# Consumer Surplus of Alternative Payment Methods*

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**Abstract**

This paper studies the consumer surplus from using alternative payment methods. We use evidence from Uber rides and focus on Mexico, where riders have the option to use cash or cards to pay for rides. We build a structural model and conduct three large-scale field experiments, which involved approximately 400,000 riders. Combining the model with our experimental data, we estimate the loss of private benefits for riders when a ban on cash payments is implemented. We find that Uber riders, using cash as means of payment either sometimes or exclusively, suffer an average loss of approximately 50% of their total expenditures on trips paid in cash before the ban. The magnitude of these estimates reflects the intensity with which cash is used in the application, the shape of the demand curve for Uber rides, and the imperfect substitutability across means of payments. Welfare losses fall mostly on the least-advantaged households, who rely more heavily on the cash payment option.

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# 1 Introduction

Some academics and policymakers have recently advocated for a cashless economy to address the prevalence of criminal activities and tax avoidance (e.g. Rogoff, 2017). For example, in India, a 2016 demonetization plan was enacted to, in part, remove certain large-denomination bills from circulation.[1] In Mexico, until a November 2018 ruling by the Supreme Court disallowing cash bans, several of the country's largest cities banned cash payments for app-based ridesharing firms like Uber.[2] Has the time come to phase out cash? This question is particularly relevant for low and middle income countries, where the least-advantaged households tend to use cash much more, and where policies that restrict the use of cash could limit economic access for the poor and could have important distributional consequences.

Despite the renewed attention to the role of cash in the economy, the debate over the consequences of phasing out cash is far from settled. In fact, it is challenging to estimate the private costs of policies limiting the use of cash. Such estimates would require detailed information on cash transfers and on people without access to banking services, especially in developing countries given their prevalence. They would also require both variation in prices, to estimate the elasticity of demand, and crucially, information about the functional form of the demand curve, since consumer surplus estimates are sensitive to the magnitude of choke prices. An accurate estimate of consumer surplus must also account for the costs of adopting cashless payment methods like debit or credit cards.

This paper builds a structural model and combines it with three large-scale field experiments to overcome these challenges and estimate the private benefits from using alternative payment methods. To do so, we use evidence from the effects of allowing for different payment methods in a ride-sharing app. In more than 400 cities worldwide, Uber allows its riders to select cash as a payment method—in the same way that their app allows riders to set more than one payment card as a means of payment. However, the use of cash to pay for Uber, in Mexico and other countries such as Panama and Uruguay, has encountered severe restrictions. Cash was originally not allowed in several cities in Mexico (for example in Mexico City or Querétaro) and was later banned in other cities, such as Puebla and San Luis Potosí. Motivated by these recent policies, we estimate the consumer surplus loss caused by banning cash as a payment method in a city where it was available.

We develop a model of an Uber rider in a city where she can purchase Uber trips paid in cash, Uber trips paid in card, an arbitrary number of other goods that might be complements

[1]See Chodorow-Reich, Gopinath, Mishra and Narayanan (2020) for a description and evaluation of its macroeconomic effects.

[2]See the decision of the "Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nacion" in the case of "Ley de Movilidad Sustentable pare el Estado de Colima" in October of 2018.

or substitutes of Uber, and an outside good.[3] We assume that the utility function is quasi-linear in the outside good, an assumption that we test and is not rejected by the data. We assume weak separable preferences so that we can define the demand for "composite Uber trips," an aggregate of both types of trips. Furthermore, we model both the extensive-margin choice of registering a card to gain access to both payment methods, and the intensive-margin choice of how many trips to take with each of the available payment methods. Thus, we distinguish between a ban's effect on riders that use both payment methods (mixed riders), and the effect on riders that do not register a payment card in the app (pure cash riders). We also allow for heterogeneity among riders in their preferences for paying with cash or card, and in the cost of registering a card in the application.

Through the lens of the model, as long as the price of all other goods stays constant, the riders' consumer surplus from paying Uber in cash can be obtained by integrating the area under the demand curve, starting with the current price and up to the choke price at which the demand reaches zero. Thus, in theory, one could estimate the demand for Uber paid in cash by imposing increasingly higher prices until reaching the choke price. In practice, however, this exercise is almost impossible to implement using exclusively field experiments.[4] We overcome this challenge by using our theory to inform the design and implementation of three large-scale field experiments and a survey, involving over 400,000 riders in the State of Mexico. Our model allows us to extrapolate the demand curve from the variation in demand that we observed as prices were reduced.[5]

In the first experiment, we targeted *mixed riders* to estimate the elasticity of substitution between paying for trips with cash or with a card. We varied prices using discounts for trips paid in cash or discounts for trips paid with a card. In particular, the experiment had a total of six treatment groups, each with about 20,000 riders who had registered a card with Uber. These riders received discounts of either 10% or 20%. Some of them received discounts for paying with cash, some received discounts for paying with a card, while others received discounts regardless of their payment method. A control group of approximately 90,000 riders received no discounts. We estimate the elasticity of substitution to be about three. We also use the price discounts given regardless of the payment method to estimate the price elasticity for Uber rides for *mixed users*, which can be as large as 1.1, evaluated at current prices.

We combine these findings with our structural model to produce theoretically-based esti-

[3]Since users can use either a credit or debit card to pay for Uber rides, in the rest of the paper we refer to card payments as those conducted with either a debit or a credit card.

[4]While Uber did allow us to implement discounts in experiments, its policies did not allow for increasing prices since increasing prices until demand reaches zero would most likely hurt its customer base.

[5]Other recent examples of work integrating structural models with experimental evidence are Kaboski and Townsend (2011) and Buera, Kaboski and Shin (2021a).

mates of the consumer surplus for mixed riders. This is equivalent to increasing the price in cash from its current value to infinity—or to the choke price at which there will be no more trips paid in cash. The effect of this increase can be decomposed into two parts. The first part is the change in the choice of payment for a given number of trips, which depends on the elasticity of substitution between payment methods, as well as the share of trips paid in cash. The second part is given by the change in the ideal price index for Uber trips caused by the cash ban, which depends on the price elasticity of Uber trips. Integrating across all types of mixed users, we find that the consumer surplus of an Uber ride falls by more than 25% of mixed users' expenditures on Uber when cash payments are banned. These users represent approximately 50% of the total Uber customers in the State of Mexico.

Our second and third field experiments were intended to estimate the consumer surplus of *pure cash riders*, who account for about 25% of Uber's user base in the State of Mexico. In the event of a ban on cash payments, pure cash users must either cease to use Uber, and lose the entire consumer surplus of using the app, or register a card at some cost. The second experiment allows us to estimate the first part of this consumer surplus loss. We randomize the amount of the discount offered to pure cash riders, measuring the effect on purchases in terms of the length and number of trips. We use four treatment groups of 23,000 riders, each with discounts of 10%, 15%, 20%, and 25%, and a control group of 56,000 riders. The four treatments cover several price points so that we can learn about the shape of the demand curve. From this experiment, we find that the price elasticity for *pure cash riders* is about 1.3, evaluated at current prices.

We use the third experiment to estimate the distribution of fixed costs of adopting a card, in order to adjust the consumer surplus for pure cash users that decide to remain in the application in the event of a ban on cash. To do so, pure cash users were offered a small reward of credit for future trips, contingent on registering a card in the application. This experiment included six treatment groups of about 20,000 riders each. In return for registering a payment card, we offered rewards equivalent to about three, six, or nine times a user's average weekly expenditure on Uber. The same reward was offered to one group of riders for registering a card in less than a week, and to another group of riders with a time limit of six weeks. We consider these two time frames to test for the hypothesis that riders may not register a card in the application *even if they have one*, because it is difficult to obtain a card in Mexico within one week, but reasonable within six. Thus, the temporal migration patterns across user types (e.g. pure cash riders becoming mixed riders) inform us about whether the likely margin of response is to register a card that the riders already have, or to obtain a new card. We find that the smallest incentives *double* the rate at which riders register a card, compared with the control group. We also find that only slightly more pure cash users register a payment card with a six-week window, as most excess migration to cards occurs in the first week. The latter finding suggests that migration from cash to card induced by small rewards is mostly driven by riders registering payment cards that they already own.

With the results of the second and third experiments targeting pure cash users and the elasticity of substitution between payment methods, we calculate the consumer surplus for pure cash users. This estimation also requires an estimate of the rate at which pure cash users *return* to the application after a ban on cash payments. We draw this estimate from a case study of such a ban in the city of Puebla, Mexico conducted by Alvarez and Argente (2022). In the most-extreme case, if no pure cash users register a payment card, then the effect of a cash-payment ban is to erase the entire consumer surplus these users enjoy when purchasing Uber rides, which we estimate to be at least as much as 47% of a user's *total expenditures* on Uber. We also know that roughly 30% of pure cash riders switch to using cards after a ban. With this figure and the above results, we estimate that a previously pure cash user who registers a card will see her consumer surplus decrease by about 44% of her Uber expenditures. Aggregating both groups, we find a ban on cash leads to a large loss in consumer surplus for pure cash riders, equal to about 46% of their total Uber expenditures. Given that lower-income households are more-likely to rely on cash as the primary mode of payment, the private costs of a ban on cash will fall disproportionately on such households.

As a complement to our estimate for the price elasticity of Uber trips, we consider two *additional* price experiments that Uber conducted independently. Neither experiment was designed to measure either of our quantities of interest. Nonetheless, the price elasticities implied by the data are similar to the findings of our field experiments. One of these additional experiments is particularly useful, since it allows us to compare the elasticity found in our field experiment (obtained with discounts that lasted only for one week) to estimates where the discounts lasted for four weeks—which presumably better approximate a permanent change in prices. We find that the elasticities estimated in both experiments are very similar.

Given that we use price discounts instead of price increases, our strategy to measure the consumer surplus necessarily involves estimating a demand function for prices below the current equilibrium prices and extrapolating prices above them using a parametric model.[6] Given that consumer surplus estimates are sensitive to the shape of the demand curve at high prices, we validate our structural assumptions for *large price increases* using a quasi-natural experiment in Uber Panama and a survey instrument. Panama saw a sudden and very large

[6]Our choice of the functional form of the demand with constant semi-elasticity is *consistent* with the local convexity we find in the relationship between composite trips and prices and with a finite choke price in the experimental and survey data. For pure cash riders this functional form implies that the choke price is about twice as large as the current equilibrium price.

change in costs and licensing requirements for Uber drivers, which drastically decreased the supply of drivers. This event allows us to estimate the price elasticity for Uber trips with a large price increase. We find that this estimated price elasticity matches the elasticity estimated from our model.

The survey instrument is intended to gather more evidence about users' choke prices. Over 6,000 users responded to the survey, which was sent almost *a year after* the experiments took place. Users were asked how they would respond to various price changes, including very large price increases. We verify that, for price changes similar to those in our experiments, the reported elasticities in the survey are informative about the revealed preference elasticities. We then compare the reported choke prices to those implied by our model. We find that both are remarkably close, providing additional validation for our structural assumptions.

Taken together, our results show that the loss in consumer surplus due to a ban in cash is large, at least 50% of total expenditures on Uber paid in cash or approximately 0.8% of annual per capita income in the State of Mexico.[7] The magnitude of our estimate reflects the following: First, we argue that any effect on riders who exclusively use cards before the ban on cash is likely to be small. Second, in the State of Mexico, pure cash riders account for 20% of total expenditures, and 50% of total expenditures are from mixed riders, who pay about 42% of their fares in cash. Third, while riders that use both means of payment do react to changes in the relative prices of the two payment methods, they view the payment methods as imperfect substitutes. Fourth, while riders without registered cards react to incentives, a significant fraction of them face large costs for registering a card. Fifth, we find that the demand for Uber trips is relatively inelastic, regardless of payment method. Importantly, consumer surplus losses fall mostly on the least-advantaged households, who rely more heavily on the cash payment option.

# 2 Related Literature

The approach of this paper is closely related to recent studies that assess the welfare implications of policies in developing economies by combining randomized controlled trials and natural experiments with structural modeling (e.g. Kaboski and Townsend, 2011; Buera, Kaboski and Shin, 2021a). Buera, Kaboski and Townsend (2021b) review this literature and

[7] Cohen, Hahn, Hall, Levitt and Metcalfe (2016) use a discontinuity design based on the rounding of prices dictated by the surge algorithm to estimate the consumer surplus of Uber for three large U.S cities and find it to be about 1.6 of the expenditure of Uber riders. This difference is in large part explained by the different elasticity that they estimate for US riders versus users in the State of Mexico. In our case the price elasticity at the current equilibrium values is 1.3 for pure cash users, 1.1, for mixed users, and 0.7 for pure card users. In Cohen, Hahn, Hall, Levitt and Metcalfe (2016) the price elasticity is below 0.55.

Townsend (2020) highlight how macroeconomic theory and empirical research can complement one another to improve macro development policy in payment systems. Our experimental design represents an innovation in *tailoring* such large-scale field experiments with a structural model in mind. This approach differs from previous related work, which relied solely on structural models (e.g. Alvarez and Lippi, 2017; Briglevics and Schuh, 2020; Alvarez, Argente, Jimenez and Lippi, 2021), and it is closer in spirit to work by Chodorow-Reich, Gopinath, Mishra and Narayanan (2020), who use the great demonetization in India as a natural experiment.

The paper also contributes to the literature on money demand, with its focus on the effects of availability and optimal choices of means of payment. Examples of earlier theoretical studies on the choice of payment are the cash-credit model in Lucas and Stokey (1987), the model of multiple payment methods in Prescott (1987), and several studies that followed: Whitesell (1989), Lacker and Schreft (1996), Freeman and Kydland (2000), Lucas and Nicolini (2015), Koulayev, Rysman, Schuh and Stavins (2016), and Stokey (2019).[8] Our well-identified estimate of the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for a given good is, in itself, a valuable contribution to the empirical study of money demand. To the best of our knowledge, ours is the first estimate of this parameter using experimental data.[9] Several mechanisms might explain the relatively inelastic substitutability between cash and cards. For instance, the popularity of paying for other goods with cash in Mexico encourages consumers to use cash for Uber rides, even those that own payment cards, as argued by Deviatov and Wallace (2014), Alvarez and Lippi (2017), and Alvarez and Argente (2022).[10]

Our paper is also related to research studying the adoption of debit and payment cards (e.g. Borzekowski, Elizabeth and Shaista, 2008, Yang and Ching, 2014), which has focused on identifying the determinants of consumers' adoption decisions. Our work contributes to this literature with experimental data about the distribution of adoption costs among consumers.

Lastly, the present work leverages findings from Alvarez and Argente (2022), who use ob-

[8]Other related work is the search-theoretical literature considering money as a payment method, largely started by Kiyotaki and Wright (1989), which incorporates credit payments as in Kocherlakota (1998), Lagos and Wright (2005), or Wang, Wright and Qian (2019).

[9]Very few studies have considered the behavior of households when faced with a differential cost in means of payment. Klee (2008) estimates the transaction times needed for different payment methods in grocery stores using data from time-stamped cash registers; this study observed no variation in prices. Humphrey, Kim and Vale (2001) use aggregate semiannual time series from Norway during the 1990s and observed variations price across payment methods to estimate patterns of substitution between cash, checks, and debit cards. Ching and Hayashi (2010) estimate the effects of payment-card rewards on consumer choice of payment methods in retail stores. Amromin, Jankowski and Porter (2006) use a one-time change in toll booth prices on a Chicago highway, which depended on whether payment is made using cash or a transponder.

[10]Cash is the main method of payment used in Mexico, according to the National Survey of Financial Inclusion (ENIF), 2018. Around 95% of all transactions below 25 USD and 87% of transactions above 25 USD are conducted in cash. The share of transactions paid in cash is above 90% for most goods in the economy.

servational data in Mexico and one in Panama to estimate how the option for cash payment affects rides, prices, and the use of other payment methods. Nevertheless, consumer surplus evaluation, which has to incorporate mixed users and pure cash users, and for which both intensive and extensive margins are important, requires estimates and structure that are not present in Alvarez and Argente (2022) and that are the core of this paper. In particular, to estimate the consumer surplus losses of pure cash users who drop from the application after the ban, we need *variation in prices* to estimate the elasticity of demand for Uber, since these users lose the entire consumer surplus of using the service. We also need variation to approximate the distribution of the cost to register a card in the application, as well as information of the appropriate *functional form* of the demand curve, since consumer surplus estimates are sensitive to the magnitude of choke prices. This paper conducts field experiments which are designed to generate these types of variation and estimate these parameters. Additionally, we develop and estimate a structural model suitable for the evaluation of the different margins.

# 3 Institutional Background

At its launch in 2010, Uber was notable for offering users the ability to easily hail a car and pay for the ride with a credit or debit card registered in a mobile-phone app. As Uber expanded to cities across the globe, it began to accept cash payment during a 2015 pilot program in Hyderabad, India. This pilot program expanded Uber's user base by opening access to consumers who prefer to use cash, because they have no access to a bank or card or because they prefer not to register a card with Uber. Following the success of that pilot, Uber extended the option to four more cities in India. By the end of 2016, the cash-payment option was made available in over 150 cities (including Mexico City); by 2018 Uber users could pay using cash in 400 cities and 60 countries. Most Latin American countries are included in this list, including Brazil and Mexico, the two largest in terms of population.[11]

Uber began operations in Mexico in 2013, beginning with the Greater Mexico City area, which is composed of Mexico City and its adjacent municipalities in the State of Mexico. As of 2018, Uber operated in more than 40 of Mexico's cities. Greater Mexico City is one of the firm's top ten most-active cities in the world, in terms of rides taken. Users can select the cash option in the payment tab of the application (e.g. Panel (a) of Figure 1) At the end of the trip, the customer hands over the amount shown in the application directly to the driver.[12] Panel (b) of Figure 1 shows the share of trips and fares paid in cash in the cities

[11]Uber has been progressively expanding its cash-payment program, recently adding several high-income countries to the list: Germany, Spain, France, Czech Republic, Greece, Poland, Turkey and Chile.

[12]Drivers accept both cash and card payments and do not know the payment method chosen by the rider

where Uber was available in October of 2017. The figure shows that in the cities in which Uber accepts cash payment, the option is used heavily; almost half of the trips taken are paid for in cash and half of all fares are collected in cash.[13] In the State of Mexico, where we executed the experiments reported below, approximately 25% of users (approximately 30% of fares) only use card payments, 25% of users (25% of fares) only pay in cash, and 50% of users (50% of fares) pay with cash and card. The relevance of riders that use both payment methods actively informed the distinction between mixed users and pure cash users in our model and experiments.

Although Uber is a service mostly consumed by middle- to high-income consumers, the cash option is largely used by low-income consumers. Panel (a) of Figure 8 shows the share of cash fares by income per capita at the municipality-level. In the State of Mexico, around 60% of fares in municipalities with low income per capita are paid with cash (e.g. Teoloyucan, Coyotepec), while less than 20% of fares in municipalities with high income per capita are paid with cash (e.g. Naucalpan de Juárez, Huixquilucan). Alvarez and Argente (2022) show, using demographic information from the 2010 Mexican Census, that this pattern holds for other variables correlated with income, such as education. A greater share of trips are paid for in cash in municipalities that have less access to banking services, as measured by debit cards per capita, credit cards per capita, bank branches per capita, or ATMs per capita. The share of cash trips is also larger in suburban regions of the State of Mexico and in municipalities with less-developed infrastructure, as measured by the availability of street lights, pavement, or whether the municipality has access to public transport.

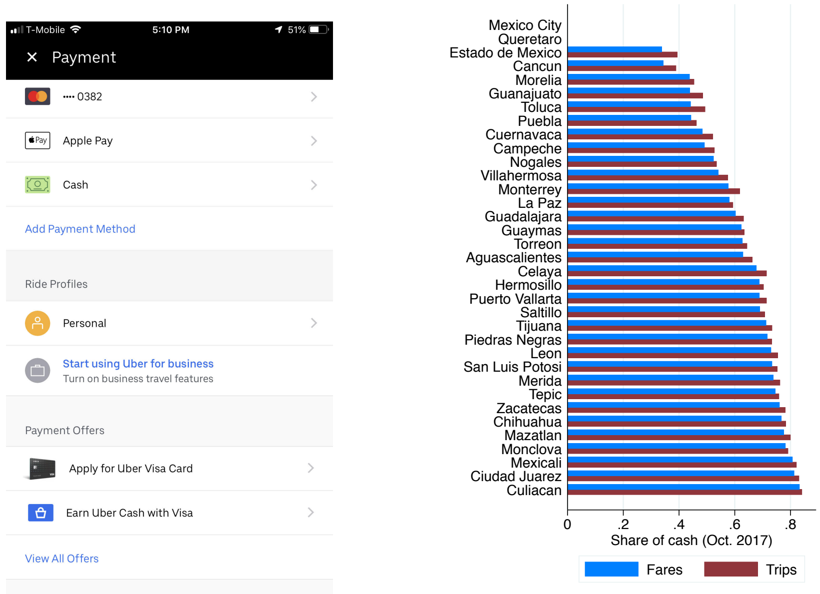
Several local governments prohibited cash payments for Uber rides at first. Cash fares were not allowed within the city limits of Mexico City, whose local government prohibited drivers from receiving any payments in cash, non-banking pre-paid cards, or payment systems hosted by convenience stores through electronic wallets. Queretaro, a mid-size city close to Mexico City, enacted similar policy. In Puebla, ride-hailing fares were limited to electronic payments, but the government did not enforce the policy until a young student was allegedly murdered by a driver working under the auspices of Cabify, another ride-hailing firm. Puebla banned cash payments for ride-hailing services in December of 2017.[14] This decision was also motivated by the taxi-drivers' union's lobbying of the state government, complaining that

when a trip is requested. If the user cancels a trip and is charged a cancellation fee, this amount is added to her next trip's fare, which can also be paid using cash.

[13]Cash-fare trips are shorter on average. As a result, the share of fares paid in cash is slightly lower than the share of trips paid in cash.

[14]Unfortunately, we do not have access to data of crimes committed by riders and/or drivers and cannot quantify the social benefits of such policy. Alvarez and Argente (2022) do not find evidence that the cash option in Uber affected city-level crime levels.

**Figure 1: Uber Mexico**




(a) Paying with Uber with Cash (b) Share of Cash by City

Note: Panel (a) illustrates how users select the cash option in the payment tab of Uber's mobile application. Panel (b) shows share of trips and fares paid in cash in different cities in Mexico. The red bars show the fraction of trips and the blue bars the share of fares paid in cash. The sample of cities are those that were active in October 2017.

cash fares for Uber rides represented unfair competition with traditional taxi services.[15] In fact, during the ban on cash, the local government launched its own ride-hailing application "Pro-taxi", which connected mobile-phone users with traditional taxis; cash payments were *allowed* for that app. In November of 2018, the Mexican Supreme Court struck down a state ban on cash fares for ride-hailing firms, setting a national precedent that allows Uber and other ride-hailing firms to accept cash payments. By a vote of 8-3, the court ruled that the small western state of Colima's ban on cash fares was unconstitutional. After the court's decision, Uber began accepting cash payments in Mexico City, Querétaro, and Puebla.

# 4 Rider's Model and Consumer Surplus

This section describes the model of consumer preferences that we use to estimate the private costs of a ban on cash payments. The model is centered on a general utility function for $n+1$ goods, one good being "composite Uber trips", and goods $n+1$ representing all other goods with constant marginal utility, such that utility is quasi-linear. Uber rides paid in

[15] According to the National Survey of Financial Inclusion (ENIF), approximately 90% of respondents, who own a debit or a credit card, report cash as their most frequently used payment method for transportation services (e.g. taxi, bus).

cash and those paid in card are distinguished as distinct goods. Composite Uber rides are an aggregate of the two. This intensive-margin choice is complemented with the choice of choosing to register a payment card, which we assume is subject to a fixed cost, so that agents have access to Uber trips paid in card only if they pay a fixed cost.

We assume that while a ban on cash payments is in effect, the prices for all goods remain constant. This assumption simplifies the problem and is documented extensively for the case of Mexico and Panama by Alvarez and Argente (2022). They find that the availability of cash payments has a substantial effect on the quantities of rides, but no effects on prices including: prices of Uber rides, average surge multiplier, waiting times for Uber rides, price of taxis, waiting times for taxis, prices of other ride-hailing companies, and waiting times for other ride-hailing companies. These findings hold for both the entry and ban of the cash option, and suggest that the supply of drivers is elastic at the relevant time horizon.[16] The lack of effect on prices allows us, in the present work, to ignore the effects of a cash-payment ban on pure card riders and on drivers' producer surplus, since both effects are likely to be small. Moreover, this evidence allows us to estimate the consumer surplus of cash Uber fares without having to measure the quantities and prices of other goods. The model, therefore, focuses on the choice faced by consumers who potentially encounter different prices for Uber rides depending on the payment method, holding prices for other goods constant.

We consider the welfare cost for riders in the case of a ban on cash as means of payment for Uber rides. Before the ban on cash payments, riders face the same price for Uber rides paid in cash and Uber rides paid in card. Facing equal prices, heterogeneous riders then face the choice of whether to register a payment card or not. We then estimate the change in a rider's welfare, in dollars, if the price cash-fare Uber rides increases to infinity (i.e. a ban on cash payments). This welfare loss equals the area under the demand curve for cash-fare Uber rides. This measure takes both the intensive and extensive margins into account, along with the initial conditions. The next sections will discuss the challenges involved in identifying this demand curve, the assumptions involved, and the data we use to overcome the challenges.

