

Revisiting urban labor market in Latin America: Segmentation, social networks and quality of employment in Bogota

Deguilhem, Thibaud (thibaud.deguilhem@u-bordeaux.fr)

Department of Economics, University of Bordeaux

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PhD in Economics - Development Economics,
Research Affiliate, GREThA UMR-CNRS 5113,
University of Bordeaux

Resumen

In the Latin American context, shaped by rapid urbanization, high inequalities and the weakness of labor institutions, issues related to the structure of the labor market and the effect of relational intermediation on job performance appear fundamental. This thesis aims to describe the structure of employment and analyzes the effects of social networks on the quality of employment and the performance of workers in Bogota's labor market (Colombia). This work adopts a multidisciplinary research approach based on a socioeconomic and institutionalist framework. In the first part, a theoretical and analytical reflection is conducted through the notion of quality of employment, to overcome the classical typologies commonly used in developing countries. From this perspective, quality of employment can be seen as a new performance indicator grasped through the prism of the labor market segmentation theory, making possible to consider the rationales and the differential effects produced by the use of social networks. Subsequently, based on quantitative data from the household survey (GEIH, 2013) supplemented by information collected through focus groups, the multidimensional, econometric and comprehensive exploratory analysis allows to empirically verify that: (i.) quality of employment reflects a strongly polarized structure of the labor market in Bogota, (ii.) the use of social networks is associated differently with the quality of employment of workers according to their segment ; opposing necessity networks (for the vulnerable segment) and opportunity networks (for the protected segment). Based on the theories of the embeddedness and the sociology of networks, the second part of this thesis proposes to explore the dimensions, configurations and mechanisms of different types of social networks to get a job. Using original data on egocentric networks collected from a specific mixed survey system deployed in Bogota between 2016 and 2018, the empirical results from multidimensional and econometric analyzes and, the application of quantified narratives method demonstrate that: (i.) the combination of an extended potential network and a cohesive active network increases the search time but also the probability of finding a satisfactory job, (ii.) the strength of ties appears contextualized and negatively correlated with income but positively with its evolution between the last and the current job, (iii.) during the actors' labor market trajectories, the necessary resources for changing job and the relationships to access them are clearly differentiated by the type of evolution (incremental or radical).