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THE EFFECT OF UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME  
ON THE LABOUR MARKET:  
A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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## ABSTRACT

Universal Basic Income has largely been discussed as a policy to reduce poverty and inequality. However, policy-makers and citizens are skeptical over the negative effects this policy could have in other areas, crucially, employment. To continue to unravel the effects of UBI, this paper has systematically analyzed data from eight flexible UBI pilots, as well as eleven quasi-UBI examples that add evidence to an otherwise limited sample of basic income experiences. Results conclude that the labour market suffered no significant effect, not in the case of labour supply, nor labour force participation. The minimal reductions observed were interpreted as positive incentives generated by UBI to reduce child labor, allow for higher parental presence in the home, increase school enrolment, improve the national skill portfolio, and flexibilize work for women in various circumstances. The review was limited by the lack of a perfect UBI sample, a shortage in experiments that allowed for a long-term analysis, and the impossibility to include examples in more diverse regions due to insufficient fulfillment of UBI components.

**Key words:** Universal basic income; labour supply; labour force participation; employment; experiments.

## INTRODUCTION

Universal Basic Income (hereafter UBI) is a proposed policy tool which aspires to create a scenario where all citizens, regardless of individual circumstances, receive enough resources in order to maintain a decent standard of living (*Van Parijs, 2004*). The specifics of this policy differ between authors, but this review has decided to focus its analysis on a basic income that is paid by a political community with publicly controlled resources; without means test or work requirement; in cash; compatible with in-kind transfers; received regularly (*Van Parijs, 2004*); sufficient to assure economic security (*Raventós, 2019*), and unconditional in the way it can be spent (*Standing, 2018*).

Approximated versions of that we describe today as basic income have been introduced well before the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1795 the Speenhamland System was instated as part of the Elizabeth Poor Law, a tool to mitigate rural poverty in England and Wales. The system was led by local parishes and based on a negative tax on income, where the quantity adjusted to household size as well as fluctuations of grain price. (*A Short History of the Basic Income Idea* | BIEN — Basic Income Earth Network, n.d.)

The program ultimately failed, as this attempt at a minimum guaranteed income became the maximum income the poor could aspire to, and because it was so specifically targeted to the lowest of incomes, it allegedly led the poor to work and save less, as well as indirectly incentivized them to birth more children and at a younger age (*Wrigley & Smith, 2020*). Many authors defend that the system wasn't as massively to blame for the worsening of the recession as history claims, but rather yet another instance of blaming calamity on the poorest (*Block & Somers, 2003*). Additionally, this form of basic income diverts widely from the UBI parameters this review has selected, in that it is based on a Negative Tax Income, led by parishes, and exclusively targeted to the poor.

Regardless, this alleged result is precisely why people and policymakers respond skeptically to UBI, they fear that if citizens have their basic needs covered and are no longer driven by the need to survive, they *will* respond by working less and severely worsening the conditions of everyone. If this truly were the case, and the very nature of UBI led to a considerable deterioration in the labour market, full basic income will never have socioeconomic feasibility and sustainability (*Yi, 2018*), regardless of its potential positive effects (*de Paz-Báñez et al., 2020*).

The motive of this paper is therefore to analyze what effects would the implementation of UBI would have on employment, in order to assess its feasibility and desirability. To carry out this analysis, the effect on employment will be measured by a) labour supply, which is defined as the number of hours (or other units of time) people are willing and able to work at a given wage rate; as well as b) labour force participation, a rate that divides the labour force

by the total working-age population and estimates what percentage of working-age and able people contribute their efforts to the workforce (*Ben-Porath, 1973*).

This review scrutinizes the available literature and the various forms of implemented experiments of UBI and answer the following questions:

- A) In the scenario of applying UBI, would the labour supply be negatively affected?
- B) In the scenario of applying UBI, would the labour force participation be negatively affected?
- C) Is UBI therefore a viable and sustainable model to implement?

## **METHODS**

This literature review was conducted by implementing the methodology of the PRISMA declaration for systematic reviews and meta-analysis for empirical research (Page et al., 2021).

### **Research Strategy**

The process of research was conducted by cross searching the concept of “Universal basic income (UBI)” or “basic income”, with the terms “productivity”, “labour supply”, “labour market”, “employment”, “contribution”, “experiments”, and “examples”. On a second wave of research, and in an effort to widen the scope of investigation, UBI was also triangulated with the keywords “basic needs”, “automatization”, “evidence” and “viability”. The articles, academic magazines and books that proved pertinent for the present study were mainly found on large indexes and databases such as RECOLECTA, Europeana, Dialnet, Google Scholar, REBIUM, ScienceDirect (1993–2022), Academic Search Complete (1888–2022), ProQuest (1971–2022) and Scopus (1960–2022). A large percentage of the literature was also found referenced by other articles and authors, as well as in the form of entries on the Basic Income European Network website. The last search was conducted September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

## **Eligibility criteria**

This paper reviews articles that have been published in academic journals, as book segments, or as entries of official basic income organizations webpages. Without limitations in language nor specific timeframe of publication. The experiments had to comply with minimum definition requirements, as well as surpass the filters established by the **Quality Assessment** (See below).

## **Selection process**

The papers were selected as according to title and abstract, inspecting the key words to determine their relevance for this review, and assessing their characteristics through the eligibility criteria (n=108). A second filter deleted those articles that seemed to fit with the desired search, but that upon closer inspection, had technical specifications or hidden characteristics that went beyond the scope of this review (n= 29). This was the case for articles that analyzed fluctuations on employment by purely economic calculations (n=3), articles dedicated to analyzing the effect of Conditional Cash Transfers on underage employment exclusively (n= 21), as well as preliminary UBI proposals that hadn't been implemented at the time of publishing and present no evidence of a plan of insertion (n=5). The articles that on a first note did seem to cross the eligibility criteria but were later found restricted by pay-per-view, were also excluded from the review (n = 23). Lastly, the resulting articles (n=56) were filtered through the Quality Assessment, resulting in the final sample of quasi-UBI (n=11), and UBI pilots (n=7).

## **Data collection process**

The collection process included three steps: On a first instance, a separate document compiled the most relevant information found on general research on Universal Basic

Income; variables and indicators for measuring employment; currents of debate on the effects of UBI on employment; and prominent pilots and approximations to UBI.

The following step utilized a spreadsheet where the UBI experiments found were individually analyzed, their information used to complete the following columns: Country or region, Level of income of the country, Percentage of GDP invested in the program, Type of experiment (UBI or quasi-UBI), UBI Characteristics, Years implemented, Social or political group responsible for the initiative, Social and political context at the time of implementation of the project, Objectives of the project at the time of implementation; Target participants, Number of Participants, Total sum, Form of payment, Comparative minimum employment benefit rate at time of implementation, and Particularities of the experiment. The quasi-UBI experiments were clustered as according to type, summarized in **Table 1**. The purer forms of UBI pilots were filtered through the **Quality Assessment**, and the chosen UBI pilots' information was summarized in **Table 2**.

