
Dr. Ali Chalak

Research Associate, PJM Economics

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OVERVIEW

Dr. Chalak is an Associate Professor in Applied Economics at the American University of Beirut, Lebanon. His academic research focuses on alcohol control and harm reduction policy in Lebanon; commuters' and motorists' behaviour, modes of transport, and greenhouse gas emissions; adoption of conservation agriculture among farmers in Lebanon and the MENA and consumer demand for food products with safety or environmental labels and certificates. He is also actively engaged in independent consulting for the UK water industry, whereby he has been involved in a large number of willingness-to-pay studies in the context of PR14 and, currently, PR19.

EDUCATION

2002-2008	PhD in Applied Economics, Imperial College London, Wye Campus, University of London, UK
2000-2001	MSc in Tropical Agricultural Development – Option in Crop Protection, University of Reading, UK
1996 – 2000	BSc in Agriculture and Diploma 'Ingénieur Agricole', American University of Beirut

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

09/2009 – present	Associate Professor of Applied Economics, Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences, American University of Beirut (Beirut, Lebanon)
02/2008 – 09/2009	Consultant, ICS Consulting (London, UK)
08/2006 – 01/2008	Consultant, ICF International (London, UK)
10/2003 – 03/2006	Part-time Teaching Assistant, Imperial College London, Wye Campus (Wye, Ashford, UK)
05/2004 – 06/2004	International Consultant, Imperial College Consultants (ICON) and World Bank (Wye, Ashford, UK)
11/2001 – 08/2002	Quality Inspector and Agricultural Engineer, TÜV-Hellas SAL (Beirut, Lebanon)

MEMBERSHIPS

Agricultural Economics Society, Lebanese Economic Association, European Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, Association of Environmental and Resource Economists, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, Order of Engineers and Architects Lebanon.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Articles in refereed international journals

Chalak, A., Abiad, M. & Balcombe, K. (Forthcoming). 'Joint use of attribute importance ranking and non-attendance data within a choice experiment on food safety certification in Lebanon.' *European Review of Agricultural Economics*.

Moledor, S., Chalak, A., Fabian, M. & Talhouk, S. (2016). 'Socioeconomic dynamics of vermicomposting systems in Lebanon.' *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 6(3): 1-24.

Chalak, A., Al-Naghi, H., Irani, A. & Abou-Zeid, M. (2016). 'Commuters' behavior towards upgraded bus services in Greater Beirut: Implications for greenhouse gas emissions, social welfare and transport policy.' *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice* 88: 265-285.

Ghandour, L., Chalak, A., Al Aily, A., Yassin, N., Nakkash, R., Tauk, M., Heffron, M. & Afifi, R. (2016). 'Alcohol consumption in the Arab region: What do we know, why does it matter, and what are the policy implications for youth harm reduction?' *International Journal of Drug Policy* 28: 10-33.

Chalak, A., Abou-Daher, C., Chaaban, J. & Abiad, M. (2016). 'The global economic and regulatory determinants of household food waste generation: A cross-country analysis.' *Waste Management* 48: 418-422.

Irani, A. & Chalak, A. (2015). 'Harnessing motorists' potential demand for hybrid-electric vehicles in Lebanon: Policy options, CO₂ emissions reduction and welfare gains.' *Transport Policy* 42: 144-155.

Hecht, J., Reid, S. & Chalak, A. (2015). 'A marketing analysis of the equitability of water/sewerage service improvements.' *Journal – American Water Works Association* 107(4): E224-E233.

Abou Zaki, S., Chaaban, J., Nasreddine, L. & Chalak, A. (2014). 'The impact of food price increases on nutrient intake in Lebanon.' *Agricultural and Food Economics* 2(3).

Chalak, A., Reid, S., Silcock, M. & Abiad, M. (2013). 'Customers' perspectives of water safety and service failure risks.' *Journal – American Water Works Association* 105(8): E449-E459.

Abiad, G. & Chalak, A. (2012). 'Unraveling mean and variance heterogeneity influences of information provision on safer food purchasing decisions: A heteroscedastic mixed logit approach.' *Food Economics* 9(3): 135-144.

Chalak, A., and Abiad, M. (2012). 'How effective is information provision in shaping food safety related purchasing decisions? Evidence from a Choice Experiment in Lebanon.' *Food Quality and Preference* 26(1): 81-92.

