

Ying Xu

Website: <https://xuying0506.github.io>

Email: yx2471@tc.columbia.edu

Office Contact Information

Address: Department of Education Policy and Social Analysis,
Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W 120th St, New York, NY 10027
Phone Number: +1(646)-934-0957

Placement Director Alex Eble (eble@tc.columbia.edu)

Education

Columbia University

Ph.D. Candidate, Economics and Education Expected 2024
M.Phil, Economics and Education 2023

Peking University

MA, Economics and Education 2018

Beijing Normal University

BA, Public Affairs Administration 2015

Manchester University

Exchange Student 2013

References

[Alex Eble](#)

Associate Professor of Economics and Education
Columbia University
eble@tc.columbia.edu

[Randall Reback](#)

Professor of Economics
Columbia University
rreback@barnard.edu

[Pietro Tebaldi](#)

Assistant Professor of Economics
Columbia University
p.tebaldi@columbia.edu

Research Fields:

Primary fields: Economics and Education, Industrial Organization, Public Policy Analysis
Secondary fields: Labor Economics, Applied Microeconomics, Public Economics

Job Market Paper

School Competition, Resource Allocation, and Inequality in Student Outcomes.

Abstract: This paper studies schools' resource allocation decisions in response to increased competition induced by school choice programs and considers the equity and efficiency implications of alternative

school choice designs. Using administrative data in North Carolina, I examine the impact of nearby charter openings on the class structure and the allocation of teachers to students within traditional public schools (TPSs). I find that TPSs experience a significant attrition of teachers and a disproportionate exodus of economically advantaged and high-achieving students to charter schools. Subsequently, TPSs reduce class offerings, resulting in a significant increase in both class size and the student-teacher ratio. Faced with the dual pressures of enlarged class sizes and the necessity of maintaining school proficiency rates dictated by accountability systems, TPSs undertake measures to enhance the allocation equity and efficiency of teaching resources. This involves a strategic reassignment of more high-quality teachers to disadvantaged students, and the enhancement in teacher-student racial matching. Furthermore, I develop and estimate a structural model of school competition, taking account of TPSs' teacher assignment policy under competition. This model is utilized to explore the implications of the policy of scaling up the charter sector. Results show that expanding the charter sector is effective in improving the equity in the distribution of high-quality teachers and in mitigating the achievement gaps. Enhancing teacher-student matching is also an effective strategy to achieve allocative efficiency.

Work in Progress

1. The Impact of Unexpected School Closures on Student Achievement: Evidence from California.

With Yifeng Luo. *Funded by the Russell Sage Foundation and William T. Grant Foundation for Improving Education Equality.*

Abstract: This paper examines the causal effect of unexpected school closures due to wildfires on student academic achievement. We exploit exogenous variation in the intensity of wildfire school closures in California between 2009 and 2017 as a natural experiment. We find that wildfire school closures have negative effects on both ELA and math test scores. On average, one wildfire school closure day decreases both math and ELA scores by 0.02 standard deviations relative to the scores of the national reference cohort in the same grade. We also find that closures lasting 2-5 school days have more severe impacts on test scores, compared to closures that last for only one day or more than 5 days. Students with lower socioeconomic status experience larger negative effects from such unexpected closures. Furthermore, we show that school time loss and air pollution are two important mechanisms contributing to the decline we measure in student achievement.

2. Incentives to Finance: How Governments Affect the Tuition-Free Policy in Vocational Schools in China. With Zhilei Tian. *Research findings have been utilized by the State Council of China to refine the implementation of the tuition-free policy.*

Abstract: This paper assesses how government subsidies, aimed at reducing schooling costs to increase enrollment, interact with the supply-side fiscal burden. Policies like school fee waivers may heighten fiscal pressure on governments and potentially dampen their motivation to fund education, especially if such policies are imposed by higher-level authorities rather than being self-initiated. We analyze the impact of fiscal burdens from tuition-free policies on enrollment in China's secondary vocational schools. Through a geographic regression discontinuity design exploiting variation in fiscal responsibilities across county borders, we find a 21% enrollment decrease in these schools, with variations ranging from 14% to 40%. We also find that larger fiscal responsibilities borne by local governments lead to greater enrollment reductions.

3. Peer Effects in Pro-environmental Behavior. With Yifeng Luo.

Abstract: This paper estimates the peer effects on pro-environmental behavior among college students. Our research demonstrates the influence of college peers on a student's pro-environmental actions. We use

a unique dataset that includes information on student pro-environmental behavior and their social networks from a Chinese university that randomly assigns students to dormitory rooms. Our findings reveal that students' willingness to pay for environmentally friendly initiatives and their recycling habits positively influence their peers' similar behaviors. These results are significant for policy-making, particularly in shaping sustainable development education strategies and assessing the effectiveness of educational policies aimed at promoting pro-environmental knowledge and actions.

