

Chuan Zhu

Ph.D. Candidate, School of Management, Fudan University
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EDUCATION

Fudan University, School of Management expected 2027
Ph.D. in Business Artificial Intelligence *Shanghai, China*

- Dissertation focus: Integrating AI in Service Operations.
- Committee: Tianjun Feng.

Northeast Forestry University 2018
B.S. in Logistics Engineering

INDUSTRY COLLABORATION AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Alibaba Group, Customer Operations Department July 2022 – Present
Research Scientist; Full-time, Onsite, Academic Collaboration *Hangzhou, China*

- Collaborate on Human-AI hybrid customer service system design.
- Develop algorithms with causal inference to better manage worker supply.
- Design data-driven strategies to optimize customer service operations.
- Provide academic consulting to support Alibaba's operational innovation initiatives.

Environmental Defense Fund Climate Corps & LONGi Green Energy July 2021 – Oct. 2021
Climate Corps Fellow; Full-time, Onsite, Internship *Xi'an, China*

- Analyzed supplier-side carbon-management challenges and green supply-chain opportunities.
- Designed supplier survey instruments and benchmarked leading firms' decarbonization practices.
- Developed a green supplier empowerment roadmap for training, renewable-energy adoption, monitoring, and incentives.
- Project link: <https://www.longi.com/cn/sustainability/green-supply-chain/>.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Fields: Service operations; platform operations; empirical operations management.

Substantive: AI-enabled service operations; human-AI collaboration; human-in-the-loop systems; GenAI and AI agents in platform operations; workforce management.

Methodological: Field experiments; causal inference; machine learning; LLM.

WORKING PAPERS

[1] Yiwei Wang*, **Chuan Zhu***, Tianjun Feng, Lauren Xiaoyuan Lu, Bingxin Jia. "Agentic AI and Human-in-the-Loop Interventions: Field Experimental Evidence from Alibaba's Customer Service Operations." (Job Market paper, **co-first authorship*), under review at *Operations Research*.

- Studies how firms should deploy and govern agentic AI in customer service operations when autonomous AI systems interact directly with customers and human workers remain in the loop.
- Uses a randomized field experiment and causal inference with large-scale customer service operational data from Alibaba Taobao's customer service operations.

- Shows that agentic AI reduces average chat duration but may lower customer ratings for AI-eligible chats; human intervention is more effective for technical escalations than emotional escalations, with effectiveness shaped by intervention timing and post-escalation human effort.
- Available at SSRN and arXiv.

[2] **Chuan Zhu**, Tom Fangyun Tan, Tianjun Feng. “Managing Front-office and Back-office Effort Allocation: Unpacking the Effects of Workload on Service Performance.” Working paper.

- Examines how workload shapes online service agents’ allocation between customer-facing interaction and back-office problem solving in live-chat customer service operations at a large Chinese e-commerce platform.
- Uses large-scale operational data analysis, a control-function approach with instrumental variables, mediation analysis, and textual analysis using LDA and LLM-based measures.
- Shows that service performance depends on maintaining an intermediate balance between visible customer communication and substantive problem-solving work.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- “Agentic AI and Human-in-the-Loop Interventions: Field Experimental Evidence from Alibaba’s Customer Service Operations.” POMS Annual Meeting, 2026.
- “Managing Front-office and Back-office Effort Allocation: Unpacking the Effects of Workload on Service Performance.” POMS-HK, 2026.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant

- Operations Management, MBA, Spring 2022.
- Data-Driven Market Analysis, Master’s, Fall 2021.
- Microeconomics, Undergraduate, Spring 2019.
- Theories and Practices of Entrepreneurship, Undergraduate, Spring 2019.

HONORS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND AWARDS

Climate Corps Fellow , Environmental Defense Fund	2021
Outstanding Academic Scholarship , School of Management, Fudan University	2019

PROGRAMMING AND RESEARCH SKILLS

GenAI / LLM: Retrieval-Augmented Generation (RAG); Agentic AI; LLM Fine-Tuning; data annotation and evaluation.

Programming: Python; R; Stata; SQL.

Software: MATLAB; LaTeX.

REFERENCES

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