ASSOCIAZIONE ITALIANA ECONOMIA DEL LAVORO

LABOUR
REVIEW OF LABOUR ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

Motivation LABOUR Dissertation Prize 2024

"*Essays on the allocation, coordination, and selection of workers*"

Virginia Minni

The 2024 LABOUR Dissertation prize has been awarded to Virginia Minni for her PhD thesis titled "Essays on the allocation, coordination, and selection of workers", defended at the London School of Economics and Political Science in April 2023. Her advisors have been Advisors Oriana Bandiera, John van Reenen, Nava Ashraf and Robin Burgess.

Virginia's thesis consists of three chapters that study the determinants and consequences of workers' allocation, coordination, and selection within organizations in countries at different levels of economic development.

The first chapter uses detailed personnel data and an event-study approach to demonstrate how high-quality managers enhance both productivity and career progression by efficiently reallocating workers within firms. This highlights the vital role of management in matching workers' skills to job tasks.

The second chapter (joint with Laura Boudreau, Rocco Macchiavello and Mari Tanaka) provides evidence of how union leaders improve collective decision-making and mobilization using data from field experiments conducted in collaboration with labor unions in Myanmar. Through randomized leader assignments, this work reveals the critical role leadership plays in building consensus and coordinating collective action, particularly in developing economies.

The third chapter (joint with Nava Ashraf, Oriana Bandiera and Victor Quintas-Martinez) employs a structural model and data from a multinational company operating in 101 countries to analyze the link between gender diversity and productivity. By combining labor force participation data with individual employee records, it shows that removing gender-specific barriers could increase productivity by 32%.

Overall, Virginia's thesis integrates rich administrative data, experimental methods, and structural modeling to offer a comprehensive analysis of how managerial quality, leadership, and gender diversity drive productivity and career advancements.

The selection committee, composed of members from the AIEL Executive Board and the Editorial Board of *LABOUR: Review of Labour Economics and Industrial Relations*, recognizes Virginia's thesis as an outstanding dissertation in Labour Economics for its methodological rigor and broad impact.