Finally, the data collection process included systematically reviewing each one of the chosen UBI experiments for their effect on labour supply and labour force participation on the market where they were implemented. The data collected is summarized in **Table 3**. in the case of UBI pilots, and in **Table 1**. for the cluster of quasi-UBI experiments.

### **Quality assessment**

This review found significant variations within the body of literature of what the ideal definition of UBI is, in the sense that different authors propose slightly different configurations that they vow will make all the difference in the program succeeding or failing. This creates a difficulty for the systematic review, because the sample of study becomes too diverse, and the number of variables to analyze, overly large and heterogeneous. This paper decided upon a two-fold solution. On a first note, to focus on a single model of UBI, by analyzing the most relevant author's configurations, and observing those characteristics that were more frequently supported. The resulting model chosen was one

were basic income was given without means test or work requirement; in cash; compatible with in-kind transfers; received regularly (*Van Parijs, 2004*); sufficient to assure economic security (*Raventós, 2019*), and unconditional in the way it can be spent (*Standing, 2018*). Secondly, and as a method to determine their relevance, the pilots reviewed had to surpass a quality assessment filter where four criteria that had to be fulfilled:

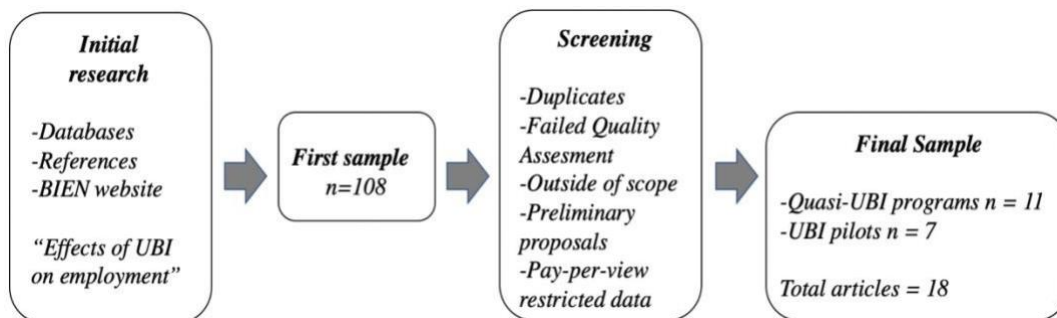
- (A) The project had to have been active for a window of time that allowed for minimum effects on both the labour market and the well-being of its participants, in order for those results to have been measured and analyzed in the literature to review. The minimum window of time stipulated for this review is 24 months.
- (B) The project must've emerged as a governmental policy initiative, as opposed to being led by forces independent to the state authority such as Non-Governmental Organizations, Community Associations, or religious groups.
- (C) The planning of the project must have originated with either the intent of implementing a UBI-like experiment, or as a tool to distribute resources, as opposed to being pitched as a mere tool to reduce poverty and inequality, or as a form of solidarity or religious charity.
- (D) The nature of the income given has to fulfill at least two out of three characteristics: Universal, unconditional and individual payment-based.

## RESULTS

Overall, 18 articles were chosen out of 108 articles identified through the research strategy represented in **Figure 1**. In an attempt to offer a broad overview on the effects of UBI on employment, two types of experiments were analyzed through empirical articles: a) Quasi-UBI experiments and lottery winning analysis (n= 11) (*Fiszbein & Schady, 2009; Parker & Skoufias, 2000; Banerjee et al., 2017; Bastagli et al., 2016; Schjoedt, 2016; Robins, 1985;*

*Kershaw, 1972; Marx & Peeters, 2008; Furaker & Hedenus, 2009; Picchio et al., 2018; Imbens et al., 2001); and b) UBI experiments (n= 7) (Jones & Marinescu, 2018; Feinberg & Kuhn, 2018; Bibler et al., 2019; Caffaso 2019; Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018; Hämäläinen et al., 2020; Verho et al, 2022).*

**Figure 1.**



## LABOUR MARKET

In order to review the effect of UBI on employment, this review could not constrain itself to UBI theory or lab-controlled simulations, but rather opted to analyze observable repercussions on past experiences. The main difficulty with empirically evaluating UBI is that the experiments implemented are small in size, short in time, and flexible in their interpretation of UBI. Technically, the only way to ensure our conclusions are reliable and replicable, would be to analyze a nation-wide and permanent UBIs that rigorously imitated the perfect model authors define. Because such unspoiled sample is not yet a reality, we are left with the “draft” versions as similarly relevant tools for our research. This review has found ample evidence in similar analysis of UBI that the most approximated examples of UBI other than the limited amount of observable pilots, are Conditional Cash Transfers and Negative Income Tax experiments (*de Paz-Báñez et al., 2020*). Additionally, in an effort to add evidence on people’s behaviour when they receive monetary influxes, evidence from lottery winners’ employment tendencies were also included. The summary of these examples is summarized in **Table 1**.



The first approximation to UBI that may clue us on what happens with employment when people receive a type of grant are Conditional Cash Transfers. On a first note, CCTs divert from UBI in a number of aspects. They are typically targeted to the poor instead of being universal; given on a household basis, as opposed to individually; and received under prespecified conditions of health, nutrition or education, as opposed to unconditionally (*Fiszbein & Schady, 2009*). Another important difference is that whilst UBI examples are scarce, CCTs triumph in their adoption rate, present in virtually every country in Latin America, implemented on a large-scale in medium to low income countries in Asia and Africa, and are gradually expanding into the developed world as tools to incentivize schooling (*Fiszbein & Schady, 2009*). Unconditional Cash Transfers present perhaps even more similarities to UBI in the sense that they are not contingent on the receiver behaving a certain way. However, because UCTs are usually aimed at groups not in a position to work, such as children, people with disabilities, and elders, we cannot compare their behaviour on the labour market to their collection of the transfer (*de Paz-Báñez et al., 2020*).

Fiszbein & Schady (2009) analyzed the effects of CCTs for the World Bank, when observing all the programs implemented in the world at the time of publication, they conclusively denied transfers have any negative effect on the behaviour of adult workers, and yet did aid significantly in reducing child labour, which is a type of labour we want to see reduced. On the other hand, and as it is expected from CCTs, consumption, education and health were overall, positively stimulated (*Fiszbein & Schady, 2009*). Parker and Skoufias (2000) inspected how the Progresa Program in Mexico had an effect on labour tendencies during the three years of its implementation on all types of work. The main deduction pointed out that adult workers did not exploit the benefits in order to work less and increase their leisure. Overall, the labour force saw a significant reduction only when it came to child labour, women who reduced their domestic work slightly, and girls who reduced their hours of domestic work as schooling opportunities increased, confirming that domestic work does compete with schooling. (*Parker & Skoufias, 2000*).

Banerjee et al. (2017) analyzed seven randomized controlled trials in six developing countries, finding no systematic evidence of an impact of work behaviour in both men and women of working age (*Banerjee et al., 2017*). Bastagli et al. (2016) carried a systematic review of fifty-six cash transfer programs in thirty countries and found that about 50% of the data demonstrated that the effect of employment wasn't significant, only seeing minor reductions in the number of hours worked. This finding is highly compensated by the increased probability that an adult works, as well as the measured improvements in poverty, education, mental health, self-employment and empowerment of women and girls (*Bastagli et al., 2016*). Schjoedt (2016) considered the effect of a cash transfer experiment in India and resolved that not only did employment not see a reduction, but the income received was largely used to invest in assets that would improve employment capacity, such as having access to better work-related equipment or furthering their literacy and training (*Schjoedt, 2016*).

