docente,” with Sandra Garcia, Dario Maldonado, Guillermo Perry and Catherine Rodriguez), 2014.

PDF version of book [[LINK](#)]

Press coverage: El Espectador (Editorials) [[LINK](#)] [[LINK](#)] [[LINK](#)]; El Tiempo (Editorial) [[LINK](#)]; El Tiempo (other) [[LINK](#)] [[LINK](#)] [[LINK](#)] [[LINK](#)]; El Espectador (other) [[LINK](#)] [[LINK](#)]; Dinero [[LINK](#)]; Semana [[LINK](#)] [[LINK](#)]; La Nación [[LINK](#)]; WRADIO [[LINK](#)]; El Nuevo Liberal [[LINK](#)]; Vanguardia [[LINK](#)]; El País [[LINK](#)]; Caracol [[LINK](#)]; El Colombiano [[LINK](#)]; La República [[LINK](#)]; Portafolio [[LINK](#)]; Foro Económico [[LINK](#)]; OEA Servicios Educativos [[LINK](#)]; La Opinión [[LINK](#)]; Diario del Huila [[LINK](#)]; El Comunicador [[LINK](#)].

Policy influence:

In 2015 the Colombian Government and the Teachers’ Union (FECODE) agreed to adopt the teacher evaluation model we propose in the book [[LINK](#)].

Invited Journal Articles

Summary and Clarifications on “In Pursuit of Teacher Excellence” (in Spanish, with Sandra Garcia, Dario Maldonado, Guillermo Perry and Catherine Rodriguez), *Revista Colombiana de Educación* 67(2): 89-105, Fall 2014. [[LINK](#)], reprinted in *La Calidad de la Educacion Bajo la Lupa*, edited by Julian de Zubiria Samper. Bogota: Cooperativa Editorial Magisterio, 2015. [[LINK](#)].

Working Papers

School Vouchers, Labor Markets and Vocational Education (with Eric Bettinger, Michael Kremer, Maurice Kugler, Carlos Medina and Christian Posso), working paper. [[LINK](#) to Borradores de Economía working paper #1087; [LINK](#) to Policy Brief].

Press coverage: El Espectador [[LINK](#)].

Awarded the Juan Luis Londoño Prize for Best Paper at the Latin American Economic Association Annual Meetings (Santa Cruz, Bolivia 2015).

Wealthier, Happier and More Self-Sufficient: When Anti-Poverty Programs Improve Economic and Subjective Wellbeing at a Reduced Cost to Taxpayers (with Titus Galama and Robson Morgan). [[LINK](#) to NBER working paper # 24090].

Publications (cont.)

Working Papers (cont.)

The Learning and Early Labor Market Effects of College Quality: A Regression Discontinuity Analysis.

Policy Reports

Youth Savings Patterns and Performance in Colombia, Kenya, Ghana and Nepal (with the YouthSave Research Consortium), YouthSave Research Report, Center for Social Development Publication # 2015-01. [[LINK](#)]. Public release summary [[LINK](#)].

Press coverage: New America Weekly [[LINK](#)].

Evaluation of Norwegian Multilateral Support to Basic Education: Synthesis Report (with the Development Portfolio Management Group), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation report # 7/2015. [[LINK](#)].

Evaluation Series of NORHED Higher Education and Research for Development: Theory of Change and Evaluation Methods (with the Development Portfolio Management Group), Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation report # 4/2014. [[LINK](#)].

Other Publications

The Role of Disbursement Timing in Conditional Cash Transfer Programmes: Long-term Effects, *VoxDev Article*, October 2017. [[LINK](#)].

The Effects of Conditional Cash Transfer Programs on Poverty Reduction, Human Capital Accumulation and Wellbeing, *United Nations Expert Group Meeting “Strategies for Eradicating Poverty to Achieve Sustainable Development for All*, New York, May 2016. [[LINK](#)]

Long-term Effects of Job Training on Human Capital, *VoxEU Column*, January 2016. [[LINK](#)].

Work in Progress

Overcoming Informational and Behavioral Obstacles in Access to Tertiary Education (with Eric Bettinger, Michael Kremer, Carlos Medina, Christopher Nielson and Christian Posso).

Improving Learning by Promoting Mental Health and Socioemotional Skills in Adolescence with a School-based Intervention (with Michael Kremer, Maria Adelaida Martinez, Christian Posso, Gautam Rao and Frank Schilbach).