## 4.1 Intensive-Margin Choice

We assume that a rider's utility function is given by

$$u\left(x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n; \phi\right) + x_{n+1}$$

[16] Drivers' income per hour (total fares divided by total driver hours) was unchanged. Hall, Horton and Knoepfle (2017) also find evidence that the supply of driver labor to ride-sharing markets is highly elastic. A more detailed study of Uber drivers' labor supply under different compensation schemes can be found in Angrist, Caldwell and Hall (2021).

where $x_1$ are composite Uber rides and the goods or services $x_2, x_3, \ldots, x_n$ are close substitutes for and/or complements to Uber (e.g. taxis). The good $x_{n+1}$ represents the rest of the goods and services. Preferences are quasi-linear, with the marginal utility of income normalized to one. We assume that $u(\cdot;\theta)$ is strictly concave and increasing in its $n$ arguments. We let $\phi$ index the preferences of different riders, and let $K$ be the distribution of $\phi$ across riders. We use $\phi$ to refer to types defined by variables that we can observe.

Assuming a quasi-linear utility function subject to idiosyncratic shocks at the rider level is reasonable, given the small share of each consumer's overall expenditures that goes to Uber rides. These preferences have two other important advantages. First, they greatly simplify the analysis since equivalent and compensated variations are the same. Second, they aggregate to a quasi-linear utility for a group of ex-ante identical riders with the same observable characteristics. As a result, we can test all the restrictions implied by our experimental data on that aggregate utility function, where the null hypothesis for the test is that the experimental data was generated by some quasi-linear utility function at the aggregate level. In Section A.1 we use the test proposed by Allen and Rehbeck (2018) and find that all restrictions are satisfied by the two price experiments we use to quantify the consumer surplus of Uber riders.[17]

Composite Uber rides $x_1$ are themselves given by a constant returns-to-scale function $x_1 = H(a, c; \phi)$, e.g. constant elasticity of substitution (CES), whose arguments are $a$, denoting Uber rides paid in cash, and $c$, denoting Uber rides paid in card. This assumption follows Lucas and Stokey (1987). It provides a tractable framework for a welfare analysis of the restrictions on cash usage. Composite rides equal total rides only when both means of payment are available. The function $H$ captures consumer preferences between paying with cash or card. We assume that $H(\cdot;\phi)$ has constant returns to scale and that it is strictly quasi-concave.

It is convenient to have a specific notation for the price of Uber rides paid in cash, for which we use $p_a$, and Uber rides paid with card, for which we use $p_c$. We let $p_2, ..., p_n$ denote the prices of the rest of the goods. Thus, the intensive-margin problem for the rider is:

$$v(p_a, p_c, p_2, \ldots, p_n; \phi) = \max_{a,c,x_2,\ldots,x_{n+1}} u\left(H\left(a, c; \phi\right)\right), x_2, \ldots, x_n; \theta) + x_{n+1} \tag{1}$$

$$\text{subject to } p_a a + p_c c + \sum_{i=2}^{n} p_i x_i + x_{n+1} = I$$

where we assume throughout that the total income of rider $I$ is large enough so that con-

[17] To the best of our knowledge, our work is the first to apply this type of statistical test to experimental data with price variation across individuals.

sumption of good $n+1$ is always positive. Note that we have normalized $p_{n+1} = 1$, so that we can interpret the numeraire as dollars (or Mexican pesos). The indirect utility function $v$ is the focus of our theory, since we will use it to estimate consumer surplus. We omit the prices $\{p_2, \ldots, p_n\}$ from most expressions since we keep them fixed in our applications given the evidence in Alvarez and Argente (2022) discussed above.

Our weakly separable specification allows us to isolate the choice between means of payment from the overall demand for Uber rides. Given the assumption that $H$ is homogeneous of degree one, a rider's choice to pay for an Uber trip with cash depends only the rider's type $\phi$ and the ratio of cash and card prices $p_a/p_c$, but it does not depend on the rider's income $I$ or any feature of the utility function $u$. On the other hand, if the cash and card prices are equal, $p_a = p_c = P$, for riders that have access to both means of payment, the demand for composite Uber rides depends only on the common price $P$ and on the utility function $u$; demand is independent of the function $H$ in this case. In general, we can use $H$ to define the ideal price for one composite Uber ride:

$$\mathbb{P}(p_a, p_c; \phi) = \min_{a,c} p_a a + p_c c \text{ subject to } H(a, c; \phi) = 1 \tag{2}$$

We normalize the units of $H(\cdot; \phi)$ so that $H(p, p; \phi) = p$ for any $p > 0$.[18] We assume that $H$ is such that $\mathbb{P}(\infty, 1; \phi)$ and $\mathbb{P}(1, \infty; \phi)$ are both finite. For instance, if $H$ is given by a CES function, we require the elasticity of substitution to be greater than one.

## 4.2 Extensive-Margin Choice

We assume that a rider can pay with a card only if she has paid a (flow) fixed cost $\psi \geq 0$.[19] We denote by $\theta = (\psi, \phi)$ a vector that completely specifies the type of the rider. Thus, the full problem for the rider is:

$$\mathcal{V}(p_a, p_c; \theta) \equiv \max \left\{ v\left(p_a, p_c; \phi\right) - \psi \, , \, v\left(p_a, \infty; \phi\right) \right\} \tag{3}$$

The first option is to pay the fixed cost $\psi$ and face ride prices $(p_a, p_c)$. The rider can also save the fixed cost $\psi$, but will then only have access to the cash price; we represent this limited

[18] We let $a(p_a, p_c)$ and $c(p_a, p_c)$ be the choices that attain the minimum in equation (2) so that $\mathbb{P}(p_a, p_c) = p_a a(p_a, p_c) + p_c c(p_a, p_c)$. The functions $a$ and $c$ are homogeneous of degree zero in $(p_a, p_c)$ while $\mathbb{P}$ is homogeneous of degree one in $(p_a, p_c)$. The ideal price index is given by $\mathbb{P}(p_a, p_c)$, and is increasing in the convex function of $(p_a, p_c)$.

[19] We express the fixed cost with its equivalent-flow value. This notation converts the fixed cost to units comparable with $v\left(p_a, p_c; \phi\right)$. Later on, we introduce a discount rate $\rho$ which converts the flows into stocks. The discount rate $\rho$ incorporates pure-time discounting and the expected duration for the registration of the payment card and/or the expected duration of the Uber service.

access by setting the card price to infinity: $p_c = \infty$.

We let $1_c(p_a, p_c; \theta) \in \{0, 1\}$ be an indicator that equals one if the optimal decision in equation (3) is to register a payment card with Uber; it is zero otherwise. We can now define the rider's demands for cash or card Uber rides for any type of rider $\theta = (\psi, \phi)$, taking the intensive and extensive margins into account:

$$(a^*(p_a, p_c; \theta), c^*(p_a, p_c; \theta)) = \begin{cases} (\tilde{a}(p_a, p_c; \phi), \tilde{c}(p_a, p_c; \phi)) & \text{if } 1_c(p_a, p_c; \theta) = 1 \\ (\tilde{a}(p_a, \infty; \phi), 0) & \text{if } 1_c(p_a, p_c; \theta) = 0. \end{cases}$$

We use the cumulative distribution functions $G$ and $K$ to describe the distribution of fixed costs conditional on $\phi$ and the distribution of $\phi$, respectively. We let $\psi \sim G(\cdot|\phi)$ and $\phi \sim K(\cdot)$ describe the cross-sectional distribution of $\theta = (\psi, \phi)$. We assume that the distribution of $\psi$ conditional $\phi$ has continuous density $g(\psi|\phi) = G'(\psi|\phi)$ for all $(\psi, \phi)$. We use $F$ for the implied distribution of types $\theta$.

## 4.3 Welfare Costs and Consumer Surplus

Given our assumption of quasi-linearity, we can aggregate the riders' welfare level and measure it in units of the numeraire. We normalize the units that quantify trips so that the price of a trip is 1 when both means of payment are available, i.e. we normalize the length of each ride so that the cash and card prices are $p_a = p_c = 1$. We denote the consumer surplus lost in the ban of cash by $CS_{ban}$, which we define as follows. We assume that riders have access to both cash and a payment card before the ban and that they have already made their optimal choice regarding registering a card by solving the problem in equation (1). The prior decision about registering a card is summarized by $1_c(1, 1; \theta)$ and the distribution of types $F$. The consumer surplus cost of the ban is, therefore:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{CS}_{ban} = & \int 1_c(1, 1; \theta) \left[ \underbrace{v(1, 1; \phi)}_{\text{mixed}} - \underbrace{v(\infty, 1; \phi)}_{\text{pure card}} \right] dF(\theta) \\ & + \int [1 - 1_c(1, 1; \theta)] \left[ \underbrace{v(1, \infty; \phi)}_{\text{pure cash}} - \underbrace{\mathcal{V}(\infty, 1; \theta)}_{\text{pure card vs no Uber}} \right] dF(\theta) \end{aligned} \tag{4}$$

The first term counts the riders that registered a card before the ban, denoted by the indicator $1_c(1, 1; \theta)$. These riders are either pure card users or mixed users. Before the ban, their net utility flow is $v(1, 1; \phi)$. These users have paid the fixed cost to register a card, which is a sunk cost. After the ban these riders face a much higher cash price for Uber ride, i.e. their utility flow value is $v(\infty, 1; \phi)$. The second term counts the riders that were pure cash users before the ban. Their utility-function flow before the ban is $v(1, \infty; \phi)$. After the ban, these riders must choose between paying the fixed cost and becoming pure card users, which gives the utility flow of $v(1, \infty; \phi) - \psi$, or ceasing to use Uber, which corresponds to the net utility flow $v(\infty, \infty; \phi)$. This last choice is accounted for with the term $\mathcal{V}(\infty, 1; \theta)$.[20]

Following standard arguments from demand theory, the consumer surplus lost after a cash-payment ban can be computed as the area below the aggregate demand for cash-fare Uber rides. First, we define the aggregate demand in a city that initially allows cash payments, where the cash price unexpectedly increases to $p_a \geq 1$:

$$A(p_a, 1) = \int 1_c(1, 1; \theta)\, \tilde{a}(p_a, 1; \phi) dF(\theta) + \int (1 - 1_c(1, 1; \theta))\, a^*(p_a, 1; \theta) dF(\theta) \tag{5}$$

Note that this definition of aggregate demand breaks the integral into two groups of riders, as in equation (4). The first group has already registered a card, according to the decision at the original prices $(p_a, p_c) = (1, 1)$, for which $1_c(1, 1; \theta) = 1$. The second are the remaining riders, which have not registered a card and, hence, they may consider to do it optimally.

Proposition 1. Assume that $G(\cdot|\phi)$ has continuous density, and that almost all riders $\theta$ have sufficiently large income $I$ to consume the outside good. Then

$$\mathcal{CS}_{ban} = \int_1^\infty A(p_a, 1) dp_a \tag{6}$$

Note that the demand that satisfies equation (6) is the *aggregate* demand. Importantly, Proposition 1 states that the consumer surplus depends only on the prices/quantities of Uber rides. Recall that the prices of taxis and other substitutes (i.e. $\{p_2, \ldots, p_n\}$), such as the prices of other ride-hailing companies, remain constant after a ban on cash payments. This finding crucially allows us to evaluate the consumer surplus for cash-fare Uber rides *without* measuring the impact on the quantities or prices of other goods. A proof of Proposition 1 appears in Section A.1. This proof relies on the envelope theorem for the intensive-margin and on the assumption of density $g$ for the fixed cost in order to account for the extensive-margin of adoption.

[20] More generally, we can define for any $p_a \geq 1$ the consumer surplus cost that follows an increase in the price of cash from 1 to $p_a \geq 1$ as $\mathcal{CS}(p_a, 1)$. The ban is represented as $\lim \mathcal{CS}(p_a) = \mathcal{CS}_{ban}$ as $p_a \to \infty$.

## 4.4 Identification and Functional Forms

In theory, based on Proposition 1, we could trace out the demand curve for Uber rides by increasing the cash price permanently and observing the quantity of cash fare trips. Repeating this exercise until the cash price reaches the choke price, we could directly estimate the consumer surplus of cash-fare Uber trips. In practice, however, Uber's policies render this exercise impossible. We overcome this challenge with large-scale field experiments in which we trace out the demand curve by reducing, rather than increasing prices, as well as bringing to bear information from the reaction of riders to the ban in Puebla. In concert with the structural model described above, we extrapolate from this data to estimate the consumer surplus. We use a parametric version of the model because our experiments contain a limited amount of price points and rewards variation.

To begin, we divide an Uber rider's consumption problem into two stages. This separation clarifies the features of the indirect utility function that are identified by each experiment. As a preliminary step, we define the utility function $U(\cdot; \phi, p_2, \ldots, p_n) : \mathbb{R}_+ \to \mathbb{R}$ to embed all the information of the utility function $u$ in a simple set up, for fixed prices of the related goods $\{p_2, \ldots, p_n\}$.

$$U(X; \phi, p_2, \ldots, p_n) \equiv \max_{x_2, x_3, \ldots, x_n} u(X, x_2, \ldots, x_n; \phi) + I - \left[\sum_{i=2}^{n} p_i x_i\right] \tag{7}$$

This problem establishes a utility function for composite Uber rides, in which $X$ serves as the main argument by maximizing out the remaining related goods 2 to $n$, at prices $\{p_2, \ldots, p_n\}$.[21] Using $U$, we can define the following indirect utility function $V(\cdot; \phi) : \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R}$ in the problem for a rider choosing the number of composite rides $X$ at price $P$:

$$V(P; \phi) = \max_{x \geq 0} U(x; \phi) + [I' - Px] \tag{8}$$

Note that we are using that preferences are quasi-linear. We let the optimal solution be $X(P)$, with the first-order condition $U'(X(P)) = P$ if $X(P) > 0$ and $U'(X(P)) \leq P$ otherwise. These results will aid the below discussion of the assumptions needed to compute $\mathcal{CS}_{ban}$.

**Cash-card choice utility** $H$**.** For a given rider type $\phi$, given that $H$ is homogeneous of degree one, we can identify $H$ if we observe the ratio of the choices $\tilde{a}(p_a, p_c; \phi)/\tilde{c}(p_a, p_c; \phi)$ as we vary $p_a/p_c$ exogenously. Equivalently, we can identify $H$ by tracing the share of trips paid in cash $p_a\tilde{a}/(p_a\tilde{a} + p_c\tilde{c})$ as a function of $p_a/p_c$ (see Experiment 1 below). For $H(\cdot; \phi)$

[21] As before, we omit the dependence of prices $\{p_2, \ldots, p_n\}$.

we use a CES function described by two parameters: the elasticity of substitution $\eta$ and the rider-specific parameter for the share of payments made with a card $\alpha$, which is observable for mixed users. To be precise, if $p_a = p_c = p$ for any $p$, the optimal demand gives $p_c c/(p_c c + p_a a) = \alpha$ and $p_a a/(p_c c + p_a a) = 1 - \alpha$. The parameters $(\alpha, \eta)$ are contained in the type $\phi$.[22]

**Uber ride utility $U$.** The definition of $U$ in equation (7) and equation (8) make clear that $U$ is identified by observing how $\tilde{c}(p, p; \phi)$ and $\tilde{a}(p, p; \phi)$ change as the price of an Uber ride with either payment method $p = p_a = p_c$ changes, since $p = \mathbb{P}(p, p; \phi)$. Moreover, for pure cash riders, we can also identify $U$ by varying the price of trips paid in cash $p_a$, which gives $\mathbb{P}(p_a, \infty; \phi) = p_a \, \mathbb{P}(1, \infty; \phi)$ (see Experiments 1 and 2 below).[23] Importantly, we use the functional form of $U$, and its associated demand for rides $X$, to extrapolate the shape of the indirect utility function $V$ estimated using experimental variation in prices. We let

$$U(x; \phi) = -k \exp\left(-\left(x + \bar{x}\right)/k\right)$$

such that $U$ is described by two parameters, $k >$ and $\bar{x} > 0$. The demand that solves equation (8) is:

$$X(P; \phi) = -k \log P + k \log \bar{P}$$

so $k$ and $\bar{P}$ are indexed by $\phi$. This demand has constant semi-elasticity $k \geq 0$. Note that the price elasticity of this demand function is:

$$\epsilon(P) \equiv -\frac{P}{X(P)} \frac{\partial X(P)}{\partial P} = -\frac{1}{\log\left(\bar{P}/P\right)}.$$

The consumer surplus of a rider with this utility function is

$$C(P_0; \phi) = \int_{P_0}^{\bar{P}} X(p; \phi) dp \qquad \text{and}$$
$$\frac{C(P_0; \phi)}{P_0 X(P_0; \phi)} = \epsilon(P_0) \left[\exp\left(\frac{1}{\epsilon(P_0)}\right) - 1\right] - 1.$$

This semi-log demand curve has a finite choke price $\bar{P}$ (i.e. $X(\bar{P}; \phi) = 0$) given by

[22]The price of a composite Uber ride $\mathbb{P}(p_a, p_c; \phi) = \left[\alpha p_c^{1-\eta} + (1-\alpha) p_a^{1-\eta}\right]^{1/(1-\eta)}$ following the standard expression. We assume that some function $H$ describes all riders with the same elasticity of substitution $\eta$. We can relax this assumption to make $\eta$ specific to a group of riders with the same observable characteristics. We also assume that the estimated $H$ holds for pure cash users.

[23]In particular, if we decrease $p_a$, we can also disregard pure cash riders' incentives toward registering a card. Also, if the constant $\mathbb{P}(1, \infty; \phi)$ is unknown, then we can identify $U$ up to a constant; see case 4 of Appendix A.4.

$\bar{P} = e^{-\bar{x}/k}$ and is convex. These two features are *consistent* with our experimental and survey data. The ratio of the choke price to the current price for the demand function with constant semi-elasticity is $\bar{P}/P = \exp(1/\epsilon(P))$. For instance, at $\epsilon = 1.3$ the choke price is about 2.1 times greater than the price at which we evaluate the elasticity.[24] The convexity of the demand curve implies that the consumer surplus (relative to expenditures) is larger than it would be if the demand curve was linear, assuming the same level of expenditures and elasticity at $P_0$, since the latter is not locally convex and has lower choke prices. The magnitude of the choke prices implies that using a demand curve with constant elasticity would also not be reasonable, even if it is consistent with the local convexity of the experimental data, given that it implies very high choke prices. In fact, under a demand curve with constant elasticity, the consumer surplus would be an order of magnitude larger.[25]

**Distribution of fixed cost $g$.** We assume that the indirect utility functions $v(p, \infty; \phi)$ and $v(p, p; \phi)$ are known and that pure cash riders are faced with different levels flow rewards $d$ that can be obtained only if they register a card (see Experiment 3 below). Then, we can identify the distribution $\psi \sim g(\cdot|\phi)$ using the fraction of riders that have registered a card for different values of $d$.[26] The distributions of $\psi$ and $\phi$ must also be consistent with the behavior of pure cash users. Here, we list the relevant constraints:

1. *The choice of pure cash users not to start using a payment card as long as cash payments are allowed.* The condition that ensures this is:

$$\psi \geq v(1, 1; \phi) - v(1, \infty; \phi) \tag{9}$$

   for all cash users and for all values of $\psi$ in the support of $G(\cdot|\phi)$. The right-hand side of this equation defines the lower bound of the support $G(\cdot|\phi)$, which we refer to as $\underline{\psi}(\phi)$.

2. *The observed excess migration of pure cash users to pure card users after the ban in Puebla.* For the second condition we use that fraction $m_{ban}$ of pure cash users in Puebla

[24] Throughout, we assume that riders all have the same semi-elasticity of demand for Uber, $k$, but can have a rider-specific $\bar{P}$. We can relax this assumption to make $k$ specific to a group of riders with the same observable characteristics. In Appendix A.4 and Appendix A.5, we derive expressions for the different demand curves for cash and card fares: $a(p_a, p_c; \phi), \tilde{a}(p_a, p_c; \phi), c(p_a, p_c; \phi), \tilde{c}(p_a, p_c; \phi)$, the indirect utility function $v(p_a, p_c; \phi)$, and other comparisons between indirect utility functions used in the computation of the consumer surplus.

[25] Specifically, the consumer surplus relative to expenditures with linear demand is $\frac{1}{2}\frac{1}{\epsilon(P_0)}$. Under a demand function with constant elasticity the consumer surplus relative to expenditures is $\frac{1}{\epsilon-1}$. This value can grow very large for elasticities closer to 1, as those we estimate below.

[26] We assume that the density $g$ of the distribution of fixed costs for registering a card $\psi$ is the same for all pure cash users.

migrated to card after the ban on cash, in excess to those that migrated before the ban. Thus, we have:

$$\psi \leq v(\infty, 1; \phi) - v(\infty, \infty; \phi) \text{ for fraction } m_{ban} \text{ and} \tag{10}$$

$$\psi \geq v(\infty, 1; \phi) - v(\infty, \infty; \phi) \text{ for fraction } 1 - m_{ban} \tag{11}$$

The right-hand side of these inequalities defines a value of $\psi$ such that for higher values pure cash riders prefer to stop using Uber. We refer to this value as $\psi_{ban}(\phi)$.

3. *The change in trips for pure cash users that became pure card users after the ban in Puebla.* In Puebla, we keep tract of the number of trips for pure cash users that become pure card users after the ban. In the data, these users decreased their number of trips. Thus, for those values of $\phi$, we must have

$$0 < \tilde{a}(\infty, 1; \phi) \leq \tilde{a}(1, \infty; \phi) \tag{12}$$

4. *The experimental evidence on the excess migration for different reward levels.* In our experiment (Experiment 3 below), pure cash riders are offered a one time payment $d_j$, from which we measure the induced (excess) migration of fraction $m_j$ of pure cash riders to become card/mixed riders by registering a card. We index each level incentives as well as each fraction of the treatment group that migrate by $j$.

$$\psi \leq v(1, 1; \phi) - v(1, \infty; \phi) + \rho d_j \text{ for fraction } m_j \text{ and} \tag{13}$$

$$\psi \geq v(1, 1; \phi) - v(1, \infty; \phi) + \rho d_j \text{ for fraction } 1 - m_j \tag{14}$$

Although we do not know $\alpha$ for pure cash riders, given that they have not been faced with interior choices for card prices, there is a small interval of $\alpha$'s consistent with all these inequalities. In Appendix A.7, we find the remaining parameters of $U$ and $G$ and compute the consumer surplus lost in a ban on cash by pure cash users for each feasible value of $\alpha$. Below, we aim to be conservative and report estimates using the value of $\alpha$ that is consistent with a *lower bound* of the net consumer surplus lost by pure cash users who switch to card payments after the ban. We also report estimates consistent with an *upper bound* of the consumer surplus lost by pure cash users assuming riders do not switch to card payments after a ban on cash. Our estimates show that both lower and upper bounds are very close.

# 5 Experiments

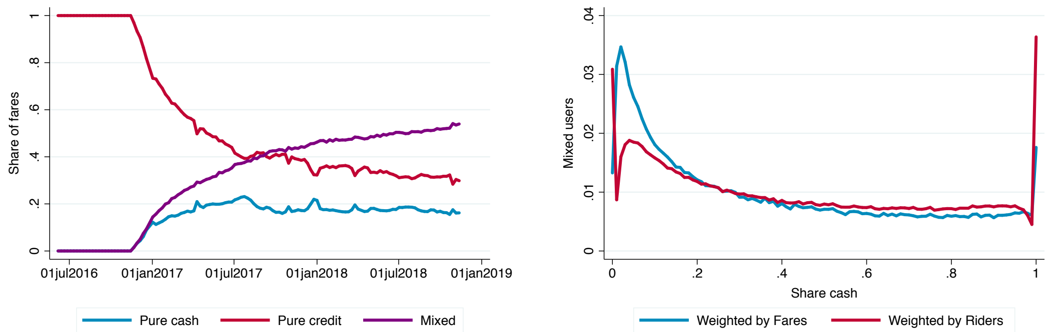
This section describes the three field experiments that let us identify the parameters in our model and estimate the consumer surplus lost after cash payment is banned. The experiments took place in the State of Mexico between August and September of 2018. In Experiment 1, we vary the prices of cash and/or card (i.e. $p_a$ and/or $p_c$) for mixed users to estimate the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments $\eta$, as well as the price elasticity of demand $\epsilon(P)$. In Experiment 2, we vary the price $p_a$ for pure cash users to estimate the price elasticity of demand $\epsilon(P)$. Lastly, in Experiment 3 we present pure cash users with different incentives toward registering a payment card to estimate the distribution of the fixed cost $g$. Table B1 shows descriptive statistics for the users in our sample including averages of variables such as fares, trips, fares paid in cash, trips paid in cash, share of fares paid in cash, and tenure. We describe each of the experiments in more detail below.

## 5.1 Experiment 1: Consumer Surplus - Mixed Users

This experiment took place in the State of Mexico from August 21st to August 27th 2018. The sample includes users who signed up in the State of Mexico and whose most-frequent city for Uber trips is within the State of Mexico. Users in the sample also must have a card on file that is not banned by Uber, have a verified mobile number, and must not be subject to other experiments at the same time. In addition, all users in our sample took at least 2 trips in 2018 and at least one trip since April 1, 2018. This experiment is focused on mixed users, who have paid for at least one trip each using cash and card before the experiment began. Panel (a) of Figure 2 shows the share of fares paid by mixed users over time in the State of Mexico. Mixed users account for approximately half of the fares paid in the State of Mexico. Panel (b) shows the distribution of mixed users over their share of fares paid in cash.

