

# Tinghan Zhang

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## RESEARCH INTERESTS

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Applied Microeconometrics, Empirical Industrial Organization, Quantitative Marketing, Digital Economy

## EDUCATION

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| <b>Tilburg University</b>                                  | Tilburg, The Netherlands           |
| <i>Ph.D. Candidate, Econometrics</i>                       | <i>Sep. 2020 - 2025 (Expected)</i> |
| • Supervisors: Prof. dr. Tobias Klein, dr. Christoph Walsh |                                    |
| <i>Research Master, Economics (Cum Laude)</i>              | <i>Aug. 2018 - Aug. 2020</i>       |
| <b>Renmin University of China</b>                          | Beijing, China                     |
| <i>M.S., Quantitative Economics</i>                        | <i>Sep. 2015 - Jul. 2018</i>       |
| <i>B.A., Economics and Mathematics</i>                     | <i>Sep. 2011 - Jul. 2015</i>       |

## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE

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| <b>Teaching Assistant, Tilburg University</b>  | 2020 - 2024           |
| <i>Econometrics 3, Research Master</i>   |                       |
| • Panel Data, Time Series  |                       |
| Microeconometrics, Master  |                       |
| • Treatment Effects, Survival Analysis, Structural Econometrics, Non-/Semi-parametric Estimation |                       |
| <b>Research Assistant, Renmin University of China</b>  | Jan. 2016 - Feb. 2017 |
| Working for Prof. Guangliang Ye, Renmin University of China                                      |                       |
| <b>Visiting Researcher, Université de Genève</b>   | Sep. 2016 - Jan. 2017 |
| Host: Prof. Harold Hau   |                       |
| <b>Special Auditing Student, Kyoto University</b>  | Sep. 2014 - Feb. 2015 |
| Host: Prof. Go Yano  |                       |

## WORKING PAPERS

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“Do I Really Want to Buy This? Preference Discovery and Consumer Search” with Tobias Klein and Christoph Walsh (Job Market Paper)

One of the most invoked assumptions in economics is that consumers know their preferences when they make choices. While theories and experiments in psychology and behavioral economics suggest this may be unrealistic, there is relatively little evidence from the field on this question. In this paper, we use detailed clickstream data from a large Central Asian online platform to study the extent to which consumers learn about their preferences while searching for a smartphone. To quantify the speed at which this takes place and account for other factors, most notably that consumers obtain additional product information when they inspect product pages, we estimate a rich search model in which consumers learn about their willingness to pay each time they visit the checkout page. Consumers initially underestimate their price sensitivity and update it along the way. Taking this into account shows that consumers are more price-sensitive than a standard search model would predict, and an intervention that prompts consumers to end their search early can lead to potential welfare loss.

## “Flexible Estimation to Sequential Search: A Partial Ranking Choice Structure”

Consumers are increasingly shopping online, and more and more datasets documenting consumer search are becoming available. One way to make use of such data is to estimate a sequential search model. However, this remains challenging due to the need to solve or approximate high-dimensional integrals. One of the reasons is that many inequalities that are implied by the model and used to construct the likelihood function depend on multiple unobservables. This paper introduces a novel representation of inequalities implied by a broad class of sequential search models, showing that the empirical content of these models can be effectively captured through a specific partial ranking that suffers less from interdependencies due to the unobservables. Leveraging this insight, I simplify the GHK-style likelihood-based estimator. The proposed estimator is easy to implement, provides greater flexibility for handling incomplete or missing search data, is able to incorporate additional ranking information, and can accommodate more complex search processes, such as those involving product discovery. I demonstrate that the estimator achieves robust performance while maintaining a relatively low computational cost, making it a practical and versatile tool for researchers and practitioners.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

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“Search Cost, Risk, and Financial Institutions Merger,” with Chenxi Wang

“Endogenous Search”

“Resource Curse or Not? The Influence of Resource Import to China in Developing Countries”, with Ran Tao

## CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

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2021-24: Tilburg Structural Econometric Group, Tilburg Graduate Students Society seminar; Workshop on Digital Markets (WDM) 2024

2015-16: China National Academic Forum for Industrial Economics Graduates

## HONORS AND AWARDS

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Tilburg University: Koopmans Scholarships, 2018 - 2020

Renmin University of China: Excellent Student Scholarships, 2015-2017

Renmin University of China: Excellent Graduate, 2018, 2015

Kyoto University: JASSO Scholarships, 2014

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

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**China Banking Regulatory Commission**

*Intern in Bureau of Policy Research*

Beijing, China

*Jun 2015 - Aug 2015*

**Tilburg Structural Econometrics Group**

*Co-organizer of the SEG Seminar Series*

Tilburg, Netherlands

*Sep 2022 - Jun 2024*

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

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**Languages:** Chinese (native), English (fluent), Japanese (advanced)

**Research Software:** Matlab (extensive use), Stata (extensive use), R (intermediate), Python (beginner)

**Application Software:**  $\LaTeX$ , Jupiter Notebook, Git

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

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**Date of Birth (dd/mm/yyyy):** 08/05/1992

**Sex:** Male

**Citizenship:** China

## CONTACT INFORMATION OF REFERENCES

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