

Research Statement

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1 Research agenda

As a researcher who specializes in political economy, I focus on the political economy of globalization and economic growth. In understanding the political economy of economic growth, I have been studying the interaction between democratization and structural change. I pursue research on the political economy of globalization through investigating globalization barriers, which include both trade and immigration barriers. Along with the determinants of globalization barriers, I am also interested in individual attitudes towards those barriers and related political-economic phenomena.

1.1 Political economy of structural change and growth

The relationship between democracy and economic development has received great attention from social scientists. Especially with the methodological innovations in the analysis of longitudinal and panel data, social scientists have started adding empirical evidence related to this important research question. However, existing literature exclusively focuses on the static impact of democratization. The dynamics of this impact in newly democratized countries has not been carefully analyzed.

In new democracies, even after democratization, it takes several decades to consolidate democracy. For example, in the case of labor representation which I focus on in my job market paper, the legalization of democratic labor union confederations occurred 12 years after democratization in South Korea and 9 years after democratization in Taiwan. It is important to note that Samuel Huntington defined the critical point of democratic consolidation as the second power shift. Therefore, when and how the democratic political

process is consolidated after democratization deserves special consideration for a better understanding of the impact of democratization.

In my job market paper, I focus on a particular aspect of the impact of democratization. In particular, I focus on the impact of unionization on structural change and how that impact is different in democracies compared to non-democracies. My paper consists of case studies of South Korea and Taiwan as well as cross-country analysis.

1.2 Political economy of trade and immigration

Globalization barriers such as tariffs and immigration regulations are determined endogenously by domestic politics. There is a well-developed literature on this, both theoretical and empirical. However, the relationship between individual barrier preference and voting behavior has received much less attention.

My co-authored paper, which was recently published in the *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, finds a link between individual barrier preference and voting behavior. Using the Swedish National Election Studies, We find that immigration barrier preference can explain voters' choice for conservative parties even after one's political ideology is controlled for while trade barrier preference doesn't. Furthermore, this individual-level pattern is reflected in the county-level election outcomes of the Swedish parliament elections. Along with this central finding, this paper also clarifies that the Heckscher-Ohlin factor proportion model of trade predicts individual barrier preference even after correcting for possible endogeneity.

1.3 Future plan related to my research agenda

I am passionate about expanding my understanding of the political economy of structural change. My job market paper focuses on new East Asian democracies with the experience of rapid economic growth. However, there have been many other new democracies with different growth experiences. Comparative understanding across different new democracies will broaden perspectives on structural change and its political-economic implications. In addition, my current job market paper performs geographical and sectoral decomposition of structural change. More detailed decomposition with firm-level or plant-level elaboration is also one of my next steps. This will provide micro-evidence on structural change.

I will deepen my analysis of the political economy of globalization by studying cross-country evidence. I am putting together comprehensive cross-country data with vote shares of populist parties and globalization penetration, such as trade penetration and immigration penetration. I am interested in studying the rise of populism and political polarization.

2 Abstracts of sample research papers

2.1 Democratic Consolidation, Unionization, and Growth-Enhancing Structural Change (Job market paper)

Re-allocation of labor from less productive sectors to more productive sectors is essential in attaining economic growth. Because only some developing countries achieve productive labor re-allocation, it is important to address the determinant of productive labor re-allocation. Based on this motivation, this paper focuses on the role of unionization in structural change. First, using aggregated cross-country data from 31 countries, I find that a country with higher national labor union density has smaller growth-enhancing structural change if the country has a democratic political regime. Furthermore, I provide detailed dynamics by constructing an index for the degree of unionization for each sector in each region of South Korea and Taiwan. Consistent with cross-country evidence, the magnitude of growth-enhancing structural change was lowered when a sector in a region had a higher degree of unionization. In addition, this heterogeneous magnitude of structural change across the different degrees of unionization became more explicit after the legalization of democratic labor union confederations. These findings suggest that the institutional properties represented by unionization can affect the dynamics and growth implications of structural change.

2.2 Attitudes towards Globalization Barriers and Implications for Voting: Evidence from Sweden (with Leyla Karakas and Devashish Mitra. Published in Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization.)

Using six waves of the Swedish National Election Studies (SNES) survey data, we investigate the determinants of attitudes towards globalization barriers

(trade and immigration) and how important these attitudes are in how people vote. In line with the existing results in the literature, we find that more educated and richer voters support freer trade and more immigration. We also find that conservative voters in Sweden are more likely to prefer freer trade but higher immigration barriers. Once various economic and demographic determinants of globalization barrier preferences along with voters' ideologies on a liberal-conservative spectrum are controlled for in the analysis of voting behavior, trade barrier preferences lose their statistical significance while attitudes towards immigration barriers remain significant. This suggests that immigration attitudes affect voting behavior through channels involving identity-driven factors that are different from the channels through which more traditional electoral issues, such as trade barriers, work. Focusing on the anti-globalization Swedish Democrats, we confirm that voters with a greater preference for barriers to immigration were more likely to switch their votes to this party from the 2014 to the 2018 election.