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Migration and Human Capital: The Effect of Education on the Qualified Employment of Venezuelan Immigrants in Peru

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Abstract

This study analyzes the impact of Venezuelan immigrants' human-capital on their occupational choice in Peru, in terms of job qualifications. Cross-sectional data were sourced from the National Survey to the Venezuelan Population in Peru, using ordered probit models for 2018 and 2022. The results show that immigrants with university education or previous job experience are overeducated for jobs requiring university education, in the Peruvian labor market, for both years, since they are more likely to obtain jobs with technical education requirements, the intensity of the phenomenon reduced in 2022. The study verifies the Venezuelan immigrants' overeducation in the Peruvian labor market.

Keywords: *Job qualification; Overeducation; Immigrants; Human-capital; Ordered probit model.*

Introduction

In recent years, owing to major crises, immigration is being considered a relevant factor in the economic development of countries receiving large numbers of migrants (Eppelsheimer & Möller, 2019; Fassio et al., 2020). The Venezuelan migration is considered the most significant one for non-war related migration.

Peru is the second-largest recipient of Venezuelan refugees and migrants, after Colombia. According to the Inter-Management Coordination Program for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela (R4V, 2022), more than 1.49 million people have moved to Peru. The rapid acceleration of the Venezuelan migration process has caused immigrant economic participation to influence the Peruvian economic system, predominantly the labor market.

To understand the effect of immigrants on the economy, it is important to consider the effective use of their human capital in the labor market; skilled immigrants can improve different economic sectors through two main channels: Generating externalities contributing to knowledge creation; and causing an aggregate rise in recipient firms' TFP through increased task specialization (Kangasniemi et al., 2012; Nathan, 2014). Otherwise, foreign skilled labor would be wasted if they cannot get jobs commensurate

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with their human-capital in terms of education and work experience (Elo et al., 2020; Pecoraro, 2013).

Hence, because of the significant number of Venezuelan immigrants and their possible human-capital mismatch in the Peruvian labor market, this study aims to empirically analyze the impact of human-capital on the occupational choice of Venezuelan migrants in the Peruvian labor market, to determine whether there is overeducation at certain levels of human-capital.

Recognising and addressing such mismatches could lead to better job allocation, improved job satisfaction, and overall economic benefits. The findings can also contribute to a broader understanding of the challenges faced by immigrants in integrating into new labour markets. This can be of value to other countries experiencing similar migratory patterns.

Theoretical framework

Previous studies indicate that immigrants' human-capital is mismatched in the host country's labor market (Dahlstedt, 2011; McGuinness et al., 2018; Prokic-Breuer & McManus, 2016). Green et al. (1999) termed this phenomenon "overeducation", which refers to the underutilization of human capital, in terms of education and work experience, in jobs with lower qualification requirements, subsequently leading to decreased worker productivity.

McGuinness & Byrne (2015) and Piracha et al. (2022) indicate that female migrants had a higher exposure to overeducation, in which those are domiciled in the host country are exposed more to overskilling than their native counterparts and have more incidence of overeducation than males. In addition, there are disadvantages in employment probabilities for migrants from different groups of foreign origin compared to natives of host countries, such as Canada (Islam & Raschky, 2015), France (Delaporte, 2019), Germany (Kracke & Klug, 2021), Ireland (Wang, 2021), Italy (Carillo et al., 2023), the Netherlands (Khoudja, 2018), and Spain (Kalfa & Piracha, 2017), even after accounting for differences in human capital.

Immigrant overeducation often occurs due to certain characteristics of the receiving country, e.g., a migration system based on meritocracy (Damelang et al., 2020; Lu & Hou, 2020), high salaries offered for unskilled occupations (Abdulloev et al., 2020), or the existence of legal barriers in the labor market and educational system (Iskakova et al., 2022; Sontag, 2018; Ulceluse & Kahanec, 2018). The intensity of overeducation among immigrants in the host country's labor market is influenced by the economic and institutional conditions of their country of origin (Aleksynska & Tritah, 2013; Jacobs et al., 2020; Sanromá et al., 2015; Schuss, 2020), the migratory condition of the person (Battisti et al., 2022; Ghosh & Grassi, 2020; Joona et al., 2014), and their years of residence in the host country(Hou et al., 2021; Nieto et al., 2015; Ulceluse, 2020).

