

Seung-hun Lee

Updated: December 15th, 2023

Department of Economics
Columbia University
420 West 118th Street
New York, NY 10027

E-mail: sl4436@columbia.edu
Website: <https://seunghunlee918.github.io>
Phone (US): +1 (917) 691-8858
Phone (Non-US): +82-10-3039-7323

PLACEMENT

Chairs: Sandra Black, sblack@columbia.edu; Suresh Naidu, sn2430@columbia.edu

Administrators: Amy Devine, aed2152@columbia.edu; Rosa Lourentzatos, rcl2109@columbia.edu

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Economics, Columbia University	May 2024 (expected)
M.Phil. Economics, Columbia University	May 2021
M.A. Economics, Columbia University	May 2020
B.A. Economics, Yonsei University	Feb 2017

FIELDS OF SPECIALIZATION

Primary: Development Economics, Political Economy, Public Economics

Secondary: Labor Economics

JOB MARKET PAPER

Organized Crime, Local Politicians, and State Capacity

Abstract: This paper investigates the effects of losing mayors to successful assassinations on the capacity of local governments. By leveraging the randomness in the outcomes of assassination attempts against mayors in Mexico in 2002-21, I find that the loss of mayors negatively affects the fiscal and personnel capacities of the local governments. Municipal tax collection decreases by 29%. The share of expenditure on primary services falls by 3 percentage points and is crowded out toward investment in construction. Municipal workers at productive stages in their careers leave the position. The back-of-the-envelope calculation shows that wages should increase by 13% to retain them after assassinations. Organized criminal groups take advantage of the loss of mayors by increasing their presence in municipalities with successful assassinations. The results are not explained by non-political violence, levels of economic activities, or population changes. The results speak to the significance of leaders in maintaining fiscal capacity and retaining capable personnel in the workforce even in a violent environment.

WORKING PAPERS

Childbirth Effects of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami (with Elizabeth Kayoon Hur)

Abstract: This paper evaluates the effect of in-utero exposure to the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami on short-term childbirth outcomes in Indonesia. We exploit variation in damage intensities across communities and the timing of exposure to identify causal links between in-utero exposure and birth outcomes. We find that the probability of successful pregnancies drops by 5.9 pp, while miscarriages increase by 5.5 pp in our preferred specification. However, this does not vary by intensity of exposure across communities. Household expenditures on health increased after the event, possibly contributing to reduced negative effects after the disaster. Our results suggest the importance of considering fetal loss for similar studies in developing countries and highlight that facilitating household investment in health through various policies may mitigate negative birth effects in the aftermath of natural disasters.

Remittance and the Tax Structures in Developing Countries

Abstract: Despite the increasing flow of remittances in volume and proportion, particularly among developing countries, their role in determining the state's capacity to collect taxes has received little attention. This paper explores the link between remittances and various tax revenue categories using country-level data. Two-way panel regressions suggest that a 1%p increase in the inflow of remittances explains a 0.12%p rise in consumption tax revenues. The same estimate derived from IV methods proxying for migrant network strength and openness of borders increases to 0.9%p. Decomposing this result reveals that the increase in household consumption expenditure explains all of the statistical association, not the efficient tax-collecting mechanism such as VAT. Subsample regressions by income category suggest that the association between remittances and consumption tax revenue is stronger in countries with lower income.

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Religious Conflicts and Educational Outcomes in Nigeria (with Kayode Taiwo, Rose Camille Vincent)

HONORS, AWARDS, AND GRANTS

Dissertation Fellowship, Columbia University	2023-24
Center for Development Economics and Policy data purchase grant, Columbia University	2021
Best paper, Korea Uni.-KIEP Paper Competition on South East Asian Studies	2020
Wueller Teaching Award, Winner (Undergraduate Core)	2020
Research Grant, Korea Foundation for Advanced Studies (KFAS)	2018-20, 2021-24
Dean's Fellowship, Columbia University	2018-23
3rd Best Paper, Korea Institute of Public Finance Economics Paper Contest	2017
2nd Best Paper, Maeil Business Newspaper Economics Paper Contest	2017
Dual Undergraduate-Graduate Degree Scholarship, Yonsei University	2017-18
Special Scholarship for Undergraduate Students, KFAS	2015-16
National Humanities Scholarship, Korea Student Aid Foundation	2011-12, 2015-16

TEACHING AND WORK EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant in Columbia University

Introduction to Econometrics II (Ph.D core)

- TA for Jushan Bai (Spring 2020), Serena Ng (Spring 2022), and Bernard Salanié (Spring 2022 & 2020)

Introduction to Econometrics (Undergraduate)

- TA for Seyhan Erden (Fall 2021), Tamrat Gashaw (Spring 2021, Fall 2019) and Simon Lee (Fall 2022)
- Winner of Wueller Teaching Awards (Fall 2019)

Economic Policy Analysis (Masters)

- TA for Lena Edlund and Brandan O'Flaherty (Fall 2020)

Teaching Assistant in Yonsei University

Public Finance (Undergraduate)

- TA for Kyung-woo Lee (Spring 2018, Spring 2017, Fall 2016)

Macroeconomics (Undergraduate)

- TA for Kyung-woo Lee (Fall 2017)

Korean Economic Development (Undergraduate)

- TA for Jaymin Lee (Spring 2016, Fall 2015)

Research Assistant

Bank of Korea Knowledge Partnership Program

- With Bank of Korea, Nepal Rastra Bank, and Yonsei University on March 2017 - December 2017
- Responsible for cleaning data and designing medium-sized macroeconomic models on Nepalese economy

EXTERNAL SEMINAR AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- 2023** Hiroshima University; Asian & Australasian Society of Labor Economics Conference, National Taiwan University; Economics Graduate Student Conference, Washington University in St. Louis
- 2021** IGC-DevLab@Duke Research Team Matching and Proposal Development Workshop (Virtual); Paris School of Economics Summer School, Development Economics Program (Virtual)
- 2018** Asian Meeting of the Econometric Society, Sogang University; International Panel Data Conference, Sogang University
- 2017** Korea-Japan Inter-University Conference, Ewha University; Korea Institute of Public Finance Conference
- 2016** Korea-Japan Inter-University Conference, Korea University

PERSONAL DETAILS

Nationality: South Korea (F-1 Visa)

Language: English (Fluent), Korean (Native), French (Basic, DELF B2), Spanish (Beginner)

Programming: Stata, Python, R, \LaTeX , QGIS, MATLAB, Eviews, and SQL

Military Service: Sergeant, English Interpreter, Republic of Korea Army (May 2013 - Feb 2015)

REFERENCES

Suresh Naidu (Sponsor)

Jack Wang and Echo Ren Professor
of Economics
Columbia University
sn2430@columbia.edu

Michael Carlos Best

Assistant Professor of Economics
Columbia University
mcb2270@columbia.edu

Rodrigo R. Soares

Lehmann Foundation Professor
of Economics
Insper, Brazil
r.soares@insper.edu.br