Grants and Contracts (as PI or co-PI)

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| 2024-2025 | Improving Learning by Promoting Mental Health and Socioemotional Skills in Adolescence with a School-based Intervention (co-PI), Jameel Poverty Action Lab. |
| 2023-2025 | Improving Agency by Improvement Mental Health for Adolescents in Colombia (PI), The Agency Fund. |
| 2023 | Smart Disclosure and Platform for Higher Education (PI), The Agency Fund. |
| 2021-2025 | Economics of Education Reform in Colombia Fund (PI), Fundacion Santo Domingo. Selected press coverage: BluRadio [LINK], El Universal [LINK], El Espectador [LINK], El Heraldito [LINK] |
| 2020-2021 | Economic Development Consultant (PI), Department of Economics, Harvard University and Kenneth Griffin Department of Economics, University of Chicago. |

Grants and Contracts (as PI or co-PI, cont.)

2020-2021	Wealth Shocks, Student Loan Debt and Intergenerational Inequality (co-PI), Student Loan Law Initiative at University of California-Irvine.
2018-2020	Expert Advisor (PI), Directorate for Education and Skills, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.
2018-2019	Overcoming Informational and Behavioral Obstacles in Access to Tertiary Education (PI), Jameel Poverty Action Lab.
2017-2018	Improving Access to Tertiary Education among Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students in Colombia (PI), Jameel Poverty Action Lab.
2013-2017	Impact Evaluation of a Low-Cost Private Schooling Model in Mexico (co-PI), Strategic Impact Evaluation Fund, World Bank.
2014-2016	Labor Markets for Novice Teachers in Developing Countries: Evidence from Colombia (PI), Inter-American Development Bank.
2010-2015	YouthSave: Helping Youth Build a Tangible Stake in Their Future (PI, Colombia Site), MasterCard Foundation and Save the Children.
2014-2015	Remedial Science Education: Experimental Evidence from Peru (PI), Inter-American Development Bank and Innovations for Poverty Action.
2013-2014	Limited English Proficiency and Fettered Financial Capabilities among US Hispanic Immigrants (PI), National Institutes of Health RCMAR Grant P30AG043073.
2012-2014	Job Training in Colombia (PI), Colombian National Planning Department.
2013	Initial Study Initial Study On How To Improve Student Outcomes Through Data-Driven Decision-Making In Mexican Upper-Secondary Schools (PI), Inter-American Development Bank.
2012-2013	Improving Self Employment Opportunities and Wellbeing for Economically Vulnerable Population Groups in the United Arab Emirates Through Social Inclusion and Entrepreneurship Development Programs (PI), Khalifa Fund for Enterprise Development—Abu Dhabi.
2012-2013	In Pursuit of Teaching Excellence (PI), Fundación Empresa Privada Compartir, Colombia.
2012	The Predictive Power of Alternative College Entry Examination Subjects (PI), Instituto Colombiano de Fomento a la Educación Superior (ICFES).
2011	Educational, Labor Market and Fiscal Impacts of Scholarships for Private Secondary Schooling (co-PI), World Bank.
2009-2011	Young Scholars Research Grant (PI) Universidad de Los Andes.
2006-2009	School Voucher Effects and Mechanisms (co-PI), World Bank.

Honors, Scholarships and Fellowships

2022	Ad-hoc member, Investment Committee, USAID Development Innovation Ventures.
2021	Ad-hoc member, Special Education Pandemic Recovery Scientific Review Panel, Institute for Educational Sciences.
2020	Ad-hoc member, Investment Committee, USAID Development Innovation Ventures.
2017	Keynote speaker, Colombian Association of Economics Departments (AFADECO).
2016	United Nations Expert Group Member, Strategies to Eradicate Poverty.
2015	Juan Luis Londoño Prize for Best Paper at the Latin American Economic Association Annual Meetings (Santa Cruz, Bolivia).
2013-2014	National Institutes of Health RCMAR Scholar.
2011-2012	Colombian Institute for Education Evaluation (ICFES) Expert Advisory Board Member.
2005-2009	Multidisciplinary Program in Inequality and Social Policy Fellowship, Harvard.
2005-2009	Institute for Quantitative Social Science Graduate Fellow, Harvard.
2007-2008	Spencer Foundation Dissertation Fellowship.

Honors, Scholarships and Fellowships (cont.)