Studies have been conducted on the overeducation of Venezuelan immigrants, mainly in Colombia and Peru, because these are the countries with the highest Venezuelan immigration (R4V, 2022). In Colombia, several authors found the presence of overeducation of Venezuelan immigrants for different reasons, such as labor discrimination (Pulido & Varón, 2020); the years of residence (Lebow, 2022; Mora, Cuadros-Menaca, et al., 2022); the migratory situation, and the sociodemographic characteristics of the Venezuelan region of origin (Mora, Castillo Caicedo, et al., 2022); and the costs and long waits to validate past educational credentials (Santamaria, 2022). In Peru, the Venezuelan migration has intensified recently mostly in 2018 (Asencios & Castellares, 2020), then, Vera & Jiménez (2022) found a degree of imperfect substitutability through statistical analysis between Venezuelan immigrants and Peruvians

of the same education-experience skill level. This indirectly indicates the presence of overeducation.

Methodology

We used the cross-sectional data from the National Survey to the Venezuelan Population in Peru (Encuesta Dirigida a la Población Venezolana que reside en el País – ENPOVE, 2018, 2022). The survey was conducted on 9,852 interviewees, including 9,487 migrants, in 2018. The same survey was conducted on 12,487 interviewees in 2022, including 11,621 migrants. After filtering for missing observations and limiting the samples to Venezuelan immigrants aged 18 or older, the sample sizes were 7,284 in 2018 and 7,416 in 2022, respectively. Table 1 describes each variable used in the econometric estimation from the database.

Table 1. Variable description

Variables	**Description**
Job qualification in Peru (Y_i)	3: Job with university education requirements
	2: Job with technical education requirements
	1: Job without education requirements
	0: Jobless
Educational level (EL_i)	4: Complete university education
	3: Incomplete university education
	2: Complete technical education
	1: Incomplete technical education
	0: No tertiary education
Job experience in Venezuela (JEV_i)	3: Job with university education requirements
	2: Job with technical education requirements
	1: Job without education requirements
	0: Jobless
Age at entry (x_1)	Individual's age at the moment of migration
Age at entry squared (x_2)	Individual's age squared at the moment of migration
Years since migration (x_3)	Years since migration
Years since migration squared (x_4)	Years since migration squared
Female (x_5)	1: Female
	0: Male
Outside Metropolitan Lima (x_6)	1: Living outside metropolitan Lima
	0: Living in metropolitan Lima

Note: Data curated from the National Institute of Statistics and Informatic in Peru (INEI, 2018, 2022). https://iinei.inei.gob.pe/microdatos/.

To analyze the effect of human-capital of Venezuelan immigrants on their occupational choice in terms of job qualifications during 2018 and 2022 in Peru, we estimate two ordered probit models proposed by Aitchison and Silvey (1957) for each year, formally represented as follows:

$$\Pr(Y_i = j) = \Pr\left(\kappa_{j-1} < \beta EL_i + \theta JEV_i + \gamma X_i + u_i \leq \kappa_j\right) \quad (1)$$

where $Y_i$represents the job qualification in Peru with its possible outcomes (j= 1, 2, and 3); EL_iindicates the educational level; JEV_i, job experience in Venezuela; and $X_i$is a set of observable individual characteristics influencing occupational choice, which are included as control variables (see Table 1). Additionally, κ_{j-1} and κ_j represent the range of the cutpoints for each possible outcome (*j*), and u_i indicates the error term, which is assumed to be normally distributed.

However, interaction effects cannot be assessed simply by analyzing the sign, magnitude, or statistical significance of the estimated model coefficients(Ai & Norton, 2003). Therefore, the marginal effects of the models accurately evaluate the magnitude of the interaction effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable, which is defined as

$$\frac{\partial \mathrm{E}(Y|Z)}{\partial Z} = \frac{1}{N}\sum_{l=1}^{N}\sum_{j=1}^{j} j\frac{\partial \Pr(Y_i = j|Z_i)}{\partial Z_i}$$

where N is the total number of individuals, Z_i represents the independent variables shown in Equation 1, and the remaining variables and indices are as indicated above.

Results and Discussion

Table 2 provides the estimation of the ordered probit models for 2018 and 2022. The pseudo-R2 for 2018 (0.039) is lower than that for 2022 (0.0546). This implies that the independent variables have slightly higher explanatory power in the 2022 model.

