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**Essays on Macroeconomics and Labor Markets**  
(Dissertation)

In the first chapter, I analyze the general equilibrium effects of implementing a job-search assistance program for unemployed job-seekers. While beneficial to participants, evidence has suggested these programs impose costs on non-participants through a crowding-out effect on hiring. Agents in the model are heterogeneous with respect to wealth, human capital, and current unemployment duration. There is a frictional, DMP-style labor market, and wages are set via bargaining. I consider a policy in which all agents out of work one year or more are automatically enrolled in a government-funded search assistance program, which increases their job-finding chances by about 50 percent, and I analyze the welfare effects for all agents of imposing this policy. I decompose these welfare effects into a partial equilibrium channel (individual job-search efficiency) and general equilibrium channels (labor market composition, firm hiring behavior, and price and tax effects). I find that while the policy is indeed welfare-improving for recipients, general equilibrium effects are non-negligible, and negative for all types of agents. For example, the creation of this program leads to a reduction in the ratio of posted vacancies to jobseekers, which, all else equal, reduces the job-finding chances of all unemployed agents. This reduction accounts for a welfare loss of around 0.4 percent. On the other hand, rising wages and interest rates increase welfare by about 0.2 percent, all else equal. I also analyze the heterogeneous effects of this policy across wealth and human capital level. In general, poor and low-skill agents benefit the most from the assistance policy. Additionally, introducing the assistance policy increases the economy's aggregate productivity, as it mitigates some of the skill erosion experienced by unemployed agents, which corresponds to a more productive workforce. I then show how the search assistance policy delivers a higher welfare gain, in consumption terms, than a revenue-neutral unemployment insurance payment.

The second chapter assesses the role of incarceration as one proposed reason for the decline in the U.S. prime-age male labor force participation rate. Those who were previously incarcerated are more likely to remain without work and as a result eventually drop out of the labor force. Using data from multiple sources on the effects of incarceration on labor market outcomes, I use a structural model to perform counterfactuals to assess the degree to which incarceration can account for the decline.

The third chapter uses CPS microdata to document which methods of job search are utilized by job-seekers. I analyze how a person's individual characteristics (e.g., education level) influence the likelihood of using any particular method. For example, I find that, controlling for other covariates, the likelihood a jobseeker attends job training courses increases with his educational attainment. I then perform hazard rate analysis to analyze how the utilization of a given method affects a person's re-employment chances. These results can shed light on how policy can most effectively help jobseekers.

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