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PLACEMENT COMMITTEE

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FIELDS OF INTEREST

Research: Applied Microeconomics, Industrial Organization, Labor, Education

Teaching: Industrial Organization, Labor, Applied Econometrics, Microeconomics

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics, Columbia University, May 2010 (expected)

M.Phil. in Economics, Columbia University, May 2007

M.A. in Economics, Columbia University, May 2006

M.A. in Economics, Peking University (Beijing, China), July 2004

B.A. in Economics, University of International Business and Economics (Beijing, China), July 2001

JOB MARKET PAPER

“Gaming the School Choice Mechanism”

Many school choice programs use centralized mechanisms to match students with schools in absence of market-clearing prices. Among them, the Boston mechanism is one of the most widely used. It is well-known that truth-telling may not be optimal under the Boston mechanism, which raises the concern that the mechanism may create a disadvantage to parents who do not strategize or do not strategize well. Using a data set from Beijing, this paper investigates parents' strategic behavior under the Boston mechanism and its welfare implications. School choice is modeled as a simultaneous game with parents' preferences being private information. The paper derives restrictions on parents' behavior under various assumptions on their information and sophistication, and the model is estimated by simulated maximum likelihood. The results suggest that parents' sophistication is heterogeneous; when parents have a greater incentive to behave strategically, they pay more attention to uncertainty and strategize better. There is no robust evidence that wealthier/more educated parents strategize better. If the Boston mechanism is replaced by the Deferred-Acceptance mechanism under which truth-telling is always optimal, among the sophisticated parents who always play a best response, the majority of them are worse off, and almost none of them are better off. The change in mechanism benefits half of the naive parents who are always truth-telling, while it also hurts about 20% of them.

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

2009	Wueller Prize for Best Summer Research Proposal, Columbia University
2004-2009	Faculty Fellow, Columbia University
2007-2008	Dissertation Fellowship, Columbia University
2008	Wueller Prize: Best 4 th Year Dissertation Proposal (runner-up), Columbia University
2008	GSAS Summer Research Grant, Columbia University
2007	PER Summer Research Grant
2006	Vickrey Prize: Best 3 rd Year Research Proposal (runner-up), Columbia University

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Instructor: Introduction to Econometrics (Columbia undergrad, 2 times)

Teaching Assistant: Microeconomics II (Columbia, PhD), Intermediate Micro (Columbia undergrad, 3 times), Econometrics (Peking Univ., PhD), Micro-econometrics (Peking Univ., PhD)

RESEARCH PAPERS

“Random Assignment: Achieving Competitive Equilibrium from Equal Incomes via the Boston Mechanism,” 2009.

In many contexts, individuals must be assigned to positions with limited capacity. Ordinal preferences are usually elicited in this one-sided matching problem. I present a new multistage mechanism which elicits cardinal preferences. It extends the one-stage Competitive Equilibrium from Equal Incomes (CEEI) mechanism (Hylland and Zeckhauser 1979). While in their version equilibrium may not exist, the new one always has an equilibrium which is efficient if participants report their true valuations. Moreover, when the number of participants is large, it is strategy-proof, and it can be implemented by the Boston mechanism which only asks ordinal information.

“Is Shared Housing a Way to Reduce Homelessness? The Effect of Household Arrangements on Formerly Homeless People” (with Brendan O’Flaherty and Robert Rosenheck), *Journal of Housing Economics*, forthcoming.

Most single adults share housing with other adults, and living alone is considerably more expensive than living with someone else. Yet policies that discourage shared housing for formerly homeless people or people at risk of becoming homeless are common, and those that encourage it are rare. This would be understandable if such housing adversely affected its users in some way. We ask whether shared housing produces adverse effects. Our provisional answer is no. For the most part, whether a person lives alone or shares housing seems to make no difference to the outcomes we studied although shared housing is associated with reduced psychotic symptomology.

“Measuring the Strictness of China’s Household Registration System,” *China Economic Quarterly*, Vol.3 Sup. 2004. [in Chinese]

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

“Weighing Money against Ability: Efficiency of School Enrollment Criteria.”

“Demand for Schools: Academic and Non-Academic Factors,” with Fang Lai (NYU).

“Pre-trade Transparency and Stock Market Quality: Evidence from China,” with Ulf Nielsson (Copenhagen Business School).

“Option Value of High School Education: Evidence from a College Expansion in China,” with Yaohui Zhao (Peking University).

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Software: Matlab, STATA, SAS, LaTeX, Microsoft Office; Language: Chinese (Native), English (Fluent)
Citizenship and Visa Status: China (F-1 visa)

REFERENCES

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