

JOU CHUN LIN

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EDUCATION

University of California, Davis

Ph.D. in Economics

September 2018-June 2024

National Taiwan University

M.A. in Economics

September 2015-June 2017

National Taiwan University

B.B.A. in International Business

September 2008-June 2012

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Applied Microeconomics, Public Economics, Public Finance, Political Economy, Labor Economics

EXPERIENCE AND AFFILIATIONS

Assistant Professor

Department of Economics, National Taipei University

August 2024-

WORKING PAPERS

“Designing Effective Welfare Programs: Evidence from SNAP’s BBCE Expansion” (JMP)

Abstract: Welfare programs in the United States aim to target beneficiaries and combat fraud through means-tested approaches. This paper evaluates the efficiency of income and asset limits in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the United States, with a focus on the state option “Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE).” BBCE allows states to eliminate asset limits and raise income thresholds to broaden eligible populations. Analyzing state variations from 1996 to 2007, I find that the states adopting BBCE reduced SNAP administration costs by nearly 20% without an increase in fraud cases. Moreover, the eligible population only increased by about 2%, implying that 20% of the costs were spent to rule out 2% of the eligible population. Additionally, there is suggestive evidence of increased program take-up among households already eligible under previous rules, potentially driven by the simplified requirements. These findings indicate that existing asset limits and income thresholds impose unnecessary restrictions, incurring high costs for government agencies and deterring participation without effectively targeting or preventing fraud.

“Understanding State Variation in SNAP Policies”

Abstract: State variations in SNAP (“Food Stamps”) policies have been widely considered to be quasi-experiments to study program participation. However, little work has systematically examined why states differ in their policy choices. This paper attempts to understand states’ decision-making behaviors by testing the role of five factors: voters’ preferences toward welfare, potential voters’ racism, states’ fiscal capability to afford expenditures, SNAP administrative costs, and business cycles. I examine six SNAP policies: the Broad-Base Categorical Eligibility, Vehicle Exemptions, Face to Face Interview Waiver, Simplified Reporting, Transitional Benefits, and Online SNAP Application. With an intensity-of-treatment specification style, I use the timing of when the states could start using the policies to interact with each of the five factors in the pre-period levels. I find that contemporaneous business cycles increase states’ tendency to expand eligibility by 5-6%, and extra fiscal capability at the state level decreases the likelihood of adopting online applications.

PUBLICATIONS

“Males’ Housing Wealth and Their Marriage Market Advantage” (with C.Y. Cyrus Chu and Wen Jen Tsay). *Journal of Population Economics*, 33(3), 1005–1023, 2020.

“Variations of Wealth Resemblance by Family Relationship Types in Modern Chinese Families” (with C.Y. Cyrus Chu and Kamhon Kan). *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 116(14), 6548–6553, 2019.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Public Economics

National Taipei University

OTHER EXPERIENCE

Academia Sinica

Research Assistant

June 2017-July 2018

Taipei, Taiwan

National Taiwan University

Graduate Student Research Assistant

Teaching Assistant

March 2017-June 2017

Taipei, Taiwan

Tyler Nelson Sofres Taiwan

Researcher

June 2012-January 2014

Taipei, Taiwan