Chalak, A., Hecht, J., Reid, S. & Abiad, M. (2012). 'Willingness-to-pay for greenhouse gas reductions: A Bayesian investigation of distributional patterns.' *Environmental Science and Policy* 19-20: 147-157.

Reid, S., Chalak, A. & Hecht, J. (2010). 'Determining the optimal investment plan for water utilities: The case of Veolia Water Central.' *Water Science and Technology: Water Supply* 10(3): pp. 367-375.

Balcombe, K., Chalak, A. & Fraser, I. (2009). 'Model selection for the mixed logit with Bayesian estimation.' *Journal of Environmental Economics and Management* 57(2): pp. 226-237.

Balcombe, K., Bailey, A., Chalak, A. & Fraser I. (2008). 'Modifying willingness to pay estimates where respondents mis-report their preferences.' *Applied Economics Letters* 15(5): pp. 327-330.

Chalak, A., Balcombe, K., Bailey, A and Fraser, I. (2008). 'Pesticides, preference heterogeneity and environmental taxes.' *Journal of Agricultural Economics* 59(3): pp. 537-554.

Balcombe, K., Bailey, A., Chalak, A. & Fraser I. (2007). 'Bayesian estimation of willingness-to-pay where respondents mis-report their preferences.' *Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics* 69(3): pp. 413-438.

Crane, M., Norton, A., Leaman, J., Chalak, A., Bailey, A., Yoxon, M., Smith, J. & Fenlon, J. (2006). 'Acceptability of pesticide impacts on the environment: what do United Kingdom stakeholders and the public value?' *Pest Management Science* 62(1): pp. 5-19.

Conference proceedings and papers

Hecht, J., Chalak, A. & Reid, S. (2010). 'How equitable are proposed water and sewerage service improvements? Evidence from a marketing analysis of stated preference data.' Paper presented at the 80th Annual Conference of the Southern Economic Association, Atlanta, Georgia, 20-22 November 2010.

Chalak, A., Reid, S. & Hecht, J. (2010). 'Using Bounded Bayesian Mixed Logit Models to Capture Heterogeneous and Shifting Public Attitudes towards Climate Change Risks.' Paper accepted at the workshop on "Risk Elicitation and Stated Preference Methods for Climate Change Research", EnviroChange, University of Trento, Trento, 21-22 October 2010.

Chalak, A and Reid, S. (2010). 'Customers' inertia in response to risks of water service failure: insights from a Bayesian analysis of a water company choice experiment.' Paper presented at the Applied Environmental Economics Conference (Envecon 2010), The Royal Society, London, 12 March 2010.

Reid, S., Chalak, A., & Hecht, J. (2009). 'Determining the optimal investment plan for water utilities: The case of Three Valleys Water.' In K. P. Tsagarakis (Ed.), 2nd International Conference on Water Economics, Statistics and Finance. Conference Proceedings (Vol. I, pp. 137-148). International Water Association (IWA), Alexandroupolis, Thrace-Greece, 3-5 July 2009.

Chalak, A., Bailey, A., Balcombe, K. & Fraser, I. (2006). 'Pesticides, preference heterogeneity and non-market values: a latent class model.' Paper presented at the 80th AES Annual Conference, Paris, 29-31 March 2006..

Reports

“C1 customer views: Customer consultation process. Report for Northern Ireland Water”, ICS Consulting, UK, February 2009.

“Post DBP Choice Experiments: Supply Interruptions and Water Quality. Report for Anglian Water Services”, ICS Consulting, UK, February 2009.

“Customer willingness to pay for reducing odour nuisance from the Beckton sewage treatment works. A report for Thames Water Utilities Ltd.”, ICS Consulting, UK, May 2008.

“Customer preferences and willingness to pay. A report for Three Valleys Water, Folkestone & Dover Water Services and Tendring Hundred Water Services (Veolia Water)”, ICF International, London, UK, February 2008.

“Customer preference surveys for PR09 investment planning: Stage 2 studies. A report for Thames Water Utilities Ltd.”, ICF International, London, UK, February 2008.

“Customer preference surveys for PR09 investment planning. A report for Thames Water Utilities Ltd.”, ICF International, London, UK, February 2008.

