

QINGYUAN CHAI

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EDUCATION

Ph.D., Economics, Boston University, Boston, MA, May 2025 (expected)
Dissertation Title: *Three Essays on Labor Economics*
Dissertation Committee: Kevin Lang, Daniele Paserman, and Raymond Fisman

B.A., Mathematics and Economics, Fudan University, Shanghai, China, 2019

Exchange Student, University of California, Berkeley, CA, 2017

FIELDS OF INTEREST

Labor Economics, Development Economics

WORKING PAPERS

- “[Housing Price, Internal Migration, and Intergenerational Mobility](#),” November 2024. Job Market Paper.
- “[Obsolescence Rents: Teamsters, Truckers, and Impending Innovations](#),” (with Costas Cavounidis, Kevin Lang, and Raghav Malhotra), September 2024, NBER Working Paper No.31743, *submitted*.
- “[Gender Imbalance, Marriage Stability, and Divorce Rate: Evidence from China](#),” (with Shiyi Sun and Yuan Zhang), August 2024, *submitted*.
- “[The World Bank and China: Comparing the Impacts of Their Development Projects in Africa](#),” (with Zhongyi Tang), May 2024.

PUBLICATIONS

- “[‘Going global’ and FDI inflows in China: ‘One Belt & One Road’ initiative as a quasi-natural experiment](#),” (with Huiyao Chen and Changyuan Luo) *The World Economy*, (2019) 42: 1654-1672.
- “[US Outward FDI: Is China a Special Host Country?](#)” (with Changyuan Luo and Chengxue Mao) *Journal of Financial Research (in Chinese)*, (2018) 462: 72-90.

WORK IN PROGRESS

- “Developing Credibility in Development Economics” (with Kevin Lang)
- “The Potency of the Pill: ED Medications and Marriage Stability” (with Daniele Paserman)
- “Hope or Trap: Navigating the Dual Impact of Cotton Cultivation on Rural Girls’ Development” (with Fei Teng and Yuan Zhang)
- “Siblings and Migration”

REFeree EXPERIENCE

Journal of Political Economy, *Contemporary Economic Policy*, *Population Research and Policy Review*

PRESENTATIONS

North American Winter Meeting of the Econometric Society (ASSA/NAWM-ES), 2025
Global GLO-JOPE Conference, North America Jobmarket Session, 2024
NBER conference on Fertility and Declining Population Growth, 2024
Asia Meeting of the Econometric Society (AMES), 2024
The Northeast Universities Development Consortium (NEUDC), 2023
Asia Meeting of the Econometric Society (AMES), 2023

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Dean's Fellowship, Boston University 2019-2024

WORK EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant for Prof. Kevin Lang, Boston University, 01/2022-present
Research Assistant for Prof. Linh T. Tô, Boston University, 12/2020-01/2021
Research Assistant for Prof. Dilip Mookherjee, Boston University, 05/2021-08/2021
Research Assistant for Prof. Frank Schilbach, MIT, 05/2018-09/2018
Research Assistant for Prof. Ulrike Malmendier, University of California, Berkeley, 09/2017-04/2018

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant, Behavioral Economics, Boston University, Fall 2020 and Fall 2021
Teaching Assistant, Intermediate Microeconomic Analysis, Boston University, Fall 2021
Teaching Assistant, Introductory Macroeconomic Analysis, Boston University, Spring 2021

DEPARTMENT SERVICE

Graduate Economics Association, Boston University, Officer 2021-2022
Co-organizer of Empirical Micro Reading Group, Boston University, 2022-2023
Website maintainer for Theoretical Research in Development Economics (ThReD), 2022-present
Conference Coordinator for Society of Economics of the Household (SEHO), 2021

COMPUTER SKILLS: STATA, MATLAB, SAS, R, Python, ArcGIS, Google Earth Engine, Mathematica

CITIZENSHIP/VISA STATUS: China/F1

REFERENCES

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Housing Price, Internal Migration, and Intergenerational Mobility (Job Market Paper)

This paper examines the role of housing affordability in shaping intergenerational mobility by affecting internal migration in China. It further explores how housing policies might address the challenges that rising housing costs pose for social mobility and inequality. To address the endogeneity of housing prices, I employ an instrumental variables approach, exploiting the Housing Purchase Restriction policy as a natural experiment. This policy limited the number of properties households could purchase in selected prefectures, thereby creating quasi-exogenous variation in housing price growth. I find that higher destination housing costs deter migration, with a more pronounced effect on individuals from disadvantaged families. As a result, these individuals earn lower incomes than their counterparts from more affluent backgrounds. Therefore, higher housing costs reduce intergenerational mobility. Furthermore, to distinguish among destinations and evaluate the effects of various housing policies, I adopt a structural approach to complement the aggregate-level reduced-form results. Unlike the reduced-form analysis, the structural approach reveals that the impact varies across different destinations. Rent subsidies in megacities primarily increase migration among advantaged individuals than disadvantaged ones, thereby exacerbating income disparities. Conversely, policies targeting disadvantaged groups or offering non-targeted subsidies in non-megacities help increase migration for disadvantaged people and raise intergenerational mobility.

Obsolescence Rents: Teamsters, Truckers, and Impending Innovations

(with Costas Cavounidis, Kevin Lang, and Raghav Malhotra)

Motivated by the advent of self-driving trucks, which will dramatically reduce demand for truck drivers, we consider large, permanent shocks to individual occupations whose arrival date is uncertain. Using a bare-bones overlapping generations model, we examine an occupation facing obsolescence. Workers are compensated for entering the occupation - receiving what we dub *obsolescence rents* - with fewer and older workers remaining in the occupation. We investigate the market for teamsters at the dawn of the automotive truck as an à propos parallel to truckers themselves. As predicted by the model, as widespread adoption of trucks crested the horizon, teamster wages rose, the number of teamsters fell, and the occupation became ‘grayer’. Older workers became more likely to enter and less likely to exit work as teamsters. As permitted, but not required, by the model, the number of older teamsters grew as a fraction of older workers. We obtain similar findings for current occupations threatened by computerization.

Gender Imbalance, Marriage Stability, and Divorce Rate: Evidence from China

(with Shiyi Sun and Yuan Zhang)

The deficit of men or women in a regional marriage market is a commonly observed phenomenon stemming from factors such as “Missing Girls” at birth, immigration, and higher mortality rates among men due to war. However, the impact of this deficit on marriage stability remains not well understood. In this paper, using provincial, census, and household survey data in China, we find that a higher male-to-female ratio increases divorce rates. Further analyses support the hypothesis that this impact is primarily driven by married women having more options outside their marriage. The effect is more pronounced in economies with greater income inequality, where there are more wealthy prospective partners. These findings highlight the significance of gender balance in sustaining stable marriages and uncover a new contributing factor to the escalating divorce rates in China.