

Can seminars for export promotion work for SMEs? Evidence from a randomized controlled trial in Vietnam*

Yu Ri Kim^a

Daichi Shimamoto^b

Petr Matous^c

Yasuyuki Todo^d

April 2016

DRAFT. DO NOT CIRCULATE.

Abstracts

This paper investigates the impact of informational and motivational seminars for export promotion to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the apparel and textile village clusters in Northern Vietnam. In order to control for the self-selection biases which the existing literature on programs for export promotion did not fully correct for, we conducted a randomized control trial and invited randomly selected firms to one-day seminars. Because only some of the invited firms participated in the seminars, we employ a 2SLS approach in which dummies for random invitation are used as instruments for the actual participation. Then, we find that the seminars for export promotion had some positive effects on participant firms' preparation for, perception of, and engaging in exporting. Therefore, our findings suggest that governments should provide information through seminars and training courses to facilitate exports of SMEs for which lack of information is a barrier to export besides low productivity.

* This research was conducted as part of a project entitled 'Empirical Analysis on Determinants and Impacts of Formation of Firm Networks,' undertaken at the Research Institute of Economy, Trade, and Industry (RIETI). The authors would like to thank JSPS Kakenhi Grant (No. 25101003 and 26245037) and Waseda University for financial supports. The opinions expressed and arguments employed in this paper are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of RIETI, Waseda University, the University of Tokyo, or any institution with which the authors are affiliated.

^a Corresponding author, Department of International Studies, Graduate School of Frontier Sciences, the University of Tokyo. E-mail: yuri.kim73@gmail.com

^b Faculty of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University. E-mail: d.shimamoto0407@gmail.com

^c School of Engineering, the University of Sydney. E-mail: petr.matous@sydney.edu.au

^d Faculty of Political Science and Economics, Waseda University. E-mail: yastodo@waseda.jp