We have six treatment groups, each composed of approximately 11,000 riders and a control group of 90,000 riders. The treatment and control groups were balanced in the following observables: average weekly historical trips, average weekly historical fares, log tenure (in weeks), and average weekly historical fares paid in cash. Riders in the treatment groups were presented with the following promotional offers: i) 10% off if the trip is paid with cash, ii) 10% off if the trip is paid with card, iii) 10% off regardless of the payment method, iv) 20% off if the trip is paid in cash, v) 20% off if the trip is paid with card, and vi) 20% off regardless of the payment method. Note that this design includes both decreases and *increases* in relative prices. The discounts were applied to all trips taken by the riders in each treatment group during the entire week. At the beginning of the week, riders received an introductory email

**Figure 2: State of Mexico: Share of Fares by Type of User**




(a) Share of Fares by User Type (b) Distribution Mixed Users

Note: Panel (a) shows the share of total fares paid by different types of users in the State of Mexico. The red line shows the share of fares paid by pure card users, those that have never paid for an Uber ride with cash. The blue line shows the share of fares for pure cash users, those who have not registered a card in the application. The purple line shows the share of fares of mixed users, those who have at least one trip paid in cash and at least one paid using a card. The cash payment option was introduced in November, 2016. Panel (b) shows the distribution of mixed users as a function of the share of fares paid in cash. The sample includes users with at least 4 weeks of tenure that had used both methods of payment and that took at least 5 trips after becoming mixed users. The blue line shows the distribution of mixed users weighted by fares and the red line shows the distribution weighted by riders.

describing the promotion. At the same time, the promotion appeared on their phone's main screen once they opened the application (helix card). Two reminder emails were sent (in the middle of the week and two days before the promotion expired).[27]

We compare the behavior of the share of trips paid with a card, i.e. $s_c \equiv p_c c/(p_c c + p_a a)$, among mixed riders with positive trips during the week of the experiment in treatments facing different relative prices $p_a/p_c$. We linearize the optimal choice of the share of card payments $s_c$ for a CES function $H$, as a function of the relative prices $p_a/p_c$, the share parameter $\alpha$, and the elasticity of substitution $\eta$.[28] The first- and second-order approximations around $p_c/p_a = 1$ are:

$$s_c = \alpha - (\eta - 1)\alpha(1-\alpha)\ln\left(\frac{p_c}{p_a}\right), \text{ and} \tag{15}$$

$$s_c = \alpha - (\eta - 1)\alpha(1-\alpha)\ln\left(\frac{p_c}{p_a}\right) + \frac{1}{2}(1-\eta)^2(1-\alpha)\alpha\left[1-2\alpha\right]\left(\ln\left(\frac{p_c}{p_a}\right)\right)^2 \tag{16}$$

Table 1 shows our estimates of $\eta$, the elasticity of substitution between Uber rides paid in cash and Uber rides paid in card under several closely related specifications. In columns (1) to (4), we divide each side of equation (15) by our estimate of $\alpha(1-\alpha)$ and run the

[27]Examples of the emails sent communicating the promotions can be found in Appendix H.
[28]See Appendix G.1 for the derivation of the approximation.

regression:

$$\tilde{s}_c = 1/(1-\alpha) - (\eta - 1)\log(p_c/p_a) \tag{17}$$

This regression has the advantage of moving the measurement error on $\alpha$ to the left-hand-side variable, thereby mitigating the attenuation bias that such measurement error may cause. The potential source of the measurement error around $\alpha$ is that we estimate it from historical data, which depends on the number of trips riders have taken. We refer to this specification as the transformed-share case. In these specifications, we find an elasticity of substitution of approximately 3. In column (5), we use each mixed rider's historical trips to estimate $\alpha$ as the share of trips paid with a card $s_c$ outside our experiment, i.e. when $p_a = p_c$, so that our estimating equation becomes linear. In column (6), we use the second-order approximation of the optimal decision for $s_c$. In column (7), we instrument $\alpha$, to reduce potential bias introduced by measurement error. Our preferred estimates are in columns (5) and (7). While the point estimates vary across the different specifications displayed in Table 1, we find $\eta \approx 3$ or smaller.

For robustness, we tested specifications with and without controls (historical fares and tenure in Uber), specifications that split price increases and price decreases, and specifications that use different thresholds to define the set of mixed users (those with more than 5% and less than 95% of their fares paid in cash, etc). These robustness checks can be found in Appendix G.2. We find that the estimates for $\eta$ are similar for price increases and price decreases (Table G25) and are independent of the share of rides paid with cash (Figure B2). These additional results provide additional portability to our estimates for this parameter.

An alternative estimate for the elasticity of substitution can be obtained by aggregating the decision about the share of card-payment trips across riders. For this purpose, we write the second-order approximation for this choice $s_c$ as a function of the prices faced by a single rider and as a function of her share parameter $\alpha$ and of the common elasticity of substitution $\eta$.[29] We interpret equation (16) as the expected value of the share of card trips. We let $\mu$ be the distribution of $\alpha$ across the experiment's population. Riders enter into this population if they satisfy the conditions to be in the experiment –such as being active mixed riders– and they do so with weights proportional to the probability of taking a trip within a week. Control and treatment groups differ only in the randomly allocated prices $p_c/p_a$, so the the

[29] In Appendix G.1, we show that for the range of the parameter of interest the first-order approximation is very accurate and the second-order approximation is nearly exact.

**Table 1: Elasticity of Substitution: Mixed Users (Miles)**

Note: The table reports estimates of the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The dependent variable is the relative miles between card and cash payments for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable is the relative price for cash and card trips. Column (1) reports the results after using the transformed-share specification in equation (17) and including mixed users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99% of their fares paid in cash. Column (2) reports the same specification including controls. The controls included for each user are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their fares paid in cash and less than 95% of their fares paid in cash. Column (4) includes the constant specified in equation (17) as a regressor. Column (5) estimates the elasticity using the CES first-order approximation in equation (15). Column (6) estimates the elasticity using the CES second-order approximation in equation (16). Column (7) reports the results of the elasticity of substitution estimated in two steps. First, we compute the predicted share of fares paid in card (i.e. $\hat{\alpha}$) using all the control variables. Then, we estimate equation (15) using the predicted share. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 3.169*** | 2.893*** | 2.620*** | 2.992*** | 2.569*** | 2.569*** | 2.241*** |
| | (0.373) | (0.349) | (0.181) | (0.217) | (0.103) | (0.103) | (0.080) |
| Obs. | 52,562 | 52,562 | 44,927 | 52,562 | 52,562 | 52,562 | 67,984 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |
| Specification | Transf. | Transf. | Transf. | Transf. | CES | CES | CES |
| | | | | Cons | First | Second | First IV |

expected value of $\bar{s}_c(p_c/p_a)$ is given by:

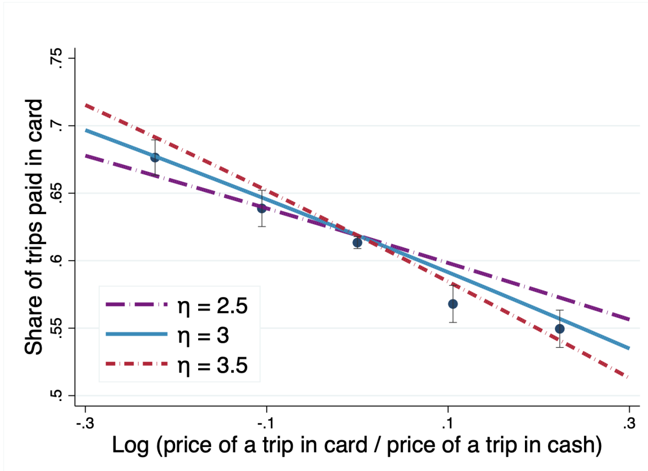
$$\bar{s}_c\left(\frac{p_c}{p_a}\right) = m_1 - (\eta - 1)m_2 \ln\left(\frac{p_c}{p_a}\right) + m_3\left(1-\eta\right)^2\left(\ln\left(\frac{p_c}{p_a}\right)\right)^2 \tag{18}$$

$$m_1 = \int \alpha\mu(d\alpha),\; m_2 = \int \alpha(1-\alpha)\mu(d\alpha),\; \text{and } m_3 = \frac{1}{2}\int (1-\alpha)\alpha\left[1-2\alpha\right]\mu(d\alpha)$$

We estimate $\mu$ by using the distribution of the share of card payments prior to the experiment for the 54,470 riders with positive trips during the experiment. The estimated values for the three moments are $m_1 = 0.6187, m_2 = 0.1349$ and $m_3 = -0.0081$, with very small standard errors.

In Figure 3, we plot the actual average share across riders for each of the four treatment groups (10% and 20% cash discount and 10% and 20% card discounts) and for the control group, including its 95% confidence interval. We also plot three versions of the theoretical prediction equation (18), using the estimated moments $(m_1, m_2, m_3)$. Each line corresponds

**Figure 3: Experiment I and Elasticity of Substitution $\eta$**




Note: The dots are the average card share for control and treatment groups with the corresponding relative price. The vertical lines are 95% standard error bands. The solid and dotted lines are the theoretical prediction for the expected card share displayed in equation (18) using the estimated values of $m_1, m_2$ and $m_3$. The lines differ in the value of the parameter $\eta$.

to a different value of the elasticity of substitution, namely $\eta = 2.5, \eta = 3$ and $\eta = 3.5$, a range of values suggested by the regressions on Table 1. We note that given the small value of $m_3$ the relationship between $\bar{s}$ and $\log(p_c/p_a)$ is almost linear, i.e. the first order approximation for the expected share is very accurate. Second, the dots, which correspond to the average card share for control and treatment groups for each price, are arranged in a nearly linear segment. Third, the value of $\eta = 3$ gives a very good fit, providing further validation to our previous estimates.

We also estimate the composite Uber price elasticity $\epsilon$ for mixed users under our functional assumption of constant semi-elasticity, using the treatments where the cash and card prices $P = p_a = p_c$ are the same. These estimates are essentially regressions of the miles during the week of the experiment on the log of the price and a constant, as shown in Table 2. We find that the elasticity $\epsilon$, evaluated at current prices, is approximately 1.1 or smaller, which corresponds to the first two columns of Table 2, labeled AA.

We also include the results of two other experiments conducted independently by Uber, labeled as Mandin and Ubernomics. We use these experiments to provide external validity to our estimates of the elasticity of demand for cash and mixed users. These experiments were not explicitly designed to give estimates of the elasticity and curvature of the demand function, but their results allow estimates of these parameters. We are able to select riders and construct control variables to make the samples comparable using historical data. These confirmatory exercises return elasticities similar those found in our experiments.[30] Interest-

[30]The Ubernomics experiment took place in the Greater Mexico City from May 15th to May 22nd of 2017,

## Table 2: Elasticity of Demand: Mixed Users (Miles)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand for pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using miles as the dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each user are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, share of fares paid in cash, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels.

| | (1) AA | (2) AA | (3) AA | (4) Mandin | (5) Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.082*** | 1.030*** | 1.096*** | 1.278*** | 1.452*** |
| | (0.103) | (0.086) | (0.093) | (0.075) | (0.296) |
| Observations | 109,365 | 109,365 | 98,773 | 11,660 | 4,306 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |

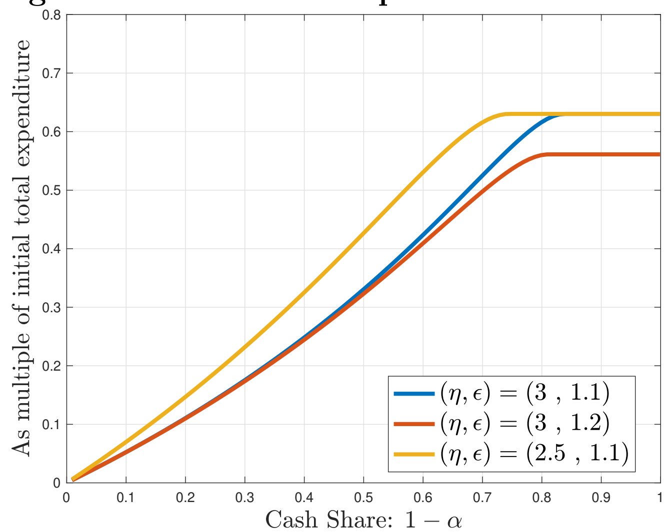
ingly, the Mandin experiment had price variation that lasted four weeks, which presumably better approximates a permanent change in prices. Appendix G.2 contains several robustness exercises that complement our estimated elasticities, including estimates of the semi-elasticity of demand, the elasticity of demand of number trips, the elasticity of demand for users that have taken at least 5 trips, and the Poisson regression specification.

We next use the estimated values of $\eta$ and $\epsilon$ and the functional form for $U$ and $H$ to calculate the consumer surplus enjoyed by mixed users. Using our preferred estimate values for these elasticities, the observed distribution of the share of cash trips, and the observed distribution of total fares, we implement equation (4). We aggregate riders weighting them by their fares paid in cash (i.e. Figure 2) so that the aggregate consumer surplus is the total surplus of the cash option over total expenditures. Figure 4 displays the consumer surplus as the share of a user's expenditure on Uber, where the horizontal axis shows the share of cash fares. Each line in the figure corresponds to different parameter values for $\epsilon$ and $\eta$, chosen around our preferred estimates. We estimate the consumer surplus lost after a ban on cash payments to be 25% what mixed users spend on Uber rides.[31] Recall that mixed

only a few months after the introduction of cash in the State of Mexico. The treatment groups received discounts of 10% and 20% off in all rides taken the week of the experiment. The sample includes 4,869 pure cash users and 4,306 mixed users. The Mandin experiment took place in all areas of the Greater Mexico City in June 2018 and lasted four weeks. The treatment groups received discounts of 10%, 20%, and 30% off for all rides taken during the weeks of the experiment. The sample includes 5,668 pure cash users and 20,914 mixed users. More details on both experiments can be found in Section B.2.

[31] The average of the ratio of consumer surplus to total Uber expenditures, using $\eta = 3$, $\epsilon = 1.1$, and the distribution of the $\alpha$, weighted by fares, is 0.2463. This figure describes mixed riders who have taken more

**Figure 4: Consumer Surplus: Mixed Users**




Note: The figure shows the model estimates of the consumer surplus (as a multiple of initial total fares) as a function of the share of a user's cash trips. The graph plots the estimates for different combinations of the elasticity of demand $\epsilon$ and the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments $\eta$. The consumer surplus estimates are for mixed users, those who have paid for at least one trip using a payment card and for at least one trip in cash.

users account for about 50% all expenditures on Uber rides in the State of Mexico. Since the average mixed user pays for 37% of rides with cash, their consumer surplus decrease by 67% of their expenditures on trips paid in cash.[32] For $\eta = 5$, the consumer surplus lost for mixed users is 42.6% of cash fares. This elasticity is consistent with the *long-run* elasticity of substitution estimated by Alvarez and Argente (2022).[33]

## 5.2 Experiment 2: Consumer Surplus - Pure Cash Users

The second experiment took place in the State of Mexico during the same week as the previous experiment (August 21st to August 27th, 2018). The sample again includes only users within the State of Mexico, and we focus on pure cash users. All users have a verified mobile number and are not subject to other experiments simultaneously. The users in our sample took at least 2 trips in 2018 and took at least one trip since April 1st of 2018.

than five trips and have more than four weeks of tenure.

[32] To be precise, using the cash share for mixed users of 0.3685, we get $0.6682 = 0.2463/0.3685$.

[33] An alternative research design would have been to only use the changes in cash prices to estimate the consumer surplus lost for mixed users (e.g. using the same four discounts as we use in Experiment 2). This alternative design has the advantage of yielding a more-direct measure of the curvature of mixed users' demand for cash trips. Figure B1 in Section B.1 shows that our implied functional form captures the shape of the mixed user's demand for cash trips. In addition, our methodology lets us *increase relative prices* and provides an estimate of the parameter $\eta$. We find $\eta$ to be of interest in itself and use it to test several counterfactuals.

We have four treatment groups each composed of approximately 20,000 riders and a control group of 56,000 riders. The treatment and control groups were balanced in the following observables: average of weekly historical trips, average of weekly historical fares, and log tenure (in weeks). We have 4 treatment groups each getting 10%, 15%, 20%, and 25% off of all the trips taken during the week of the experiment. Note that, since the treatments cover several price points, the experiment is designed to provide information about the local convexity of the demand curve, which we use to inform our structural assumptions on the constant semi-elasticity demand function. At the beginning of the week the riders received an introductory email describing the promotion. At the same time, the promotion showed up in the main screen of their phone once they opened the application (helix card). Two reminder emails were sent (in the middle of the week and two days before the promotions expired).[34]

**Table 3: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Cash Users (Miles)**

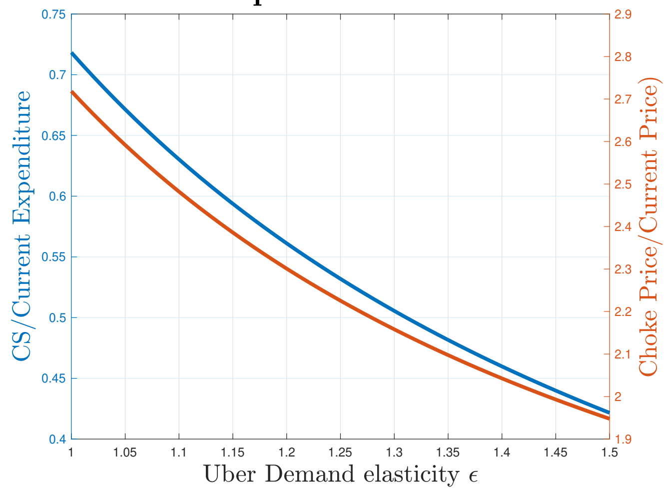
Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated from equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.375*** | 1.383*** | 1.113*** | 0.813** |
| | (0.101) | (0.078) | (0.165) | (0.414) |
| Observations | 138,725 | 138,725 | 4,279 | 3,569 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Using the miles traveled during the week of the experiment as the dependent variable, we estimate the price elasticity of demand, $\epsilon$, to be approximately 1.38, when evaluated at current prices. Our baseline case is the semi-log demand corresponding to our functional form specification. Table 3 displays the estimates under columns AA, as well as estimates using the same specification for the Ubernomics and Mandin experiments. Other specifications and further robustness exercises can be found in Appendix G.2. This estimate is robust to using controls such as the average of weekly historical trips, average of weekly historical trips squared, average of weekly historical fares, and log tenure (in weeks).

[34]Examples can be found in Appendix H.

**Figure 5: Consumer Surplus and Choke Price: Cash Users**




Note: The figure shows the model estimates of the consumer surplus (as a multiple of initial total fares) as a function of the elasticity of demand $\epsilon$. The graphs also shows the model estimates of the choke point, the price at which the demand for Uber trips is zero as a function of $\epsilon$. The estimates are for pure cash users, those that never registered a card in the application.

Using the estimated price elasticity and our demand specification we next estimate the consumer surplus for pure cash users. Figure 5 displays our estimates for different elasticity estimates. Using 1.38, we estimate the consumer surplus to be approximately 47% of the total fares per year. The consumer surplus lost displayed in Figure 5 is, however, an *upper bound* estimate given that, some users might decide to begin using a card rather than leaving Uber completely after a large price increase. In fact, when the cash option was banned in Puebla, only 70% of the users left the platform. To adjust the consumer surplus of these riders we use both the experience in Puebla, as well as a third experiment to estimate the fixed cost of adopting a card payments. Section 5.3 provides more details.

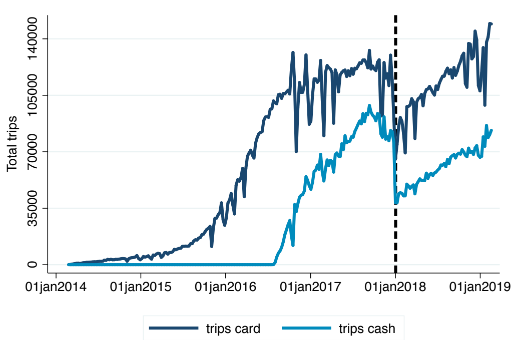
The right axis of the figure displays the corresponding choke price implied by our functional form as a multiple of the current price. The choke prices corresponding to our preferred estimate for price elasticity are about double the current prices. We choose a demand function with constant semi-elasticity because it is consistent with the local convexity we found in the experimental data and because it implies a finite choke price. This implication is relevant because consumer surplus estimates are sensitive to the shape of the demand curve at very high prices, which are rarely explored in field experiments. To go further in confirming our results, in the next subsection we use a natural experiment in the country of Panama and a survey instrument to validate the functional-form assumptions for the demand curve at very high prices.

### 5.2.1 Panama: Large Price Increase

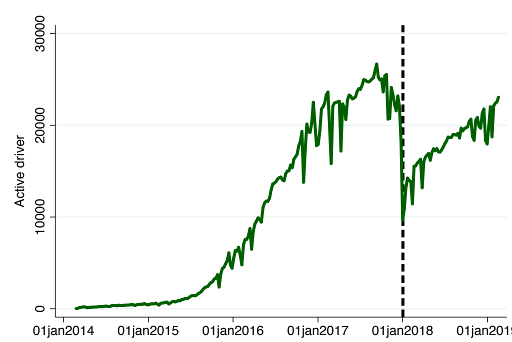
We use data from a natural experiment in Panama, where the government suddenly restricted the supply of drivers, to validate our functional-form assumptions and to compute another estimate of demand elasticity. Given that the price of Uber rides almost doubled after the government regulation went into effect, this data gives particular insight into the shape of the demand curve at high prices.

Uber launched in Panama in February of 2014. Until recently, Uber was only active in 3 provinces: Panama City, Panama West, and Colon.[35] The most-active province in terms of rides is Panama City. In August of 2016, cash payments were introduced in the country because of the low penetration of credit card use. Cash was introduced in all provinces at the same time and within a year more than half of all trips were paid with cash.[36]

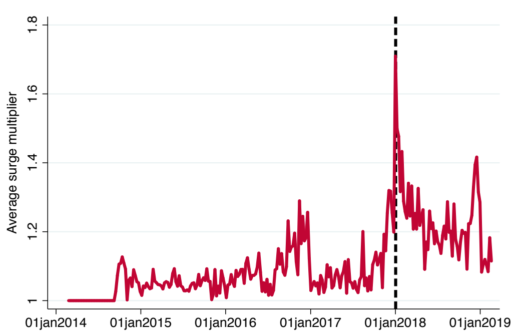
**Figure 6: Panama: Trips, Fares, and Drivers**



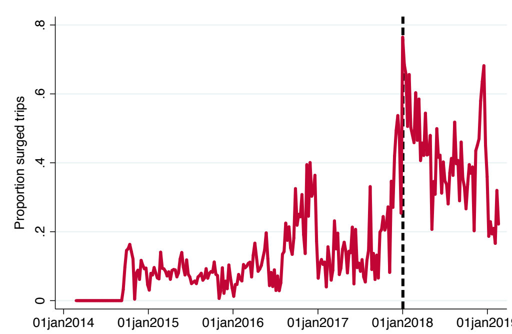

(a) Trips




(b) Active Drivers




(c) Avg. Surge Multiplier




(d) Share Surged Trips

Note: The figure shows the evolution of trips, active drivers, the average surge multiplier and the share of surged-price trips in Panama. The frequency of the data is weekly. The black dotted line marks the date that the restrictions went into effect.

[35] A recent Supreme Court decision has allowed Uber to provide services in more provinces.

[36] Cabify is also present in Panama, and has been since June of 2016, however, as in Mexico, their market share is still very low.

Panama's government placed restrictions on Uber in October of 2017. The decree included a prohibition on cash payments for Uber rides, and required a special license for drivers (i.e. an "E1" type), which can only be obtained by nationals over 21. The license costs around $200 USD and can only be obtained after a 36-hour seminar. The decree also imposes a fleet cap of 2 cars and geographic limitations that restrict Uber to 4 out of Panama's 10 provinces. The driver restrictions went into effect January 2, 2018.[37] A total of 83% of Uber drivers were disconnected from the application because they had no E1 license. Due to this unexpected reduction in the supply of drivers, the fraction of surge-price trips rose from an average of 16% in 2017 to an average of 45% in 2018. Figure 6 shows that the share of cash-fare trips also decreased drastically, from more than 50% in 2017 to less than 35% in 2018. The number of trips paid in cash decreased more than those paid with cards, consistent with our findings that the demand for Uber trips paid in cash is more elastic than the demand for trips paid with card.

Interpreting this natural experiment as an exogenous decrease in the supply of drivers, we use data about the total number of trips and the average surge multiplier to trace the Uber demand function in Panama. Figure 7 plots the number trips as a function of prices for each of the 52 weeks in 2018 that followed the restriction to the supply of drivers. The blue line shows the fit of the semi-log demand function that is implied by our functional-form choices. Under this specification, we estimate the elasticity of demand to be approximately 0.95 for all trips in the city of Panama. If we restrict our attention to cash-fare rides the demand elasticity rises to about 1.00, with both elasticities evaluated at base-line prices. The share of cash-fare rides before the restriction on drivers was about 0.4, but decreased after, consistent with the higher elasticity of cash trips. All these trends are consistent with the trends we observe in our data from the State of Mexico.[38] The graph also shows that, even at the very high prices we could not explore in our experiments, the demand curve fits our observed patterns of total trips and prices remarkably well. Even in weeks during which prices almost double, our functional-form assumption of exponential utility fits the patterns observed in Panama well.

