

MENGWEI LIN

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438 Warren Hall, Ithaca 14850 · ml2622@cornell.edu

EDUCATION

Cornell University Applied Economics & Management, Ph.D. Candidate	<i>2018-2024(expected)</i>
Harvard University Department of Economics, Exchange Student	<i>2022-2023</i>
University of Wisconsin-Madison Department of Economics, Master of Science	<i>2016-2018</i>
Beijing Jiaotong University School of Traffic and Transportation, Bachelor of Engineering	<i>2012-2016</i>

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Public Economics, Political Economy, Firm Behavior

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Local Policies and Firm Location: The Role of Leaders’ Promotion Motives in China”

Abstract: This paper investigates the impact of local government competition on the spatial distribution of firms and the role of leaders’ promotion motives in intensifying such competition. Local governments compete by offering city-wide policies, such as lowering tax rates, giving subsidies, providing financial support, or loosening environmental regulations. The difference between what is practiced and what is legally mandated is non-negligible, and many of these policies remain unobservable due to limited data accessibility. To address this issue, I introduce a novel method to quantify the net effect of various policies proposed by local governments. This net effect, referred to as the policy index, is identified using data from all manufacturing plant locations along with a spatial border design. When applying this method to Jiangsu, a province in China with 13 competitive cities, all ranked in the top 100 by GDP over the past decade, I find that geographically proximate cities tend to adopt similar industrial policies. I then incorporate the estimated policy index into a promotion competition framework to understand how policies are determined in equilibrium and how competition, in turn, affects the business landscape. Counterfactual simulations demonstrate that only 23% of firms would choose a different location if leaders’ incentives were the same across all cities.

WORKING PAPERS

“Peace and Petty Corruption: Evidence from Trucking in Côte d’Ivoire,” with Jeremy Foltz and Souleymane Soumahoro.

“Money, Influence (and Death) in U.S. Politics,” with Marco Battaglini, Valerio Leone Sciabolazza, Eleonora Patacchini.

“A Tax-Shaped Retail Landscape,” with Feng Chi, Limin Fang, Nathan Yang.

“Local Governance and Environmental Regulation: Evidence from China’s Urbanization,” with Deyu Rao.

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

“Count on a Leader? Evidence from Government-Business Contracts and Firm Performance,” with Jaya Wen.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Adam Smith Fellowship	<i>2023-2024, Mercatus Center</i>
EAP C.V. Starr Fellowship	<i>2024, Cornell</i>
Adlerbert Graduate Fellowship	<i>2023, Cornell</i>
Graduate School Fellowship	<i>2022-2023, Cornell</i>
Cornell Laidlaw Scholars Graduate Mentor Fellowship	<i>2022, Cornell</i>
Cornell Center for Teaching Innovation (CTI) Graduate Fellowship	<i>2021, Cornell</i>
Dyson “Graduate Teaching Assistant - Outstanding Service” Award	<i>2020, Cornell</i>
First Prize, 13th “Jinshixuan Cup” Innovation Contest	<i>2015, BJTU</i>
Outstanding Student Leader Award	<i>2015, BJTU</i>
First-class Scholarship for Academic Excellence	<i>2014, BJTU</i>

GRANTS

Collaborator, Local Governance and Environmental Regulation	<i>2023-2025</i>
Research Grants Council, Early Career Scheme	<i>HK\$ 535,443</i>

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

- 2023: Harvard University (Graduate Student Workshop in Political Economy and Rational Choice, Political Economy Tea)
- 2022: AEA, University of Oxford (Center for the Study of African Economics), CEGA (Working Group in African Political Economy), Harvard University (Econ and Social Policy Grad Workshop, Graduate Student Workshop in Environmental Economics)
- 2021: International Growth Centre (the BREAD Conference on the Economics of Africa), SEA, Cornell University (Emerging Markets Research Day)
- 2020: Boston University (Mentoring Workshop), Cornell University (Labor Work in Progress Seminar, Development Microeconomics Graduate Research Seminar)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

TA: NCC5020/NCCY5020 Microeconomics for Management (MBA)	<i>2022 Summer, Cornell</i>
Instructor: CICER Winter Camp - Public Economics Research Group	<i>2022 Winter, Cornell</i>
TA: AEM4120 Computational Methods for Management and Economics	<i>2021 Fall, Cornell</i>
Head TA: AEM2420 Marketing for Dyson Majors	<i>2021, 2022 Spring, Cornell</i>
Head TA: AEM2400 Marketing for Non-majors	<i>2020 Fall, Cornell</i>
TA: AEM7020/ECON6115 Game Theory (PhD)	<i>2020 Spring, Cornell</i>
TA: AEM4110 Introduction to Econometrics	<i>2019 Fall, Cornell</i>
Tutor: MATH217 Calculus with Algebra and Trigonometry II	<i>2017 Fall, UW-Madison</i>

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Referee: Regional Science and Urban Economics, Journal of Economic Geography
Ad-hoc Reviewer: STAARS Fellowship

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

President: Community-Based Project Evaluation Group	<i>2022-2023, Cornell</i>
Director of Outreach: Community-Based Project Evaluation Group	<i>2020-2022, Cornell</i>
Treasurer: AEM Graduate Student Association	<i>2021-2022, Cornell</i>
Internship: Tesla, Inc.	<i>2016, Beijing</i>

OTHERS

Skills	Stata, R, Matlab, Python, QGIS, C Programming, Latex, 3DS Max, AutoCAD
Interests	Photography, Dancing(Jazz, Latino), Painting, Swimming

REFERENCES

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