The second quasi-UBI format relevant to our research are Negative Income Tax Experiments, a form of welfare policy largely installed in the United States of America by Milton Friedman. The basic structure establishes a threshold that if negatively surpassed, reverses the direction in which income is paid, relieving low-income families of tax payments and simultaneously functioning as a grant (*Moffitt, 2003*). The main difference between NIT and UBI is the targeting to the poor, however, it shares with basic income that it is devised as an interwoven part of the state policy.

Robins (1985) analyzed four prominent NIT experiments based in New Jersey; a small cluster of rural populations; Gary, Indiana; and Seattle-Denver. In wondering how do families adjust their labour supply in response to an NIT as opposed to their equivalent support groups, the results were consistent and labour supply was minimally affected. In this sense, husbands were found to reduce their time worked an average of two weeks of full-time employment; wives and single females a medium of three weeks of full-time employment; and the employed youth about four weeks of full-time employment. It is speculated that the reason why the women and the young reduce their worked weeks more than men after receiving an NIT, is because their contribution to the household was lower than the men's, and can now

be partially substituted by the additional income of the NIT, allowing women to better care for children and domestic work, and the young to more effectively educate (*Robins, 1985*). Kershaw (1972) analyzes the NIT program promoted by president Nixon and senator McGovern as part of a welfare reform. The sample included 1.300 poor families with at least one able bodied man between 18 and 58 years old either in the labour force or capable of entering it. The results were measured in weekly earnings, which directly correlate with hours worked in a specific field. Whilst the experimental sample did increase their income compared to the control group, they also worked an average of 12% less hours and yet did not leave the workforce. The speculated reason offers the possibility that the experimental group sought better-paying jobs which allow for a minimal reduction in work without sacrifice of income. However, even if this theory was discarded, a 12% decrease in hours worked does not imply a significant voluntary decline in labour supply (*Kershaw, 1972*).

A third installment that provides insight on the effects of UBI is a curious one, as it provides insight on the behavioural tendencies of humans when a large sum of money is received. A major objection to UBI dictates that CCTs UCTs and NIT themselves only offer enough resources to survive short-term, and further ensnare the poor into the poverty and bureaucratic trap in the long-term (*Easterly, 2009*). On the other hand, their neutral and often positive results in the labour market are challenged by the idea that the amounts given in any of these programs aren't sufficient to persuade people to withdraw from working, but that if the amount given were large enough to adequately cover all basic needs as UBI proposes, people *would* exile the workforce (*Battistoni, 2017*). De Paz-Báñez (2020) proposes analyzing the work-related behaviours of lottery winners after they receive sums larger than most grant programs (*de Paz-Báñez et al., 2020*).

Marx and Peeters (2008) focus on the winners of a lifetime-payment lottery, specifically, the Belgian scratch-off *Win for Life*, where winners receive an annuity of €1000 for the rest of their lives, an amount significantly higher than the proposed Belgian UBI sum of €613. The Belgian National Lottery acts as intermediate to contact the anonymous winners of the scratch off via email, and delivers a survey on their employment tendencies at the time of winning the lottery, versus at the time of receiving the survey (*Marx & Peeters, 2008*).

The effects of winning were essentially minimal on their employment status. Out of sixty-six people answered the survey, only five stopped working after winning, one single man, four couples where both partners worked (only one of them stopped working), and one couple where only one person worked, indicating that the grand majority did not stop working after securing the yearly sum. When it comes to self-employment, those that weren't self-employed, remained not self-employed. Only the amount of hours worked saw a significant reduction, as eleven couples where only one person worked, and three couples where both worked reduced their average of hours. Single men and women maintained their number of hours worked. Contemplation suggests that the reduction in working hours in couples may be due to childcare, but the protective anonymity of the survey prevents further information on the personal lives of participants. Ultimately, only a proportion of households have a preference to reduce the number of hours worked if given sufficient financial incentives (*Marx & Peeters, 2008*).

Furaker and Hedenus (2009) analyzed the winners that left their jobs upon collecting the large sum and noticed three distinct tendencies. A proportion of winners that quit their jobs proved to have returned to the same position after taking a holiday; others abandoned their field, getting higher degrees of education and later returning to the workforce on a different area of employment; the remaining fraction switched to self-employment (*Furaker & Hedenus, 2009*). Only Imbens et al. (2001) found a significant withdrawal from the workforce after winning the lottery, but only in the cases where the amount won was very large, arguably enough to finance an early retirement (*Imbens et al., 2001*), and Picchio et al. (2018) observed significant reductions in hours worked when the prize surpassed \$500.000 USD (*Picchio et al., 2018*). This last finding is not concerning for the case of UBI since the basic income sum will never amount such quantity.

**Table 1.**

<b>Type of quasi-UBI Experiment/Evidence</b>	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Sample &amp; Objective</b>	<b>Findings on labour market</b>
Conditional Cash			No negative effects on adult employment

Transfers	Fiszbein & Schady, 2009 Parker & Skoufias, 2000 Banerjee et al., 2017 Bastagli et al., 2016 Schjoedt, 2016	CCT receivers in developing countries  <i>Do cash transfers promote a reduction in working hours and the labour force?</i>	Adult workers did not exploit transfer benefits to increase their leisure  Minor reductions in the number of hours worked  The transfers were invested in improving employment capacity  Women reduced their domestic work slightly  Significant reductions in child labour  Girls reduced their hours of domestic work as schooling opportunities increased
Negative Income Tax	Robins, 1985 Kershaw, 1972	Low-income families that were eligible for NIT  <i>How do families adjust their labour supply in response to an NIT as opposed to their equivalent support groups?</i>	Labour supply was minimally affected  Hours worked slightly reduced  Women and the young reduce their worked weeks slightly more than men  Small tendency to increase income and reduce hours worked without leaving the workforce by seeking better-paid jobs
Lottery winners' Employment Tendencies	Marx & Peeters, 2008 Furaker & Hedenus, 2009 Picchio et al., 2018 Imbens et al., 2001	Employment tendencies in lottery winners after receiving prize  <i>How do people change their employment status after receiving large amounts of money?</i>	Winning the lottery has minimal effects on employment  The not self-employed remained not self-employed  Households do have a preference to reduce the number of hours worked  People that leave their jobs tend to: return after a holiday; get more education and return to the workforce; switch to self-employment  Winners leave the workforce only if the sum is large enough to cover early retirement  Winners reduce their hours worked only if the prize is over \$500.000 USD

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The quasi-UBI examples as well as the evidence from lottery-winners' behaviour offer insight on the manner in which the labour market fluctuates when people receive different forms of transfers. However, in order to offer insight on the effects of UBI as a program, this review had to assess the experiments that more closely resembled the state-of-the-art Universal Basic Income. The experiments chosen had to surpass the conditions established in the **Quality Assessment**, which operated as a tool to differentiate between mere cash transfers and actual attempts at UBI, depending on whether they presented enough basic income characteristics. The three pilots that adequately passed this filter are described below, their main features summarized visually in **Table 2**. When interpreting Table 2, note that two remarkable particularities between pilots is their variation in currency and periodicity, thus, whilst the original values are indicated, they are later converted to USD and to yearly payments in order to more accomplish an accurate comparison. The one exception is the case of Iran, as the available literature already utilized the converted currency from Iranian Rial to USD for that particular year's rate.

