

Alison X. Pei

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics & Public Policy, Duke University	Expected 2024
M.S. in Applied Economics and Management, Cornell University	2019
B.A. in Economics, Nankai University	2017

RESEARCH AND TEACHING INTERESTS

Primary Fields: Labor Economics, Industrial Organization
Secondary Field: Entrepreneurship

REFERENCES

Matthew S. Johnson (co-chair) Sanford School of Public Policy Duke University matthew.johnson@duke.edu ✉	Daniel Yi Xu (co-chair) Department of Economics Duke University yi.xu@duke.edu ✉
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WORKING PAPERS

[“Monopsony in the High-Skilled Foreign Labor Market - Evidence from H-1B Labor Market”](#) with Seohee Kim.

This paper assesses the extent of monopsony in the H-1B labor market through the lens of employment concentration and its effect on H-1B workers’ wages. Using FOIA-requested micro-level H-1B petition data, we calculate the H-1B employment concentration using Herfindahl-Hirschman Index (HHI) from 2010 to 2021. We first discover that the H-1B labor market is nearly twice as concentrated as the broader U.S. labor market, with a steady increasing trend over the last two decades. We then examine the impact of high employment concentration on H-1B workers’ wages. The causal link is established by exploiting a lottery system implemented for over-the-cap H-1B applications that generate random labor supplies for each labor market. We find that larger firms disproportionately get more new workers from the exogenous increase in the market-level lottery win rate. These unbalanced distributions of new H-1B workers increase HHI, which in turn, reduces the H-1B workers’ wages in the corresponding labor market. A shift from the 25th to the 75th percentile of the employment concentration distribution decreases the workers’ wage by 7.1 percent. These local average treatment effects are the largest for first-time Chinese applicants in scientific and technical services.

WORK IN PROGRESS

“The Enforceability of Noncompete Agreements and Innovation: Evidence from State Law Changes,” with Matthew Johnson and Michael Lipsitz.

“OSHA Inspections, Productivity, and Management,” With Nicholas Bloom, David Levine and Matthew Johnson.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant to Matthew S. Johnson Special Sworn Status, U.S. Census Bureau.	2021 – Present
Research Assistant to Kaushik Basu	2018 – 2019
Research Assistant to Nancy Chau	2017 – 2018

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Duke University PUBPOL 801: Microeconomics in Public Policy (MPP) Teaching Assistant	Fall 2020
Cornell University AEM 1200 Introduction to Business Management (UG) Section Lecturer & Teaching Assistant	Summer 2019
ECON 1110 Introductory Microeconomics (UG) Section Lecturer & Teaching Assistant	Spring 2019

AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS AND GRANTS

Competitive Summer Research Fellowship for Students in Third Year and Beyond	2022
Sanford School of Public Policy Graduate Student Travel Grant Award	2021
Duke University Graduate Fellowship	2019–Present
Cornell University Teaching Assistant Fellowship	2019
Erasmus Exchange Program Fellowship, China Scholarship Council	2017
First Prize, Comprehensive Scholarship of Nankai University	2016 – 2017

PRESENTATIONS

Wharton Migration and Organizations Conference(scheduled)	2022
APPAM Fall Research Conference (scheduled)	2022
NBER Summer Institute Entrepreneurship Research Bootcamp	2022
Western Economics Association Annual Conference	2022
Midwestern Economics Association Annual Conference	2022
Graduate Student Seminar in Industrial Organization - Department of Economics, Duke University	2022
CSWEP Mentoring Workshop - 2021 Southern Economics Association Annual Conference	2021
Graduate Student Seminar in Labor Economics - Department of Economics, Duke University	2020 - 2022
Graduate Research Workshop - Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University	2020 - 2022
Development Policy Research Unit (DPRU) Workshop - University of Cape Town	2019

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

School and Departmental Service	
Diversity and Inclusion Committee, Duke University	2020 - 2021
Women in Economics, Duke University	2020 - Present
Professional Association Memberships	
Southern Economics Association	
Eastern Economics Association	
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)	