Table 2. Ordered probit model of the job qualification of Venezuelan immigrants in Peru

	Job qualification in Peru	
	2018	**2022**
Educational level		
Incomplete technical education	0.1691***	0.1868***
	(0.0392)	(0.0444)
Complete technical education	0.1375***	0.1009**
	(0.0415)	(0.0433)
Incomplete university education	0.3058***	0.3401***
	(0.0372)	(0.0406)
Complete university education	0.5122***	0.6273***
	(0.1259)	(0.1313)
Job experience in Venezuela		
Job without education requirements	0.0228	-0.0441
	(0.0391)	(0.0351)
Job with technical education requirements	0.1959***	0.2054***
	(0.0374)	(0.0388)
Job with university education requirements	0.221***	0.2278***
	(0.0466)	(0.0497)
Control variables		
Age at entry	0.024***	0.0508***
	(0.0073)	(0.0072)
Age at entry squared	-0.0006***	-0.0008***
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Years since migration	0.2267***	0.0808***

	(0.038)	(0.0161)
Years since migration squared	-0.0379***	-0.0036**
	(0.0016236)	(0.0019)
Female	-0.2692***	-0.4232***
	(0.0271)	(0.0267)
Outside Metropolitan Lima	0.0963***	-0.0449*
	(0.0268)	(0.0261)
μ1	-0.766	0.068
μ2	0.834	1.651
μ3	2.223	2.812
Observations	7284	7416
Log-likelihood	-7626.3081	-7673.1547
Pseudo-R^2	0.039	0.0546

Note: The two models relax the parallel regression assumption and do not present heteroscedasticity, as they are fitted to a robust ordered probit model. Robust standard errors are indicated in the parentheses.

*indicates significance at 10%.

**indicates significance at 5%.

***indicates significance at 1%.

Table 3 Marginal probability effects of the job qualification of Venezuelan immigrants in Peru.

	2018				**2022**			
Dependent variable: Job qualification in Peru	**(0)**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**	**(0)**	**(1)**	**(2)**	**(3)**
Educational level								
Incomplete technical education	-0.0393***	-0.0168***	0.0452***	0.0109***	-0.0546***	0.0031**	0.0399***	0.0117***
	(0.0088)	(0.0046)	(0.0105)	(0.0028)	(0.0125)	(0.0013)	(0.0098)	(0.0031)
Complete technical education	-0.0324***	-0.0128***	0.0366***	0.0086***	-0.0303**	0.0034***	0.0211**	0.0058**
	(0.0095)	(0.0046)	(0.0111)	(0.0028)	(0.0128)	(0.0011)	(0.0092)	(0.0027)
Incomplete university education	-0.0664***	-0.0383***	0.0822***	0.0225***	-0.0941***	-0.0049*	0.0745***	0.0245***
	(0.0078)	(0.0055)	(0.0101)	(0.0031)	(0.0106)	(0.0028)	(0.0093)	(0.0036)
Complete university education	-0.1***	-0.0818***	0.1362***	0.0456***	-0.1547***	-0.0432*	0.1395***	0.0585***
	(0.0185)	(0.0295)	(0.0318)	(0.0161)	(0.0243)	(0.0234)	(0.0289)	(0.0187)
Job experience in Venezuela								
Job without education requirements	-0.0056	-0.0018	0.006	0.0013	0.0136	-0.0022	-0.009	-0.0024
	(0.0096)	(0.003)	(0.0103)	(0.0023)	(0.0108)	(0.0017)	(0.0072)	(0.0019)
Job with technical education requirements	-0.0441***	-0.022***	0.0524***	0.0136***	-0.0582***	-0.0002	0.0445***	0.0139***
	(0.0086)	(0.0041)	(0.01)	(0.0026)	(0.011)	(0.0016)	(0.0085)	(0.0027)
Job with university education requirements	-0.0491***	-0.0258***	0.0592***	0.0156***	-0.0641***	-0.0012	0.0496***	0.0158***
	(0.0102)	(0.006)	(0.0126)	(0.0035)	(0.0137)	(0.0022)	(0.011)	(0.0038)

