

Liaoliang Zhang

+65 87756156 | zhang.liaoliang@outlook.com | Singapore
<https://liaoliangzhang.github.io>

Education

Since 2022	DPhil in Economics, National University of Singapore - Visiting UC Berkeley in 2026 Spring Term
2019-2020	MSc Econometrics and Mathematical Economics, Distinction, London School of Economics (LSE)
2016-2019	BSc Economics, First-class honors, LSE

Pre-doctoral academic position

2020- 2022	Predocctoral fellow, University of Zurich, with Professors Anne Brenøe, David Dorn, and Josef Zweimüller
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Working in progress

“Closing Occupation Expectation and Wage Gap: Evidence from a Survey Experiment”
(Field experiment ongoing)

*Awarded Graduate Research Prize by NUS Economics Department
Supported by NYF Research Grant from the National Youth Council*

Working Papers

“[Effects of Education on Corruption: Evidence from Vietnam's University Expansion](#)”
with Edmund Malesky, Martin Mattsson, and Khoa Vu. (*Revise and Resubmit, Journal of Public Economics*)

Education and corruption are negatively correlated at the cross-national level, but little is known about the causal relationship between the two. We combine newly-collected data on timing and locations of Vietnam's national expansion of universities with detailed survey data on experiences of corruption from over 170,000 respondents in 320 districts across 12 years. Using staggered difference-in-differences, we show that cohorts exposed to the university expansion are 78.0% more likely to have a university education. However, this increase neither translates into a lower propensity to pay bribes nor an increased propensity to denounce corrupt officials. Instead, we find that education increases the propensity to pay bribes at the individual level. The mechanism for this increase that is most consistent with our data is that education raises household income and higher income leads to more bribe payments.

“[Age Discrimination in Hiring: Evidence from Online Job Ads](#)” with Qinyue Luo and Xinhan Zhang. (*Submitted*)

We analyze explicit age discrimination in an online job market and job seekers' responses to it in China, using nearly 8 million job postings with ad-level group characteristics of applicants. In nearly half of job postings, employers explicitly state age restrictions and often exclude older applicants. To rationalize this, we develop a dynamic game in which older workers incur a disutility from employment at a biased firm, while biased employers trade off a larger applicant pool against higher screening costs. Consistent with the model's predictions, empirical results show that age

restrictions encourage younger workers but discourage middle-aged and older workers, although some ineligible candidates still apply to high-wage or high-skill positions. Firms are more likely to impose age limits when jobs demand high work intensity, low skill levels, or when they face greater hiring costs and weaker market competition. Our results highlight that explicit age preferences, by altering both the composition of applicants and the costs of screening, can sustain discriminatory hiring equilibria even in competitive labor markets.

Seminar and conference presentations

2026	IRLE UC Berkeley, UC Berkeley Labor Lunch, AMES Hong Kong, AMES Vietnam
2025	SOLE Toronto, NUS
2024	NUS, EALE Norway, AASLE Bangkok
2023	NUS, AMES Beijing, ASSLE Taipei

Grant

NYF Research Grant, the National Youth Council (S\$ 25,000)

Overseas Research Immersion Award, NUS Graduate School

Conference Travel Grant, NUS FASS

Department PhD Research Grant, NUS Economics

Graduate Research Support Scheme (Fieldwork Grant)

Awards

Graduate Research Prize, National University of Singapore

President Graduate Fellowship, National University of Singapore

SM1 Scholarship, Ministry of Education in Singapore

Teaching experience

Teaching Assistant for EC6883 Advanced Topics in Applied Economics (2024/25 Sem 2)

- Invited for a special lecture on Project Management and Coding

Mentor for Economics Society undergraduate students at NUS (2025 Summer)

Yale-NUS Economics Capstone Project Peer Tutor (2024/25 Sem 1 & 2)

Teaching assistant for EC1101E Introduction to Economic Analysis (2024/25 Sem 1)

Teaching assistant for EC3303 Econometrics I (2023/24 Sem 2)

Economics tutor at New Generation Education (Before Graduate School)

Mathematics tutor for disadvantaged students as a member of Interact Club at National Junior College (Before Graduate School)

Co-curriculum activity

Co-organizer of the Applied Economics Student Workshop (AESW)

PhD Student Representative

Student Member on the Board of Discipline at NUS