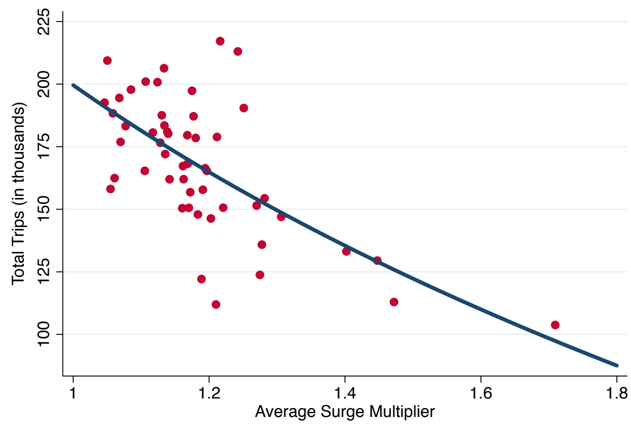
### 5.2.2 Survey Instrument: Choke Prices

We also used a survey instrument to gain further insight into how price changes might affect consumer preferences and what the choke price might be. The survey was sent to the riders in our experiments 11 months after the experiments concluded. Six different surveys were

[37]Uber negotiated an extension of the deadline for the ban on cash. The extension expired on May 2019, and it was renewed until October 2019, when cash payments were banned, but only temporarily; cash payments were reintroduced in February 2020.

[38]We provide details on these estimates in Section C.

**Figure 7: Panama: Total Trips and Prices (2018)**




Note: The figure plots the total weekly trips and the average weekly surge multiplier for Panama. Each dot represents a week in 2018, the weeks after the decree went into effect reducing the supply of drivers in the country. The surge multiplier is seasonally adjusted. The line is a semi-log function.

randomly given to users, with three questions each. We received more than 6,000 responses, an average of 1056 responses per survey.[39] This format allowed us to minimize response times and, at the same time, allowed us to obtain a range of responses for a given question. For example, all surveys included the following question: "If you were to receive a 20% discount for one week, how would you change the number of trips you take...". Some users were given the options to respond a) no change, b) increase less than 10%, c) increase more than 10%. A second set of users were given options to respond a) no change, b) increase less than 20%, c) increase more than 20%. And a third set of users were given options to respond a) no change, b) increase less than 30%, c) increase more than 30%.

Each survey also included two other symmetric questions, one related to a permanent large price decrease (e.g. "If the price of trips is permanently reduced by half, how would you change your trips...") and another related to a permanent large price increase (e.g. "If the price of trips is permanently doubled, how would you change your trips..."). Half of the surveys sent asked users to respond to permanently doubling prices or permanently reducing prices by half, while the other half of surveys asked users to respond to prices permanently tripled or cut by a third. In response to the question about a permanent price increase, the users could respond with the following options: i) no change, ii) decrease substantially, iii) stop traveling. We use the answers to the first questions to compare elasticities from

[39]The surveys were sent through email to all riders in experiments 1 and 2 on July 9th, 2019 and were open to responses until July 16th, 2019. A total of 433,356 users received a survey, 287,233 participated in experiment 1 (mixed and pure card users) and 146,123 participated in experiment 2 (pure cash users). The response rate was 1.46%.

the survey to those obtained from our experimental design in order to validate the survey instrument and verify that the reported elasticities are informative about revealed preference elasticities. We use the last question of the survey about the permanent doubling or tripling of prices to obtain information about the distribution of choke prices and to compare it to the distribution implied by our structural framework.

To analyze users' responses, we proceed in three steps. First, we adjust the covariate distribution of survey respondents by reweighting to make the distribution more similar to the covariate distribution of the entire population that participated in our experiments based on their history of trips per week and their tenure. We accomplish this step with entropy balancing, a multivariate reweighting method described in Hainmueller (2012). Second, we use responses to the first question to validate the survey instrument and confirm that the reported elasticities are informative about the revealed-preference elasticities estimated from our experiments; the bounds implied by the survey responses align well with those in the experimental data.[40] Lastly, we use responses to the third question to compare the reported choke prices to those implied by our model. The reaminder of this section is focused on this last step, but we provide more details about the previous two steps in Appendix I.

In our structural framework, for mixed users in the control group (facing prices equal to 1 in our model), the implied choke price is defined as:

$$\bar{P} = \exp\left(\frac{X(P)}{-k}\right) \tag{19}$$

where $X(P)$ is the number of miles a rider travels in a week and $k$ is the semi-elasticity we estimated from experimental data. Since the survey responses provide us with a distribution of choke prices, we implement equation (19) using the data to obtain the distribution of choke prices implied by our structural assumptions. This requires taking a stance on the riders' heterogeneity. In this case, we use each user's history of average weekly fares to approximate $X(P)$ and the semi-elasticity estimated in our experiments.[41] Table 4 presents the distribution of choke prices for mixed users.

[40] A recent literature examines the external validity of survey instruments as low-cost alternatives to experimental evidence and concludes that that survey-based data are informative for predictions but do not necessarily provide precise quantitative responses. Examples include Karlan, Osman and Zinman (2016), Parker and Souleles (2019), and Hainmueller, Hangartner and Yamamoto (2015).

[41] To minimize the measurement error in the historical average of weekly fares, we trim the top and bottom one percent.

## Table 4: Distribution of Choke Prices

Note: The table shows moments of the distribution of choke prices implied by framework described in Section 4 for both mixed users and pure cash users. To approximate $X(P)$, we use each user's historical average of weekly fares. To minimize the measurement error, we trim the top and bottom one percent. The semi-elasticity $k$ is that estimated for each group of users presented in Table G1 and Table G7.

| Choke Price | (1) Mean | (2) Std. Dev. | (3) 10th | (4) 25th | (5) Median | (6) 75th | (7) 90th |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mixed users | 6.0 | 20.7 | 1.18 | 1.35 | 1.82 | 3.28 | 8.19 |
| Pure cash users | 4.8 | 12.0 | 1.62 | 1.78 | 2.18 | 3.36 | 6.7 |

The median choke price for mixed users implied by our model is 1.82. There is considerable heterogeneity in the choke prices; the ratio of the 75$^{\text{th}}$ percentile and the 25$^{\text{th}}$ percentile is 2.42. Given our structural assumptions, if we doubled prices, 56% of users would leave the platform and, if we tripled prices, approximately 73% of users would stop using Uber. These figures are remarkably close to the survey responses. Approximately, 56% of respondents said they would stop traveling if prices doubled and 67 % responded that they would stop traveling if prices were tripled.

Next, we implement a similar approach to study pure cash users. Their choke price is defined as:

$$\bar{P} = \exp\left(\frac{\tilde{a}(p_a, \infty)}{k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}} + \frac{\log\left(k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\right)}{k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}\right) \tag{20}$$

where $k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}$ is the semi-elasticity of demand for pure cash users, as estimated directly from our regressions. The median choke price in this case is 2.18 and the ratio of the 75$^{\text{th}}$ percentile and the 25$^{\text{th}}$ percentile is 1.88. Our model implies that if we doubled prices, 41% of users would leave the platform, whereas in the survey 54% of respondents would leave the platform. If prices tripled, our framework implies that 71% would leave the platform, which is remarkably close to the 69% of users that responded that they would strop traveling if prices were to triple. We argue that, given that self-reports are informative about revealed-preference elasticities, these findings about the choke prices provide additional validation to our structural assumptions.

## 5.3 Experiment 3: Net Consumer Surplus - Pure Cash Users

The estimates of the consumer surplus for pure cash users reported in Section 5.2 under our structural assumptions still need to be adjusted for the fact that, in the event of a ban on cash, riders could decide to pay the fixed cost of adopting a card and return to the application. Experiment 3 is designed to estimate the fixed cost of adopting a payment-card. The experiment took place in the State of Mexico from September 17th to October 23rd, 2018. It was targeted to pure cash users in order to understand their card adoption patterns. Our sample of users includes those who signed up in the State of Mexico and whose most frequent city is the State of Mexico. We focus on users that have not registered a card with Uber. In addition, the users in our sample own a verified mobile and were not subject to other experiments at the time of the experiment. The users in our sample took at least 2 trips in 2018 and took at least one trip since April 1st of 2018.

We offered rewards if a user registered a cards in the application, without imposing restrictions on the payment method used for subsequent rides. This was the first time Uber Mexico implemented an experiment of these characteristics. The treatment groups received rewards of 100, 200, or 300 pesos (5.2, 10.5 and 15.7 USD), which are approximately 3, 6, and 9 times the average weekly fares (or approximately 1, 2 and 3 average rides). The experiment is designed to obtain information about different points in the distribution of fixed costs. Furthermore, given that pure cash users might or might not have a card already, the experiment had two treatments for each reward with two different time horizons. The first lasted only one week, targeting users that might already have a card, but have not registered it in the application. The second lasted 6 weeks in order to allow enough time for users to obtain a new card. These users received email reminders about the promotion every week. Overall, the experiment included six treatment groups with three incentive levels lasting one and six weeks, each made up of approximately 20,000 riders and a control group of 40,000 riders.

Table 5 shows the percent of pure cash users that adopted a payment-card (registered a card in the application) in each of the treatment groups conditional on having taken a trip during the weeks of the experiment. Column (1) and (2) show the adoption rates during the first week, for the one-week and six-week experiments. The columns show that similar amounts of users register a card in the first week, regardless of the time horizon. In both cases, users in the treatment groups responded significantly to the incentives provided, relative to the control group. We observe more migration to card payments when larger incentives are offered. For instance, for a reward of slightly more than 15.2 USD the migration rate increases by 3.9%, which is statistically significantly larger than the migration rate with a reward of 5.2 USD, which is 1.6% –see column (2) of the table.

**Table 5: Extensive-Margin: Adoption of a Payment-Card**

Note: The table reports the percent of users that adopted a payment-card for each of the treatment groups in experiment three relative to the control group. Migration is an indicator function that equals one if the user registered a card conditional on taking trip the weeks of the experiment. The variables "Treatment" report the migration rates relative to the control group of the three treatment groups in the experiment: 3, 6, and 9 times their average weekly fares if the users register a card in the application. Column (3) reports the rates of card adoption during the first three weeks of the experiment. Column (4) reports the rates of adoption in the last three weeks of the experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels.

| | (1)<br>1 week | (2)<br>1 week | (3)<br>1-6 week | (4)<br>1-3 week | (5)<br>4-6 week |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Treatment 1 - 1 week | 0.0241*** | | | | |
| | (0.004) | | | | |
| Treatment 2 - 1 week | 0.0269*** | | | | |
| | (0.004) | | | | |
| Treatment 3 - 1 week | 0.0366*** | | | | |
| | (0.004) | | | | |
| Treatment 1 - 6 week | | 0.0166*** | 0.0333*** | 0.0283*** | 0.0112*** |
| | | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.003) |
| Treatment 2 - 6 week | | 0.0217*** | 0.0394*** | 0.0382*** | 0.0088*** |
| | | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.003) |
| Treatment 3 - 6 week | | 0.0390*** | 0.0468*** | 0.0485*** | 0.0088*** |
| | | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.003) |
| Constant | 0.0272*** | 0.0272*** | 0.0711*** | 0.0445*** | 0.0372*** |
| | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.001) |
| Observations | 20,609 | 20,677 | 46,996 | 36,184 | 46,996 |
| R-squared | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.006 | 0.001 |

Column (3) shows the overall migration rate over the span of 6 weeks and Column (4) and (5) examine the migration rates during weeks 1-3 and weeks 4-6 respectively. The columns show that significantly more users migrate during the first three weeks of the experiment than do in the latter three weeks. This indicates that, although our incentives were sufficiently enticing to encourage migration of marginal users, they were not enough to substantially incentivize users that did not own a card. Importantly, Table B3 shows that users in our treatment groups were more likely to use cards more than 6 months after our experiment ended. The table shows that, conditional on traveling between April and June of 2019 and having taken a trip during the weeks of our experiments, the probability of paying with a card is larger for users in our treatment groups.[42]

[42]Table B4 shows unconditional migration rates – users registering a card in the application regardless of

We next use a variety of observations to estimate the consumer surplus lost in a ban, taking into account the effect of those pure cash riders that choose to pay the fixed cost and become pure card users after the ban. To do so, we combine theoretical aspects with experimental evidence. On the theoretical side we use the specifications of preferences (described in Section 4.4), with their implications for demand (derived in Appendix A.4), the corresponding indirect utility functions derived in Appendix A.5, and the conditions that fixed cost and indirect utility have to satisfy for the optimal adoption of cards, as described in equation (10) and equation (13). On the experimental side, we use the parameters estimated in Experiment 2 for the demand of trips for pure cash users, the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments estimated in Experiment 1 for mixed users, the migration rates under each of the incentive levels described in Section 5.3 from Experiment 3. With this information we jointly estimate the counterfactual share parameter $\alpha$ for pure cash users, the parameters for the utility function $U$ for composite rides for pure cash users ($k$ and $\bar{P}$), and the distribution of the fixed cost $G$. In our choice of $\alpha$, we strive to be conservative by making choices that give a *lower bound* to the net consumer surplus lost. Appendix A.7 gives the details of these calculations.

Approximately 70% of the pure cash riders stop using Uber after the ban of cash according to the evidence from Puebla, which is a very similar city to the State of Mexico in the context of the cities served by Uber across Mexico. From Table 3 our estimated elasticities at pre-ban prices are approximately 1.38 for this group, so their consumer surplus loss is almost 47% of their yearly expenditure in Uber. For the remaining 30% of riders the losses are smaller.[43] Using the information from Experiment 3, we obtain a lower bound for the net consumer surplus for pure cash users who register a card after the ban of about 44% of the yearly expenditure on Uber.[44] Aggregating both groups, riders who register a card and riders who do not register a card after a ban on cash, we find a ban on cash leads to a loss in consumer surplus for pure cash riders, equal to about 46% of their total Uber expenditures.

whether they took trips during the weeks of the experiment. The table shows that the overall unconditional migration, over the six weeks that the experiment lasted, are similar to those presented in Table 5.

[43]In Appendix D we compare Puebla and the State of Mexico and we correct our estimates to take into account observable differences between Puebla and the State of Mexico, which may lower this estimate up to 29%; Puebla's residents have in average about one more year of education, and have higher financial inclusion. In the spirit of obtaining a lower bound on the consumer surplus lost, we retain the 30% figure.

[44]Appendix A.7 presents the detailed calculations for this lower bound. It also shows the net consumer surplus lost computed cell-by-cell, where the cells are percentiles of the distribution of the historical number of trips. The consumer surplus lost is higher for pure cash users that travel more because of the convexity of the net consumer surplus lost and the skewness of the distribution of historical trips.

# 6 Consumer Surplus Estimates: Taking Stock

The consumer surplus lost after a ban on cash payments has a *lower bound* of at least 50% of total expenditures on cash-fare Uber rides, and an *upper bound* of 57%. We proceed by summarizing how we computed these estimates. For mixed users, who account for about 50% of Uber fares, we estimate a loss in consumer surplus of about 25% of what they spend on Uber rides. For pure cash users, who account for 20% of all fares collected by Uber and tend to be poorer, we estimate a loss in consumer surplus of at least 46%. Adding up the loss of consumer surplus from mixed users and pure cash users, the consumer surplus lost is about 30% of what the two groups spend on Uber rides. Considering that mixed users pay for about 37% of their Uber rides with cash, we obtain our 50% headline figure for the lower bound of the consumer surplus lost in a ban on cash.[45] An upper bound of this estimate can be found if we do not account for pure cash riders registering a card in the app after a ban on cash. The upper bound estimates are very close to the lower bound estimates and are approximately 57% of total expenditure on cash-fare Uber rides. The magnitudes of our estimates reflect i) the intensity with which cash is used in the application by *both* mixed users and pure cash users, ii) the convexity of the demand curve for Uber rides, iii) the high costs of registering cards, and iv) the fact that users view cash and cards as far from perfect substitutes.

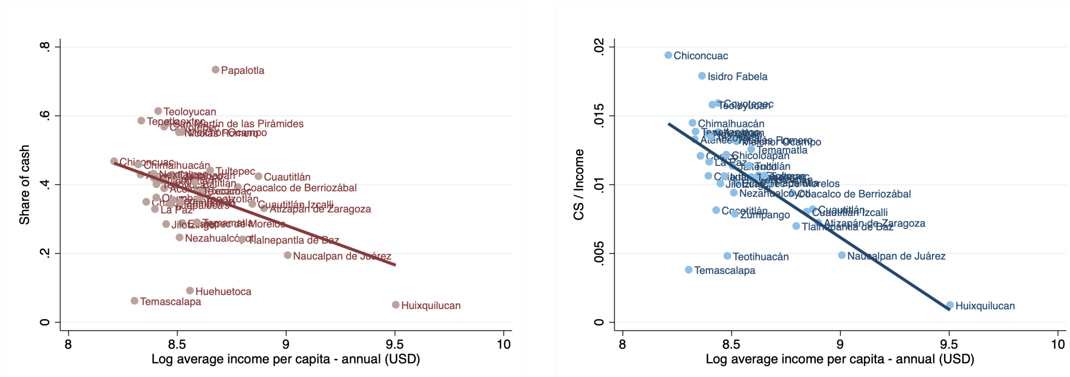
To determine the *distributional* consequences of a ban in the cash payment option, we estimate the consumer surplus at the municipality-level, the finest level of aggregation at which per capita income is available. To do so, we use geolocalized information about every trip taken in the State of Mexico during the month of August 2018. We assign each user to the municipality where most of his or her trips originated.[46] After classifying riders into pure cash users and mixed users, we calculate the consumer surplus for both groups in USD, considering that pure cash users spend approximately 80 USD per year in Uber rides while mixed riders spend 200 USD per year.[47] The consumer surplus lost at the municipality-level is the average of the consumer surplus of pure cash users and mixed users, weighted by their share of total expenditures in Uber in the municipality.

[45] The calculation for the consumer surplus lost is the average of the consumer surplus of pure cash users and mixed users weighted by their share of total cash expenditures: $0.46 \times \frac{0.20}{0.2+0.5\times0.37} + 0.67 \times \frac{0.5\times0.37}{0.2+0.5\times0.37} > 0.5$.

[46] Details can be found in Appendix F.

[47] Table B1 reports the weekly expenditures by pure cash users and mixed users. In order to accurately classify riders across user types, we consider riders with at least 4 trips in August 2018. We also use the share of payments made with card at the municipality-level to reduce potential measurement error.

**Figure 8: Share of Cash Fares and Consumer Surplus by Income**




(a) Share of Cash Fares

(b) Consumer Surplus

Note: Panel (a) shows the share of cash fares and the average income per capita per year in USD. Panel (b) shows the consumer surplus from paying Uber in cash in each municipality of the State of Mexico as a fraction of the average income per capita per year. The consumer surplus lost at the municipality-level is the average of the consumer surplus of pure cash users and mixed users weighted by their share of total expenditures. We multiply income times 1.24 to account for the fact that individuals with access to a smartphones earn higher income. The income data comes from individuals that report labor income surveyed in the Intercensal Survey of 2015. The data on smartphone usage comes from the 2015 National Survey of Financial Inclusion (ENIF). The data of Uber rides are from August of 2018 in the State of Mexico.

Panel (b) of Figure 8 displays the consumer surplus loss as a share of the average annual income of Uber riders at the municipality-level. A rider who uses cash either sometimes or exclusively suffers an average loss in consumer surplus of approximately 0.8% of her annual income.[48] The figure also shows that the losses from a ban in cash fall mostly on households who reside in low-income municipalities. These households rely more heavily on the cash option. Panel (a) of Figure 8 indeed shows that the share of cash fares declines with income per capita.[49] These findings imply that, in the case of Uber rides, restrictions on the use of cash have important distributional consequences that mainly affect the least-advantaged households.

## 6.1 Applications: The Case of Panama and the Case of Argentina

Our results can be used to estimate the welfare effects of similar policies promulgated elsewhere. We have estimated price elasticities for riders of different types in Panama that are similar to those in the State of Mexico—see Section 5.2.1 and Appendix C. Thus, keeping other parameters at the values estimated for the State of Mexico, the ban on cash fares in

[48]The average annual income of Uber users in the State of Mexico is approximately 6400 USD. This estimate is calculated by averaging the per capita income across municipalities weighted by the total number of Uber users in each municipality. We multiply this number by 1.24 to account for the fact that individuals with access to a smartphone earn higher income. The income data comes from Intercensal Survey of 2015 and the data on smartphone usage comes from the 2015 National Survey of Financial Inclusion (ENIF).

[49]Figure F1 shows a similar pattern for the share of pure cash users at the municipality-level.

Panama caused a consumer surplus loss of approximately 50% of total expenditures paid in cash.

Our estimates are also relevant for policies applied in the southern cone. In Argentina, the municipal government of the city of Buenos Aires, as a way to curtail the use of Uber, issued a prohibition on the processing of card payments in the Uber app, which had the implication that cards were not accepted in the entire country. Hence, for a while, Argentina's riders could only pay with cash. Motivated by this, we estimate the consumer surplus losses from a *ban on card payments*, assuming that all the parameters are as in the state of Mexico –see Appendix E for details. We found that the consumer surplus loss of a ban on card payments is about 80% of the yearly expenditure on Uber paid in card before the ban. This loss is higher than the one for a ban on cash. The reason is that for pure card users a ban on cards is fully equivalent to a ban on Uber. These users tend to spend more on rides and their demand for rides is less elastic. Furthermore, mixed users are more affected by a ban on card payments than they are by a ban on cash payments, since they pay for approximately 63% of rides with a card.

# 7 Conclusion

Policies restricting means of payment have recently received great interest, and their possibility has been debated both by policymakers and academics. There are very few attempts to quantify the welfare effects of such policies, mainly because opportunities for accurate estimations of the relevant elasticities for this calculation for a given good or service are rare. In this paper, we combine a theoretical model with three large field experiments in Mexico to estimate the consumer surplus of using cash as a payment method in Uber. The total consumer surplus lost after a ban on cash payments is large, equivalent to at least 50% of total expenditure on cash-fare Uber rides. Given that the majority of trips paid in cash originate in low-income municipalities, these losses fall mostly on the least-advantaged households, who rely heavily on the cash payment option.

We have several other findings of interest for the literature on money demand and for the analysis of policies attempting to encourage or discourage payment methods. We found a statistically significant but small elasticity of the adoption/registration of cards when riders are given incentives. A reward of 15 USD increases the adoption rate by less than 4%, which is largely explained by the registration of existing cards. Nevertheless, users who registered a card after receiving a reward were more likely to use it to pay for rides in the future. This finding is relevant for the analysis of policies that encourage access to financial services, particularly in developing countries where pure cash users are widespread.

We also provide a well-estimated elasticity of substitution across payment methods using experimental data, an important input to models that incorporate a choice between means of payment. The low substitutability across payment methods implies that the optimal response of shifting away from cash payments (e.g. during the COVID-19 pandemic) is not without cost, even if people have access to other means of payment. This elasticity of substitution can be used to parameterize models designed to analyze counterfactuals in which means of payment are subject to a tax or a subsidy. For example, Alvarez, Argente, Jimenez and Lippi (2021) use our estimates to quantify the private costs of heavily taxing the use of cash to pay for all goods in Mexico and found that the private losses that follow a 40% tax on cash are approximately 6% of GDP. The extension of our analysis of Uber trips to the analysis of different goods and services, as well as our estimated elasticities, are important areas for future research.

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# APPENDIX

# A Model

## A.1 Proofs

**Proof.** (of Proposition 1) The first step uses a standard results form demand theory. From the definition of the indirect utility function $v(p_a, p_c; \theta)$. Given the quasi-linearity replacing the budget constraint, and using the assumption that $I$ is large enough:

$$v(p_a, p_c, p_2, \dots, p_n; \phi) = \max_{a,c,x_2,\dots,x_n} u\left(H\left(a, c; \phi\right)\right), x_2, \dots, x_n; \theta) - \left[p_a a + p_c c + \sum_{i=2}^{n} p_i x_i\right] + I$$

Thus, using the envelope theorem:

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} v(p_a, p_c, p_2, \dots, p_n; \phi) = -\tilde{a}\left(p_a, p_c, p_2, \dots, p_n; \phi\right)$$

Hence, using the fundamental theorem of calculus:

$$v(\bar{p}_a, p_c, p_2, \dots, p_n; \phi) - v(\underline{p_a}, p_c, p_2, \dots, p_n; \phi) = -\int_{\underline{p_a}}^{\bar{p}_a} \tilde{a}\left(p_a, p_c, p_2, \dots, p_n; \phi\right) dp_a$$

The second step, uses a characterization of the extensive-margin choice. We can write the two parts of the expression for $\mathcal{C}_{ban}$. First we take the case of those that prior to the ban have registered a card, i.e. those types for which $1_c\left(1, 1; \theta\right) = 1$. The third step describes the adoption decision as a threshold rule on $\psi$. To do so, we rewrite the vector of type as $(\psi, \phi) = \theta$, so that $\phi$ contains all the information of the types except the fixed cost, i.e. $u$ and $H$ are indexed on $\phi$. Using this notation we can fix a type $\phi$ and describe her decision to register a card as:

$$1_c\left(p_a, p_c; (\psi, \phi)\right) = 1 \iff \psi \leq \bar{\psi}(p_a, p_c; \phi) \equiv v(p_a, p_c; \phi) - v(p_a, \infty; \phi)$$

The fourth step is to differentiate the firm term of $\mathcal{CS}(p_a, 1)$:

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} \int 1_c\left(1, 1; \theta\right) \left[v(1, 1; \phi) - v(p_a, 1; \phi)\right] dF(\theta) &= -\int 1_c\left(1, 1; \theta\right) \, \frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} v(p_a, 1; \phi) dF(\theta) \\ &= \int 1_c\left(1, 1; \theta\right) \tilde{a}(p_a, 1; \phi) dF(\theta)\end{aligned}$$

where the last term uses the derivative of the indirect utility function.