- ALASKA: Permanent Fund Dividend

The case of Alaska's Permanent Fund Dividend is easily the most relevant pilot to study in the northern hemisphere. In 1968 Alaska started to receive tremendous revenue from oil deposits within its land, and in order to both limit government officials spending, and to protect the income for future generations, this Universal Basic Income system was installed in 1982 (*Goldsmith, 2010*). The fund represents about 10% of total oil production and sale from Alaska's North Slope region, and about 4% of the total GPD, in 2018 it was estimated to be worth 65 billion dollars. At the time of installing the program in 1984 the sum was \$331 USD, but it has adjusted to either inflation or to the intensification of oil production, reaching its peak amount at \$2.072 USD in 2015. (*Jones & Marinescu, 2018*).

The dividend is paid on a yearly basis and to all residents that have lived in Alaska for at least a year. In 2019 the sum received was \$1.606 USD, for reference, the minimum unemployment insurance that very same year was \$2.912 USD (*Dunleavy & Ledbetter, 2020*). The most important aspect of this basic income pilot is its permanence, because it has been ongoing for 40 years, it allows for a long-term analysis and may provide crucial findings for the development of new UBI pilots.

- IRAN: Subsidy Termination Program

The case of Iran is somewhat similar to the Alaskan, in the sense that it is based on oil revenue availability and was meant to remain as a permanent policy. The historical background that led to the policy dates back to the energy subsidies that were left over from the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Terminating the subsidies presented a conundrum: their presence benefitted primarily the rich, and yet their removal would translate to higher monthly costs for the poor (*Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018*). President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad finally eliminated the subsidies for bread and energy and committed to compensate the added expense by paying everyone a fixed amount of monthly cash, our UBI example (*Guillaume et al., 2011*).

This political strategy in the form of a periodic payment immediately boosted both incomes and inflation, yet the inflation subsided and the project was generally accepted as a more equitable way to distribute the nation's natural wealth (*Guillaume et al., 2011*). Parallely and as expected, poverty and inequality decreased, but an imminent question appeared: Did labour supply suffer a similar plummet? President Hassan Rouhani, successor to Ahmadinejad, slashed the budget for the policy, criticizing that it promoted beggars and discouraged work. The state-wide dividend was given to 70 million people, about 96% of the total population, and came to represent 28% of the median household income equal to 15% of the total GDP.

The dividend is given in the form of a monthly cash sum, transferred directly into the bank accounts of household heads (often men), instead of individually. At the time of introduction of the program, the sum amounted to about \$90 USD per month, a total of \$1080 USD per year. For reference, the minimum unemployment insurance benefit is \$2137 USD per year (the minimum salary is \$323 USD per month, and Iranian law stipulates unemployment insurance must be equal to 55% of the salary in the last 90 days).

An important aspect of this pilot is the fact that it did not emerge as an intent to act against poverty and inequality, but rather as an efficient way to reorganize the subsidy system without causing social tumult. Additionally, the fact that the transfer is made to the head of household creates a difficult debate over whether such income is reaching the people it is intended to, especially women in the household. (*Tabatabai, 2012*).

#### - FINLAND: Unemployment experiment

Finland's version of UBI was installed by Prime Minister Juha Sipilä in January 2017. The aim of the program wasn't necessarily to fight against poverty and inequality, but rather to identify ways to design a social security system with changes in the nature of work (*Kangas & Pulkka, 2016*). News outlets proclaimed Finland as the first country implementing UBI as a nationwide policy, but due to the hastiness at the time of design, taxation could not be adjusted to include the cost of the project, creating a budget deficit of 11 billion euro (*Kangas & Pulkka, 2016*), thus the program ultimately culminated in December 2019.

The dividend itself is not universal, it is targeted towards 2000 randomly chosen unemployed citizens between the ages of 25 and 58 (so that the experiment would not interfere with their studies nor their retirement plans), who already received minimum employment benefits as of 2016. The sum itself was compatible with other forms of aid and amounts to €560 per month, thus €6720 euro per year, about \$6.640 USD yearly. For reference, the minimum unemployment benefit covers up to 400 weekdays of all those that worked 6 months in the last 28 months, a total of €8.364 per year, around \$8.316 USD (*Hämäläinen & Verho, 2022*).



The control group utilized were the other 178.000 unemployed citizens that continued to receive basic employment benefits (*De Wispelaere et al., 2018*).

- Other relevant pilots not included

This review is aware that the implementation of UBI and its subsequent effects depend not merely on its design but rather on the social, political and economic characteristics of the region where it is implemented. In this sense, this paper made a conscious effort to include countries or regions in diverse positions within the spectrum of income. However, during the process of selection, the most prominent UBI pilots in low-income regions: Kenya's GiveDirectly experiment in 2011 (*Haushofer & Shapiro, 2016*); India's Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) experiment in 2011 (*Bhatt, 2006*); and Namibia's Lutheran Evangelical Church experiment in 2008 (*Frankman, 2010*), did not fulfill the minimum established criteria that authors and this review define for the label of UBI, nor did they comply with the minimum requirements established in the Quality Assessment for the paper.

Additionally, this review felt it was relevant to include UBI pilots on regions with high rates of unemployment, in order to further validate the experiments' potential positive or negative effects on employment. In this sense, The B-INCOME in Barcelona, Spain, was considered as a highly valuable candidate to provide this added perspective. However, and despite the Quality Assessment allowing some flexibility, when systematically reviewing its effects on employment, the majority of the literature was dedicated to analyzing improvements in freedom, decision-making skills, sense of community, and alleviation of vulnerabilities. This review found a single document report which was published by Barcelona's City Hall, that briefly reported on the employment effects of B-INCOME, but provided insufficient information in the method of analysis, only superficially disclosed results on labour force participation, and did not evaluate labour supply fluctuations after its implementation, thus it was ultimately not included in this review. (For further information see *Lain, 2019*).

