CHEN Junhao

PUBLIC ECONOMICS · EDUCATION · TEXTUAL METHODS
ECONOMICS OF DIGITIZATION · DEVELOPMENT

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EDUCATION

2018 – 2024^e	**Ph.D.** in Economics	BOSTON UNIVERSITY, MA
2016 – 2018	**M.A.** in Economics	BOSTON UNIVERSITY, MA
2012 – 2016	**B.A** in Economics	FUDAN UNIVERSITY, SHANGHAI

RESEARCH

WORKING PAPER

1. **Is Deservingness Merit-based or Need-based? Evidence from Medical Crowdfunding** *Job Market Paper*

This paper studies how donors respond to merit and need when giving to families facing unaffordable medical expenses. With data from a leading crowdfunding platform in China, I find that campaigns receive more donations if patients or fundraisers report attending (selective) colleges. After controlling for campaign characteristics and donor fixed effect at the transaction level, I show that a repeat donor favors patients who attend a higher-ranked college or have a higher education level. An online survey experiment is conducted to elicit respondents' willingness to donate to synthetic fundraising stories, in which the patients' college and medical expenses are independently randomized. Both academic merit and financial need enhance donor generosity. The effect on college ranking is more pronounced for top and in-province institutions and among respondents with better knowledge of college ranking. Merit helps attract more donations, presumably by enhancing perceived deservingness. Female and younger respondents respond more to need and less to merit. Novel textual methods based on large language models are developed to extract information and build measures from text efficiently.

WORK IN PROGRESS

2. **Social Learning in Policy-making** *Joint with Yiming Cao*

We investigate the diffusion of policy ideas by using large language models to categorize policy documents and exploiting a unique social networking setup among policymakers at China's Party School. We find that policy diffusion is more likely between cities with leaders who were classmates in Party School training programs. The results indicate that social networks influence policy transmission. The impact of these social connections is equivalent to approximately 10% of the effect of directly moving a policymaker from one jurisdiction to another. These findings primarily apply to non-economic policies, suggesting that when tackling complex social problems, policymakers rely on knowledge exchange with more experienced peers in their network.

3. **The Economic Impact of Closing Illicit Markets:
    Evidence from China's Crackdown on Prostitution**   *Joint with Songjun Jiang*

Using synthetic control methods, we estimate the economic impact of a crackdown on prostitution in Dongguan. Tourism suffered a major blow due to the removal of the sex industry and increased law enforcement. As collateral damage, we document a reduction in entertainment consumption for local households. We measured local prostitution activity based on locations in judicial records and addresses in firm registrations. With a spatial diff-in-diff strategy, we explored the economic impact of the crackdown at the block level.

Teaching

Fall 2020	Co-Instructor, Intermediate Micro	New York University (Shanghai)
Spring 2023	Teaching Fellow, Introductory Macroeconomics	Boston University
Spr & Fall 2022	Teaching Fellow, Introductory Microeconomics	Boston University
Fall 2021	Teaching Fellow, Microeconomic Theory (Master)	Boston University
Spring 2020	Teaching Assistant, Intermediate Microeconomics	Boston University
Fall 2019	Teaching Assistant, Economics of Sports	Boston University
Fall 2019	Teaching Assistant, Environmental Economics	Boston University

Work Experience

2022-2023	Research Assistant to Prof. Siddharth George	Boston University
2021	Research Assistant to Prof. Marc Rysman	Boston University
2021	Conference Coordinator The North East Universities Development Consortium	Boston University
2018	Conference Coordinator The China Meeting of the Econometric Society	Fudan University

Conference & Seminar

2023.09	Science of Philanthropy Initiative (SPI)	Chicago University

Honors & Grants

2023.07	IED Research Grant($3000)	Boston University

Skills

Python, Stata, SQL, HTML