The fifth step is to rewrite the second term of $\mathcal{CS}(p_a, 1)$:

$$\begin{aligned}
&\int [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - \mathcal{V}(p_a,1;\theta)\right] dF(\theta) \\
&= \int \left( \int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - \mathcal{V}(p_a,1;\theta)\right] g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi) \\
&+ \int \left( \int_{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)}^{\infty} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - \mathcal{V}(p_a,1;\theta)\right] g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi) \\
&= \int \left( \int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - v(p_a,1;\phi) + \psi\right] g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi) \\
&+ \int \left( \int_{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)}^{\infty} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - v(p_a,\infty;\phi)\right] g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi)
\end{aligned}$$

where we first use that $\theta = (\psi, \phi)$, and then we use the characterization of the optimality of registering a card in $\mathcal{V}$ in terms of $\bar{\psi}$. Now we compute the derivative of this second term with respect to $p_a$:

$$\begin{aligned}
&\frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} \int [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - \mathcal{V}(p_a,1;\theta)\right] dF(\theta) \\
&= - \int \left( \int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} v(p_a,1;\phi) g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi) \\
&- \int \left( \int_{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)}^{\infty} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} v(p_a,\infty;\phi) g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi) \\
&+ \int \left( \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - v(p_a,1;\phi) + \bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi) - v(1,\infty;\phi) + v(p_a,\infty;\phi)\right] g(\psi|\phi) \right) dK(\phi)
\end{aligned}$$

where we pass the derivative inside the integral sign, and use Leibniz rule. Rearranging terms and using the definition of $\bar{\psi}$ we have eliminate the last term:

$$\begin{aligned}
&\frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} \int [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \left[v(1,\infty;\phi) - \mathcal{V}(p_a,1;\theta)\right] dF(\theta) \\
&= - \int \left( \int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} v(p_a,1;\phi) g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi) \\
&- \int \left( \int_{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)}^{\infty} [1 - 1_c(1,1;\theta)] \frac{\partial}{\partial p_a} v(p_a,\infty;\phi) g(\psi|\phi) d\psi \right) dK(\phi)
\end{aligned}$$

and using the derivative of the indirect utility function:

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\frac{\partial}{\partial p_a}\int \left[1-1_c\left(1,1;\theta\right)\right]\left[v(1,\infty;\phi)-\mathcal{V}(p_a,1;\theta)\right]dF(\theta)\\
&=\int\left(\int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)}\left[1-1_c\left(1,1;\theta\right)\right]\tilde{a}(p_a,1;\phi)g(\psi|\phi)d\psi\right)dK(\phi)\\
&+\int\left(\int_{\bar{\psi}(p_a,1;\phi)}^{\infty}\left[1-1_c\left(1,1;\theta\right)\right]\tilde{a}(p_a,\infty;\phi)g(\psi|\phi)d\psi\right)dK(\phi)
\end{aligned}
$$

which can also be written using the optimality of the extensive-margin decision as:

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\frac{\partial}{\partial p_a}\int \left[1-1_c\left(1,1;\theta\right)\right]\left[v(1,\infty;\phi)-\mathcal{V}(p_a,1;\theta)\right]dF(\theta)\\
&=\int\left[1-1_c\left(1,1;\theta\right)\right]a^*(p_a,1;\theta)dF(\theta)
\end{aligned}
$$

Putting the two parts together we have:

$$
\frac{\partial}{\partial p_a}\mathcal{CS}(p_a,1)=A(p_a,1)\,.
$$

Using the definition we can verify that $\mathcal{CS}(1,1)=0$. Thus

$$
\mathcal{CS}(p_a,1)=\int_1^{p_a}A(p,1)dp\,.
$$

□

# B Experiments

### Table B1: Summary Statistics: Experiments

Note: The table reports summary statistics of the users included in the experimental data. Pure cash users are those that have not registered a card in the application. Mixed users are those that have a registered card and have used both payment methods. Column (2) includes users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their fares paid in cash and less than 95%. Pure card users are those that have never used cash as a payment method. The table reports the mean of historical variables such as fares, trips, fares in cash, trips paid in cash, share of fares paid in cash, and tenure. All the variables, except for tenure, are computed for the weeks of the calendar year when the experiment took place. The table also reports the average of the fares, trips, fares in cash, and trips paid in cash during the week of the experiment.

| | (1)<br>Pure Cash | (2)<br>Mixed 1% | (3)<br>Mixed 5% | (4)<br>Pure Card |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fares per week (historical) | 1.54 | 4.26 | 3.84 | 3.58 |
| Trips per week (historical) | 0.36 | 0.83 | 0.76 | 0.52 |
| Fares per week cash (historical) | 1.54 | 1.57 | 1.57 | 0.00 |
| Trips per week cash (historical) | 0.36 | 0.34 | 0.34 | 0.00 |
| Share of fares cash (historical) | 1.00 | 0.43 | 0.45 | 0.00 |
| Tenure in weeks (historical) | 42.99 | 74.52 | 72.92 | 90.61 |
| Fares week (experiment) | 1.73 | 4.35 | 3.94 | 3.88 |
| Trips week (experiment) | 0.40 | 0.82 | 0.76 | 0.55 |
| Fares cash week (experiment) | 1.73 | 1.51 | 1.51 | 0.00 |
| Trips cash week (experiment) | 0.40 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 0.00 |
| Users | 138725 | 109365 | 98773 | 88844 |

# ONLINE APPENDIX

# A Model: Details

## A.1 Random Quasi-linear Utility Test

In this section, we test all restrictions implied by our experimental data on the aggregate quasi-linear utility function. The null hypothesis for the test is that the data set given by the experiments was generated by some quasi-linear utility function at the aggregate level. This test consists on checking several inequalities as explained below. We assume that the rider's $i$ utility function of cash and card rides $(a_i, c_i)$ is given by the composition of version $H$ and $\tilde{U}$. We fix the type $\phi$ and allow for unobservable idiosyncratic shocks $\omega$ to $\tilde{U}$, so the utility function of the rider $(\phi, \omega)$ is:

$$\tilde{U}\left(H\left(a_i, c_i; \phi\right); \phi, \omega\right) \tag{21}$$

where $\tilde{U}(\cdot; \phi, \omega)$ has been described in equation (7). The function $H(\cdot; \phi)$ is the cash-card sub-utility function, which can depend on the observable type $\phi$, but cannot depend on the idiosyncratic shock $\omega$.

It is well know that quasi-linearity is preserved under aggregation. We assume that the rider's random shocks $\omega$ are distributed across riders according to $\mu(\cdot|\phi)$ for a given observable type $\phi$. We define the utility for the representative rider of observable type $\phi$ as:

$$U(a, c; \phi) \equiv \max_{a_i, c_i} \int \tilde{U}\left(H\left(a_i(\omega), c_i(\omega); \phi\right); \phi, \omega\right)\, \mu(d\omega|\phi) \tag{22}$$
$$\text{subject to: } a = \int a_i(\omega)\, \mu(d\omega|\phi) \text{ and } c = \int c_i(\omega)\, \mu(d\omega|\phi)\,.$$

Note that, since we assume that $H$ is the same for all $\omega$'s, the utility of the representative rider is also homothetic with the same $H$. In words, the shocks $\omega$ only change the demand for Uber composite trips, but they don't change the choice of means of payments.

To test whether the data can be approximated using a quasi-linear utility, we use the test proposed by Allen and Rehbeck (2018). The null hypothesis of this test is that a data set of Uber rides paid in cash and card $\{a^t, c^t\}_{t=1}^T$ and their corresponding prices $\{p_a^t, p_c^t\}_{t=1}^T$ were generated by maximizing some quasi-linear utility function, where $t$ indexes the choices corresponding to the different prices. These choices are generated by a quasi-linear utility function if there is a function $U(a, c; \phi)$ for which $(a^t, c^t)$ maximizes $U(a, c; \phi) - p_a^t a - p_c^t c$ for all $t$. In particular, Allen and Rehbeck's (2018) test of quasi-linearity of $\tilde{U}$ consists of finding utility levels $\{\bar{U}^t\}_{t=1}^T$ for which the following $(T-1)T$ inequalities hold:

$$\bar{U}^r - p_a^r a^r - p_c^r c^r \geq \bar{U}^s - p_a^r a^s - p_c^r c^s \text{ for all } r, s = 1, \dots T, \text{ and } r \neq s$$

This, in turn, is equivalent to a test of $J \equiv \sum_{\ell=2}^{K} K!/((K-\ell)!\ell)$ inequalities on partial sums of $p_a^r a^s + p_c^r c^s$ for different values of $s$ and $r$. To be concrete, in one of our experiments we have one control and six treatment effects, so that the test consists on checking up to $J = 2,365$ inequalities. Note that this notation includes the case where there are only changes on the price of cash, as it is the case in the experiments to pure cash users. In this case, with one control and four treatments, the test is equivalent to test up to $J = 84$ inequalities. We implement this test using the linear programming problem suggested by Allen and Rehbeck (2018). The summary statistics of the necessary data to conduct this test are reported in Table A1 and Table A2 in Appendix A.1. We found that all restrictions are satisfied for the two price experiments we conducted.

### Table A1: Random Quasi-linear Utility Test: Experiment 1 (Mixed Users)

Note: The table shows descriptive statistics of the mixed users that were part of the experiment described in the main text. The table reports statistics for the control group and the six treatment groups. The variables reported are those use to test that the users in the experiment were maximizing some quasi-linear utility function. The variables reported are the average trips per user, trips paid in cash per user, fares per user, fare paid in cash per user, total users, and the prices faced by users in the control group and the six treatment groups.

| | (1)<br>Trips | (2)<br>Trips Cash | (3)<br>Fares | (4)<br>Fares Cash | (5)<br>Users | (6)<br>Price Cash | (7)<br>Price Card |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 0.79 | 0.31 | 4.20 | 1.44 | 87001 | 1 | 1 |
| Treatment 1 | 0.86 | 0.38 | 4.49 | 1.80 | 11078 | 0.9 | 1 |
| Treatment 2 | 0.87 | 0.30 | 4.63 | 1.44 | 11209 | 1 | 0.9 |
| Treatment 3 | 0.88 | 0.35 | 4.59 | 1.67 | 11175 | 0.9 | 0.9 |
| Treatment 4 | 0.84 | 0.40 | 4.40 | 1.90 | 11204 | 0.8 | 1 |
| Treatment 5 | 0.88 | 0.28 | 4.69 | 1.29 | 11261 | 1 | 0.8 |
| Treatment 6 | 0.98 | 0.39 | 5.25 | 1.86 | 11189 | 0.8 | 0.8 |

### Table A2: Random Quasi-linear Utility Test: Experiment 2 (Pure Cash Users)

Note: The table shows descriptive statistics of the pure cash users that were part of the experiment described in the main text. The table reports statistics for the control group and the four treatment groups. The variables reported are those use to test that the users in the experiment were maximizing some quasi-linear utility function. The variables reported are the average trips per user, fares per user, total users, and the prices faced by users in the control group and the four treatment groups.

| | (1)<br>Trips | (2)<br>Fares | (3)<br>Users | (4)<br>Price |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Control | 0.37 | 1.66 | 54779 | 1 |
| Treatment 1 | 0.41 | 1.81 | 22841 | 0.9 |
| Treatment 2 | 0.45 | 2.02 | 22827 | 0.85 |
| Treatment 3 | 0.48 | 2.17 | 22836 | 0.8 |
| Treatment 4 | 0.51 | 2.31 | 22840 | 0.75 |

## A.2 CES Sub-utility for Means of Payments Choice

Let $H(a,c) = \left[\alpha^{\frac{1}{\eta}} c^{\frac{\eta-1}{\eta}} + (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{\eta}} a^{\frac{\eta-1}{\eta}}\right]^{\frac{\eta}{\eta-1}}$ so $\alpha$ and $1-\alpha$ are the share of rides in card and cash when both prices are the same, i.e. if $p_a = p_c = 1$. The parameter $\eta$ is the elasticity of substitution. The optimal card and cash trips, which minimize expenditure subject to obtaining one util of composite trips are:

$$c(p_a, p_c) = c\left(\frac{p_a}{p_c}, 1\right) = \alpha\left[\alpha + (1-\alpha)\left(\frac{p_a}{p_c}\right)^{1-\eta}\right]^{\frac{\eta}{1-\eta}}$$

$$a(p_a, p_c) = a\left(\frac{p_a}{p_c}, 1\right) = (1-\alpha)\left[\alpha\left(\frac{p_c}{p_a}\right)^{1-\eta} + (1-\alpha)\right]^{\frac{\eta}{1-\eta}}$$

Note that $c(p,p) = \alpha$ and $a(p,p) = 1-\alpha$, i.e. $\alpha$ and $1-\alpha$ are the shares at equal prices. Note also that, as standard:

$$\frac{a(p_a, p_c)}{c(p_a, p_c)} = \frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha}\left(\frac{p_a}{p_c}\right)^{-\eta}$$

and the ideal price index is: $\mathbb{P}(p_a, p_c) = [\alpha p_c^{1-\eta} + (1-\alpha) p_a^{1-\eta}]^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}$.

## A.3 Exponential Utility for Composite Rides

Let denote the aggregate composite trips by $x$ and assume that $U(x) = -k \exp\left(-\left(x+\bar{x}\right)/k\right)$. We are interested in $U'(x) = P$ (i.e. $\exp\left(-\left(x+\bar{x}\right)/k\right) = P$) or $x = -k\log P - \bar{x}$. In general $X(P) = -k\log P - \bar{x}$ and the choke point is $X(\bar{P}) = 0 = -k\log\bar{P} - \bar{x}$ or $\log\bar{P} = -\bar{x}/k$.

**Demand, Choke price and elasticity.** Note we can write:

$$X(P) = -k\log P + k\log\bar{P} \tag{23}$$

so that the intercept divided by the slope is the choke point. Also note:

$$-P\frac{\partial X(P)}{\partial P} = k \text{ thus}$$

$$-\frac{P}{X(P)}\frac{\partial X(P)}{\partial p} = \frac{k}{k\log(\bar{P}/P)} = \frac{1}{\log(\bar{P}/P)} \text{ or}$$

$$\bar{P}/P = \exp\left(\frac{1}{-\frac{P}{X(P)}\frac{\partial X(P)}{\partial P}}\right)$$

We can define the elasticity as:

$$\epsilon(P) \equiv -\frac{P}{X(P)} \frac{\partial X(P)}{\partial P}$$

$$\bar{P}/P = \exp\left(\frac{1}{\epsilon(P)}\right)$$

**Consumer Surplus for composite trips.** We define the consumer surplus as:

$$C(P_0) = \int_{P_0}^{\bar{P}} X(p) dp$$

so using the form of the demand as well as the first order conditions, we have:

$$\begin{aligned} C(P_0) &= \int_{P_0}^{\bar{P}} X(p) dp = -k \int_{P_0}^{\bar{P}} \log p dp + [-\bar{x}] (\bar{P} - P_0) \\ &= k(\bar{P} - P_0) - P_0 X(P_0) \end{aligned}$$

which are observables, since we can estimate $k$ and $\bar{p}$. The consumer surplus is positive:

$$C(P_0) = k \left[ \left(\bar{P} - P_0\right) - P_0 \left(\log \bar{P} - \log P_0\right) \right] > 0$$

where the inequality follows from the concavity of log. Also note that :

$$C(P_0) = k P_0 \left(\frac{\bar{P} - P_0}{P_0}\right)^2 + o\left(\left(\bar{P} - P_0\right)^2\right)$$

We can normalize the consumer surplus by the current expenditures:

$$\frac{C(P_0)}{P_0 X(P_0)} = \frac{k}{X(P_0)} \frac{(\bar{P} - P_0)}{P_0} - 1 = \epsilon(P_0) \left[\exp\left(\frac{1}{\epsilon(P_0)}\right) - 1\right] - 1$$

where $\epsilon(P_0)$ is the elasticity evaluated at $p_0$. Expanding the exponential we get:

$$\frac{C(P_0)}{P_0 X(P_0)} > \epsilon(P_0) \left[1 + \frac{1}{\epsilon(P_0)} + \frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{1}{\epsilon(P_0)}\right)^2 - 1\right] - 1 = \frac{1}{2} \frac{1}{\epsilon(P_0)}$$

which is the expression for a linear demand, which follows because the remaining terms in the MacLaurin expansion are all positive. As $\epsilon(P_0) \to \infty$, the two expressions converge.

## A.4 Demand Functions for Different Users Types

In this section, we use the demand for composite rides coming from an exponential utility function $U(\cdot)$ described by parameters $k, \lambda$ and $\bar{P}$, as well as CES sub-utility $H$, which share parameter $\alpha$ for card and with elasticity of substitution $\eta$. Note that composite rides equal total rides only when both means of payment are available. We consider several other cases:

1. Mixed users cash demand when facing $p = p_a = p_c$:

$$\tilde{a}(p,p) = \begin{cases} (1-\alpha)k \log \bar{P} - (1-\alpha)k \log p & \text{if } p < \bar{P} \\ 0 \text{ otherwise} & \end{cases}$$

2. Mixed users cash demand for arbitrary prices $(p_a, p_c)$:

$$\tilde{a}(p_a,p_c) = \begin{cases} (1-\alpha)k \left(\frac{p_a}{\mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c)}\right)^{-\eta} \left[\log\left(\frac{\bar{P}}{\mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c)}\right)\right] & \text{if } \mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c) \leq \bar{P} \\ 0 & \text{if } \mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c) > \bar{P} \end{cases}$$

3. Mixed users cash demand for arbitrary cash price $p_a$ but fixed card price $p_c = 1$:

$$\tilde{a}(p_a,1) = \begin{cases} k(1-\alpha) \left(\frac{p_a}{\mathbb{P}(p_a,1)}\right)^{-\eta} \log\left(\frac{\bar{P}}{\mathbb{P}(p_a,1)}\right) & \text{if } \mathbb{P}(p_a,1) < \bar{P} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

4. Pure cash users, i.e. users facing arbitrary $p_a$ but infinite card price $p_c = \infty$.

$$\tilde{a}(p_a,\infty) = \begin{cases} k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \left[\log\left(\frac{\bar{P}}{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}\right)\right] - k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \log p_a & \text{if } (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} p_a < \bar{P} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

5. Pure card users (card demand for arbitrary $p_c$) but infinite cash price $p_a = \infty$.

$$\tilde{c}(\infty,p_c) = \begin{cases} k\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \left[\log\left(\frac{\bar{P}}{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}\right)\right] - k\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \log p_c & \text{if } \alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} p_c < \bar{P} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Note that if $p_c = p_a = 1$ and both means of payments are available, total trips $T = X(1) = k \ln \bar{P}$. This is because total demand for trips paid in card is $\tilde{c}(1,1) = \alpha X(1)$ and the total demand for trips paid in cash is $\tilde{a}(1,1) = (1-\alpha)X(1)$ so that $T = \tilde{c}(1,1) + \tilde{a}(1,1) = X(1)$.

## A.5 Indirect Utility

Let $U(x) = -\exp\left(-(x+\bar{x})/k\right)/k$ (i.e. exponential) and $H(a,c) = \left[\alpha c^{1-\frac{1}{\eta}} + (1-\alpha)a^{1-\frac{1}{\eta}}\right]^{\frac{\eta}{\eta-1}}$ (i.e. CES). The indirect utility $v(p_a,p_c)$ is thus

$$v(p_a,p_c) = U(X(P)) + (I - PX(P)) = -ke^{-X(P)/k}e^{-\bar{x}/k} + (I - PX(P))$$

Using that the demand is $X(P) = -k\log(P/\bar{P})$ and $e^{-\bar{x}/k} = \bar{P}$ we have:

$$v(p_a,p_c) = -ke^{\log P/\bar{P}}\bar{P} + (I + Pk\log(P/\bar{P})) = -k\frac{P}{\bar{P}}\bar{P} + (I + Pk\log(P/\bar{P}))$$

Thus the indirect utility, in terms of the numeraire:

$$v(p_a,p_c) = \begin{cases} k\mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c)\left[\log(\mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c)/\bar{P}) - 1\right] + kI & \text{if } \mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c) \leq \bar{P} \\ -k\bar{P} + kI & \text{if } \mathbb{P}(p_a,p_c) > \bar{P} \end{cases}$$

**Indirect Utilities for selected cases**

1. Mixed user

$$v(1,1) = -k + kI - k\log\bar{P}$$

2. Pure cash user

$$v(1,\infty) = \begin{cases} k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left[\log\left(\frac{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right) - 1\right] + kI & (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \leq \bar{P} \\ -k\bar{P} + kI & \text{if } (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} > \bar{P} \end{cases}$$

3. Pure card user

$$v(\infty,1) = \begin{cases} k\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left[\log\left(\frac{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right) - 1\right] + kI & \alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \leq \bar{P} \\ -k\bar{P} + kI & \text{if } \alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} > \bar{P} \end{cases}$$

4. Non-Uber user

$$v(\infty,\infty) = -k\bar{P} + kI$$

**Indirect Utility Comparisons:**

1. Mixed users vs. Pure card users, relative to total trips (or fares) of mixed users:

$$\frac{v(1,1)-v(\infty,1)}{(c^*(1,1)+a^*(1,1)))} = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{\log \bar{P}}\left[-\log(\bar{P})-1+\bar{P}\right] & \text{if } \alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \geq \bar{P} \\ \frac{1}{\log \bar{P}}\left[-\log(\bar{P})-1-\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left(\log\left(\frac{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right)-1\right)\right] & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \tag{24}$$

2. Pure cash users vs. non Uber-users

$$\frac{v(1,\infty)-v(\infty,\infty)}{a^*(1,\infty)} = \begin{cases} \frac{\frac{\bar{P}}{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}-1}{\log\left(\frac{\bar{P}}{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}\right)}-1 & \text{if } \bar{P} > (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

and

$$v(1,\infty)-v(\infty,\infty) = \begin{cases} k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left[\log\left(\frac{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right)-1\right]+k\bar{P} & \text{if } \bar{P} > (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

3. Pure card users vs. non Uber-users

$$\frac{v(\infty,1)-v(\infty,\infty)}{a^*(1,\infty)} = \begin{cases} \frac{\frac{\bar{P}}{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}-1}{\log\left(\frac{\bar{P}}{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}\right)}-1 & \text{if } \bar{P} > \alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

and

$$v(\infty,1)-v(\infty,\infty) = \begin{cases} k\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left[\log\left(\frac{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right)-1\right]+k\bar{P} & \text{if } \bar{P} > \alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

4. Mixed Users vs Pure cash Users

$$\frac{v(1,1)-v(1,\infty)}{a^*(1,\infty)} = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{0}\left[-\log(\bar{P})-1+\bar{P}\right] & \text{if } (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \geq \bar{P} \text{ and otherwise} \\ \frac{1}{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\log \bar{P}}\left[-\log(\bar{P})-1-(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left(\log\left(\frac{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right)-1\right)\right] & \end{cases}$$

and

$$v(1,1)-v(1,\infty) = \begin{cases} k\left[-\log(\bar{P})-1+\bar{P}\right] & \text{if } (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \geq \bar{P} \text{ and otherwise} \\ k\left[-\log(\bar{P})-1-(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left(\log\left(\frac{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right)-1\right)\right] & \end{cases}$$

## A.6 Heterogeneity of Mixed Users

Index riders by $i$ and assume that $\bar{P}_i$ is rider specific. Assume that the demands of total trips by mixed riders facing $P = p_a = p_c$ can be written as: $x_i = k \log \bar{P}_i - k \log P = \beta_{0i} + \beta_1 \log P$. We assume that $k$, and hence the slope of the regression, is common across riders. We can then write:

$$\log \bar{P}_i = \frac{\beta_{0i}}{\beta_1}$$

The rider specific elasticity is $\log \bar{P}_i / \log P = 1/\epsilon_i(P)$ or $\log P / \log \bar{P}_i = \epsilon_i(P)$ and evaluating it at $P = 1$: $\log \bar{P}_i = 1/\epsilon_i(1)$. Thus

$$1/\epsilon_i(1) = \log \bar{P}_i = \frac{\beta_{0i}}{\beta_1} \text{ or } \epsilon_i(1) = \frac{\beta_1}{\beta_{0i}}$$

Note that if we normalize the price to $P = p_a = p_c = 1$, then we are measuring $x$ in fares. We first estimate the elasticity with a regression in our experimental data of:

$$X_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \log P$$

so that $\beta_0$ has the interpretation of the control group's fares. Given the randomization, the control group has the same average fares, pre-experiment, as the treatment groups. We let:

$$\epsilon(1) = \beta_1 / \beta_0$$

Then, we can correct the elasticities to other groups with different fares as follows:

$$\epsilon_i(1) = \frac{\beta_1}{\beta_0} \frac{\beta_0}{\beta_{0,i}} \approx \epsilon(1) \frac{Avg\, Fare}{Fare_i}$$

## A.7 Net Consumer Surplus Lost: Pure Cash Users

In this section we compute the adjustment to the consumer surplus of pure cash users in the case of a ban due to the option of becoming pure card users. We assume that all the pure cash users have a common value of $\phi$ but they are heterogeneous with respect to the cost of registering/obtaining a card. In particular we obtain an interval for the counterfactual value of $\alpha$ for these riders, and for each value of $\alpha$ we describe the corresponding values of $k$ and $\bar{P}$. We assume that the elasticity of substitution $\eta$ is the same as the one we estimate from mixed users.