RELEVANT PROJECTS

Welsh Water, UK

PR19 Willingness to Pay Research

Currently contributing to the stated preference design, analysis and reporting components of a programme of research with Welsh Water customers to explore their priorities between various service areas, and their willingness to pay for improvements.

Save the Children and UNICEF, Jordan

Cost Efficiency Evaluation

Currently leading the analysis and reporting components of an independent cost efficiency evaluation of the Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) Program in Syrian refugee camps and host communities in Jordan

CEDRO, UNDP, Lebanon

Econometric Analysis and WTP Research on Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Currently leading the design, analysis and reporting components of various stated preference and related survey-based studies investigating the demand and WTP for energy efficiency and renewable energy in Lebanon.

Irish Water, Ireland

PR14 Customer and WTP Research

Led the analysis and contributed to the reporting components of a stated preference study of Irish customer priorities for improvement in their water and wastewater service.

Thames Water Utilities, UK

PR14 Customer Research

Led the analysis and contributed to the reporting components of a survey-based study of Thames Water customers' views and priorities for improvement of leakage and restricted use of their water service.

Severn Trent Water, UK**PR14 Customer and WTP Research**

Contributed to the analysis and reporting components of a follow-on stated preference study of Severn Trent's customers' preferences for service improvements.

Dong Energy, Denmark**Stated Preference Research**

Led the analysis and contributed to the reporting of a stated preference study to estimate the non-financial impacts associated with investment in improving health and safety, environmental performance, reputation and employee engagement for the purpose of investment optimisation of this leading Danish energy provider.

South Staffordshire Water, UK**PR14 Customer and WTP Research**

Contributed to the stated preference design, analysis and reporting components of a programme of research with South Staffordshire customers to explore their priorities between various service areas, and their willingness to pay for improvements.

ICS Consulting, UK**PR14 Acceptability research**

Contributed to the conceptualization of novel methods for evaluating customers' acceptability of water and wastewater service improvements among UK customers.

Various England and Wales Water and Wastewater Companies**PR14 Stated Preference Research**

Provided econometric support for second stage stated preference studies for various England and Wales water and wastewater companies.

Anglian Water Services, UK**PR14 Customer and WTP Research**

Contributed to the stated preference design, analysis and reporting components of a programme of research with Anglian Water customers to explore their priorities between various service areas, and their willingness to pay for improvements.

Severn Trent Water, UK**PR14 Customer and WTP Research**

Contributed to the stated preference design, analysis and reporting components of a programme of research with Severn Trent Water customers to explore their priorities between various service areas, and their willingness to pay for improvements.

Thames Water Utilities, UK**PR14 Stated Preference Customer Research**

Contributed to the design, analysis and reporting components of second stage stated preference studies evaluating Thames Water customers' priorities for improvements in their sewer flooding, supply interruptions and environmental performance of their service.

South West Water, UK**PR14 Customer and WTP Research**

Contributed to the stated preference design, analysis and reporting components of a programme of research with South West Water customers to explore their priorities between various service areas, and their willingness to pay for improvements.

Thames Water Utilities, UK**PR14 Follow-on WTP/WTA Research**

Contributed to the analysis and reporting of a follow-on WTP and WTA study of Thames Water customers' priorities.

Yorkshire Water Services, UK**WTA and WTP valuations for investment planning**

Contributed to the analysis and reporting components of follow-on stated preference studies exploring different econometric approaches to the estimation of WTP and WTA for service improvement/deterioration among Yorkshire Water customers.

YouGov, UK**Customer Research and Econometric Analysis**

Led the econometric analysis of water customer data from a UK National Water Survey exploring different perceptions, attitudes and priorities for improvement related to UK customers' water and wastewater service.

Virgin Media, UK**Econometric Modelling of Broadband Network Capacity**

Led the conceptualization, analysis and reporting components of a study exploring the probabilistic relationship between actual download speeds and broadband network capacity, given customer demand, of this leading UK internet provider. The study also generated a tool to support the decision to upgrade network capacity.

Thames Water Utilities; Veolia Water; Anglian Water; Northern Ireland Water**PR09 and PC10 Customer and WTP Research**

Led the design, analysis and reporting components of a programme of stated preference research exploring Thames, Anglian, Veolia and Northern Ireland Water customer priorities between various service areas, and their willingness to pay for improvements.