2007-2008	Harvard Graduate Society Dissertation Grant.
2008	Women in Public Policy Research Grant, Harvard.
2007	Honorable Mention, Research Competition, Fedesarrollo-Colombia.
2007	Center for International Development Research Grant, Harvard.
2005-2007	Faculty of Arts and Sciences Doctoral Grant, Harvard.
2005	Center for International Development Research Grant, Harvard.
2004-2005	Harvard Kennedy School, Pre-doctoral Fellowship.
2001-2003	Joint Japan Fund World Bank/Harvard Scholarship.

Non-Profit Board Memberships

2019-2022	ConsiliumBots, Director.
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Previous Employment Experience

2021-2023	Visiting Lecturer in Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School.
2021-2023	Consulting Director, Development Innovation Lab, University of Chicago.
2013-2023	Research Economist, Dornsife Center for Economic and Social Research, University of Southern California.
2011-2013	Adjunct Professor of Public Policy, Escuela de Gobierno Alberto Lleras Camargo, Universidad de Los Andes.
2011-2013	Associate Economist, RAND Corporation.
2009-2011	Assistant Professor of Public Policy, Escuela de Gobierno Alberto Lleras Camargo, Universidad de Los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia.
2005-2007	NBER, Research Assistant, Prof. R. Jensen, Cambridge, MA.
2004	Inter-American Development Bank, Consultant, Suriname.
2003-2004	NBER, Research Assistant, Profs. R. Jensen and S. Dynarski, Cambridge, MA.
2002	Trickle-Up, Summer Intern, India.
2000-2001	National Planning Department, Evaluation Advisor, Bogotá Colombia.
1999-2000	National Federation of Coffee Growers, Economist, Government Advisors Office, Bogotá Colombia.

Professional Activities

Journal reviewer for: *Nature: Human Behavior, Quarterly Journal of Economics, American Economic Review, American Economic Journals: Applied Economics, American Economic Journals: Economic Policy, Journal of the European Economic Association, Review of Economics and Statistics, Journal of Human Resources, Journal of Development Economics, Journal of Labor Economics, Journal of Public Economics, Journal of Applied Econometrics, Economic Development and Cultural Change, Economics of Education Review, Labour Economics, Economica, Journal of Policy Analysis and Management, World Development, Journal of Human Capital, Higher Education, Journal of Research on Educational Effectiveness, American Educational Research Journal, Education Finance and Policy, Educational Researcher, Journal of Education Policy, Lecturas de Economía, Colombia Internacional.*

Proposal reviewer for: *US Institute of Education Sciences, USAID Development Innovation Ventures, International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), Inter-American Development Bank, Spencer Foundation, National Science Foundation, National Science Centre (Poland), JPAL Learning for All Initiative.*

Conference Organizer: Harvard CID-Santo Domingo Foundation Conference on Transforming Colombian Education (2022) [[LINK](#)].

Professional Activities (cont.)

Symposia Organizer: Improving Educational Outcomes in Developing Countries (Association for Policy Analysis and Management 2012); Access, Attainment and Learning in Higher Education: The Role of Aid, Incentives and Resources (Association for Education Finance and Policy 2009).

Conference Discussant: Association for Education Finance and Policy (2012), Impact Evaluation Network Annual Meeting (2009).

Seminars and Presentations

- 2022-2023 Harvard Kennedy School, Institute for Higher Education (ICFES- Colombia), University of Chicago (Development Innovation Lab), Harvard CID-Santo Domingo Foundation Conference on Transforming Colombian Education (one of four Keynote Speakers).
- 2018 Universita di Siena (International Conference on Health and Happiness), University of Zurich (Technology for Child and Youth Development Workshop).
- 2017 RAND Corporation, Colombian Association of Economics Departments (Keynote).
- 2016 NBER Labor Studies Meeting (Spring), UC Irvine School of Education, Occidental College, Yale University-IPA Research Gathering on Financial Inclusion, NBER Productivity of Higher Education, United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Strategies to Eradicate Poverty, NBER Education Meeting (Fall).
- 2015 APPAM, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, 10th IZA/World Bank Conference on Employment and Development, NBER Productivity of Higher Education Pre-Conference.
- 2014 NBER Education Meeting (Fall), National Institutes of Aging RCMAR Annual Investigator Meetings, NBER Education Summer Institute, Colombian National Economic Conference (Plenary Session).
- 2013 Universidad de los Andes, Institute for Higher Education (ICFES- Colombia).
- 2012 APPAM, 8th Australasian Development Economics Conference, Columbia University Economics Department, Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness, USC, RAND, Inter American Development Bank (Bogotá), Institute for Higher Education (ICFES- Colombia), Universidad de Los Andes (Colombia).
- 2011 RAND, Institute for Higher Education (ICFES- Colombia), Universidad de Los Andes (Colombia), Ministry of Education (Colombia).
- 2010 Universidad del Rosario (Colombia), Universidad de Los Andes (Colombia).
- 2009 RAND, Mathematica Policy Research, Association for Education Finance and Policy, Society of Labor Economists, Universidad de Los Andes.
- 2008 Harvard Economics Dept., Institute for Higher Education (ICFES- Colombia)
- 2007 Harvard Economics Dept., Fedesarrollo (Colombia), Ministry of Education (Colombia), ICFES.