**Table 2.**

Country / Region	Level of income	Experiment	UBI Characteristics	Years implemented	Participants	Total sum / form of sum	Minimum unemployment benefit rate
ALASKA	High	Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD)	Universal Unconditional Permanent	1982 - Present	All citizens that have resided in Alaska for at least a year	\$1.606 /y (2019)  Individual Payment	\$2.912/y (2019)
IRAN	Medium	Subsidy Termination Program	Universal Unconditional Regular	2011 - 2016	2000 Randomly chosen unemployed citizens  Ages 25 to 58	\$1.080/y (\$90/m) (2011)  Household Payment	\$2.137/y (\$178/m) (2011)
FINLAND	High	Unemployment experiment	Unconditional Regular	2017 - 2019	Unemployed citizens ineligible for earnings-related unemployed benefits	\$6.640/y (€560/m) (2017)  Individual payment	\$8.314/y (€697/m) (2017)

### Labour force participation

When it comes to labour force participation, both types of quasi-UBI experiments as well as the lottery-winners evidence were consistent in their statement that receiving an allocation of money does not imply an exodus of the labour market. The available literature found that labour force participation was minimally affected, and that both the quasi-UBI and the UBI pilots had no significant effect on adult employment. The one case where individuals have been found to exit the labour force after winning the lottery is when the sum won is sufficient to cover an early retirement, however the amount of UBI will never be as massive (*Imbens et al., 2001*). On the other hand, these experiences were found to diminish child labour rates, thus, the only clear evidence of labour force deactivation as a result of receiving a cash grant

is a positive one. (*Fiszbein & Schady, 2009*). The lottery prize did not serve as an incentive for those that weren't self-employed to enter self-employment (*Marx & Peeters, 2008*).

The examination of the UBI pilots suggests that the implementation of the basic income had minimal effects on labour force participation, and even produced a wave of employment incentives (*Verho et al., 2022* and *Bibler et al., 2019*). Experimental groups presented similar employment rates to their corresponding control groups (*Jones & Marinescu, 2018* and *Hämäläinen et al., 2020*).

Those UBIs that saw a decline in labour report it as modest and unlikely to offset the market (*Feinberg & Kuehn, 2018* and *Hämäläinen et al., 2020*). The labour market only saw a contraction smaller than 1%, and in this very same experiment men were found to be 1.8% more likely to find employment than before (*Bibler et al., 2019*). When specifically analyzing whether the poor would leave the workforce, even households in the lower 40% of the income distribution did not exit the labour force (*Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018*). A positive additive to labour force participation came from women activation in the workforce, which was enough to surpass the women abandonment of the workforce rate (*Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018*).

When it comes to self-employment tendencies and whether the basic income would motivate people to switch to self-employment if they weren't in it beforehand, lottery winners did not turn to self-employment (*Marx & Peeters, 2008*), and only Alaska's PFD presented a slight increase in self-employment rates (*Cafasso, 2022* and *Jones & Marinescu, 2018*). This review understands self-employment as an equally valid form of employment, thus does not consider this as evidence of a reduction in the labour force participation.

## **Labour supply**

Regarding the fluctuation in time worked, (i.e., the labour supply), the available literature found that labour supply was minimally affected, the reductions in hours or weeks worked

were minimal in cases of small concessions of cash, such as NIT (*Robins, 1985*) and CCTs (*Bastagli et al., 2016*). Some families reduced their number of hours worked but increased their income and remained in the labour force, thus may have relied on the financial security provided by the grant to seek better-paying jobs (*Kershaw, 1972*). The significant reductions in hours worked were mainly present in the domestic work field, women slightly diminished their domestic hours worked; and girls reduced their hours of domestic work proportionately to the rise of schooling opportunities, proving that domestic work does compete with schooling in their case (*Parker & Skoufias, 2000*).

Demographically, both women and young citizens reduced their worked weeks slightly more than men (*Robins, 1985*). The evidence on lottery winners found that households, especially those where only one person works, do have a preference to reduce their hours of work (*Marx & Peeters, 2008*), and lottery winners present an inclination to reduce their hours of work if the prize won surpasses the \$500,000 USD threshold, which again, does not concern this review as this isn't a number associated with UBI grants. (*Picchio et al., 2018*).

The UBI pilot experiments revealed mixed results in the fluctuation of hours worked. In the case of the Permanent Fund Dividend, the results show a reduction in the hours worked as compared to the control group (*Cafasso, 2022*), this is especially true for married women, who decrease their working hours more than single women and men (*Feinberg & Kuehn, 2018*), and for employed women that are either young, low earners, or that have small children in the household, who decreased their working hours an average of 4%. However this decrease in hours isn't significant enough to cause a negative ripple effect on the labour market (*Bibler et al., 2019*).

The other two archetypes of UBI found minimal effects in labour supply, and days of work were minimally but gradually increased (*Verho et al., 2022 and Hämäläinen et al., 2020*). Specifically, the groups that more significantly increased their days of employment were families with children, speakers of a foreign language (*Hämäläinen et al., 2020*); and men, who were also found to increase their number of hours worked in the industrial and service sector (*Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018*). The one instance where this review

found hours of work were significantly reduced was in the age group between 20 and 29 years old in the Iranian experiment. The authors speculate such variant could be due to the either the easiness of enrolment in secondary and tertiary education, but provides little evidence to support this thesis (*Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018*).

When it comes to part-time work, which to the understanding of this review implies a significant reduction in hours, only the Alaskan experiment reported a 1.8% increase in part-time employment rates (*Cafasso, 2022 and Jones & Marinescu, 2018*).

### Results in low-income regions

The research dedicated to lower income countries, constantly debated whether targeting was beneficial or even necessary to the program and found that targeting the policy to the poor, ensures that the sum is more substantial and will actually reach the needed, but in return sacrifices both universality and unconditionality, which are fundamental materials in the fabric of UBI (*Banerjee et al., 2019*). In this sense, none of the experiments observed in low-income countries could be interpreted as pilots of UBI because of their targeting to the poor, which is why they had to be considered as cash transfer experiments, and as a form of quasi-UBI instead. The analysis of these examples as cash transfers did conclude that even in low-income countries, a monetary sum does not have negative effects on employment, nor is it exploited to increase leisure, but on the contrary, serves as a form of investment in improving employment capacity (*Schjoedt, 2016*).

**Table 3.**

Experiment	Author	Year	Method	Results	Particularities
ALASKA'S PERMANENT	<i>Jones &amp; Marinescu</i>	2018	Synthetic control matching labour market outcomes in other control states	Similar employment rates between Alaska and other control states	Analysis of part-time employment

FUND DIVIDEND		after the creation of the PFD	1.8% increase in part-time employment	
<i>Feinberg &amp; Kuhn</i>	2018	<p>Use American Community Survey between 2005-2015 to evaluate how the PFD affects the number of hours worked</p> <p>Compare Alaska's labour supply to the one in Hawaii and Montana as control groups</p>	<p>Married women decrease their working hours more than single women and men 1.7% -1.8% for every 10% the PFD increased</p> <p>Decline in labour is modest and unlikely to offset market</p>	<p>Different results for men and women</p> <p>Different results for women in different life circumstances</p>
<i>Bibler et al.</i>	2019	<p>Calculation of timing of disbursements and annual fluctuations in disbursement size to compare fluctuations in labour demand and employment rates</p>	<p>Increase in labour demand</p> <p>Labour market contraction of only 0.7% in the following months and 0.2% in the following year of disbursement</p> <p>Men are 1.8% more likely of finding employment</p> <p>Employed women (young, low earners, and with young children in the household) reduce their working hours an average of 4%</p>	<p>Different results for men and women</p> <p>Different results for women in different circumstances</p> <p>Consideration of variables related to family and income for women</p>
<i>Caffaso</i>	2022	<p>Synthetic control groups to find states similar to Alaska in employment, part-time rate, labour force participation and hours worked from 1995 to 2020</p> <p>Use control group to estimate difference-in-differences regression 1979-1985</p>	<p>Increase in part-time employment and a reduction in hours worked compared to the control states</p> <p>Alaska presents a better average skill portfolio than control states</p> <p>Increase of analytical, fundamental and social skills</p> <p>Decrease in merchandise skills and managerial skills</p>	<p>Estimation of skill portfolio to reflect areas of increased labour and areas of diminished labour</p>