4. Employment Protection, Teacher Hiring, and Teacher Productivity.

5. Winners and Losers: The Distributional Effects of Transportation on College Monopsony Power.

Research Grants

2020-2022	Russell Sage Foundation and William T. Grant Foundation for Improving Education Equality, Co-PI (\$13,740)
2022	Dean's Grant for Student Research at Teachers College (Top Two Finalist)

Awards and Fellowships

2024	Research Dissertation Fellowship, Teachers College (Awarded to top 2% of applicants for excellent dissertation research)
2020,2023	Arvid J and Mary Burke Scholarship, Teachers College
2023	Education Policy Dissertation Fellowship, Teachers College (Awarded to 6 applicants for excellent research in education policy)
2023	EPSA Research Travel Award, Teachers College
2023	The Provost's Grant for Conference Presentation, Teachers College
2018-2021	EPSA Departmental Doctoral Fellowship, Columbia University
2018	Honored Graduates, Outstanding Thesis Award, Peking University.
2017	National Scholarship, Central Government of China.
2016	Founder Scholarship, First-class Academic Fellowship, Merit Student, Peking University
2015	Honored Graduates, Beijing Municipal Education Commission and Beijing Normal University
2012-2014	First-class Academic Fellowship, Beijing Normal University
2014	Academic Competitiveness Awards, Beijing Normal University
2012	Merit Student, Beijing Normal University

Publications

- Yang, Po, & Xu, Ying. (2017). Digital Divide and Inequality in Household Education Investment. *Peking University Education Review*, 15(4), 126-154. (In Chinese)
- Yang, Po, & Xu, Ying. (2020). Information Capital and Household Education Choice: Evidence from China. *Journal of East China Normal University Education Science*, 38(11), 39-55. (In Chinese)
- Gao, Wenjuan, & Xu, Ying. (2022). Empirical Research on Publication Output of American Doctoral Students During Their Studies: Taking 19 Economics Schools of Research Universities as Examples. *China Higher Education Research*, (9):102-108. (In Chinese)

Lian, J., & Xu, Y. (2016). New features in graduate education at the University of Toronto. In Ma, J., & Chen, Y. (Eds), *Development of graduate education of the world-class universities in 21st century: its new features and new trends* (pp. 104-139). Higher Education Press. (In Chinese)

Conference Presentations

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| 2023 | APPAM, AEFPP, Columbia University Industrial Organization Colloquium |
| 2022 | RSF and William T. Grant Foundation: Improving Education and Reducing Inequality Conference, APPAM, AEA-CSWEP Mentoring Workshop for 3rd + Year Women & Non-Binary PhD Students, Econ & Ed Ph.D Students' Colloquium, Columbia University Industrial Organization Colloquium |
| 2021 | Econ & Ed Ph.D Students' Colloquium, Teachers College |
| 2018 | AEFP |
| 2017 | CIES, International Association for Feminist Economics Annual Conference, Academic Conference of Education Finance in China |
| 2016 | Summer School on Education Research (National Research University in Russia and China Institute for Education Finance Research) |

Other Research Experience

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| 2017-2019 | National Assessment of Education Quality in China (<i>Funded by the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Education of China</i>), Student Researcher |
| 2015-2016 | The Integration of ICT into Education in China (<i>Funded by the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Education of China</i>), Student Researcher |
| 2014-2015 | The Development of Graduate Education in High-level Universities in the World (<i>Funded by Chinese Society of Academic Degrees and Graduate Education</i>), Student Researcher |

Teaching Experience

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| Spring 2024 | TA, Resource Allocation in Education, Teachers College |
| Fall 2023 | TA, Statistics for Economics, Barnard College |
| 2021-2023 | TA, Data Analysis for Policy and Decision Making II, Teachers College |
| Summer 2023 | TA and Course Developer, Behavior Economics with Applications to Education, Teachers College |
| Fall 2022 | TA, Economics and Education, Barnard College |
| Fall 2017 | TA, Advanced Quantitative Methods, Peking University |
| Spring 2017 | TA, Education Statistics and Econometrics, Peking University |

Professional Service

Senior Student Advisor for MA Students in Economics and Education, Teachers College

Miscellaneous

Citizenship: China

Programming: Tableau, SPSS, Stata, Python, Julia, R, HLM, ArcGIS, LaTeX

Language: Chinese (Native), English (Professional)