Control variables								
Age at entry	-0.0053***	-0.0028***	0.0064***	0.0017***	-0.0147***	0.0007***	0.0107***	0.0033***
	(0.0016)	(0.0009)	(0.002)	(0.0005)	(0.0021)	(0.0003)	(0.0015)	(0.0005)
Age at entry squared	0.0001***	0.0001***	-0.0002***	-0.00004***	0.0002***	-0.00001***	-0.0002***	-0.0001***
	(0.00002)	(0.00001)	(0.00003)	(0.00001)	(0.00003)	(0.000004)	(0.00002)	(0.00001)
Years since migration	-0.0504***	-0.026***	0.0602***	0.0162***	-0.0234***	0.0011**	0.017***	0.0053***
	(0.0085)	(0.0045)	(0.0101)	(0.0029)	(0.0047)	(0.0005)	(0.0034)	(0.0011)
Years since migration squared	0.0084***	0.0044***	-0.0101***	-0.0027***	0.0011*	-0.0001	-0.0008*	-0.0002*
	(0.0026)	(0.0014)	(0.0031)	(0.0009)	(0.0005)	(0.00003)	(0.0004)	(0.0001)
Female	0.0598***	0.0309	-0.0715***	-0.0193***	0.1225***	-0.0059***	-0.0889***	-0.02760***
	(0.0061)	(0.0034)	(0.0071)	(0.0022)	(0.0076)	(0.0022)	(0.0055)	(0.0024)
Outside Metropolitan Lima	-0.0214***	-0.0111***	0.0256***	0.0069***	0.013*	-0.0006	-0.0094*	-0.0029*
	(0.006)	(0.0031)	(0.0071)	(0.002)	(0.0076)	(0.0004)	(0.0055)	(0.0017)

Note: Columns (0), (1), (2), (3) represent the categories of dependent variables specified in Table 1. This table also presents the marginal effects of the ordered probit models for 2018 and 2012 shown in Table 2, which are interpreted as the extent to which the conditional probability of the dependent variable changes when the value of the independent variable changes, holding all other regressors constant. For example, the value for the variable "Female" in column (2) for 2018 indicates that a Venezuelan immigrant woman is 7.15% less likely to get a job that requires university studies in Peru compared to a Venezuelan male in 2018. Robust standard errors are indicated in parentheses.

*indicates significance at 10%.

**indicates significance at 5%.

***indicates significance at 1%.

Table 3 presents the marginal effects of the determinants of the probability of obtaining a qualified job. Regarding education level, individuals with incomplete technical education were more likely to obtain any type of job compared to those with complete technical education for both examined years. Immigrants with either type of university education were more likely to obtain jobs with technical, rather than university education requirements, in both years. This difference diminished slightly for either type of university studies, potentially because the educational mismatch of immigrants in the labor market dissipates, when they reside in the host country for a longer time (Sanromá et al., 2015). Significant Venezuelan immigration occurred in 2018 (Asencios & Castellares, 2020); therefore by 2022, these immigrants had likely adapted to the Peruvian context.

Regarding job experience in Venezuela, for immigrants who previously held jobs without educational prerequisites, this experience was not a determining factor for obtaining employment in Peru in the observed years. Furthermore, experience in a job requiring university education demonstrates greater probability of obtaining one with technical, rather than university, education requirements, in either year. This probability decreased slightly from 2018 to 2022, since immigrants often accumulate knowledge and experience in the host country, which helps them adapt to the local labor market, facilitating their assimilation process, and increasing the probability of getting jobs according to the level of work experience in their origin countries (Nieto et al., 2015).

The findings reveal that immigrants who have been in Peru longer or who immigrated at an older age, are more likely to procure jobs requiring technical or university education in either year. Women are less likely than men to obtain jobs requiring either type of education, in both years. This probability has fallen, and consequently, so has immigrant women's vulnerability in the labor market. In 2018, immigrants living outside Metropolitan Lima had a higher propensity to obtain at least one job with technical education requirements than those living within, whereas the opposite was true in 2022.

Conclusions

This study appraises the influence of immigrants' human-capital, in terms of job qualification, on their occupational choice. The results indicate overeducation of Venezuelan immigrants in the Peruvian labor market for both years under study, because even with university-level education (complete and incomplete), or work-experience requiring university studies, they are more likely to procure jobs requiring technical studies; however, the intensity of the phenomenon reduced in 2022. The results align with those of Vera and Jiménez (2022) because in both cases, the presence of Venezuelan immigrants' overeducation in the Peruvian labor market is verified.

Hence, overeducation exists in Venezuelan immigrants in the Peruvian labor market for both years. Finally, the results of this research may serve as a tool for public policymakers, allowing them not only to identify the level of education or work experience most likely to cause under-employment, but also evaluate the influence of other social, demographic, and cultural characteristics that are important in occupational choice, concerning job qualification, to frame pertinent public policies.

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Data availability

The filtered and curated data can be accessed at https://doi.org/10.17632/5w24x72k75.1.

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