YONGLI CHEN

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Economics, University of California, Riverside

June 2023 (expected)

M.A., Economics, Nankai University

June 2018

B.A., Economics, Nankai University

June 2015

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Primary fields: Public Economics, Labor Economics

Secondary fields: Environmental Economics, Development Economics

WORKING PAPERS

"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 natural experiment. The reform enabled county governments to directly connect with provincial governments in fiscal affairs, bypassing the intermediary 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

"Revisiting the Relationship between Tax and Happiness" (with Jinpeng Yin)

"Verticalized Environmental Administration and Environmental Equity: Evidence from China"

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

PUBLICATIONS

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

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

Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award, UC Riverside	2022
Dissertation Year Program Fellowship, UC Riverside	2022
Conference Travel Grant, UC Riverside	2022
Dean's Distinguished Fellowship, UC Riverside	2018
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

National Scholarship (undergraduate), Ministry	2014 2013	
AEON Scholarship, Nankai University		
CONFERENCE AND SEMINAR PRESENT	TATIONS	
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, onlin		ne <i>March 2022</i>
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		
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		
Yang Xie (Chair)	Ozkan Eren	
Assistant Professor of Economics	Professor of Economics	
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Honorable Mention Award of Mathematical Contest in Modeling, COMAP, USA

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2014