using individual-level data

<p>IRAN'S SUBSIDY SUSTITUTION PROGRAM</p>	<p><i>Salehi- Isfahani &amp; Mostafavi- Dehzoeei</i></p>	<p>2018</p>	<p>Observing panel of households before and after the program to assess its impact on labour force participation and hours worked for men and women by:</p> <p>a) analyzing the difference-in-differences between the households that got the sum immediately and those that had to wait 3 months</p> <p>b) comparing total household expenditures from the year prior to the program and using fixed effects to estimate the cash transfer changes in labour supply</p> <p>Especial focus on the lower income households</p>	<p>None of the results pointed towards a discernible negative effect on labour force participation</p> <p>The households in the bottom 40% of the income distribution did not leave the labour force nor did they decrease the number of hours worked</p> <p>Women increased the labour supply by activating their labour force participation more than men (despite also abandoning more than men)</p> <p>Men increased the labour supply by increasing the number of hours worked in the industrial and service sector</p> <p>Reduction of hours worked in the age group between 20 and 29 years old</p>	<p>Reduction of hours worked in the age group between 20-29</p>
<p>FINLAND'S UNEMPLOY- MENT EXPERIMENT</p>	<p><i>Hämäläinen et al.</i></p>	<p>2020</p>	<p>Analysis of the primary outcome.</p> <p>Combination of individual-level data from administrative registers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Pension Security Agency (ETK)</li> <li>-Kela TE Offices</li> <li>-Tax Administration</li> <li>-Population Register Center (VRK)</li> </ul> <p>to determine employment rates,</p>	<p>Minor effects on employment</p> <p>Employment rate increased an average of 6 days per year or 7.2%</p> <p>Employment rates between experiment and control group grew similarly</p> <p>Families with children increased their days of employment on the first year, and doubled them on the second year</p>	<p>Analysis of family configurations in relation to employment tendencies</p> <p>Inclusion of data on speakers of a foreign language</p>

		labour supply and demographical characteristics	Speakers of a foreign language increased their days of employment	
<i>Verho et al.</i>	2022	Use of administrative data to study how a new social benefit reduced administrative barriers, and lower marginal tax rates affected employment of each year of the experiment	<p>Employment incentives increased during the first and second year</p> <p>Employment rates had a nonsignificant increase of 1.5 days or 3.1% per year during the first year</p> <p>Employment rates had a somewhat significant increase of 6.6 days or 8.6% during the second year (but results may have been influenced by the benefit reform of 2018)</p> <p>Background characteristics associated single-adult households with poor employment</p>	Analysis of background characteristics in relation to employment tendencies

## DISCUSSION

The present review has analyzed a total of 18 articles that reported on the effects of quasi-UBI and UBI pilots on labour supply and labour force participation, without limitations in language nor date of publication. The UBI pilots were carefully filtered in order to ensure they sufficiently resembled the ideal UBI sample this review and a cluster of authors describe as ideal.

### **The impossibility of a long-term analysis and the matter of age**

An interesting realization is that the one experiment that presents a reduction in hours worked is also the only sample that allows for a long-term analysis. I believe two different interpretations can derive from this conclusion. On the one hand, these results could suggest



that the neutral effects found in other UBI examples may shift with the progression of time, thus in the name of caution, UBI experiments ought to be closely monitored after the two-year mark in order to detect their potential decline. Whilst this interpretation can be possible and thus is worth mentioning in this review, we have to consider that the Alaskan PFD has been active for forty years, and that if UBI truly progressively deteriorated with time, the results would reflect a much more pernicious scenario. On the other hand, and the reasoning this review finds more feasible, is that Alaskan citizens have accepted the PFD as part of their financial lives, accustomed to a reduced uncertainty in their future. Less uncertainty allows people to make conscious decisions to reduce work hours in the name of sickness, child-caring or mere respite, without denting their acquisitive capacity severely, thus could be a positive instance on freedom and one more argument in favor of UBI.

The difficulty in analyzing experiments long-term interferes with reaching definitive conclusions and prevents us from confidently illustrating *why* a certain result was obtained. This is the case of the Iranian experiment and the age group between 20 and 29 years old, who significantly reduced their hours worked after the implementation of the pilot. The author's speculation, and one that makes sense to this review, is that the working hours were traded in search for a better education, as the easiness of enrolment in tertiary education in Iran, and the covering of needs by the UBI income, allow the young to seek an improvement in human capital (*Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018*). If this were the case, it would imply a long-term benefit for Iran as a whole, and yet another favorable trait resulting of UBI. However, because we cannot longitudinally analyze the progression of this group in the workforce and observe whether this group has returned to the workforce and is now present in higher-skill fields, a phenomenon we did observe in Alaska and in the CCTs, we cannot ensure this quid pro quo is real, and must consider the possibility that UBI does incentivize the young to refrain from working.

Additionally, the topic of age is only superficially analyzed, whilst the review generally negates that working people will stall their performance, little to no attention is paid to those that haven't entered the workforce due to age, and whether they would see in UBI an opportunity to cover their needs without needing to enter the workforce. We could speculate

that despite this review finding no evidence that previous UBI pilots have negatively affected employment, the risk of labour force participation and hours worked diminishing, could increase with every generation that comes of working age, as they may not feel drawn to activate their labour participation.

### **Universal Basic Income thus far: An insufficient sum**

The literature review analyzes whether people would stop working and concludes that people would not leave nor reduce their work significantly. However, none of the experiments provided a sum higher than the unemployment benefit insurance at the time of implementation, and surely not enough to fully cover one person's basic needs. An argument to be made is that because the sum hasn't been sufficient to cover all basic needs, and due to every pilot outside the PFD lasting only a brief window of time, people do not rely on the size nor permanence of the benefit enough to stop working. It makes us wonder, if UBI was properly implemented as a permanent grant of income that sufficiently covered basic needs, *Would people stop working then?* The experiments available at this time can only provide us with estimations, but they unfortunately haven't been implemented to a sufficient degree, and cannot empirically answer this question.

Aware of this gap in the discourse, this review decided to include studies on labour tendencies after winning a type of lottery, not as an exemplary UBI experience but as a way to present results on people's behaviour when the amount received is considerably larger and must be understood within this context. The results correlated with those in the CCTs and NIT, only seeing a severe reduction in hours if prizes were over \$500.000 (Picchio et al., 2018), and a total exodus from the workforce if the winnings were massive enough to cover retirement (Imbens et al., 2001). These amounts are not proposed for UBI, but they provide evidence that even when the quantity received is larger than it has been in previous experiments, the variables remain stable.

