

Liaoliang Zhang

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Education

Since 2022	DPhil in Economics, National University of Singapore - Visited 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	Predoctoral fellow, University of Zurich, with Professors Anne Brenøe, David Dorn, and Josef Zweimüller
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Work in progress

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

*Awarded the Graduate Research Prize in 2026 by NUS Economics Department
Supported by the NYF Research Grant from the National Youth Council*

Working Paper

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

Using nearly eight million Chinese online job postings with ad-level applicant group characteristics, we study explicit age restrictions, present in nearly half of advertisements. Our dynamic model combines workers’ search under age-biased job signals with employers’ posting decisions balancing applicant-pool quality and recruitment costs. We find age restrictions attract younger applicants but deter middle-aged and older applicants. Some ineligible workers still pursue high-wage or high-skill positions. Age caps are associated with high-intensity or low-skill jobs, higher hiring costs, and weaker competition. By altering applicant composition and recruitment costs, age restrictions can sustain discriminatory hiring equilibria even in competitive labor markets.

Publication

[Effects of Education on Corruption: Evidence from Vietnam's University Expansion \(Ungated version\)](#), with Edmund Malesky, Martin Mattsson, and Khoa Vu. *Journal of Public Economics*, Oct 2026

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 87% more likely to have a university

education. However, this increase neither translates into fewer individuals being affected by corruption nor increases the propensity to denounce corrupt officials. Instead, we find that education increases the incidence of bribe requests and perceptions of corruption. The mechanism most consistent with our data is that higher education raises household income, and that the associated rise in the opportunity cost of time and in exposure to bribe-prone situations increases exposure to corruption.

Seminar and conference presentations

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

Grants

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

KR Chou Scholarship, NUS Economics

Graduate Research Prize, NUS Economics

President's Graduate Fellowship, NUS Graduate School

SM1 Scholarship, Ministry of Education in Singapore

Teaching experience

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

- Invited to give 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)

Other services

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

PhD Student Representative

Student Member on the Board of Discipline at NUS