For each feasible value of $\alpha$ and the corresponding values of $(k, \bar{P})$ and distribution $g(\cdot)$

for $\psi$ we compute the consumer surplus lost in the ban as:

$$
\begin{aligned}
CS_{ban,a}(\phi) &\equiv v(1,\infty;\phi) - \int \max\left\{v(\infty,1;\phi) - \psi, v(\infty,\infty;\phi)\right\} g(\psi|\phi)d\psi \\
&= v(1,\infty;\phi) - v(\infty,\infty;\phi) \\
&- \left[v(\infty,1;\phi) - v(\infty,\infty;\phi)\right] \int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\max\{\underline{\psi},\psi_{ban}\}} g(\psi|\phi)d\psi + \int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\max\{\underline{\psi},\psi_{ban}\}} \psi g(\psi|\phi)d\psi
\end{aligned}
\tag{25}
$$

where $g$ is the distribution of fixed cost among the pure cash users before the ban conditional on $\phi$, $\underline{\psi}$ is the lower bound of the support of $g$, and $\psi_{ban}$ is the highest fixed cost for which a rider will migrate from being pure cash to pure card in the case of a ban. Note that a lower bound of equation (25) is

$$
\begin{aligned}
CS_{ban,a}(\phi) \geq \underline{CS}_{ban,a}(\phi) &\equiv v(1,\infty;\phi) - v(\infty,\infty;\phi) \\
&- \left[v(\infty,1;\phi) - \underline{\psi} - v(\infty,\infty;\phi)\right] \int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\max\{\underline{\psi},\psi_{ban}\}} g(\psi|\phi)d\psi
\end{aligned}
\tag{26}
$$

We proceed in two steps. The first step jointly identify the set of values for $\phi$ and range of values $\underline{\psi}$ and $\psi_{ban}$. The second step obtains the distribution $g$ within $[\underline{\psi}, \psi_{ban}]$.

1. We obtain a set of values of $\phi = (\eta, \alpha, k, \bar{P})$, which can be represented as an interval for $\alpha$ and the corresponding unique values for each value of $\alpha$ in this interval. These parameter have to satisfy the following conditions/assumptions, which are discussed at the end of Section 4.4.

   (a) The (common) elasticity of substitution $\eta$ on the function $H$ is the same as the one for mixed riders. Here we use the CES functional form for $H$.

   (b) The value of $\eta$ and the two parameter values $(\beta_0, \beta_1)$ characterizing the demand of pure cash rides $\tilde{a}(p,\infty;\phi) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \log p$ give two equations for the parameters $(\alpha, k, \bar{P})$. The derivation uses that $H$ is CES and $U$ being exponential. The equations are:

$$
\beta_0 = k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \left[\log\left(\frac{\bar{P}}{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}\right)\right] \tag{27}
$$

$$
\beta_1 = -k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \tag{28}
$$

   (c) Pure cash users that become pure card users take fewer rides after the ban. In term of the model it means that $\tilde{a}(1,\infty;\phi) > \tilde{c}(\infty,1;\phi) > 0$. This was shown in the analysis of Puebla by Alvarez and Argente (2022). Using the expression in Appendix A.4 we have:

$$\alpha \leq 1/2 \tag{29}$$

(d) The demand of a pure cash rider that becomes a pure card rider after the ban must be strictly positive, or $\tilde{a}(\infty, 1; \phi)$. The estimated parameters $\beta_0$, $\beta_1$ and equation (27) and equation (28) enforce that the demand of pure cash users is positive. Using the expressions in Appendix A.4 we have:

$$\frac{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}} \leq 1 \tag{30}$$

Proposition 2. Assume that $\eta > 1$, $\beta_0 > 0$, and $\beta_1 < 0$. The set of values for which $\alpha$ satisfies all the conditions described in step 1 above is contained in an interval $[\underline{\alpha}, 1/2]$ where $\underline{\alpha} = 1/\left[1 + \exp\left((1-\eta)\beta_0/\beta_1\right)\right]$. The values of $\bar{P}$ and $k$ for each $\alpha$ are given by

$$\bar{P} = (1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} e^{-\beta_0/\beta_1} \text{ and } k = \frac{-\beta_1}{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}. \tag{31}$$

2. The last step is to estimate the distribution $g$ corresponding to each set of values ($\alpha$, $k$, $\bar{P}$, $\underline{\psi}$, $\psi_{ban}$).

(a) Prior to the ban, pure cash riders must prefer to use cash, i.e. they must be indifferent when $\psi$ is at the lower bound of the support for $g$:

$$\underline{\psi} \equiv v(1, 1; \phi) - v(1, \infty; \phi) = -k(1 + \log \bar{P}) - k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \left[\log\left(\frac{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right) - 1\right] \tag{32}$$

where $\underline{\psi}$ is the lower bound of the support of $\psi$.

(b) $\psi_{ban}$ triggers that no pure cash users want to registered a card:

$$\psi_{ban} = v(\infty, 1; \phi) - v(\infty, \infty; \phi) \equiv k\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}} \left[\log\left(\frac{\alpha^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\bar{P}}\right) - 1\right] + k\bar{P} \tag{33}$$

(c) The value of $\int_{\underline{\psi}}^{\max\{\underline{\psi}, \psi_{ban}\}} g(\psi|\phi) d\psi$ is the excess migration of pure cash riders to pure card riders.

(d) The shape of $g$ in the interval $[\underline{\psi},\ \psi_{ban}]$ is obtained by using the information of the Experiment 3, given the parameters $(\alpha,\ k,\ \bar{P},\ \eta)$. For a given discount rate $\rho$, these experiments give three values of the CDF for $g$ inside the interval $[\underline{\psi},\ \psi_{ban}]$. See equation (13) for the relevant expressions. We interpolate these values so that they are consistent with the experiments and, among them, we choose the one with the highest cost (in a first order stochastic dominance sense). Furthermore, we use $\rho = 0.25$ so the expected duration of the fixed cost is four years.

Next, we note that the consumer surplus lost, for those that do not switch to card payments after the ban, is independent of $\alpha$. This is the quantity plotted in Figure 5 (as a fraction of expenditure) and it is only a function of $\beta_0$, $\beta_1$. To see this recall that the consumer surplus lost for this group is defined as:

$$CS_{ban,a}(\phi) \equiv v(1,\infty;\phi) - v(\infty,\infty;\phi) = k(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left[\log\left(\frac{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}{\log \bar{P}}\right) - 1\right] + k\bar{P}$$

Using the definitions of $\beta_0$ and $\beta_1$ and Proposition 2 we can write

$$\widehat{CS}_{ban,a}(\beta_0,\beta_1) = -\beta_0 + \beta_1 - \beta_1 \exp\left(-\beta_0/\beta_1\right) \tag{34}$$

On the other hand, the consumer surplus of pure cash users who switch to card payments can be written as a function of $\alpha$ given $\beta_0$, $\beta_1$, and $\eta$. Using Proposition 2 and the definitions of $\beta_0$ and $\beta_1$ and substituting into equations equation (32) and equation (33) we find

$$\widehat{\underline{\psi}}(\alpha;\beta_0,\beta_1,\eta) = \frac{\beta_1}{(1-\alpha)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}}\left(1 + \frac{1}{1-\eta}\log(1-\alpha) - \frac{\beta_0}{\beta_1}\right) - \beta_1 + \beta_0 \tag{35}$$

and

$$\widehat{\psi}_{ban}(\alpha;\beta_0,\beta_1,\eta) = -\beta_1\left(\frac{\alpha}{1-\alpha}\right)^{\frac{1}{1-\eta}}\left[\frac{1}{1-\eta}\log\left(\frac{\alpha}{1-\alpha}\right) + \frac{\beta_0}{\beta_1} - 1\right] - \beta_1 e^{-\beta_0/\beta_1} \tag{36}$$

The consumer surplus lost for switchers can be written as

$$\widehat{CS}_{ban,a}(\alpha;\beta_0,\beta_1,\eta) = \left[-\beta_0 + \beta_1 - \beta_1 \exp\left(-\beta_0/\beta_1\right)\right] - \int_{\widehat{\underline{\psi}}}^{\max\{\widehat{\underline{\psi}},\widehat{\psi}_{ban}\}} \left[\psi - \widehat{\underline{\psi}}\right]\widehat{g}(\psi)d\psi$$

with lower bound

$$\widehat{\underline{CS}}_{ban,a}(\alpha;\beta_0,\beta_1,\eta) \equiv [-\beta_0+\beta_1-\beta_1\exp(-\beta_0/\beta_1)] - \tilde{\psi}\int_{\widehat{\underline{\psi}}}^{\max\{\widehat{\underline{\psi}},\widehat{\psi}_{ban}\}} \widehat{g}(\psi)d\psi \tag{37}$$

where $\tilde{\psi} \equiv \widehat{\psi}_{ban} - \widehat{\underline{\psi}}$ and $\widehat{g}$, $\widehat{\underline{\psi}}$, $\widehat{\psi}_{ban}$, and $\tilde{\psi}$ are evaluated at $(\alpha;\beta_0,\beta_1,\eta)$.[50] Given that $\tilde{\psi}$ only affects the consumer surplus of the users that switch to card payments after the ban, given $\beta_0$, $\beta_1$, and $\eta$, we can obtain the lower bound of the net consumer surplus by evaluating $\tilde{\psi}$ for all values of $\alpha \in [\underline{\alpha}, \alpha = 1/2]$. In practice $\tilde{\psi}$ is a single-peaked function with maximum either at $\alpha = \underline{\alpha}$ or at $\alpha = 1/2$.

## A.8 Case with No Heterogeneity

We begin with the case without heterogeneity, all users have the same $\phi$. From Table G1 we obtain obtain the following point estimates $\beta_1 = -2.044$ and $\beta_0 = 1.48$ for the miles specification. We use the mile specification because the price of a trip has been normalized to one, as in the theory. This corresponds to an elasticity of 1.38. Aiming to be conservative, this is the largest elasticity, which gives the lowest consumer surplus. Using the values $\beta_0$ and $\beta_1$ we obtain a consumer surplus lost by the pure cash users that do *not* migrate after the ban, estimated using equation (34), of approximately 36 USD per year, or about 0.47 of the yearly expenditure on rides paid in cash.

Moreover, with this values of $\beta_0$, $\beta_1$ and our benchmark estimates of $\eta$, the difference $\tilde{\psi}$ is increasing in $\alpha$ ranging between $\tilde{\psi} = 0$ and and $\tilde{\psi} = 10.8$ USD per year at $\alpha = 0.5$. Thus we can use the lower bound on the consumer surplus lost is given by selecting $\alpha = 0.5$ and using the formula for the lower bound we obtain $\widehat{\underline{CS}}_{ban,a} \geq 33.4$ USD per year or about 0.43 of the yearly expenditure of cash rides in Uber. For this lower bound we have used $\int_{\widehat{\underline{\psi}}}^{\max\{\widehat{\underline{\psi}},\widehat{\psi}_{ban}\}} \hat{g}(\psi)d\psi = 0.3$, based on Puebla.

We can use the results of Experiment 3 to obtain a better estimate of $\int_{\widehat{\underline{\psi}}}^{\max\{\widehat{\underline{\psi}},\widehat{\psi}_{ban}\}} \psi\hat{g}(\psi)d\psi$. We use that for one time rewards of 5.3, 10.5 and 15.7 USD the excess migration rate in six weeks have been 3.3%, 3.9% and 4.7% respectively –see Table 5, column (3). Since these are one time rewards, we need to convert them into flows, by using a rate of discount, which should take into account the duration of the cards. To be conservative we use $\rho = 0.2$, so the average duration is 5 years, i.e. the rewards are about 1, 2.1, and 3.6 USD dollars per year.

[50] In what follows, to simplify the notation, we use this convention.

We can use these figures to obtain a tighter upper bound as follows:

$$\int_{\underline{\widehat{\psi}}}^{\max\{\underline{\widehat{\psi}},\widehat{\psi}_{ban}\}} \left[\psi - \underline{\psi}\right] \hat{g}(\psi) d\psi$$
$$\leq 1 \times 0.033 + 2.1 \times (0.039 - 0.033) + 3.6 \times (0.047 - 0.039) + (10.8 - 3.6) \times (0.3 - 0.047)$$
$$= 1.9 \leq 0.3 \times 10.8 = 3.24$$

In this case we obtain $\widehat{CS}_{ban,a} \approx 36 - 1.9 = 34.1$ USD per year or about 0.44 of the yearly expenditure on Uber paid in cash by pure cash riders. This calculation is our headline number for pure cash users who switch to cards in a ban. The results are similar if, instead of using $\eta = 3$, we use a higher value (i.e. $\eta$=5). In this case, the net consumer surplus lost is 31.2 USD per year or about 0.40 of the yearly expenditure on Uber paid in cash by pure cash riders.

## A.9 Case with Heterogeneity

Next, we allow consumer to have different $\beta_0$. For each percentile of the distribution of $\beta_0$ reported in Columns (1)-(2) of Table A3, we compute the consumer surplus lost of both pure cash users that do not switch to card payments and those that do. Columns (3) reports the percentiles that migrate to card after a ban on cash consistent to our model (i.e. $\tilde{\psi} > 0$). We aim to provide a lower bound for the consumer surplus lost. First, in order to be consistent with the evidence from Puebla, we allow 30% of the users to migrate. We use the percentiles of the distribution with migration consistent with our model and with a lower consumer surplus lost. These percentiles are reported in Column (4). Second, we evaluate $\underline{\widehat{CS}}_{ban,a}$ at $\alpha = 1/2$ since, for all percentiles that switched to card payments, it provides a maximum value for $\tilde{\psi}$ and hence a lower bound for the net consumer surplus. The last column reports the lower bound of the net consumer surplus lost for each percentile. Notice that the net consumer surplus lost is convex in $\beta_0$ as shown in equation (34). The consumer surplus lost is higher for pure cash users that travel more because of the convexity of the net consumer surplus lost and the skewness of the distribution of historical trips. The median net consumer surplus lost is 10.3 USD (mean 185 USD). If we use $\eta$=5, results are similar, the median is 10.6 USD (mean 181 USD).

## Table A3: Net Consumer Surplus Lost in a Ban on Cash for Pure Cash Users

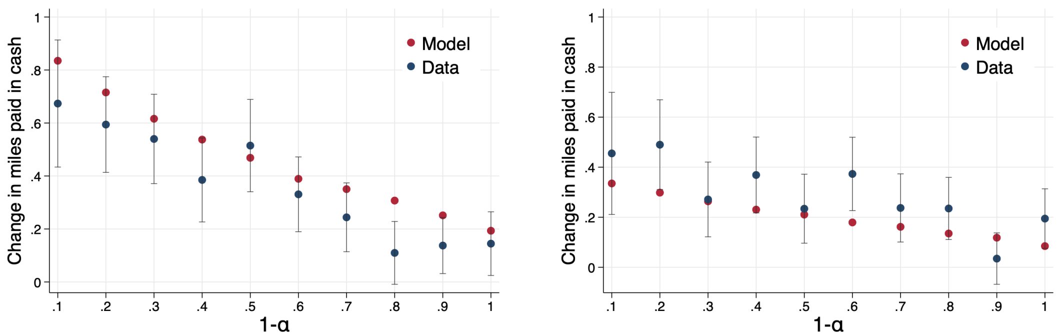
Note: The table reports the net consumer surplus lost of pure cash users after a ban on cash for several percentiles of miles per week, $\beta_0$. The net consumer surplus lost is the adjustment to the consumer surplus of pure cash users in the case of a ban due to the option of becoming pure card users. Column (3) shows the percentiles of the distribution of $\beta_0$ that switch to card payments (i.e. $\tilde{\psi} > 0$) according to our model. Column (4) shows the percentiles that percentiles of the distribution of $\beta_0$ that we elect to migrate to card payments in order to be consistent with the data of Puebla (30% of the population) and also to provide a lower bound of the consumer surplus lost. Column (5) reports the lower bound of the net consumer surplus lost by the pure cash users, those that migrate are adjusted by the costs paid to migrate. All calculations use $\beta_1$ = -2.044, $\eta$=3, and $\alpha$=1/2 since for that $\alpha$ the consumer surplus lower bound is attained. The average $\beta_0$ in our sample is 1.48.

| (1) Percentile | (2) $\beta_0$ | (3) Consistent | (4) Migrate | (5) Net Consumer Surplus Lost (USD) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | 0.16 | 0 | 0 | 0.3471 |
| 10 | 0.23 | 0 | 0 | 0.7359 |
| 15 | 0.30 | 0 | 0 | 1.2043 |
| 20 | 0.36 | 0 | 0 | 1.7879 |
| 25 | 0.42 | 0 | 0 | 2.5156 |
| 30 | 0.49 | 0 | 0 | 3.4231 |
| 35 | 0.57 | 0 | 0 | 4.5722 |
| 40 | 0.65 | 0 | 0 | 6.0297 |
| 45 | 0.74 | 0 | 0 | 7.9076 |
| 50 | 0.84 | 0 | 0 | 10.356 |
| 55 | 0.95 | 0 | 0 | 13.582 |
| 60 | 1.08 | 0 | 0 | 18.011 |
| 65 | 1.23 | 1 | 1 | 24.091 |
| 70 | 1.42 | 1 | 1 | 31.143 |
| 75 | 1.65 | 1 | 1 | 41.493 |
| 80 | 1.96 | 1 | 1 | 57.841 |
| 85 | 2.38 | 1 | 1 | 86.165 |
| 90 | 3.01 | 1 | 1 | 144.09 |
| 95 | 4.11 | 1 | 0 | 307.85 |
| 100 | 8.24 | 1 | 0 | 2952.1 |

# B Experiments: Details

## B.1 Implied Elasticities Mixed Users' Demand for Cash Trips

**Figure B1: Elasticity of Demand: Trips Paid in Cash (Model vs Data)**




(a) 20% off trips paid with cash (b) 10% off trips paid with cash

Note: Panel (a) shows the percent change in miles paid in cash for mixed users that received 20% off for trips paid in cash (relative to the control group) for different deciles of riders' cash share. Panel (b) shows the percent change in miles paid in cash for mixed users that received 10% off for trips paid in cash (relative to the control group) for different deciles of riders' cash share. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The vertical lines are 95% standard error bands. The estimates include mixed users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. In both panels, the red dots indicate the changes in miles paid in cash for mixed users predicted by the model using $\eta = 3$ and $\epsilon = 1.1$.

In this Appendix, we compute the price elasticities of mixed users' demand for cash trips using our structural model – evaluated at the estimated parameters – and compare them with the observed elasticities from the experimental data. In particular, we compare the two elasticities obtained after giving riders discounts on cash trips in Experiment 1; recall that, while there are six treatment groups, only two of them, treatment (i) and treatment (iv), involved discounts conditional on paying only with cash. Figure B1 compares the observed percent change in miles paid in cash with those predicted by our model for each decile of the riders' historical cash share. In the data, the riders' elasticities are estimated as the difference between the average number of miles of riders in the treatment and control groups for each of the two discounts. In the model, we use our preferred parameter estimates (i.e. $\eta = 3$ and $\epsilon = 1.1$) to compute the elasticities implied by mixed users' cash demand described in Section A.4 together with a choice of $\bar{P}$ to match the historical cash fares of each rider. Note that $\eta$ and $\epsilon$ are estimated using different price changes; they are estimated using either all six treatment groups in Experiment 1 or using only the treatment groups where Uber prices are the same for rides paid in cash and paid with cards. Figure B1 shows that the model predictions are roughly in line with the observed elasticities for both 20% and 10% discounts on trips paid with cash.

## B.2 Other Experiments

### B.2.1 Ubernomics

**Table B1: Summary Statistics: Ubernomics**

Note: The table reports summary statistics of the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. Pure cash users are those that have not registered a card in the application. Mixed users are those that have a registered card and have used both payment methods. Column (2) includes users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their fares paid in cash and less than 95%. Pure card users are those that have never used cash as a payment method. The table reports the mean of historical variables such as fares, trips, fares in cash, trips paid in cash, share of fares paid in cash, and tenure. All the variables, except for tenure, are computed for the weeks of the calendar year when the experiment took place. The table also reports the average of the fares, trips, fares in cash, and trips paid in cash during the week of the experiment.

| | (1)<br>Pure Cash | (2)<br>Mixed 1% | (3)<br>Mixed 5% | (4)<br>Pure Card |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fares per week (historical) | 1.43 | 5.29 | 4.56 | 5.16 |
| Trips per week (historical) | 0.36 | 1.11 | 0.98 | 1.02 |
| Fares per week cash (historical) | 1.43 | 1.33 | 1.44 | 0.00 |
| Trips per week cash (historical) | 0.36 | 0.31 | 0.33 | 0.00 |
| Share of fares cash (historical) | 1.00 | 0.33 | 0.37 | 0.00 |
| Tenure in weeks (historical) | 47.36 | 88.80 | 85.53 | 114.83 |
| Fares week (experiment) | 3.00 | 7.00 | 6.34 | 6.55 |
| Trips week (experiment) | 0.73 | 1.40 | 1.27 | 1.19 |
| Fares cash week (experiment) | 2.91 | 2.22 | 2.39 | 0.00 |
| Trips cash week (experiment) | 0.71 | 0.49 | 0.53 | 0.00 |
| Users | 4869 | 4306 | 3719 | 26162 |

The experiment took place in the Greater Mexico City from May 15th to May 22nd of 2017, only a few months after the introduction of cash in the State of Mexico. The treatment groups received 10% and 20% off in all rides taken the week of the experiment. The day before the experiment started, all riders in the treatment groups were emailed and received an in-app notification informing them of the relevant price change. The promotion went live on Monday at 4 am local time and lasted through the following Monday at 4 am. Riders received a reminder of the promotion on Wednesday and Friday. To guarantee that the sample in this experiment is comparable to the one used in our experiments, we only consider riders whose most frequent city is the Greater Mexico City. Table B1 shows descriptive statistics of the users in this experiment. The sample includes 4,869 pure cash users and 4,306 mixed users. To guarantee that the estimates of the elasticity of demand are comparable across experiments, we estimate them controlling for the same observables we use to balance the treatment groups in our experiment: average of weekly historical trips, average of weekly historical fares, and log tenure (in weeks). Appendix G.2 shows the estimates of the elasticity of demand for pure cash users (Table 3) and mixed users (Table 2). The tables show that the estimates are close to those found using our experimental data; the null hypothesis that these elasticities are the same cannot be rejected.

### B.2.2 Mandin Experiment

**Table B2: Summary Statistics: Mandin**

Note: The table reports summary statistics of the users included in the Mandin experiment. Pure cash users are those that have not registered a card in the application. Mixed users are those that have a registered card and have used both payment methods. Column (2) includes users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their fares paid in cash and less than 95%. Pure card users are those that have never used cash as a payment method. The table reports the mean of historical variables such as fares, trips, fares in cash, trips paid in cash, share of fares paid in cash, and tenure. All the variables, except for tenure, are computed for the weeks of the calendar year when the experiment took place. The table also reports the weekly average of the fares, trips, fares in cash, and trips paid in cash during the weeks of the experiment.

| | (1)<br>Pure Cash | (2)<br>Mixed 1% | (3)<br>Mixed 5% | (4)<br>Pure Card |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fares per week (historical) | 4.30 | 12.32 | 10.61 | 11.53 |
| Trips per week (historical) | 1.08 | 2.37 | 2.10 | 2.12 |
| Fares per week cash (historical) | 4.30 | 3.27 | 3.65 | 0.00 |
| Trips per week cash (historical) | 1.08 | 0.71 | 0.79 | 0.00 |
| Share of fares cash (historical) | 1.00 | 0.34 | 0.39 | 0.00 |
| Tenure in weeks (historical) | 50.91 | 86.15 | 82.23 | 115.73 |
| Fares week (experiment) | 6.74 | 14.68 | 13.21 | 13.10 |
| Trips week (experiment) | 1.66 | 2.87 | 2.65 | 2.47 |
| Fares cash week (experiment) | 6.43 | 4.03 | 4.48 | 0.00 |
| Trips cash week (experiment) | 1.60 | 0.89 | 0.98 | 0.00 |
| Users | 5668 | 11660 | 9254 | 47849 |

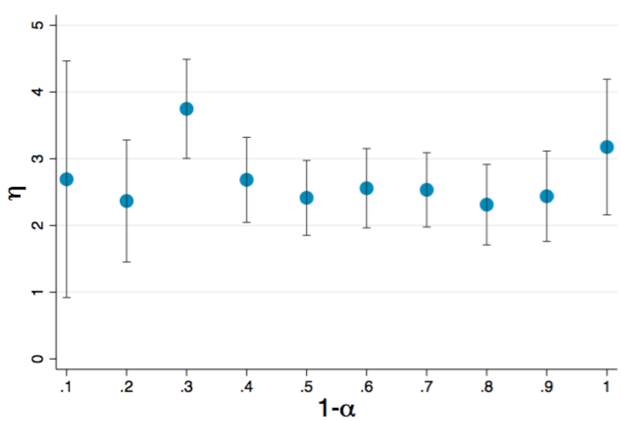
The Mandin (Demand Incentive) experiment took place in all areas of the Greater Mexico City (except for the South) in June 2018 and lasted four weeks. Riders were segmented depending on the number of trips they took during the last month and area of the city where they take most of their trips. Distinct levels of discounts were given to each Rider segment. The geographic areas they considered and the distribution of riders in each area are: North (30% of CDMX trips), West (8%), Center (32% ), South (14%), and East (15%). Furthermore, they segmented riders according to the number of trips they took during the last year in the following categories: Remain (Trips $\leq 10$), Regular ($10 <$ Trips $\leq 20$), Mid ( $20 <$ Trips $\leq 30$), Power ($30 <$ Trips $< 50$), and Rockstar (Trips $\geq 50$).

In this experiment, the control group was composed by users in the segments Remain, Regular, Mid, Power and Rockstar. The treatment groups were the following: 10% off: Remain and Regular; 20% off: Remain, Regular, Mid, Power and Rockstar; 30% off: Mid, Power and Rockstar. Discounts were offered to targeted riders through an automatic promo apply, and periodic communications were sent to them with the intention to incentivize usage.

To guarantee that the sample in this experiment is comparable to the one we use we consider riders whose most frequent city is the Greater Mexico City as in our experiment. Table B2 describes the characteristics of the users that took part of the experiment. In addition, we control for the same observables we use to balance the treatment groups in our experiment: average of weekly historical trips, average of weekly historical fares, and log tenure (in weeks). Using the data of this experiment we find an elasticity of 1.1 for pure cash users and 1.2 for mixed users, which are within the range of those estimated in our experiment. Importantly, given that this experiment lasted four weeks, we consider these findings as evidence that the short-run elasticity and the medium-run elasticity of Uber rides are very similar.

