

Si Chen

University of Bonn

<https://sichen-econ.github.io>

sichen@uni-bonn.de

Placement Director: Stephan Lauermann, s.lauermann@uni-bonn.de, +49 (0)228 736327.

Graduate Coordinator: Simone Jost-Mussehl, jost-mussehl@uni-bonn.de, +49 (0)228 739238.

Office Contact

Institute for Applied Microeconomics

University of Bonn

Lennéstrasse 43, 53113 Bonn, Germany

Phone: +49 (0)228-737936.

Personal Information

Citizenship: Chinese.

Date of Birth: 8th August 1991.

Fields of Interest

behavioral economics, applied microeconomics (primary);

experimental economics, microeconomic theory (secondary).

Education

2014-present	Ph.D candidate in Economics, <i>University of Bonn</i> , Germany; Expected completion: July 2020.
2014-2018	M.Sc in Economics, <i>University of Bonn</i> , Germany.
2012-2014	B.Sc in Economics, <i>Otto-von-Guericke Univeristät Magdeburg</i> , Germany.
2009-2014	B.Sc in Economics, Xiamen University, China.

Research Visit

08/2017-05/2018	Visiting assistant in research, <i>Yale University</i> , the USA.
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Teaching Experience

spring 2018	Yale, Introductory Macroeconomics (undergrad), Teaching Fellow;
fall 2017	Yale, Game Theory (undergrad), Teaching Fellow;
summer 2017	Bonn, Labor Economics (grad), Teaching Assistant.

Job Market Paper

Motivated Information Acquisition (w/ Carl Heese)

Noisy information is information that does not reveal the truth at once but unravels it piece by piece. Allowing individuals to stop learning about the truth before their beliefs reach certainty, noisy information offers individuals the possibility to manipulate their beliefs. In a decision that affects others, if the decision maker does not know whether a self-benefiting option harms others and can acquire noisy information about it, when would she stop acquiring noisy information? We present causal evidence from a laboratory experiment that in comparison to decision makers whose decision only concerns others, the decision-makers for whom there is a self-benefiting option *exploit information* in the following way: when the information received so far suggests that the self-benefiting option imposes no harm on others, they are *more* likely to stop acquiring information; when the information received so far suggests that the self-benefiting option is harmful to others, they are *not more* likely to stop acquiring information. We propose a theoretical model that predicts this empirical finding. In the model, we apply techniques from the Bayesian persuasion model to a self-persuasion problem and transform the question of information acquisition to the question of one person persuading herself to choose the self-benefiting option by sending herself signals. We then theoretically derive the surprisingly result that information exploitation can *improve* the welfare of the passive party affected by the decision. We find evidence consistent with this surprising prediction in our experiment.

Publications

Looking at the Bright Side: The Motivational Value of Confidence.

w/ Hannah Schildberg-Hörisch, *European Economic Review* (2019) :103302.

Work in Progress

Stress and Risk Taking (w/ Thomas Dohmen and Elena Shvartsman)

funded by Diligentia Foundation for Empirical Research

In a laboratory experiment, we study the effect of acute and chronic stress on risk taking. We exogenously induce acute stress using the Trier Social Stress Test for Groups developed by von Dawans, Kirschbaum and Heinrichs. We measure subjects' acute stress by their saliva cortisol levels and chronic stress by their hair cortisol levels. We elicit the subjects' risk taking tendency by randomized lottery pairs. Using a within-subject design, i.e. eliciting each subject's risk taking tendency both with and without acute stress, this project sheds light on individuals' heterogeneous responses to acute stress in terms of risk taking and thereby contributes to the inconclusive literature on the causal effect of acute stress on risk taking. It will also be the first to study the interactive effect between chronic and acute stress on risk taking.

A Non-Parametric Elicitation of Probability Weights (w/ Carl Heese)

This paper proposes an innovative non-parametric method to elicit probability weights as in Prospect Theory. This method trades off risky rewards and delayed ones. It has the following two advantages: first, it does not require functional form assumptions on the utility function, nor elicitation of the utility function; second, it is compatible with both monetary and non-monetary incentives. Requiring only few measurements, it is also easy to implement.

Grants

2019 research funding of 36,000 EUR for project ‘Stress and Risk Taking’,
The Diligentia Foundation for Empirical Research
(joined with Thomas Dohmen and Elena Shvartsman).
since 2018 research fellowship, *Collaborative Research Center (CRC) TR 224*;
2015-2018 doctoral scholarship, *German Research Foundation (DFG)*;
2014-2015 doctoral scholarship, *Research Training Group 1707*,

Presentations

Workshop on Belief-Dependent Preferences, *University of Copenhagen*, 2019;
Workshop on Behavioural Game Theory, *University of East Anglia*, 2019;
2nd Japanese-German Workshop on Contracts and Incentives, *University of Munich*, 2019;
10th them on Social Preferences, *University of Konstanz*, 2019;
TIBER Symposium, *Tilburg University*, 2019;
M-BEES, *Maastricht University*, 2019;
CRC Young Researchers’ Workshop, Mainz, 2019;
Bonn Applied Micro Workshop, 2019, 2016.
European Doctoral Program Annual Jamboree, *European University Institute*, 2018.
Bonn-Mannheim PhD Workshop, 2017;
International Workshop on Experimental Economics, *Beijing Normal University*, 2016;
International Workshop on Experimental Economics, *Xiamen University*, 2016;

Summer Schools

Spring School in Behavioral Economics, *UC San Diego and NHH Bergen*, 2018;
Summer School in Social Inequality, *briq*, 2016.

Skills

Languages: Chinese (native), English (proficient), German (proficient).
Programming: STATA, pandas, z-Tree, o-Tree, \LaTeX .

References

Professor Thomas Dohmen

University of Bonn; IZA.

Phone: +49 228 73-9238

Email: t.dohmen@uni-bonn.de

Professor Lorenz Götte

National University of Singapore;

University of Bonn.

Phone: +49 228 73-9238

Email: lorenz.goette@uni-bonn.de

Professor Florian Zimmermann

University of Bonn;

Behavior and Inequality Research Institute (briq)

Phone: +49 228 3894-704

Email: florian.zimmermann@briq-institute.org