## **Circumstantial bias**

Because the nature of this review included systematically probing for any diminishment in the labour market, the results obtained were either neutral, positive, or negative, but provided little refinement on their actual implications. In this sense, a number of the negative effects found in this review deserve a deeper refinement and discussion on their significance. On a first note, seeing reductions in hours worked by children, including the domestic force in girls, is a “negative” result that is to be interpreted as a positive consequence, as whilst the market is technically losing work, child labour is a type of work that when downsized, represents a positive indicator of improved wellbeing nationwide. This is especially true in the case of girls and the relationship between schooling and domestic work, as the experiment sensed they are inversely correlated.

A second example of this falsely negative outcome is found in the reduced hours of work in households where only one person works. The argument to be made is that if only one person carries the weight of providing financial security, they may also carry the pressure of working more hours or enter riskier higher-paying jobs in order to fully provide for their household. The installation of UBI could be merely acting as a reliever of such pressure and allowing the family to fulfill their needs without the one working member needing to continuously withstand overly intensive work. In this speculated scenario, UBI is less of a deterrent of work, and more of a financial security tool, thus acting exactly as it is intended.

## **Skill portfolio improvement**

An important debate arises when we realize that whilst Alaska is the only experiment that had somewhat significant reductions in labour force participation, it also presents a better average skill portfolio than the calculated control states: an increase of analytical, fundamental and social skills, and a decrease in merchandise and managerial skills. Finland presents the opposite situation, whilst certain groups increased their days of employment and the country overall saw a small increase in employment rates, most of these advances seem

to happen in the industrial and service sector. By no means does this review imply that work in the industrial and the service sector is inferior to other forms of labour, but rather observes that this contrast between Alaska and Finland may challenge the way we measure productivity, that perhaps even when labour supply is reduced, if it is accompanied by a shift in the work field, the total contribution to the workforce may not suffer a detriment despite the hours worked being fewer.

The UBI pilots implemented in low-income countries did not surpass the legibility criteria for this review, however, evidence on low-income countries was presented in the form of CCTs and as quasi-UBI examples, and the results extracted were very similar to those in the UBI pilots. The question relevant for this review is whether these results found in quasi-UBI examples would remain positive in a program more closely related to UBI, or if when we magnified the complexity of social, economic and political variables of said region, would we see the effects on employment negatively tilted.

### **Gender and demographic-specific results**

Seeing as the matter of employment can produce highly gendered debates, a curious observation is that most studies do not display their results differentiated by gender, and even those that do (*Bastagli et al., 2016; Robins, 1985; Bibler et al., 2019; and Salehi-Isfahani & Mostafavi-Dehzoeei, 2018*) lack a deeper discussion about the disparity of labour opportunities and wages for women, and how a basic income could play a positive role in effectively merging childcare and work for those women that do. Feinberg & Kuhn (2018) sensed enough variation in the labour elasticities between women with different marital statuses, that they presented their results differentiated, finding that married women decreased their working hours more than single women and men (*Feinberg & Kuehn, 2018*). Bibler et al. (2019) found that the group that reduced its working hours the most were precisely women that are young, low earners, and with young children in the household (*Bibler et al., 2019*). These instances can be interpreted as evidence that UBI provides an income security net, which allows women to decide if they wish to dedicate further efforts to

their households, without significant financial consequences. A growing body of literature suggests that UBI allows for higher parental presence in the home, which is associated with children having better school attendance, improved grades, and well-being (*Ruckert et al., 2018*), thus this slight decrease in worked hours could be interpreted as a small sacrifice for a long-term investment in future generations.

Contrary to UBI pilots, quasi-UBI experiments and especially CCTs, do analyze their impact on women specifically, arguably because they are typically created to improve certain circumstances for women, so it makes sense that they report on women empowerment. A systematic review of fifteen CCTs found that women and children undoubtedly benefit more from the grant than any other group, as it aids in mitigating the social disparities that puts them at scarcity risk and partially reduces their vulnerability (*Yoong et al., 2012*). In this sense, evidence that UBI experiments have a positive impact on women is quite obvious in CCTs and more subtle in the differentiated results of UBI pilots. However, both types of experiments have sensed their implementation affect women differently than men, benefiting women tremendously, thus providing us with yet another motive to implement UBI programs.

The general debate around UBI often wonders how ample should the universality of the proposed programs be, whether residing immigrants are included in the sample, or if the grant shall be given only to those portraying formal citizenship (*Van Parijs, 2004*). This discussion diverts from the objectives of this paper, but because popular discourse often pairs immigrants with laziness, and states that any type of financial aid will result in them not working and simply exploiting state benefits for a living, this review found it interesting that speakers of a foreign language, which could very well include immigrants, were actually reported to increase their days of employment (*Hämäläinen et al., 2020*).

### **Expected results vs. Obtained results**

Grant programs are colloquially associated with a negative reputation, the popular discourse dating back to the Speenhamland System, associates monetary grants with laziness, and

views CCTs and other forms of quasi-UBI examples with similar skepticism. A narrative preoccupied with the idea that spoon-feeding the poor will only result in a reduction of work, and that a domino effect in production will end up harming the whole population (*Block & Somers, 2003*). The general theoretical research on UBI indicates quite different results than those stated in the informal anti-UBI debate, and the present literature review isn't the first to systematically analyze UBI experiences and produce evidence proving its effects are nowhere near the catastrophic scenario. This review can't help but wonder why the expected and the obtained results continue to present such disparity.

This paper has found empirical evidence that when people receive an unconditional amount of money, not only does the labour market not plummet, but the labour supply increases, individuals transfer to better-paying and higher-skilled jobs, certain groups activate their role in the workforce, and the only ones that actually stop working are those that shouldn't be working to cover their basic needs in the first place. If this is the case, and we have found ample and consistent indication that it is, Why do people associate UBI and quasi-UBIs with havoc in the labour market?

Duflo and Banerjee (2019) conducted a survey in 2019 where they asked participants a series of questions where they had to answer what they thought others would do, versus what they, personally, would do. When presented with a scenario where UBI consisted of \$13,000 USD, they were asked *Would others stop working? Would you stop working?* A total of 49% of people said that others would stop working, but only 12% stated they would personally refrain from work. They conclude that as a society we suffer from a certain bias where we believe everyone else is susceptible and responds to incentives "but I don't", and that financial incentives are nowhere near as powerful we assume and want them to be (*Duflo & Banerjee, 2019*). Evidence of this is found not only in this review, but in the realization that the rich aren't motivated to stop working when their assets are taxed, nor will the poor accept social benefits if they are contingent on being treated like a criminal. In this sense, curiosity, knowledge acquisition, and expanding one's capacities, are better motivators than external rewards such as monetary compensation (*Thomas, 2009*).

A tremendous body of psychological theory and research has been dedicated to deciphering human motivations, Maslow's 1943 pyramid of needs suggested a structure where after one level is fulfilled, the natural instinct is to seek fulfillment of the next. Whilst his approach has admittedly been greatly modified, the understructure system where humans seek progressively more complex achievements is still respected and defended (*Kenrick et al., 2010*). We saw evidence of this motivation in the results, individuals who are provided basic income to meet their basic survival needs, but do not lose their motivation to work, arguably, to accomplish higher desired goals.