## B.3 Experiment Intensive-Margin: Robustness

**Figure B2: Elasticity: Mixed Users (by Cash Share)**




Note: The figure reports estimates of the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users for different deciles of the riders' cash share. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The dependent variable is the relative miles between card payments and cash for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable are the relative prices for trips in cash and card. Each dot in the figure was estimated using the CES second order approximation in equation (16) including controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. The estimates include mixed users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. The confidence intervals represent statistical significance at the 5% level.

## B.4 Experiment Extensive-Margin: Robustness

### Table B3: Extensive-Margin: Adoption of Payment-Cards (Long-Run Effects)

Note: The table reports the percent of users that adopted card payments in the long run for each of the treatment groups in experiment three relative to the control group. Migration is an indicator function that equals one if the user took a trip paid in card from April to June of 2019 conditional on taking trip the weeks of the experiment. The variables “Treatment” report the migration rates relative to the control group of the three treatment groups in the experiment: 3, 6, and 9 times their average weekly fares if the users register a card in the application. Column (1) reports the rates of card adoption of those users in the experiment that lasted one week. Column (2) reports the rates of card adoption of those users in the experiment that lasted six weeks.

| | (1)<br>1 week | (2)<br>1-6 week |
|---|---|---|
| Treatment 1 - 1 week | 0.0252*** | |
| | (0.009) | |
| Treatment 2 - 1 week | 0.0161* | |
| | (0.009) | |
| Treatment 3 - 1 week | 0.0171* | |
| | (0.009) | |
| Treatment 1 - 6 week | | 0.0064 |
| | | (0.006) |
| Treatment 2 - 6 week | | 0.0165*** |
| | | (0.006) |
| Treatment 3 - 6 week | | 0.0257*** |
| | | (0.006) |
| Constant | 0.1477*** | 0.1390*** |
| | (0.005) | (0.003) |
| Observations | 13,088 | 28,870 |
| R-squared | 0.001 | 0.001 |

**Table B4: Extensive-Margin: Adoption of Card Payments - Unconditional**

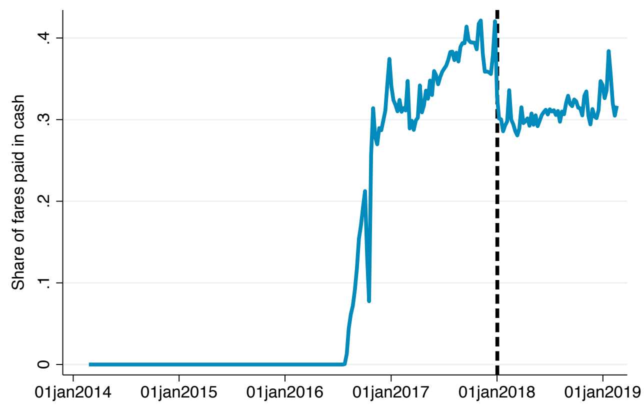
Note: The table reports the percent of users that adopted card payments for each of the treatment groups in experiment three relative to the control group. Migration is an indicator function that equals one if the user registered a card in the application the weeks of the experiment. The variables "Treatment" report the migration rates relative to the control group of the three treatment groups in the experiment: 3, 6, and 9 times their average weekly fares if the users register a card in the application. Column (3) reports the rates of card adoption during the first three weeks of the experiment. Column (4) reports the rates of adoption in the last three weeks of the experiment.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1 week | 1 week | 1-6 weeks | 1-3 weeks | 4-6 weeks |
| Treatment 1 - 1 week | 0.0069*** | | | | |
| | (0.001) | | | | |
| Treatment 2 - 1 week | 0.0073*** | | | | |
| | (0.001) | | | | |
| Treatment 3 - 1 week | 0.0094*** | | | | |
| | (0.001) | | | | |
| Treatment 1 - 6 week | | 0.0054*** | 0.0333*** | 0.0283*** | 0.0112*** |
| | | (0.001) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.003) |
| Treatment 2 - 6 week | | 0.0062*** | 0.0394*** | 0.0382*** | 0.0088*** |
| | | (0.001) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.003) |
| Treatment 3 - 6 week | | 0.0106*** | 0.0468*** | 0.0485*** | 0.0088*** |
| | | (0.001) | (0.004) | (0.004) | (0.003) |
| Constant | 0.0069*** | 0.0069*** | 0.0711*** | 0.0445*** | 0.0372*** |
| | (0.001) | (0.001) | (0.002) | (0.002) | (0.001) |
| Observations | 96,965 | 97,035 | 46,996 | 36,184 | 46,996 |
| R-squared | 0.001 | 0.001 | 0.005 | 0.006 | 0.001 |

# C Panama

Here we collect additional information on the case of Panama. In particular the behaviour of the share of cash and the two regressions estimating semi-log demand functions.

**Figure C1: Panama: Share of Fares Paid in Cash**




Note: The figure shows the evolution of the share of fares paid in cash in Panama. The frequency of the data is weekly. The black dotted line denotes the date the decree by the government restricting the supply of drivers went into effect.

**Table C1: Elasticity of Demand: Panama (Trips)**

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand estimated using equation (23) using trips as dependent variable for Panama. Each observation is a week in 2018; the year after the decree by the government restricting the supply of drivers went into effect. Column (1) reports the estimates using aggregated information of all trips. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using only trips paid in cash. The prices used are the average surge multipler seasonally adjusted using data before the decree went into effect. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) All Trips | (2) Only Cash Trips |
|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 0.955*** | 1.008*** |
| | (0.135) | (0.142) |
| Observations | 52 | 52 |
| Specification | Semi-log | Semi-log |

# D Adapting Puebla's Evidence to State of Mexico

In this section, we adapt the evidence in Alvarez and Argente (2022) on the rate of migration of pure cash riders in Puebla after the ban, to the rate of migration of pure cash users in an hypothetical ban in the State of Mexico. In their counterfactual analysis of the ban in Puebla using synthetic control method, they found that the State of Mexico is one of the cities with higher weights on the synthetic Puebla. Since the excess rate at which pure cash users migrated to become pure card users after the ban is an important statistic in the identification of the model, we adapt the estimates Alvarez and Argente (2022) obtained using the actual ban in Puebla to the evaluation of an hypothetical ban in the State of Mexico. They found an excess migration rate of about 30% of the pure cash users. We follow a two steps procedure to adapt this estimate to the State of Mexico. The first step is to document the difference in observable indicators for residents of Puebla and State of Mexico, where we define both locations as the municipalities covered by Uber service. The second step is to include some of these observables in their analysis of the rate of migration in Puebla, so we can take into account the difference in observables between the two cities. Overall, these difference change the estimate to the State of Mexico in less than 1%.

Table D1 displays statistics at the census block level for Puebla and the State of Mexico. Table D2 displays statistics at the municipality level for Puebla and for the State of Mexico. From these tables we conclude that, while Puebla and the State of Mexico are relatively similar in the context of the cities served by Uber across Mexico, Puebla's residents have in average about one more year of education, and have higher financial inclusion. In Table D3 we include the census block level variables we have access to in a linear probability model predicting whether a pure cash rider will take trips paid with a card in Puebla after the ban. The sample used in this regression are all the trips in three months on the year before and three months after the ban, which are geolocalized and matched with the census at the block level. [51] The presence of a bank in the geographical statistical area (AGEB) and the average years of education have the expected signs, although the values of the coefficients are small and only marginally statistically significant. Using these coefficients and the average difference between the observables in Puebla and in the State of Mexico, we obtain that the indeed the migration rate will be lower in the State of Mexico than in Puebla, but that correction is smaller than 1%, i.e. it is given by $(0.74-0.59)\times 0.0095+(9.95-8.88)\times 0.0056 = 0.0074$.

[51] This sample is smaller than the universe used in Alvarez and Argente (2022). The smaller size of the sample is due to the fact that we need to geolocalize all these trips.

## Table D1: Puebla vs State of Mexico: Summary Statistics at the Block Level

Note: The table reports the average across census blocks of different variables for Puebla, Mexico City, and the State of Mexico. The variables reported are the share of banks in the census block, the share of banks in the basic geostatistical area, the share of homes with car, the share of homes with phone, the share of homes with internet and the average years of educations. The average across census blocks is computed weighting each block by the total trips that took place in August of 2017. The source of the demographic variables is the Mexican Census.

| | (1)<br>State of Mexico | (2)<br>Mexico City | (3)<br>Puebla |
|---|---|---|---|
| Share of banks in the block | 0.12 | 0.31 | 0.16 |
| Share of banks in basic geo. area | 0.59 | 0.83 | 0.74 |
| Share of homes with car | 0.46 | 0.50 | 0.44 |
| Share of homes with phone | 0.65 | 0.67 | 0.60 |
| Share of homes with internet | 0.36 | 0.49 | 0.36 |
| Average years of education | 8.88 | 10.63 | 9.95 |
| Blocks | 60056 | 53606 | 19899 |

## Table D2: Puebla vs State of Mexico: Financial Inclusion Statistics

Note: The table reports the per capita averages of several variables related to financial inclusion for Puebla, Mexico City, and the State of Mexico. The variables reported include debit cards per capita, credit cards per capita, ATMs per capita, ATM transactions per capita, bank branches per capita, as well as the income per capita and the total population of each State. The statistics are computed using information of the municipalities where Uber was active in 2017. The source of the data is the 2017 Financial Inclusion Database (BDIF).

| | (1)<br>State of Mexico | (2)<br>Mexico City | (3)<br>Puebla |
|---|---|---|---|
| Debit cards per capita | 0.64 | 2.93 | 0.93 |
| Credit cards per capita | 0.21 | 0.67 | 0.25 |
| ATMs per capita | 2.63 | 8.49 | 4.30 |
| ATM transactions per capita | 1.13 | 3.01 | 1.75 |
| Bank branches per capita | 0.99 | 2.21 | 1.51 |
| Income per capita (USD) | 445.52 | 707.32 | 454.15 |
| Population (millions) | 11.67 | 8.81 | 2.76 |

**Table D3: Puebla: Returning After the Ban of Cash**

Note: The table reports the probability of returning from 2017-2018 for users in the city of Puebla. The dependent variable is an indicator variable that equals one if the user was active in 2017 and she is also active in the application in 2018. The independent variables include an indicator variable that equals one if a bank is present in the user's geostatistical area and the average years of education of the census block where the user resides. The sample of users are those that only used cash as a payment method in 2017. The regression is weighted by the total trips they took in 2017.

| User Returning | (1) | (2) | (3) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bank in basic geo. area | 0.0149*** | | 0.0095*** |
| | (0.002) | | (0.001) |
| Years of Education | | 0.0061** | 0.0056* |
| | | (0.003) | (0.003) |
| Constant | 0.2922*** | 0.2305*** | 0.2291*** |
| | (0.007) | (0.024) | (0.025) |
| Observations | 91,111 | 91,111 | 91,111 |
| R-squared | 0.000 | 0.001 | 0.001 |
| Users | Pure Cash | Pure Cash | Pure Cash |
| Weight | Trips in 2017 | Trips in 2017 | Trips in 2017 |

# E Ban on the Use of Cards: Argentina

Motivated by the recent legal framework in Argentina, where local cards could not be used as a means of payment for Uber rides, we consider a ban on the use of cards in the State of Mexico. The situation in Argentina was that Uber riders could not be paid using cards, whose payments are processed by one of the two local firms processing card payments. This was due to an initial injunction issued by a public attorney of the City of Buenos Aires, even though it has now been reversed in an appeal. The reason the ban was nationwide, even though the initial injunction was for the city of Buenos Aires, was that the card processors cannot distinguish the location where the charges of riders were originated. Uber riders using card whose payments were processed abroad, such as most international tourists, were able to pay for Uber rides using their cards.

In our calculations we assume that the initial conditions are exactly as the situation in the State of Mexico during 2018 (so that cash and card payments are available as means of payment, and we can use our estimates for several quantities) and a permanent unexpected ban on card payments is enacted. We distinguish the effect on three type of riders (classified when both cash and card payments were available): pure cash riders, mixed riders, and pure card riders. We will continue to assume that prices will not change, and that drivers will not be affected.

The ban in card payments has no effect on the 25% pure cash riders (which account for about 20% of the fares). Pure cash riders continue to be pure cash riders after the ban, and will pay the same price. The ban on card payments has a similar effect in mixed riders that the ban in cash. The magnitudes for the ban on card payments will be different than the magnitude of the ban in cash because the distribution of the share for card trips for mixed riders is not symmetric around 0.5. Using the distribution of riders cash share weighted by their total fares –as in Figure 2, a elasticity of substitution $\eta = 3$, and a price elasticity $\epsilon = 1.1$, we obtain that the consumer surplus lost by a ban on card payments is 0.43 of the total expenditure of mixed users.

The ban on card payments has a large effect on the pure card riders. Given our assumption of no fixed cost to use cash, we rationalize that rider does not use cash (i.e. that she is a pure card rider) as having a value of $\alpha \approx 1$. This means that pure card riders will stop using Uber altogether after a ban on card payments and, hence, their loss will be the entire consumer surplus of using Uber. This will be a large multiple of their revenue, since these users tend to be the more inelastic ones. Our estimates for the price elasticity of Uber rides for pure card users is $\epsilon \approx 0.7$. With this elasticity, the consumer surplus lost by the pure card rides is about 1.22 of their total expenditure in Uber. This number is comparable to the consumer surplus of using Uber estimated by Cohen, Hahn, Hall, Levitt and Metcalfe (2016) using U.S. data and a different identification scheme, which is 1.66. Recall that in that in the U.S. only card payments are available as a means of payment. Lastly, we can aggregate the consumer surplus lost by a ban on card payments computed above among mixed and pure card users by weighting them by their share of total expenditure in Uber paid with card. The consumer surplus lost by a ban on card payments is $0.82 = 1.22 \times \frac{0.30}{0.30+0.50\times 0.63} + 0.43 \times \frac{0.50\times 0.63}{0.30+0.50\times 0.63}$ of the total expenditure paid on card before the ban.

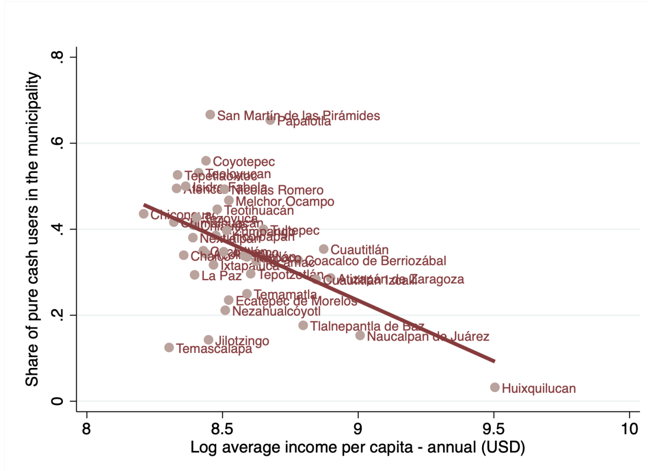
# SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL
# (NOT FOR PUBLICATION)

## F Demographics: Income

We use geolocalized information about every trip taken in the State of Mexico during the month of August 2018. The data include the date, time, and the pick-up and drop off locations (i.e. latitude and longitude) of every trip during this period as well as the total fare paid and an indicator for whether the trip was paid for in cash. Our sample of users are those whose most-frequent city of origin for an Uber request is Greater Mexico City. The latitude and longitude coordinates allow us to assign each user to the municipality where most of his or her trips originated. The Mexican Census provides shape files containing the coordinates of the polygons surrounding each census block in the country. We use the longitude and latitude of the centroid of each census block as its location. Then, we match each Uber trip to the closest census block by minimizing the Euclidean distance between the two. In case of ties we assigned users to the municipality where the majority of her trips started in the morning (before noon) and where the majority of her trips ended at night (after 5 pm).[52] This step allows us to use income data from the Inter-censal Survey to determine the average income of groups of Uber users, while identifying users that are more likely to use cash for payment. Figure F1 shows the share of pure cash users (riders that do not register a payment card in the app) in each municipality. It shows that the share of pure cash users declines with income per capita.

[52] Our results are not sensitive to switching the order of these criteria.

**Figure F1: Share of Pure Cash Users by Income per Capita (Municipality)**




Note: The figure shows the share of pure cash users (riders that do not register a payment card in the app) in each municipality. We multiply income times 1.24 to account for the fact that individuals with access to a smartphones earn higher income. The income data comes from individuals that report labor income surveyed in the Intercensal Survey of 2015. The data on smartphone usage comes from the 2015 National Survey of Financial Inclusion (ENIF). The data of Uber rides are from August of 2018 in the State of Mexico.

# G Experiments: Additional Robustness Checks

## G.1 CES

If $H$ is a CES we obtain the following expression for the ratio of expenditure:

$$\frac{p_a a}{p_c c} = \left(\frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha}\right)\left(\frac{p_a}{p_c}\right)^{1-\eta} \tag{38}$$

using the identity

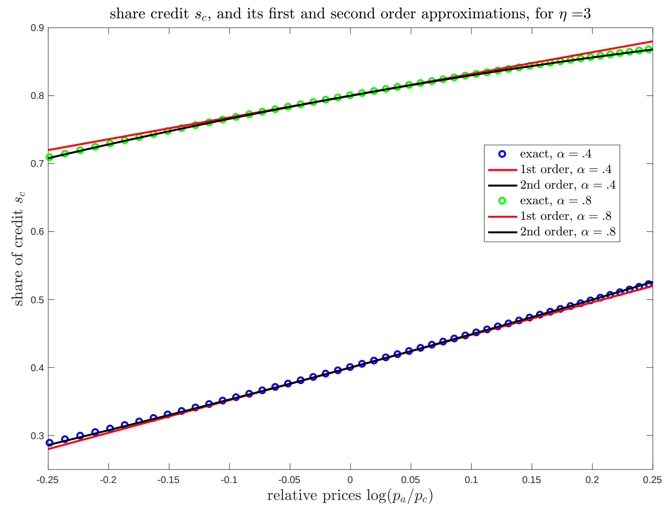
$$s_c = \frac{p_c c}{p_a a + p_c c} = \frac{1}{1 + (p_a a)/(p_c c)} \tag{39}$$

thus

$$s_c = \frac{1}{1 + \left(\frac{1-\alpha}{\alpha}\right)\left(\frac{p_a}{p_c}\right)^{1-\eta}} \tag{40}$$

A first order approximation of $s_c$ around $\log(p_a/p_c) = 0$ gives equation (15). A second order approximation of $s_c$ around $\log(p_a/p_c) = 0$ gives equation (16). Note that the second order approximation can be convex or concave depending on whether $\alpha \geq 1/2$ or not. Figure G2 plots the exact expression given by equation (40) and its first and second order approximation given by equation (15) and equation (16) respectively. The range of the x-axis coincides with the range on variability on the relative prices the experiment for mixed users.

## Figure G2: Quality of the approximations




Note: The figure plots the share of card payments $s_c$ for $\eta = 3$ for two values of $\alpha$. For each $\alpha$ we plot the exact expression, the first order approximation, and the second order approximation.

The value $\eta = 3$ used for the elasticity of substitution in the figure is our preferred estimate. We plot the exact expression for $s_c$ and its two approximations for two values of $\alpha$, one above 1/2 and one below. From Figure G2 we conclude that for this range of parameters the first order approximation is very accurate and the second order approximation is almost exact.

## G.2 Estimation of Elasticities

### Table G1: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Pure Cash Users (Miles)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | AA | AA | Mandin | Ubernomics |
| Log Price | -2.035*** | -2.044*** | -6.611*** | -2.331** |
| | (0.127) | (0.116) | (0.982) | (1.189) |
| Observations | 138,725 | 138,725 | 4,279 | 3,569 |
| R-squared | 0.002 | 0.174 | 0.448 | 0.181 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 1.479 | 1.478 | 5.937 | 2.869 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G2: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Cash Users (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) AA | (2) AA | (3) Mandin | (4) Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.351*** | 1.345*** | 1.138*** | 0.825* |
| | (0.105) | (0.082) | (0.176) | (0.464) |
| Observations | 88,326 | 88,326 | 3,394 | 1,869 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G3: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Pure Cash Users (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) AA | (2) AA | (3) Mandin | (4) Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -2.842*** | -2.831*** | -7.678*** | -3.696* |
| | (0.189) | (0.174) | (1.185) | (2.080) |
| Observations | 88,326 | 88,326 | 3,394 | 1,869 |
| R-squared | 0.003 | 0.159 | 0.435 | 0.139 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 2.104 | 2.105 | 6.748 | 4.482 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G4: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Cash Users (Trips)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using trips as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.271*** | 1.270*** | 1.080*** | 1.218*** |
| | (0.093) | (0.071) | (0.157) | (0.384) |
| Observations | 138,725 | 138,725 | 4,279 | 3,569 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G5: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Pure Cash Users (Trips)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using trips as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -0.440*** | -0.440*** | -1.586*** | -0.820*** |
| | (0.028) | (0.024) | (0.230) | (0.259) |
| Observations | 138,725 | 138,725 | 4,279 | 3,569 |
| R-squared | 0.002 | 0.214 | 0.485 | 0.216 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 0.346 | 0.346 | 1.468 | 0.674 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G6: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Cash Users (Trips - Poisson)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using a poisson a regression using trips as dependent variable and the log of prices as independent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -1.094*** | -1.110*** | -0.795*** | -1.091*** |
| | (0.039) | (0.039) | (0.107) | (0.217) |
| Observations | 138,725 | 138,725 | 4,279 | 3,569 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G7: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Mixed Users (Miles)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of mixed users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, share of fares paid in cash, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>AA | (4)<br>Mandin | (5)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -4.543*** | -4.334*** | -4.165*** | -16.292*** | -9.409*** |
| | (0.416) | (0.360) | (0.355) | (0.962) | (1.921) |
| Observations | 109,365 | 109,365 | 98,773 | 11,660 | 4,306 |
| R-squared | 0.001 | 0.253 | 0.232 | 0.550 | 0.243 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 4.199 | 4.206 | 3.800 | 12.744 | 6.478 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |

## Table G8: Elasticity of Demand: Mixed Users (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, share of fares paid in cash, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>AA | (4)<br>Mandin | (5)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.096*** | 1.041*** | 1.109*** | 1.263*** | 1.428*** |
| | (0.103) | (0.086) | (0.095) | (0.075) | (0.300) |
| Observations | 97,586 | 97,586 | 87,014 | 11,282 | 3,930 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |

## Table G9: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Mixed Users (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of mixed users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, share of fares paid in cash, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>AA | (4)<br>Mandin | (5)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -5.069*** | -4.820*** | -4.684*** | -16.502*** | -9.942*** |
| | (0.460) | (0.400) | (0.399) | (0.986) | (2.089) |
| Observations | 97,586 | 97,586 | 87,014 | 11,282 | 3,930 |
| R-squared | 0.001 | 0.244 | 0.223 | 0.545 | 0.232 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 4.624 | 4.632 | 4.223 | 13.067 | 6.963 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |

## Table G10: Elasticity of Demand: Mixed Users (Trips)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of mixed users estimated using equation (23) using trips as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, share of fares paid in cash, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>AA | (4)<br>Mandin | (5)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.106*** | 1.050*** | 1.084*** | 1.175*** | 1.235*** |
| | (0.094) | (0.076) | (0.082) | (0.068) | (0.262) |
| Observations | 109,365 | 109,365 | 98,773 | 11,660 | 4,306 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |

## Table G11: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Mixed Users (Trips)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of mixed users estimated using equation (23) using trips as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, share of fares paid in cash, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>AA | (4)<br>Mandin | (5)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -0.878*** | -0.835*** | -0.791*** | -2.964*** | -1.617*** |
| | (0.071) | (0.060) | (0.060) | (0.171) | (0.343) |
| Observations | 109,365 | 109,365 | 98,773 | 11,660 | 4,306 |
| R-squared | 0.001 | 0.292 | 0.274 | 0.557 | 0.299 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 0.794 | 0.795 | 0.730 | 2.522 | 1.309 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |

## Table G12: Elasticity of Demand: Mixed Users (Trips - Poisson)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of mixed users estimated using a poisson a regression using trips as dependent variable and the log of prices as independent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, share of fares paid in cash, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>AA | (4)<br>Mandin | (5)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -0.996*** | -0.998*** | -0.998*** | -0.829*** | -1.133*** |
| | (0.044) | (0.044) | (0.048) | (0.043) | (0.145) |
| Observations | 109,365 | 109,365 | 98,773 | 11,660 | 4,306 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |

## Table G13: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Card Users (Miles)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) AA | (2) AA | (3) Mandin | (4) Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 0.622*** | 0.604*** | 0.776*** | 0.375*** |
| | (0.114) | (0.092) | (0.037) | (0.121) |
| Observations | 88,844 | 88,844 | 47,849 | 26,162 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G14: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Pure Card Users (Miles)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of pure card users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) AA | (2) AA | (3) Mandin | (4) Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -2.331*** | -2.265*** | -9.328*** | -2.411*** |
| | (0.411) | (0.347) | (0.439) | (0.779) |
| Observations | 88,844 | 88,844 | 47,849 | 26,162 |
| R-squared | 0.000 | 0.290 | 0.595 | 0.345 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 3.745 | 3.749 | 12.014 | 6.423 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G15: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Card Users (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure cash users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 0.608*** | 0.579*** | 0.771*** | 0.376*** |
| | (0.116) | (0.095) | (0.037) | (0.125) |
| Observations | 64,648 | 64,648 | 45,036 | 21,141 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G16: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Pure Card (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of pure card users estimated using equation (23) using miles as dependent variable. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -2.957*** | -2.824*** | -9.671*** | -2.850*** |
| | (0.546) | (0.464) | (0.461) | (0.948) |
| Observations | 64,648 | 64,648 | 45,036 | 21,141 |
| R-squared | 0.000 | 0.276 | 0.588 | 0.331 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 4.868 | 4.875 | 12.546 | 7.585 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G17: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Card Users (Trips)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure card users estimated using equation (23) using trips as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The standard errors are computed using the Delta Method. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 0.732*** | 0.707*** | 0.693*** | 0.408*** |
| | (0.103) | (0.080) | (0.033) | (0.110) |
| Observations | 88,844 | 88,844 | 47,849 | 26,162 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G18: Semi-Elasticity of Demand: Pure Card Users (Trips)

