

LELE ZHAO

lzhao6@tulane.edu

Department of Economics

Tulane University

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, Tulane University,

Expected Completion: June 2026

M.A. in Economics, Central University of Finance and Economics, China, 2018-2021

B.A. in Economics, Shandong University of Finance and Economics, China, 2014-2018

RESEARCH FIELDS

Applied Microeconomics, Demography, Health Economics, Gender Disparities

PUBLICATIONS

Jianmei, Zhao, and Lele Zhao. 2022. **“Mobile Payment Adoption and the Decline in China’s Household Savings Rate.”** *Empirical Economics*, 63: 2513-37. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00181-022-02212-w>

Abstract: This paper examines the effects of mobile payment (m-payment) adoption on household savings decline in China. Using data from the 2017 China Household Finance Survey, we employ an instrumental variable approach with multiple robustness checks to evaluate the impact of m-payment adoption on household savings rate. Our study discovers that m-payment usage decreases the household savings rate by about 20% points. We also find that, relative to that of rural and older households, the savings of urban and younger households are more significantly influenced by m-payment adoption. The main channels through which m-payment usage affects the household saving rate likely include improved risk sharing, alleviated credit constraint, and enhanced risk tolerance. This paper provides important insights about m-payment adoption and the ongoing household savings decline in China.

RESEACH IN PROGRESS

Lele, Zhao. **“Gender Disparities in Divorce Laws: Incentivizing Women’s Education.”**

Lele, Zhao. **“The Impact of Straw Burning Ban on Children’s Health in China.”**

Yu, Liu and Lele, Zhao. **“The Impact of Telemedicine on Physicians’ Offline Behavior and Patient Health Outcomes: Evidence from China.”**

INSTRUTOR EXPERIENCE

Stata Lab, ECON 3250-01, Tulane University, Spring 2025

TEACHING ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE

Econometrics, Tulane University, Econ 3230, 2024

Intro to Microeconomics, Tulane University, Econ 1010, 2023

Industrial Organization, Tulane University, Econ 4980, 2023

Intermed Microeconomics, Tulane University, Econ 3010, 2023

Government and The Economy, Tulane University, Econ 3340, 2022

RELVANT POSITONS

Research Assistant for Prof. Stefano Barbieri, Tulane University, 2022

Research Assistant for Prof. Jianmei Zhao, Central University of Finance and Economics, 2019-2021

Research Assistant for Prof. Yu Li, Central University of Finance and Economics, 2019

Research Assistant for Prof. Lezheng Liu, Central University of Finance and Economics, 2018

SCHOLARSHIP AND HONORS

Graduate Student Summer Write-Up Awards, Tulane University, 2024

Excellent Master Thesis, Central University of Finance and Economics, 2021

Graduate Academic Scholarship for Excellent Students, Central University of Finance and Economics,
2018-2020

Excellent Graduate, Shandong University of Finance and Economics, 2018

First and second-class Scholarship, Shandong University of Finance and Economics, 2015 - 2018

National Encourage Scholarship, Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2015