

Master Thesis Opportunity

Minding women's time: Does time-saving and behavioral interventions change the margins?

Background:

[Chair of Rural Development Theory and Policy](#) in collaboration with [the University of San Francisco](#) and [Hawassa University](#) is implementing a research project titled "Minding women's time: Does time-saving and behavioral interventions change the margins?" The aim of the project is to identify and test the effectiveness of time saving and behavioral interventions that save women's time, increase their participation in paid work, and ultimately economically empower women. This research project is funded by the [Center for Effective Global Action](#) at UC Berkeley, the [University of Hohenheim](#) and the [Baden-Württemberg Stiftung](#).

We are looking for MSc candidates who contribute to answering some of the research question while gaining valuable experience in data collection, data analysis and scientific writing from rigorous mentorship that we provide. For all the topics presented below, the ideal candidate should have above average grade and must have audited modules such as **Agricultural Economics Seminar, Rural Development Policies and Institutions** or have a proven experience in conducting literature reviews and also should be willing to travel to participate in parallel sessions organized in conferences such as Tropentag. We provide topic specific requirements below.

Master Thesis Topics

Topic 1: Adoption of improved cook stoves in LMICs

Background: Improved cook stoves have been promoted since the 1940s to address health, environmental and energy access, and time and drudgery associated with the use of traditional biomass stoves (1, 2). Despite widespread effort to increase adoption and potential benefits, adoption of improved cook stoves remains low and a third of the world population still relies on traditional cook stoves for cooking and heating (3).

Objective: To conduct a systematic review of the literature on adoption of improved cook stoves in low and middle-income countries and identify factors influencing adoption/dis-adoption. In addition, supplement the findings from the systematic review with qualitative research conducted in one LMIC.

Requirement:

- Must have audited module Qualitative Research Methods.
- Interested candidates should send their CV, motivation letter, and transcript of records to bezawit.bahru@uni-hohenheim.de with copy to manfred.zeller@uni-hohenheim.de and subject **Master thesis opportunity WEETU – 101**.

Topic 2: Household preference and willingness to pay for improved cook stoves in LMICs

Background: Improved cook stoves have been promoted since the 1940s to address health, environmental and energy access, and time and drudgery associated with the use of traditional biomass stoves (1, 2). Despite widespread effort to increase adoption and potential benefits, adoption of improved cook stoves remains low and a third of the world population still relies on traditional cook stoves for cooking and heating (3).

Objective: To quantify households willingness to pay for improved cook stoves and factors affecting that. To give causal explanations for adoption or lack there of improved cook stoves (Here I want to bring out the aspect of food taste in adoption - the [Ethiopia - Multi-Tier Framework \(MTF\) Survey | Data Catalog \(worldbank.org\)](#) has data on that).

Requirement:

- Must have audited modules in Econometrics such as Applied Econometrics, Quantitative Economic Methods.
- Must have intermediate level skill in R/Stata/Python.
- Interested candidates should send their CV, motivation letter, and transcript of records to bezawit.bahru@uni-hohenheim.de with copy to manfred.zeller@uni-hohenheim.de and subject **Master thesis opportunity WEETU – 102**.

Topic 3: What is your time worth?

Background: An hour of an individual with bachelor's degree is worth 15 euros. Hence, we can equate an hour of a student enrolled in the master's program as 15 euros. However, what if market does not set the price of an individual with a certain profile such as in many low and middle-income countries? Does that mean time has no worth? This study aims to uncover the value of time in a context where economic opportunities are limited and hence there is no simple price tag for time. This study is motivated by a qualitative study conducted to inform treatment options for impact evaluation study that aims to improve women's economic empowerment by saving women's time by providing time saving technologies and redistributing housework in the household in rural Ethiopia. But due to limited economic opportunities, time saved might not directly translate into time sold in the labor market to earn wages. Nonetheless, time saved might improve welfare even when used as leisure. Studies show that leisure improves welfare through increasing productivity at work, reducing stress, improving wellbeing, etc (4-8). Moreover, leisure may empower women by allowing time for creative thinking to peruse a profitable economic venture, socializing, engaging in women groups, sports, etc (8). While all this issues are interesting to examine, there is no standard definition of leisure – leisure is very subjective.

Objective: This study aims to answer what is leisure? How do people spend their leisure time? With what are they willing to trade their one hour?

Requirement

- Must have audited modules in Econometrics such as Applied Econometrics, Quantitative Economic Methods.
- Must have intermediate level skill in R/Stata/Python.
- Interested candidates should send their CV, motivation letter, sample do file or r script, and transcript of records to bezawit.bahru@uni-hohenheim.de with subject **Master thesis opportunity WEETU – 103**.

Topic 4: Empowerment through leisure

Background: Studies show that leisure improves welfare through increasing productivity at work, reducing stress, improving wellbeing of individuals and their family members, etc (4-9). More importantly, leisure may empower women by allowing time for creative thinking to pursue a profitable economic venture, socializing, engaging in women groups, sports, etc (8). Using the Ethiopian time use survey, this study aims to examine:

Objectives: Does the time spent in leisure improve empowerment outcomes? Is there heterogeneity in the effect of leisure on empowerment by gender? What are some of the pathways through which leisure improves empowerment outcomes?

Requirement

- Must have audited modules in Econometrics such as Applied Econometrics, Quantitative Economic Methods.
- Must have intermediate level skill in R/Stata/Python.
- Interested candidates should send their CV, motivation letter, sample do file or r script, and transcript of records to bezawit.bahru@uni-hohenheim.de with subject **Master thesis opportunity WEETU – 104**.

References

1. Jeuland, M. A., & Pattanayak, S. K. (2012). Benefits and costs of improved cookstoves: assessing the implications of variability in health, forest and climate impacts. *PloS one*, 7(2), e30338.
2. Krishnapriya, P. P., Chandrasekaran, M., Jeuland, M., & Pattanayak, S. K. (2021). Do improved cookstoves save time and improve gender outcomes? Evidence from six developing countries. *Energy Economics*, 102, 105456.
3. World Health Organization. (2021). Tracking SDG 7.
4. [Leisure and quality of life in an international and multicultural context: what are major pathways linking leisure to quality of life? | SpringerLink](#)
5. [Leisure engagement and subjective well-being: A meta-analysis. \(apa.org\)](#)
6. [The Contribution of Active and Passive Leisure to Children's Well-being \(sagepub.com\)](#)
7. [Leisure time and labor productivity: a new economic view rooted from sociological perspective \(degruyter.com\)](#)
8. [An Integrative Review of Women, Gender, and Leisure: Increasing Complexities \(tandfonline.com\)](#)
9. [Women's empowerment in agriculture and child nutritional status](#)