Note: The table reports the semi-elasticity of demand of pure card users estimated using equation (23) using trips as dependent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the semi-elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -0.387*** | -0.375*** | -1.585*** | -0.477*** |
| | (0.052) | (0.043) | (0.075) | (0.128) |
| Observations | 88,844 | 88,844 | 47,849 | 26,162 |
| R-squared | 0.001 | 0.332 | 0.639 | 0.396 |
| $\hat{y}$ | 0.529 | 0.530 | 2.287 | 1.169 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G19: Elasticity of Demand: Pure Card Users (Trips - Poisson)

Note: The table reports the elasticity of demand of pure card users estimated using a poisson a regression using trips as dependent variable and the log of prices as independent variable. Column (1) reports the estimates without using controls. Column (2) estimates the elasticity using controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, and log of tenure. Column (3) reports the results using the users included in the Mandin experiment. Column (4) reports the results using the users included in the Ubernomics experiment. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1)<br>AA | (2)<br>AA | (3)<br>Mandin | (4)<br>Ubernomics |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | -0.681*** | -0.680*** | -0.507*** | -0.361*** |
| | (0.052) | (0.051) | (0.024) | (0.066) |
| Observations | 88,844 | 88,844 | 47,849 | 26,162 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |

## Table G20: Semi-Elasticity of Substitution: Mixed Users (Miles)

Note: The table reports estimates of the semi-elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The dependent variable is the relative miles between card payments and cash for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable are the relative prices for trips in cash and card. Column (1) reports the results of estimating $\gamma$ using the transformed share specification denoted in equation (17) and including mixed users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (2) reports the same specification including controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their fares paid in cash and less than 95%. Column (4) includes the constant specified in equation (17) as a regressor. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | 0.284*** | 0.262*** | 0.285*** | 0.255*** |
| | (0.021) | (0.018) | (0.020) | (0.017) |
| Observations | 53,966 | 53,966 | 46,328 | 53,966 |
| R-squared | 0.003 | 0.222 | 0.174 | 0.304 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct |
| Specification | Transf. | Transf. | Transf. | Translog-Constant |

## Table G21: Elasticity of Substitution: Mixed Users (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports estimates of the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users. The dependent variable is the relative miles between card payments and cash for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable are the relative prices for trips in cash and card. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment in the State of Mexico. Column (1) reports results after using the transformed share specification denoted in equation (17) and including mixed users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (2) uses the same specification including controls including historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their fares paid in cash and less than 95%. Column (4) includes the constant specified in equation (17) as a regressor. Column (5) estimates the elasticity using the CES first order approximation in equation (15). Column (6) estimates the elasticity using the CES second order approximation in equation (16). Column (7) reports the results of the elasticity of substitution estimated in two steps. First, we compute the predicted share of fares paid in card (i.e. $\hat{\alpha}$) using all the controls variables. Then, we estimate equation (15) using the predicted share. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 3.169*** | 2.893*** | 2.620*** | 2.992*** | 2.569*** | 2.569*** | 2.241*** |
| | (0.373) | (0.349) | (0.181) | (0.217) | (0.103) | (0.103) | (0.080) |
| Obs. | 52,562 | 52,562 | 44,927 | 52,562 | 52,562 | 52,562 | 67,984 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |
| Spec. | Transf. | Transf. | Transf. | Transf.-Cons | CES - First | CES - Second | CES - First IV |

## Table G22: Semi-Elasticity: Mixed Users (Miles - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports estimates of the semi-elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The dependent variable is the relative miles between card payments and cash for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable are the relative prices for trips in cash and card. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the results of estimating $\gamma$ using the transformed share specification denoted in equation (17) and including mixed users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (2) reports the same specification including controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their fares paid in cash and less than 95%. Column (4) includes the constant specified in equation (17) as a regressor. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Log Price | 0.275*** | 0.253*** | 0.276*** | 0.247*** |
| | (0.021) | (0.018) | (0.021) | (0.017) |
| Observations | 52,562 | 52,562 | 44,927 | 52,562 |
| R-squared | 0.003 | 0.227 | 0.179 | 0.312 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct |
| Specification | Transf. | Transf. | Transf. | Translog-Constant |

## Table G23: Elasticity of Substitution: Mixed Users (Trips)

Note: The table reports estimates of the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The dependent variable is the relative trips between card payments and cash for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable are the relative prices for trips in cash and card. Column (1) reports the results after using the transformed share specification denoted in equation (17) and including mixed users with more than 1% of their trips paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (2) reports the same specification including controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their trips paid in cash and less than 95%. Column (4) includes the constant specified in equation (17) as a regressor. Column (5) estimates the elasticity using the CES first order approximation in equation (15). Column (6) estimates the elasticity using the CES second order approximation in equation (16). Column (7) reports the results of the elasticity of substitution estimated in two steps. First, we compute the predict share of trips paid in card (i.e. $\hat{\alpha}$) using all the controls variables. Then, we estimate equation (15) using the predicted share. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.449*** | 1.475*** | 1.902*** | 1.593*** | 1.555*** | 1.559*** | 1.331*** |
| | (0.500) | (0.498) | (0.304) | (0.483) | (0.185) | (0.185) | (0.288) |
| Obs. | 3,336 | 3,336 | 3,176 | 3,336 | 3,336 | 3,336 | 1,814 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |
| Spec. | Transf. | Transf. | Transf. | Transf.-Cons | CES - First | CES - Second | CES - First IV |

## Table G24: Elasticity of Substitution: Mixed Users (Trips - at Least 5 Trips)

Note: The table reports estimates of the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The dependent variable is the relative trips between card payments and cash for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable are the relative prices for trips in cash and card. The sample includes users with at least 5 trips during the year before the week of the experiment. Column (1) reports the results after using the transformed share specification denoted in equation (17) and including mixed users with more than 1% of their trips paid in cash and less than 99%. Column (2) reports the same specification including controls. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. Column (3) includes users with more than 5% of their trips paid in cash and less than 95%. Column (4) includes the constant specified in equation (17) as a regressor. Column (5) estimates the elasticity using the CES first order approximation in equation (15). Column (6) estimates the elasticity using the CES second order approximation in equation (16). Column (7) reports the results of the elasticity of substitution estimated in two steps. First, we compute the predict share of trips paid in card (i.e. $\hat{\alpha}$) using all the controls variables. Then, we estimate equation (15) using the predicted share. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 1.449*** | 1.475*** | 1.902*** | 1.593*** | 1.555*** | 1.559*** | 1.352*** |
| | (0.500) | (0.498) | (0.304) | (0.483) | (0.185) | (0.185) | (0.282) |
| Obs. | 3,336 | 3,336 | 3,176 | 3,336 | 3,336 | 3,336 | 1,749 |
| Controls | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 5 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |
| Spec. | Transf. | Transf. | Transf. | Transf.-Cons | CES - First | CES - Second | CES - First IV |

## Table G25: Elasticity: Mixed Users (Miles - Price Increases and Decreases)

Note: Note: The table reports estimates of the elasticity of substitution between cash and card payments for mixed users after splitting price increases and price decreases. The estimates are computed using experimental data collected in the State of Mexico. The dependent variable is the relative miles between card payments and cash for each user the week of the experiment and the independent variable are the relative prices for trips in cash and card. Column (1)-(2) estimate the elasticity for positive price changes and negative price changes using the CES first order approximation in equation (15). Column (3)-(4) estimate the elasticity for positive price changes and negative price changes using the CES second order approximation in equation (16). The elasticity in each column is estimated including controls and mixed users with more than 1% of their fares paid in cash and less than 99%. The controls included for each users are the historical trips, trips squared, fares, fares squared, cash fares, cash fares squared, log of tenure, cash trips, and cash trips squared. The ***, **, and *, represent statistical significance at 1%, 5%, and 10% levels, respectively.

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elasticity | 2.571*** | 2.644*** | 2.702*** | 2.556*** |
| | (0.154) | (0.155) | (0.156) | (0.157) |
| Observations | 46,003 | 45,856 | 46,003 | 45,856 |
| Controls | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Type | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct | 1 pct |
| Specification | CES - First | CES - First | CES - Second | CES - Second |
| Direction | Only Positive | Only Negative | Only Positive | Only Negative |

# H Communication

**Email Experiments 1**

Subject: Ya tienes un descuento de 10% en tus viajes de esta semana (con EFECTIVO) Pre Header: No tienes que hacer nada, sólo viajar.

Header: Viaja más, pagando menos.

[Name], hemos ingresado a tu cuenta un código promocional para que recibas un 10% de descuento en los viajes que pagues con EFECTIVO durante la semana*.

*Promoción válida por un número máximo de 50 viajes realizados desde las 12 del mediodía del Lunes 20 hasta las 12 del mediodía del Lunes 27 de agosto de 2018.

**Email Experiments 2**

Subject: Ya tienes un descuento de 10% en tus viajes de esta semana.

Pre Header: Promoción especial sólo por esta semana.

Header: Viaja más, pagando menos.

[Name], hemos ingresado a tu cuenta un el código promocional para que recibas un 10% de descuento en todos tus viajes de esta semana*.

*Promoción válida por un número máximo de 50 viajes realizados desde las 12 del mediodía del Lunes 20 hasta las 12 del mediodía del Lunes 27 de agosto de 2018.

**Email Ubernomics**

Subject: Tienes 10% de descuento en todos tus viajes esta semana.

¡Esta semana te damos un descuento de hasta 10% aplicado automáticamente en todos tus viajes! Llega a tu trabajo, al gym o a una cena con amigos — todo con un costo por viaje menor.

**Email Mandin**

Subject line: [Nombre], te regalamos 10% de descuento en tus viajes Pre-Header: No te lo puedes perder.

Title: 10% de descuento en tus siguientes viajes*.

Queremos acompañarte en todos tus viajes. Por eso, entre el 19 de junio y 16 de julio de 2018, podrás disfrutar de 10% de descuento en tus viajes de menos de $200 MXN*.

Tu descuento se aplicará automaáticamente, sólo solicita tu viaje que está a un click de distancia. ¡No dejes pasar esta oportunidad!

**Email Experiments 3**

[Nombre],

Tenemos una promoción especial para ti con la que podrás obtener 2 viajes con descuento por hasta $50 MXN cada uno. Lo único que tienes que hacer es ingresar una tarjeta de crédito o débito a tus métodos de pago en tu cuenta.

Después de ingresar la tarjeta, espera un periodo de 8 horas para poder utilizar el descuento. Recuerda que podrás disfrutar de esta promoción sin importar el método de pago que elijas para los siguientes viajes.

*Promoción válida desde el lunes 17 de septiembre hasta el domingo 23 de septiembre de 2018. Si el Usuario no consume el valor total del Código, no podrá acumular el remanente en un viaje posterior.

# I Survey

The survey was sent to all the users that participated in experiments 1 and 2 approximately 11 months after the experiments took place. The surveys were sent through email on July 9th, 2019 and they were open until July 16th, 2019. We design 6 different surveys, each with 3 questions. This format allowed us to minimize the response time and, at the same time, allowed us to obtain several responses to a given question. A total of 433,356 users received a survey, 287,233 participated in experiment 1 (mixed and pure card users) and 146,123 participated in experiment 2 (pure cash users). We randomize the 6 surveys within each of the treatment and control groups in experiment 1 and 2. For example, experiment 1 has 6 treatment groups and 1 control group. Within each of those groups a random sample of users got each of the surveys. Since experiment 2 has 4 treatment groups and 1 control group, approximately 72,220 people received each of the surveys. We received 6,341 responses. After dropping illegible responses (in a few cases users provided other information rather than that asked in the questions) and duplicates, our total sample contains an average of 933.5 responses per survey. If a given user responded the survey more than once we kept the response with less missing answers or, in case of a tie, we kept their last response.

All surveys included the following question: "If your receive a 20% discount for one week, how would you change your trips...". Some users were given the options to respond a) no change, b) increase less than 10%, c) increase more than 10%. A second set of users were given the options to respond a) no change, b) increase less than 20%, c) increase more than 20%. And a third set of users were given the options to respond a) no change, b) increase less than 30%, c) increase more than 30%. Each survey also included two additional questions. We split the sample of users in two groups. To the first group we asked the following two questions: 1) "If the price of trips is permanently reduced by half, how would you change your trips..." and 2) "If the price of trips is permanently doubled, how would you change your trips...". To the second group we asked: 1) "If the price of trips is permanently reduced to a third, how would you change your trips..." and 2) "If the price of trips is permanently tripled, how would you change your trips...".

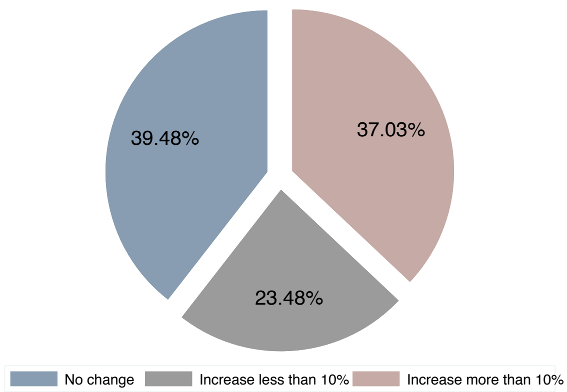
To analyze the responses, we adjust the covariate distribution of the survey respondents by reweighting such that it becomes more similar to the covariate distribution of the entire population that participated in our experiments. We implement entropy balancing, a multivariate reweighting method described in Hainmueller (2012). Entropy balancing is based on a maximum entropy reweighting scheme that fit weights that satisfy a set of balance constraints that involve exact balance on the first, second, and possibly higher moments of the covariate distributions in the treatment and control groups. We reweight the sample of survey respondents based on the historical trips per week and their tenure based on the first and second moments of the distribution. Using higher moments do not affect our findings. The distribution of responses for each question is provided in Section I.1 for mixed users and Section I.2 for pure cash users.

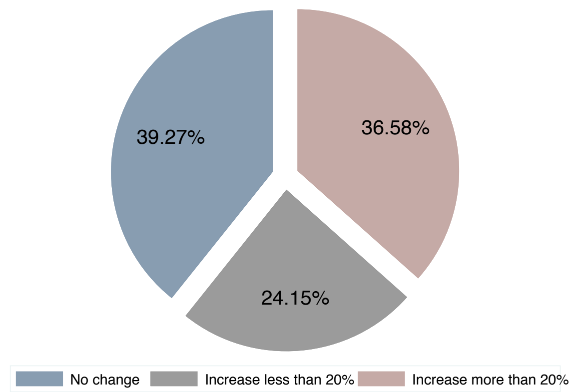
In order to provide external validity to our survey-based evidence, we compare the bounds in the elasticity of demand implied by the survey to those implied by the field experiments. We use the first question of the survey, where users are asked to describe their behavior if they were to receive a 20% discount for one week. Recall that equation (23) shows the relationship between the demand, the choke price, and the elasticity of demand implied by our model. The equation can be used to recover the response of users to a change in prices $P$ that is consistent with both our experimental evidence and our structural framework. We implement equation (23) using the semi-elasticity $k$ estimated in our field experiments and the choke prices $\bar{P}$ of users recovered (when they face prices equal to 1) from the average of their weekly historical fares.[53] In this case, when we decrease prices by 20%, given that in our model users always change their trips if prices change, we find that 11% of users would increase their trips less than 10 %, 32% of users would increase their trips less than 20%, and 49% of users would increase their trips less than 30%. The responses of the survey are remarkably similar. They show that, conditional on users changing their trips, 14.75% of the users would increase their trips less than 10%, 39.7% would increase their trips less than 20%, and 46% of users would increase their trips less than 30%. Overall, we find that the estimated bounds of the elasticity of demand in the survey are informative of the revealed bounds obtained using our experimental data.

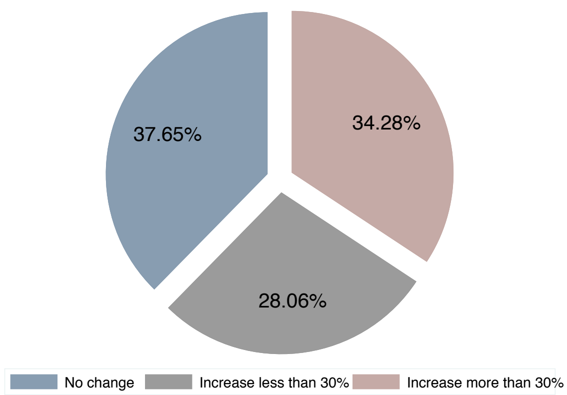
[53] To minimize the measurement error in the average of weekly historical fares, we trim the top and bottom one percent.

## I.1 Mixed Users

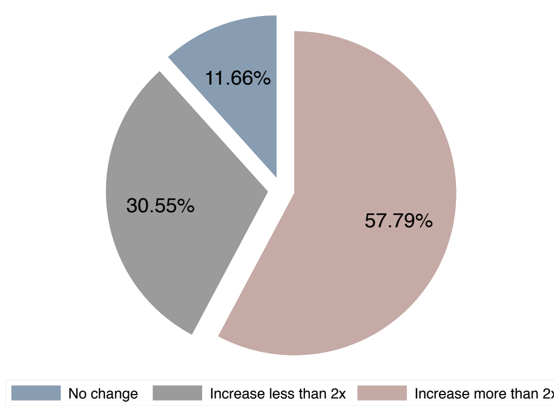
**Question 1: If your receive a 20% discount for one week, how would you change your trips...**



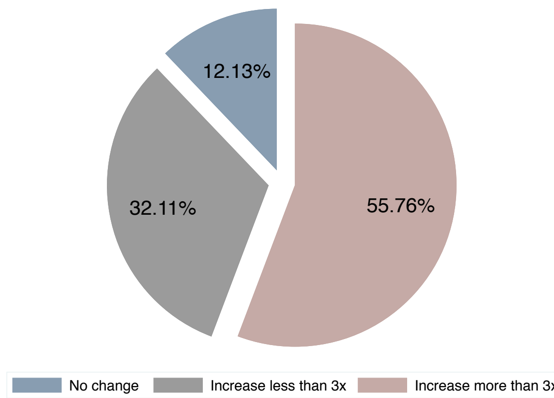



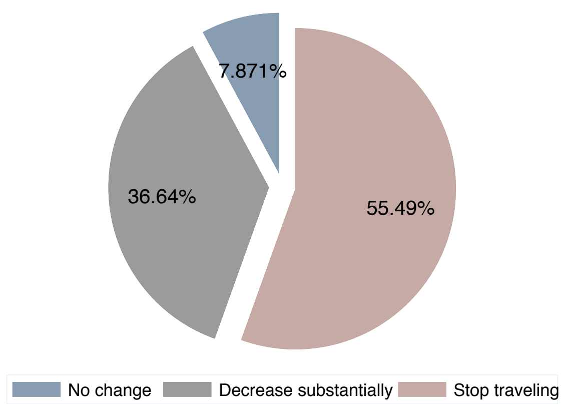

**Question 2a: If the price of trips is permanently reduced by half, how would you change your trips...**



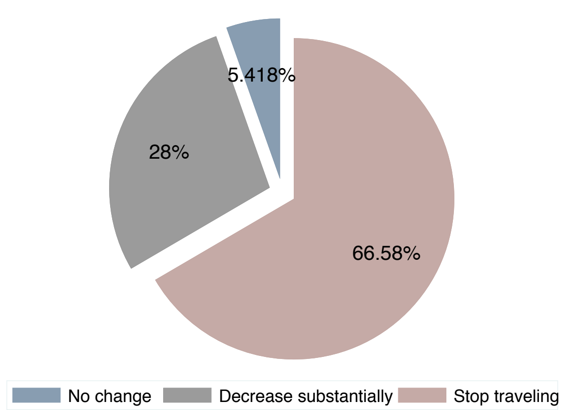
**Question 2a: If the price of trips is permanently reduced to a third, how would you change your trips...**




**Question 3a: If the price of trips is permanently doubled, how would you change your trips...**

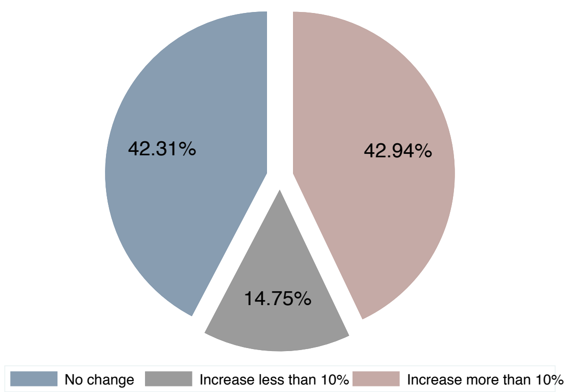


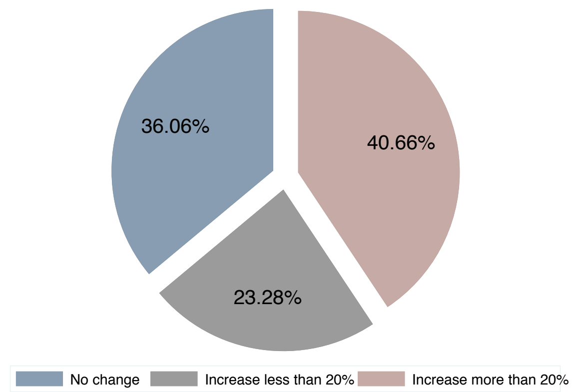

**Question 3a: If the price of trips is permanently tripled, how would you change your trips...**

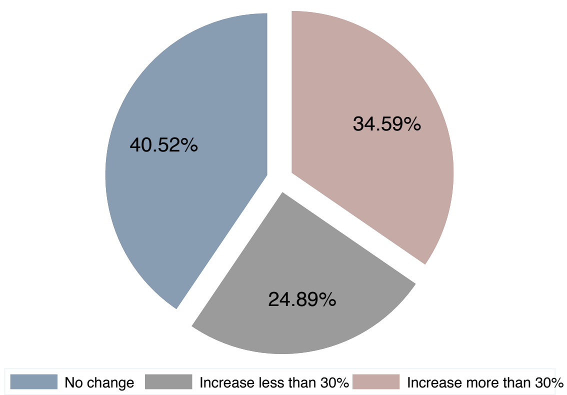


## I.2 Pure Cash Users

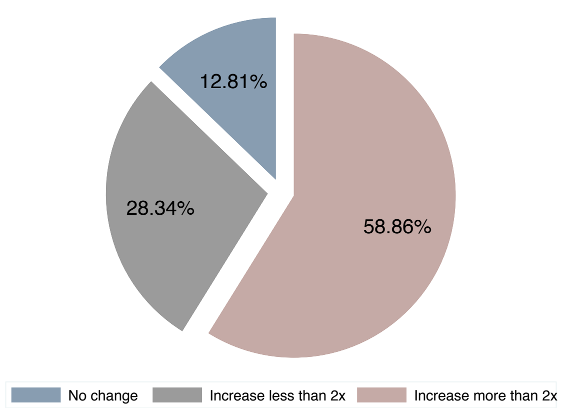
**Question 1: If your receive a 20% discount for one week, how would you change your trips...**



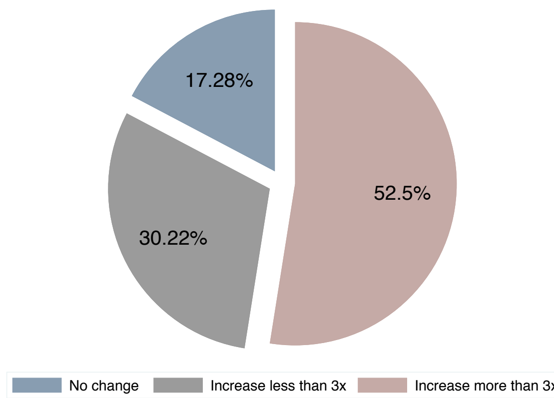



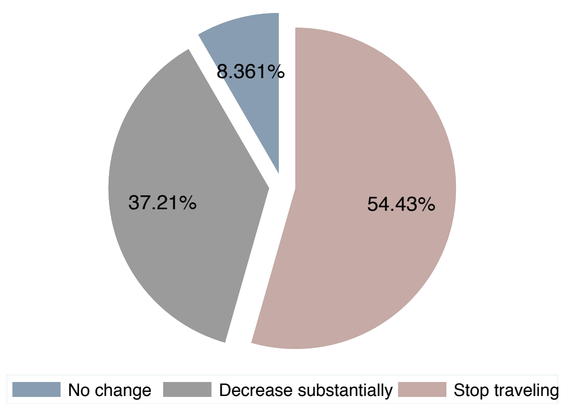

**Question 2a: If the price of trips is permanently reduced by half, how would you change your trips...**



**Question 2a: If the price of trips is permanently reduced to a third, how would you change your trips...**




**Question 3a: If the price of trips is permanently doubled, how would you change your trips...**




**Question 3a: If the price of trips is permanently tripled, how would you change your trips...**