

Yanli Liu

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics, Northeastern University	2024 (Expected)
M.S. Applied Economics, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)	2018
B.A. Economics (<i>Summa Cum Laude</i>), Shandong University of Finance and Economics	2015

RESEARCH FIELDS

Primary Field: Industrial Organization
Secondary Field: Labor Economics

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Reputation Systems of Digital Platforms and their Impact on Consumer Purchase Behavior and Welfare: Evidence from Airbnb (Job Market Paper)

Digital platforms provide a space where previous consumers can share insights about their consumption experiences and product preferences. This user-generated feedback significantly contributes to the reputation of both the producer and the product, thereby generating benefits for future consumers. In this paper, I examine the relative impacts of different reputation components, specifically star ratings and text reviews, on consumer welfare within the short-term rental market. Using a censored logit demand specification, I estimate the impacts of these reputation components on the demand for individual property listings. Through counterfactual analysis, I find that, in comparison to star ratings, text reviews deliver greater benefits to consumers and create more consumer welfare. The two elements serve as substitutes, albeit not perfect substitutes, in enhancing consumers' utility.

Race and Unidentifiable Profile Photos on Digital Platforms: Evidence from Airbnb (with A.R. Shariq Mohammed)

This study delves into racial dynamics on digital platforms Airbnb, investigating users' strategic choices in displaying racial identity through profile photos. Our research addresses three main questions. First, we explore whether users strategically choose to display profile photos with race-dependent patterns. Second, we assess the bias in racial gap estimates when considering both identifiable and unidentifiable profile photos. Third, we examine whether the tendency to use unidentifiable photos correlates with property or host attributes and market characteristics. We source our Airbnb data from InsideAirbnb.com and employ machine-learning based API services to categorize hosts into racial groups. Additionally, zip-code level socio-economic attributes are derived

from the American Community Survey. Our findings underscore the nuanced ways in which racial information disclosure shapes economic interactions on online platforms, revealing differential behaviors and implications for hosts belonging to different racial backgrounds.

The Value of Signals and Fundings of University Titles (with Yanchi Zou)

Double First-Class Plan (DFC Plan) is a recent performance-based attempt aimed at bolstering the competitiveness of Chinese universities. In this paper, we investigate the causal effects of the DFC Plan on the graduates' job market performance by examining the changes in employment outcomes among graduates from DFC universities compared to those from non-DFC universities, employing a difference-in-difference framework. We conducted university-level analysis by constructing a unique panel dataset sourced from the Annual Graduate Employment Quality Report released by relevant universities and a third-party platform, Salary.com. Our identification mitigates endogeneity issues, as students in both treatment and control groups were admitted years before the list was released. Additionally, we endeavored to examine the mechanism underlying this causal effect by decomposing the overall effect into signal effect and the funding effect. Our results reveal that the DFC Plan has had limited effect in general, with heterogeneous effect across different company legal structures.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

RA for Shuo Zhang on Gender Equity in Hiring, Northeastern University	Fall 2023
RA for Alicia Sasser Modestino on Community to Community Summer Youth Employment Project, Northeastern University	Summer 2023
RA for Catalina Herrera Almanza on Determinants of Internal Migration among Young People in Senegal, Northeastern University	Fall 2019

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor

Econ 1116 Principles of Microeconomics	Summer 2022
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Recitation Leader

Econ 1126 Recitation for Principles of Microeconomics (4.8/5.0)	Fall 2021–Fall 2022
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Teaching Assistant

ECON 2316 Labor Economics	Fall 2023
ECON 3410 Labor Economics	Spring 2023
ECON 2560 Applied Econometrics & ECON 4640 Financial Economics	Spring 2021
ECON 5120 Macroeconomics Theory I (graduate)	Spring 2020
ECON 3416 Behavioral Economics	Fall 2020

WORK EXPERIENCE

Program Assistant, Northeastern University Dialogue of Civilization, Rwanda	Summer 2022
Economist Intern, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Namibia	2018–2019

Research Assistant, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), China

2018

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

PhD Trainee Fellowship Award, Northeastern University	2020-2021
Doctoral Fellowship, Department of Economics, Northeastern University	2019-2024
International Organization Internship Scholarship, China Scholarship Council	2018
First-class Scholarship, Shandong University of Finance and Economics	2011-2015
Presidential Scholarship, Shandong University of Finance and Economics	2014
First Prize for China Undergraduate Mathematical Contest in Modeling (CUMCM), China Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (CSIAM)	2013

SKILLS

Languages: English (fluent), Mandarin (native)

Programming: Stata, R, Python

REFERENCES

Imke Reimers

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