Application for NBER Digitization Tutorial 2019

November 12, 2018

My name is Shuo Zhang, and I am a fourth year Phd student in Economics department in University of California, Santa Barbara. I have not advanced to candidate yet, but I have decided my committee members, and Prof. Peter Kuhn is my advisor. My contact information is as following:

Email address: shuo_zhang@ucsb.edu

Telephone: (805) 886-6392

Course Description

In the first year, I finished the sequences of microeconomics, macroeconomics and econometrics. Staring from the second year, my focus of courses and study is labor economics, especially the search behavior in labor market. I have finished the sequence of labor economics, including labor economics, wage structure and population economics, the sequence of macroeconomics, including economic development, aggregate economics and job search theory, and the sequence of econometrics, including two classes on econometric theory, and Bayesian econometrics. Besides, I also took classes of statistical theory and statistical machine learning from statistics department.

Research Description

My main research interest is the empirics of search and matching in online labor market. Using the data of job posting and applications from online job boards, I want to test the hypotheses of search theory, especially on wage and gender differentials. Here are three ongoing research projects

on online job search:

Gender-Targeted Job Ads in the Recruitment Process: Evidence from China, with Peter Kuhn and Kailing Shen.

Explicit requests for applicants of a specific gender are widely used in emerging-economy labor markets. The extent to which these requests affect the allocation of workers to jobs depends on two factors: how much workers comply with firms' requests in their application decisions, and how much firms enforce their own requests when they encounter gender-mismatched applicants. Using internal data from a Chinese job board, we show that both compliance and enforcement are substantial, but compliance accounts for the vast majority of the gender segregation and gender wage gap associated with employers' explicit gender requests.

Wage Range in Online Job Matching

Wage plays a very important role in search theory in labor market, and some recent studies show that good jobs can attract more and high-quality workers even the posted wage is hidden to applicants. One emerging trend in wage posting in online job boards is firms post a wage range, rather than an exact number. Using data from an online job board, I want to test how the wage range affect application behaviors.

Apply What You See: Matching Algorithms of Job Websites and Gender Discrimination

In traditional search model, job postings are public information to all job seekers, and job seekers choose to apply or not after looking at job advertisements. However, in the online job search, all jobs that are shown to applicants are filtered by matching algorithms of websites, in the sense that the choice set of applicants is almost defined by websites. In the job websites in China, firms can report the true gender request when they post a job, while firms' gender preferences are invisible to job seekers. However, gender matching is one of the factors that are considered into the algorithms of websites. We conduct an audit study, to compare the different job searching results between male and female job seekers.

My secondary research interest is target and payment incentives in team production, in personnel economics. Using data from a coal mine, I want to test how the target will influence team production, and try to find some empirical evidences for ratchet effect.

I heard this tutorial from senior Phds in my department, who attended the previous NBER Digitization Tutorial. They told me they spent good time and learnt a lot from this tutorial and encourage me to apply. I am looking forward to attending the event in this year!