Teaching/Seminar Experience

Harvard Kennedy School

- S 2023-2025 Economic Analysis of Public Policy, Calculus Section (G)
- F 2023-2025 Markets and Market Failure (G)
- F 2022-2023 Advanced Microeconomics (G)
- F 2022-2023 Markets and Market Failure (G)
- S 2021-22 Advanced Econometrics (G)
- F 2021-22 Markets and Market Failure (G)

University of Southern California

- S 2020-21 Public Finance (UG).
- F 2019-20 Understanding Financial Crises (UG).

Teaching/Seminar Experience (cont.)

University of Southern California (cont.)

F 2017- Empirical Microeconomics Seminar Organizer (G).

S 2015-21 Advanced Econometrics (UG).

MIT Jameel Poverty Action Lab (Latin America and the Caribbean)

2018 Lecturer, Executive Education Impact Evaluation Course, Chile.

2016 Lecturer, Executive Education Impact Evaluation Course, Colombia.

2013 Lecturer, Executive Education Impact Evaluation Course, CONEVAL, Mexico.

Lecturer, Academic Education Randomized Impact Evaluation Course, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, D.C.

2012 Lecturer, Academic and Executive Education Randomized Impact Evaluation Course, Peru.

2011 Lecturer, Executive Education Randomized Impact Evaluation Course, Guatemala.

2011 Lecturer, Executive Education Randomized Impact Evaluation Course, Mexico.

2010 Lecturer and co-organizer, Executive Education Randomized Impact Evaluation Course, Colombia.

2009 Lecturer, Executive Education Randomized Impact Evaluation Course, Chile.

Universidad de Los Andes

S 2011 Impact Evaluation (G), Public Finance (UG).

F 2010 Impact Evaluation (G).

S 2010 Public Policy and Finance (UG), Human Capital (UG).

F 2009 Public Finance (UG).

Harvard University

S 2007, 2009 Econometrics (Master), Teaching Fellow, Prof. A. Abadie. Nominated for excellence in teaching award.

F 2006 Intro Econometrics (UG), Teaching Fellow, Prof. J. Stock.

S 2006 Econometrics (Master), Teaching Fellow, Prof. R. Jensen.

Doctoral Committees

Evan Riehl (PhD Economics, Columbia University).

Undergraduate, Masters and Research Assistant Placement

Alison Benson (PhD Development Studies, LSE).

Luis Omar Herrera (Inter American Development Bank).

Andrea Cornejo (MA, Columbia University).

Benji Smith (PhD Applied Economics, University of Pennsylvania Wharton School).

Justin Scott (PhD Finance, MIT Sloan School of Management).

Anbar Aizenman (Federal Reserve Board of Governors).

Shaoshuang Yang (PhD Economics, USC).

Yihang Zhou (PhD Economics, UT Austin).

Xuntao (Tony) Wang (Master in Computational Finance, Carnegie Mellon University).

Yuchen Shi (Master of Finance, MIT Sloan School of Management).

Derek Zhou (Master in Business Analytics, Columbia Graduate School of Business).

Michael Kawas (JD, University of Chicago Law School).

Sam Chapman (Progressive Degree Program in Economics, USC).

Danielle Kuehler (Progressive Degree Program in Data Analytics, USC).

Sebastian McCrimmon (PhD Statistics, Iowa State University).

Sabrina Feng (JD, Columbia Law School).

Sabarish Shankar (What Works Hub for Global Education, Oxford University).

Santiago Velasquez (Pre-Doctoral Program, University of Chicago, DIL).

Hadar Sachs (MBA, MIT Sloan School of Management).