Another expected result derived from skeptic discourse around UBI, is that receivers of grants misuse the funds in leisure, often related with alcohol and drugs. In this review, Schjoedt (2016) notes that rather than using the subsistence guarantee to fund idleness and recreation, many recipients used the additional income to invest in goods that expanded their capacity for employment, furthering their literacy, seeking access to better work-related tools, paying transportation fees to attend job interviews, purchasing materials to enroll in self-employment, or simply affording clean clothes, assets that in one way or another improved their conditions of work (Schjoedt, 2016).

### **Implications for the viability and sustainability of UBI**

The motivation to research the effect of UBI on employment rose as a concern over its viability and sustainability, if the implementation of basic income proved to be detrimental to the labour market, even its potential positive effects would not suffice in arguing in favor of its expansion. This review has offered two types of quasi-UBI experiments, ample evidence from lottery winners, and three different configurations of UBI pilots. All of them present concurring evidence that Universal Basic Income does not negatively affect labour supply nor labour force participation, the two variables we found to be the most commonly used when measuring fluctuations on employment. In other words, and focusing exclusively on the debate regarding employment, the research suggests that Universal Basic Income would indeed be a viable program to implement.

The matter of sustainability is backed by a smaller body of evidence, largely due to an equally reduced sample of perennial forms of UBI to empirically research. However, the Permanent Fund Dividend presents as the most substantial evidence that a UBI program can be both viable and sustainable in time, as since its implementation in Alaska forty years ago, it has not reported significant negative impacts on its labour market, and has continued to be active today. While this review is aware that a single piece of evidence is insufficient to support a thesis, it also argues that the massiveness of its implementation across time, along with the neutral and often positive evidence the other experiments provided, do make a case in favor of UBI being a potentially sustainable program to implement.

The previous statement and the overall results of this review, disclaim the negative associations between UBI and labour, aid in debunking the bias that people only work to cover their most basic of needs, and contradict the stereotype that the poor invest money from grants in leisure instead of employment tools.

Hopefully this review also adds to the body of knowledge of UBI, so that more policymakers see the value in its implementation without the fear of labour sector collapse. As more regions implement UBI models, more research can be conducted, and perhaps, advance to a point where a true and ideal UBI model can be implemented confidently, finding assurance on the positive longitudinal evidence found in previous UBI pilots.

The results of this review not only answered the questions that motivated it, but in its exploration of the topic of UBI, came across secondary realizations that are important to highlight as added implications that come with UBI. The implementation of a basic income proved to be a beneficial tool in aiding young girls' enrolment in schooling; noticed the disparity women suffer contingent on their life circumstances; granted individuals enough financial security to more freely decide where and how to invest their time; promoted seeking further education and improving human capital; resulted in a long-term better average skill portfolio; pointed out which demographic groups are most vulnerable and how their



conditions were and can be improved; and challenged the idea that immigrants exploit welfare benefits to partake in leisure.

The matter of UBI on employment was thoroughly answered, but these observations prove that concerns for the potential negative consequences of UBI and why it shouldn't be implemented, may eclipse the larger conversation on why it should, leaving the positive effects that we have found UBI does have on employment, greatly undermined.

## **LIMITATIONS**

The very first limitation this review encountered was the lack of access to a perfect UBI sample for the analysis of employment effects. While the paper is confident in that it considered and evaluated the most relevant approximations and to the necessary extent, the impossibility to observe a pure and full sample, undeniably implies that these results, while valuable, are only partial in the matter of basic income.

In the process of analyzing grant schemes and their potential to provide insight on the effects of an external income on employment, the literature disagreed on whether the negative tax income would provide reliable and extrapolatable results. The main concern was the geographical and historical narrowness of the few experiments implemented, as well as a couple of articles discouraging the use of NIT as a form to test *UBI* (*Widerquist, 2005* and *Widerquist, 2018*). Ultimately, for the sake of providing additional evidence in the matter, and secure in that the inclusion of two articles would not drastically derail the conversation on quasi-UBI experiments, the decision was to include them.

This paper made a conscious effort to include countries or regions in diverse positions within the spectrum of income and with high rates of unemployment, yet in the process of the metanalysis, the most prominent UBI experiments in low-income countries could not be included, admittedly limiting the universality of results, and creating room to debate whether

these results may change drastically as the socio-economic and political structure is different as well.

Summarizing the results of this review presented a challenge, as differences in method, design, and evaluation, limited the ability to redact the findings in a homogeneous and consistent manner. Specifically, the methodology to analyze UBI experiments was anything but uniform, as some articles drew their data from administrative bodies, others fabricated an instrument to estimate a control group, and a few relied on observations and email surveys.

The difficulty of analyzing the experiments on the long-term highly limited this paper's conclusions and overall assessment of UBI viability. It became apparent that previous reviews and authors ran across the same obstacle, as in order to provide answers on discrepancies on their results, they had to resort to speculation, a method this review also employed, and admits leaves potentially relevant observations unanswered.

## **CONCLUSION & FUTURE RESEARCH**

This review has analyzed the effects of UBI and UBI-like projects on the labour market by systematically analyzing the labour supply and the labour force participation variations after each program was introduced. The results point towards stability, as labour force participation was minimally affected, even on the lower 40% of the income distribution. Two groups did partially leave the workforce, winners of lottery prizes that received amounts large enough to retire, and children, a group whose exodus of the labour market is perceived as positive.

Labour supply provided be slightly more complex results. Quasi-UBI examples saw minimal reduction in time worked, only somewhat significant in the case of domestic work led by girls and women, and in households where only one person worked. The pilots, however, suggested two interesting nuances in their results. Those experiments that could only be observed in the short-term presented generally good or neutral consequences, only the age

group between 20 and 29 decreased their working hours. In contrast, families with children, speakers of a foreign language, and men in the industrial and service sector increased their hours of work. Contrariwise, the one experiment that allowed for a long-term analysis produced somewhat negative results, a reduction in hours worked and a subsequent increase in part-time employment, especially for married women, young women, low earning women, and women caring for small children.

Seeing as the results of the empirical research do not associate forms of UBI with negative consequences on the labour market, but rather observe a series of positive implications on both employment and general societal aspects, this review concludes that UBI is indeed a viable program for state implementation. The longitudinal evaluation of a UBI pilot that has been active for forty years, as well as cumulative evidence from other experiences, suggest that UBI can be sustainable, and may confidently be implemented as a permanent scheme.

The future of UBI is hopefully to continue its expansion, implementing more and improved pilots that add to the discussion on in its effects when faced with various circumstances in different backgrounds and territories, as well as in the long-term. Further research has to dive into the positive implications this review detected, and further obtain evidence on the positive outcomes of implementing UBI other than reducing poverty and inequality. An interesting debate that the literature has already begun to inspect and recount on, is the application of UBI in the imminent future of automated labour, a scenario that completely shifts the debate from whether people would stop working if UBI covered their needs, to presenting UBI as a rescue tool that could potentially ensure individuals have their basic needs covered even in a paradigm of intense employment scarcity.

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