

# YONGLI CHEN

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## EDUCATION

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Ph.D., Economics, University of California, Riverside	<i>June 2023 (expected)</i>
M.A., Economics, Nankai University	<i>June 2018</i>
B.A., Economics, Nankai University	<i>June 2015</i>

## FIELDS OF INTEREST

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Primary fields: Public Economics, Labor Economics

Secondary fields: Development Economics, Environmental Economics

## WORKING PAPERS

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### **“Long-Run Impacts of Public Investments in Children’s Nutrition on Education: Evidence from Rural China” (*Job Market Paper*)**

Abstract: The long-term impacts of school meal programs on educational attainment and intergenerational mobility in education are under-investigated, particularly for developing countries. To fill this gap, this paper explores a nutrition improvement program implemented in rural China. Using the China Family Panel Study data and a Difference-in-Differences identification strategy, my results show that the policy improved educational attainment for rural students: one additional year of policy exposure led to a 0.14-year increase in schooling, a 2.3 percentage point increase in middle school graduation, and a 1 percentage point decrease in illiteracy rate. Girls and students from poverty-stricken counties and low-income families benefited most. The improvements in educational attainment were associated with better health status, fewer absence days, a lower likelihood of absence for illness, and better academic performance. Further analysis shows that this policy also promoted intergenerational mobility in education in rural China, and this effect was more pronounced for aforementioned socioeconomically disadvantaged groups.

### **“The Unintended Impact of Fiscal Hierarchy Reforms on Local Air Quality: Evidence from China”**

Abstract: This paper explores the causal relationship between the flattening of a fiscal hierarchy and environmental consequences using the Province-Managing-County (PMC) reform in China as a quasi-experiment. The reform enabled county governments to directly connect with provincial governments in fiscal affairs, bypassing the intermediate prefecture-level governments. Using a county-level panel data set from 2000 to 2012 and a Difference-in-Differences design, I find that local air quality measured by PM2.5 concentration was negatively affected by the PMC reform. Further analysis suggests that the deterioration in local air quality was not caused by better economic performance, since reformed counties’ GDP per capita also witnessed a significant drop compared with non-reformed counties. These impacts of the PMC reform were more negative for counties in provinces with larger number of subordinate governments under direct supervision before the reform. Mechanism analysis shows that reformed counties spent less on environmental protection, which could weaken environmental monitoring and enforcement, so firms in reformed counties generated more air pollutants. The findings of this paper imply that flattening a fiscal hierarchy may lead to undesirable outcomes if the monitoring from the upper-level government becomes less effective due to the increased number of subordinates.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

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“Revisiting the Relationship between Taxes and Happiness” (with Jinpeng Yin)

“Verticalized Environmental Regulations and Environmental Equity: Evidence from China”

“Intergenerational Impacts of Mass Layoffs: Evidence from China” (with Ozkan Eren)

## PUBLICATIONS

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Chinese translation of “*The Origins of Happiness: The Science of Well-Being over the Life Course* (by Andrew E. Clark et al., Princeton University Press, 2018)” (with Zhiliang Ni et al.). Shanghai: Gezhi Press, 2021.

“Environmental Behaviors of Local Governments and Subjective Well-Being.” (with Jinpeng Yin and Binbin Zhong). *Review of Industrial Economics* (CSSCI) 20 (4): 88–118, 2021. (in Chinese)

“Public Education Spending, Social Stratification and Happiness: An Empirical Research Based on CGSS2010–2015.” (with Jinpeng Yin and Zhiliang Ni). *Nankai Economic Studies* (CSSCI) (2): 147–167, 2019. (in Chinese)

“Laws and Policies of Public-Private Partnerships in China.” In Dongyan Li and Dongmei Zhang (eds.), *Public-Private Partnerships: Theory and Practice*. Beijing: China Financial and Economic Publishing House, 2018. (in Chinese)

“Fiscal Decentralization, Income Gaps and Citizen Happiness: An Empirical Study Based on CGSS2010.” (with Zhiliang Ni and Jinpeng Yin). *Economic Survey* (CSSCI) 33(4): 127–132, 2016. (in Chinese)

## TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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### Teaching Assistant – UC Riverside

Introduction to Macroeconomics *Winter 2022, Fall 2020, Spring 2020, Winter 2020*

Intermediate Macroeconomics *Spring 2021, Winter 2021*

Intermediate Macroeconomic Theory *Fall 2021, Fall 2019*

Intermediate Microeconomics *Spring 2022*

Introductory Econometrics *Summer 2021*

## AWARDS AND HONORS

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Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, UC Riverside *2022*

Dissertation Year Program Fellowship, UC Riverside *2022*

GSA Conference Travel Grant, UC Riverside *2022*

Dean’s Distinguished Fellowship, UC Riverside *2018–Present*

Outstanding Master’s Thesis, Nankai University *2018*

National Scholarship (Graduate), Ministry of Education, China *2016*

Merit Student (Graduate), Nankai University *2016*

Graduate First-Class Scholarship, Nankai University *2015*

Outstanding Graduates, Nankai University *2015*

Outstanding Bachelor’s Thesis, Nankai University *2015*

Merit Student (Undergraduate), Nankai University	2015
Honorable Mention Award of Mathematical Contest in Modeling, COMAP, USA	2014
National Scholarship (Undergraduate), Ministry of Education, China	2014
AEON Scholarship, Nankai University	2013

## CONFERENCE AND SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

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Applied Economics Colloquium, UC Riverside	October 2022
15th All-California Labor Economics Conference (Poster), Riverside, USA	September 2022
Western Economic Association International 97th Annual Conference, online	July 2022
China Economist Society 2022 Annual Conference, online	June 2022
RCEA Conference on Recent Development in Economics, Econometrics and Finance, online	March 2022
Conference on Macroeconomic Stability and Financial Risk Prevention, Tianjin, China	May 2017
Graduate Summer School in Econometrics and Statistics, Shanghai, China	July 2016
Midwest Political Science Association 74th Annual Conference (Poster), Chicago, USA	April 2016

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

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Paper Discussant, Western Economic Association International 97th Annual Conference	July 2022
Session Chair and Paper Discussant, China Economist Society 2022 Annual Conference	June 2022

## REFERENCES

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