



August 2023

Topics for Bachelor Theses at the chair of Prof. Vollmer

The list below gives topic ideas for Bachelor theses. The thesis can be written in German or English. Bachelor theses are typically a literature review of the theoretical and empirical research on the topic.

In case you are interested in writing your thesis on one of the proposed topics please contact Lisa Bogler via Email (lisa.bogler@cemis.uni-goettingen.de). You can also make your own proposition.

For Master thesis requests please contact Prof. Vollmer directly.

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Topics
<p>Social desirability bias <i>Surveys can contain questions on sensitive topics, including on health and health behaviour or values. Answers to sensitive questions can be affected by social desirability bias. List experiments are one method to try to reduce the risk of social desirability bias. On which topics and in which settings has social desirability bias been documented? Does social desirability bias vary between population groups? Are list experiments successful in reducing social desirability bias and under what conditions?</i></p>
<p>Improving public service delivery <i>Public service delivery, e.g. the provision of primary education or primary health care, is often suboptimal in low- and middle-income countries. Many researchers and policy makers have focused on improving service delivery in specific sectors. A bachelor thesis can review the literature comparing the effect of different interventions or policies to improve public service delivery. The student can choose to focus on a specific sector and region.</i></p>
<p>The link between anaemia and cognition <i>Anaemia is a disease that leads to weakness among adults and is linked with impaired cognitive development among children. The causal impact of anaemia on cognitive outcomes and productivity is less clear. A bachelor thesis would review the literature identifying evidence causally linking anaemia with cognition and/or productivity. Students can choose to focus on particular age groups or outcomes.</i></p>
<p>Scaling up <i>While reports from an intervention might indicate positive outcomes, such results do not necessarily guarantee that the intervention would become successful when it is scaled up at a wider scope (either in the same region or transferred elsewhere – in a national or international scale). Based on evidence from the literature, the thesis would identify examples of programs that were successfully scaled up. This could be an intervention in the field of education, health, environment, or any other topic of interest. Based on evidence from the literature, the thesis would discuss the aspect that play critical role in making a program scaling up successful as well as pitfalls and barriers in its path.</i></p>

Success and failure of health policies

To start, a bachelor thesis should review and summarise the health policies that helped to reduce tobacco consumption, their success rate globally and with examples from various countries. Then focusing on recent policies on promoting healthy eating and exercise, the question is that is it plausible to expect the same rate of success for these policies in combating obesity? The argument should be supported by examples and evidence from field experiments.

Iron supplementation for the treatment of iron deficiency: The state-of-the-art knowledge

The bachelor thesis should systematically summarise evidence on the effectiveness of iron supplementation for the treatment of iron deficiency. It should consider metabolic channels as well as implementation of iron supplementation programmes.

Functionality of and policies to improve the Integrated Child Development Scheme

The Indian ICDS is the world's largest social welfare programme targeting young children and their mothers. With centers in almost every village across India, it is a powerful programme to improve the nutritional and health status of financially poor families. However, its impact is often limited by inadequate service delivery. Since its set up, many studies have evaluated aspects of the ICDS and initiatives have tried to improve its service delivery. A bachelor thesis can review the literature on functionality of the different services as well as initiatives to improve it.

Social unrest and economic deprivation

Instances of social unrest are often attributed to economic deprivation. However, instances of social unrest and mass uprising are relatively rare compared to the extent of deprivation. Which factors influence the individual decision to 'riot' and the evolution of a mass movement? A bachelor thesis can look at a specific aspect of this wider topic, with a focus on historic incidents.

Distributive justice and fairness in non-monetary domains

The debate on just distribution of wealth is old, extensive, and ongoing. Yet, how these debates can be argued in non-monetary domains such as education and health? Furthermore, how they can be argued in the global scale in terms of e.g., rights and access to raw resources (such as fossil fuel and minerals) in one hand, and dividing the burden of global issues such as Pandemic and Climate Change in the other? How about intergenerational fairness or countries' own responsibility (e.g., polluter pays)? Free to tailor their related research question, students can use theoretical and/or empirical evidence to answer their proposed question within a clearly defined framework.

Making agriculture resilient to climate change: Evidence from developing countries

Agriculture and climate change: The case of zero tillage and early sowing in subsistence farming

Information frictions and technology adoption: Theory and evidence from developing countries

The role of information frictions in subsistence farming: Evidence from developing countries

Son preference and its implications

Several countries in East and South Asia, including China, India, and South Korea display a strong cultural preference for sons for a variety of economic, social, and religious reasons. Bachelor theses can be on: (i) What are the causes of son preference in different settings? (ii) How does son preference manifest? Are there differences in how son preference is manifested in different settings (iii) What are the implications of son

preference? and (iv) What are some gaps in the literature that studies son preference? Students can choose one or more questions among these questions, further refine these questions and/or choose a particular context or country for their thesis.

Gender differences in unpaid care work and leisure

Gender differences in time spent on unpaid care work (i.e., activities such as cooking, cleaning, shopping, collecting water, wood, and fuel, and taking care of children and the elderly) is ubiquitous despite large heterogeneity in the extent of burden borne by women. Bachelor theses can be on: (i) Trends in gender differences in unpaid care work and leisure across the world or in a particular country, (ii) What policies have been effective in reducing gender differences in unpaid care work (students can decide to work on a particular policy of interest such as maternity leave/paternity leave/childcare services etc., (iii) Any other topic within this broad area of research that they identify.