

Younghoon Kim

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Education

Ph.D. in Economics, University of California, Los Angeles	2025 (Expected)
Advisors: Jonathan Vogel, Pablo Fajgelbaum, Oleg Itskhoki	
B.A. in Economics (<i>Summa Cum Laude</i>), Seoul National University	2015

Research Interests

International Trade and International Organization

Working Papers

“When Export Controls Backfire: Evidence from 2019 Korea-Japan Trade Dispute”

Can export controls backfire, leading to an increase in productivity and exports in the targeted country? I use Korea's response to the 2019 Korea-Japan trade dispute to answer this question. In 2019, Japan announced export controls on South Korea for national strategic items, leaving enforcement up to Japanese officials. Although no export restrictions were imposed in practice, the potential risk alone triggered substantial changes in Korea's imports and exports. Imports from Japan declined significantly, irrespective of whether items were subject to the announcement. However, imports from Japan decreased disproportionately in sectors where Japan had been the primary supplier, and Korean producers' revenue also increased in these sectors, suggesting import substitution. Notably, Korea's exports expanded more in these sectors while prices declined, suggesting increased productivity. Motivated by these empirical findings, I structurally estimate the strength of scale economies in Korea (and elsewhere) leveraging variation in exposure to Korea's substitution away from Japan across industries (and across countries). The results support the presence of large scale economies, suggesting that export-control-induced positive shocks to domestic demand increased productivity, which in turn boosted exports.

“Responding to Semiconductor Supply Chain Disruptions: Evidence from South Korea”

How might semiconductor producers respond to the possibility of restricted access to key imported intermediate goods? And how might this response vary across inputs? I use the response of Korean semiconductor producers amid the 2019 Korea-Japan political dispute to answer these questions. In July 2019, Japan announced potential export controls on South Korea for three key semiconductor inputs, leaving implementation to Japanese officials.

Although no export restrictions were applied in practice, the announcement itself triggered uncertainty over the global supply chain, leading to drastically different responses from Korean producers across the three targeted inputs. I present a model featuring two adjustment margins—inventories and global sourcing decisions—with heterogeneity across inputs in the initial share of sourcing from Japan. I show that the calibrated model matches the heterogeneous patterns across the three inputs, suggesting that these two adjustment margins played an important role in practice. Using the model, I also solve for how Korean producers would have responded had Japan extended its export controls to other key semiconductor inputs. These counterfactual responses align with actual responses, indicating that semiconductor producers feared an extension of Japanese export controls.

Work in Progress

“Hysteresis Effects of Geopolitical Conflicts on Consumer Goods Trade”

“Heterogeneous Effects of Geopolitical Disputes on Exports and Imports”

Presentations

Korea International Economic Association (Winter Meeting),	2024
Yonsei University, Asia-Pacific Industrial Organisation Conference,	
Korea-America Economic Association Job Market Conference, CSU-Long Beach,	
Midwest International Trade Conference, UCLA Proseminar	
Warwick Economics PhD Conference, UCLA Proseminar	2023
UCLA Proseminar	2021, 2022

Honors and Awards

Departmental Fellowship, UCLA	2020-2024
Lewis L. Clarke Graduate Fellowship, UCLA	2023, 2024
Summer Graduate Fellowship, UCLA	2020
Fulbright Graduate Study Award	2019, 2020
Official Commendation, Deputy Prime Minister of Republic of Korea	2017
Honorary Pass in Higher Civil Service Examination, Republic of Korea	2013
Merit Based Scholarships, Seoul National University	2008, 2011-2014

Teaching

University of California, Los Angeles (Teaching Assistant)

Intermediate Microeconomic Theory	2021-2025
Microeconomic Theory	2022

Professional Experience

Ministry of Economy and Finance, Republic of Korea

Deputy Director, Social Policy Division 2018-2019

- In charge of National Pension Scheme analysis and forecast
- Drafted “*The 4th Operation Plan for National Pension Scheme (2018)*”

Deputy Director, Population Policy Division 2017-2018

- In charge of demographic analysis including women’s employment
- Drafted “*Measures to Boost Women’s Employment (2017)*”

Deputy Director, Future Policy Division 2016-2017

- In charge of higher education policy analysis including National Student Grants
- Drafted “*Medium and Long-term Strategy of the Republic of Korea (2017)*”

Seoul Metropolitan Government, Republic of Korea

Deputy Director, Transportation Policy Division 2015-2016

- In charge of analyzing the fare system and profits of the Seoul Metropolitan Subway
- Drafted “*The Analysis of the Effect of Fare Increases in the Seoul Metropolitan Subway*”

Other Information

Nationality: Republic of Korea

Military Service: Republic of Korea Army, 2008-2010

Language: Korean (native), English (fluent), Japanese (business proficient)

Skills: MATLAB, Stata, Julia, Latex

References

Jonathan Vogel

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Oleg Itskhoki

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