

# ECON BROWNBAG SEMINAR CUM RESEARCH FINDINGS SEMINAR

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## Childhood Starvation and Mental Health

22 March 2024 (Fri)  
12:30 – 13:30

WYL314, Dorothy Y. L. Wong  
Bldg., Lingnan University

**Presenter:**

**Ms. TAN Jiamin**  
(ECON PhD Student)

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### ABSTRACT

This paper examines the long-term effect of childhood starvation on mental health status in China. Using two nationally representative surveys, we find that exposure to hunger early in life increases the probability of moderate depression in old age. The adverse effects of childhood starvation are found to be consistent for both genders. We also find that the negative consequences can be mitigated by social insurance coverage and improved family economic situations. Our findings trace mental distress to early-life experiences and highlight the importance of social insurance in reducing depressive symptoms.