

# HAIYI CHENG

Carolina Population Center, UNC-Chapel Hill  
123 W Franklin St  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

haiyicheng@unc.edu  
(510) 990-5182

## EDUCATION

---

### University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

M.A., Educational Innovation, Technology, and Entrepreneurship Expected: 2026

- Relevant Coursework: Life Course and Aging; Health and Developmental Trajectories from Adolescence to Adulthood; Migration and Population Distribution

### University of California, Berkeley

Summer Exchange Student 2023

- Relevant Coursework: Sociology of Education; Politics and Social Change

### Renmin University of China

B.A. (Hons), Politics, Economics, and Philosophy 2020-2024

- Relevant Coursework: Contemporary Western Sociology; Categorical Data Analysis; Design and Evaluation of Questionnaire; Econometrics; Probability Theory and Mathematical Statistics; Linear Algebra; Political Economics; Social Science Research Methods

## RESEARCH INTEREST

---

Social Stratification; Comparative Historical Analysis; Life Course; Health Disparities.

Primarily interested in how categorical distinctions structure and reproduce inequalities across populations. Specifically, I focus on the role of state classifications in structuring mobility, resource access, and life chances, and on how social and institutional environments are embedded in health outcomes to produce cumulative disparities.

## PUBLICATIONS

---

**Haiyi Cheng.**, Manuel Schechtl. (2026). "Financial Assets and Cardiometabolic Risk in Early Adulthood: Evidence from Add Health." *Social Sciences & Medicine*.

### Work Under Review

Long Li., **Haiyi Cheng.**, Guangzhao Jin., Rize Jing. "Does Pressured Internet Use Promote Chinese Older Adults' Mental Health?." Revise and Resubmit at *Depression and Anxiety*.

## PRESENTATIONS

---

**Haiyi Cheng.** Wendy Yiqing Chao. "The Moderating Role of Early Life Family Environment on the Education-Health Relationship."

- Population Association of America 2025 Annual Meeting
- American Sociological Association 2025 Annual Meeting

**Haiyi Cheng.** "Gender Disparities in Grade Retention among Asian Americans: Family Structure and Racial/Ethnic Variation."

- American Sociological Association 2025 Annual Meeting

**Haiyi Cheng.** “We Eat Our Pigs’: How Economic Principles and Institutions Shape the Emotions of Piggery Employees.”

- American Sociological Association 2023 Annual Meeting
- BSA Work, Employment & Society Conference 2023
- East Asian Anthropological Association 2023 Annual Meeting

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

---

### **Wealth Poverty: Measurement, Prevalence, Determinants** 2025

Carolina Population Center, UNC-Chapel Hill

Research Assistant, Supervisor: Prof. [Manuel Schechtl](#)

- Conducted literature review on asset poverty, wealth insufficiency, and their determinants for an invited *Annual Review of Sociology* article.

### **Financial Assets and Health Outcome in Early Adulthood Using [Add Health](#)** 2025

Carolina Population Center, UNC-Chapel Hill

Research Assistant, Supervisor: Prof. [Manuel Schechtl](#)

- Constructed cardiometabolic risk indices and mediating variable indices including stressful life events, health behaviors, and neighborhood disadvantage using Stata and R.
- Employed Poisson regression and generalized structural equation modeling (GSEM) to explore potential mediation pathways linking financial assets to cardiometabolic outcomes.

### **Ideological Coherence and Political Identity of Chinese Immigrants** 2024

Center for Right-Wing Studies, UC Berkeley

Independent Studies, Supervisor: Prof. [Cihan Tugal](#)

- Conducted discourse analysis of comments on Wechat forums to examine ideological alignments around anti-communism, meritocracy, and Christian nationalism.
- Coded deidentified interview transcripts and ethnography notes from Chinese Christian churches conducted by team members.

### **Sleep Patterns and Mental Health Among Adolescents in China** 2024-

Center for Population and Development Studies, Renmin University of China

Research Assistant, Supervisor: Prof. [Long Li](#)

- Coded [CEPS](#) data (2013-2020) across five waves using Stata and R, examining bidirectional relationships between sleep patterns and depression symptoms among Chinese adolescents.
- Applied latent change score models (LCSM) to investigate how educational trajectories moderate the sleep-depression relationship over adolescent development.

### **Gender Disparities in Grade Retention Among Asian Americans** 2024-2025

The Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies, Harvard University

Research Assistant, Supervisor: Dr. [Fumiya Uchikoshi](#)

- Processed ACS microdata (2008-2023), implementing sibling fixed effects models to examine three-way interactions between gender, race/ethnicity, and family structure.
- Applied linear probability models with household-clustered standard errors to analyze grade retention patterns across Asian ethnic subgroups.

### **Internet Usage and Mental Health Among Older Adults in China** 2023-2024

Center for Population and Development Studies, Renmin University of China

Research Assistant, Supervisor: Prof. [Long Li](#)

- Applied confirmatory latent class analysis to distinguish pressured Internet use (pandemic-driven applications) from voluntary Internet use patterns among older adults.

- Employed structural equation modelling (SEM) to examine differential associations between Internet use types and mental health and the mediating role of subjective age.

**The Ban of After-School Tutoring and Educational Inequality** 2022-2023

School of International Studies, Renmin University of China

Independent Studies, Supervisor: Prof. [Shi Li](#)

- Conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers, parents, and students to assess perceptions of China's ban of after-school tutoring on educational equity in Beijing.
- Utilized Qualtrics to administer questionnaires in Beijing high schools to examine household education expenditure patterns before and after tutoring restrictions.

**The Interaction between Vtubers (Virtual Idols) and Their Fans** 2022

School of Journalism and Communication, Renmin University of China

Independent Studies, Supervisor: Prof. [Tianping He](#)

- Conducted 26 semi-structured interviews with Vtuber fans to examine three types of fan-idol interactions: consuming idol texts, producing idol content, and using idols as mediums.
- Applied grounded theory and discourse analysis to identify how fans, performers behind idols (中の人), and agencies compete for interpretive control over virtual idol images.

## SCHOLARSHIPS AND AWARDS

---

### UNC-Chapel Hill

MEITE Student Academic Travel Fellowship, \$1000 2025

Graduate Student Transportation Grant, approx. \$300 2025

School of Education Student Travel Award, \$500 2025

### Renmin University of China

Renmin University of China Distinguished Graduates 2024

ICBC Innovation Excellence Scholarship, approx. \$700 2023

Outstanding Winner of Undergraduate Research Award Competition 2022

National College Student Research Innovation Fellowship, approx. \$1400 2022

Linghui Essay Award for Ethics Studies, approx. \$700 2021

### Other Institutions

Center for Right-Wing Studies Mini-Grant, UC Berkeley, \$500 2025

Student Forum Travel Award in 2023 ASA Annual Meeting, American Sociological Association, approx. \$400 2023

Bursary Funding in BSA Work, Employment and Society Conference 2023, British Sociological Association, approx. \$150 2023

## LEADERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT

---

**Youth Volunteers Association, Renmin University of China** 2022-2023

Student Assistant in the University Library

**Youth RUC Newspaper, Renmin University of China** 2020-2022

Vice Head of the Commentary Department

## SOFTWARE SKILLS

---

Proficient in STATA, R, SPSS, Figma, and Adobe (Photoshop and InDesign).