

Yanchao Yang

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Economics - University of California, Riverside	June 2021(Expected)
M.A. in Economics - University of California, Riverside	2016
B.S. in Financial Engineering - Shanghai Finance University, Shanghai, China	2015
Exchange Student - Lakeland College, Wisconsin	2013-2014

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Health Economics, Financial Economics, Chinese Economy, Applied Econometrics

WORKING PAPERS

1. “*The Economics of Psychological Well-Being: Evidence From the United States Using Machine Learning Methods*” [Job Market Paper]
2. “*Unemployment, Negative Equity, and Mortgage Loan Default*”
3. “*Which Matters More to Happiness, Consumption or Saving? Evidence from China*”

WORK IN PROGRESS

1. “*The Puzzling Decline in American Birth Weights with Big Data*” with Joseph Cummins, Will Masters
2. “*The National Psychological Well-Being in China’s Transition Period: A Machine Learning Approach*”

PUBLICATIONS

1. “*Empirical Analysis of Decision of Transactional Money Demand in China’s Transition Period*”, Productivity Research, Vol. 264, No.7 2014, pp 152-154.(*In Chinese*)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Lecturer - University of California, Riverside

- Economic Development: Theory and Policy Summer 2018-2020

Teaching Assistant - University of California, Riverside

- Intermediate Macroeconomics Spring, Winter 2020
- Statistics for Economics Spring 2019
- Introduction to Econometrics Winter 2017

- Intermediate Microeconomics Winter 2018
- Introduction to Financial Management Spring 2017
- Introduction to Microeconomics Fall 2016, Winter 2019

AWARDS AND CERTIFICATES

HarvardX Data Science Machine Learning Professional Certificate	2020
Dean's Distinguished Fellowship, University of California, Riverside	2016-2020
Non-Residential Tuition Awards, University of California, Riverside	2016-2020
Teaching Assistantship, University of California, Riverside	2016-2020
Outstanding Student Scholarship, Shanghai Finance University, Shanghai, China	2012-2015
Student Scholarship, Lakeland College, Wisconsin	2013
Dean's Academic Honor, Lakeland College, Wisconsin	2013

SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS

APPAM Regional Student Conference, Claremont Graduate University	March 2018
Applied Economics Brown Bag Seminar, University of California, Riverside	February 2018

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

American Economics Association
 American Red Cross Member

UNIVERSITY SERVICES

University of California, Riverside	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Mentor for First-Year Ph.D. Students 2018 • Member of Graduate Student Association 2018-2020 	

SKILLS AND LANGUAGES

Software: Stata, Matlab, R, Eviews, Python, Latex, Microsoft Office

Languages: English(Fluent), Chinese(Native)

REFERENCES

Marcelle Chauvet (Dissertation Chair)
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ABSTRACTS

The Economics of Psychological Well-Being: Evidence From the United States Using Machine Learning Methods [Job Market Paper]

This paper models people's psychological well-being (PWB) by applying machine learning methods to a large dataset in the United States. PWB can be quantified by three self-reported variables: general happiness, satisfaction with the financial situation, and satisfaction with the job. First, we run the K-nearest neighbor (KNN) algorithm for each respective feature to rank the importance of features. We found that marital status has a higher importance score than income for people's general happiness. Prestige score of occupation is the most important predictor of satisfaction with jobs. Next, we utilize the Forward Selection algorithm to find the best combination of predictions. Using this selected combination to predict people's PWB, we achieve 70% classification accuracy when detecting people with disadvantaged PWB. On top of that, we use ordered probit regression to quantify how each feature affects PWB. Lastly, we show that PWB is important to economics by investigating how happiness affects physical and mental health, risky goods consumption, investment decisions, and working behaviors. We find that happier people have better health conditions, smoke and drink less, have more confidence in financial institutions, and generally work more hours.

Unemployment, Negative Equity, and Mortgage Loan Default

Which factor triggers the mortgage loan default, the negative equity (owing more on the mortgage than the property is currently worth) or job loss? In this paper, we explore the differential impact of employment status and house prices on mortgage loan default. We use the household-level data, the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), between 1990-2018 in the United States. Exploiting the heterogeneity in house price changes and variation in employment status across the US states and over time, we find that low-income households are more likely to default because of job loss potentially due to the rigid demand for the house. Households whose number of homeownership are larger than one are more likely to strategically default because of negative equity. We also find that homeowners who applied for unemployment insurance exhibit a lower rate of default. Our findings provide important micro-foundations to the income effect on mortgage loan decisions.

Which Matters More to Happiness, Consumption or Saving? Evidence from China

This paper uses the China Household Finance Survey (CHFS) to examine the impact of consumption and saving on household's happiness in China. Using an ordered logistic model, we find that the impact of saving is statistically significant on happiness and its magnitude is larger than the effect of consumption using the full sample. We also show that the high saving rate in China is driven by high labor market risks and preference over homeownership. This paper provides new empirical evidence of the people's preference for consumption and saving in China.