

Zeyi Qian

PhD Candidate · Economics · Urban and Trade

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Education

Clark University	Worcester, Massachusetts
PhD in Economics	2026 (Expected)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unproposed Dissertation: Quantitative Analysis on Spatial Distribution of Firms and International Trade• Advisor: Dr. Junfu Zhang (Chair) and Dr. Kensuke Suzuki	
Clark University	Worcester, Massachusetts
MA in Economics	2023
Shanghai University	Shanghai, China
MA in Economics	2021
University of Toronto	Toronto, Ontario
International Visiting Graduate Student	2020
Shanghai Ocean University	Shanghai, China
BA in Economics	2018

Research Papers

Working Papers

Trade Costs, Entry Costs, and the Spatial Distribution of Chinese Manufacturing Firms (JMP)

with Kensuke Suzuki and Junfu Zhang

Abstract: This paper examines sectoral growth patterns across Chinese provinces during the country's economic takeoff in the early 2000s, following key policy reforms including trade liberalization, infrastructure expansion, business climate improvements, and relaxed rural-to-urban migration restrictions. We develop a spatial general equilibrium model based on the Melitz-Chaney framework to analyze how these factors interact and influence the geographic distribution of economic activity. Our model extends the heterogeneous firm approach to a multi-sector, multi-region setting, incorporating detailed sectoral and regional linkages. Using Chinese data, we calibrate the model and conduct counterfactual simulations to identify the key mechanisms driving regional development. Our results highlight manufacturing employment expansion as the primary driver of firm distribution and economic growth. While reductions in trade costs intensify competition and deter firm entry, improvements in the local business climate lower entry barriers and foster firm creation. Together, these factors shape China's overall economic growth and regional specialization. Finally, we quantify the contributions of manufacturing employment expansion, trade cost reductions, and business climate improvements to overall welfare gains.

Trade Shock and Dynamic Labor Allocation

Abstract: The early 21st century saw the U.S. economy undergoing a profound structural shift, driven by the "China shock" following China's accession to the WTO. This trade shock initially significantly affected U.S. manufacturing, causing widespread job losses and economic disruption. However, contrary to expectations, the shock also accelerated the growth of the service sector, which emerged as a primary driver of economic expansion. A key mechanism behind this transformation was reducing labor relocation costs, enabling workers—particularly those with lower education levels—to switch industries and maximize their life utility. This adjustment not only offset the negative effects of the trade shock but also contributed to a re-optimization of labor market allocation. To understand this counterintuitive outcome, we develop a dynamic spatial model grounded in the frameworks of CDP and ACM. Our model integrates declining labor relocation costs with heterogeneity in workers' education levels and labor mobility. Numerical exercises using a toy model show that reducing labor relocation costs allows more low-educated workers to transition into the service sector. These findings highlight the critical role of declining labor relocation costs in mitigating trade shock impacts and achieving an optimal labor market allocation.

Publications

- Zhao, H., *Qian, Z., Guo, Y. and Ye, Y., 2025. **How City Size Affects Firm Survival: Evidence from Chinese Enterprise Registration Data.** *Applied Economics Letters*, 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504851.2025.2473662>
- *Qian, Z., Zhang, J. and Chen, Q., 2024. **Estimating Round-Tripping FDI from Firm-Level Data in China.** *International Studies of Economics*, 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ise3.102>
- Chen, Q., Yang, J. and Qian, Z., 2022. **International Twin Cities and Chinese Export Activities.** *Economic Theory and Business Management*, (3), 137-155.(in Chinese)
- Chen, Q., *Qian, Z., Chen, Y. and Shi, Z., 2021. **Promotion Effect of FDI on Enterprise Survival in Host Country—A Discussion on Industry Safety and Market Access of Foreign Investment.** *China Industrial Economics*, (7), 137-155.(in Chinese)
- Qian, Z., Chen, Q., Shi, Z. and Li, X., 2021. **The Man-Bear Race: A New Explanation of Regional Competition for China's High-Speed Rail Stations.** *South China Journal of Economics*, 40(2), 66-83.(in Chinese)

Presentations

- 2025 Annual Meetings of the MEA , **Midwest Economics Association**; Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
- 2024 Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
- 2023 Chinese Economist Society North American Conference, **University of Oklahoma**; Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
- 2022 Graduate Student Seminar, **Clark University**
- 2020 Camphor Economic Circle Seminar, **University of Chinese Academy of Social Sciences**
Academic Forum on Regional Science and Urban Economics, **Shanghai University of Finance and Economics**;
Shanghai Postgraduate Academic Forum, **University of Shanghai for Science and Technology**; Forum on Frontier
2019 of International Trade Theory and Demonstration, **Southwestern University of Finance and Economics**; Urban
Development Forum, **Renmin University of China**; Innovation Forum, **Shandong University of Finance and Economics**; National Development Youth Forum, **Peking University**

Teaching & Research

Teaching Assistant

- Spring 2025 ECON 265: Econometrics, supervised by Dr. Moshi Alam (**Clark University**)
- Fall 2024 ECON 160: Intro to Statistical Analysis, supervised by Dr. Moshi Alam (**Clark University**)

Research Assistant

- 2021-2024 Supervised by Dr. Junfu Zhang, Dr. David Cuberes, Dr. Jon Denton-Schneider, and Dr. Kensuke Suzuki, (**Clark University**)
- 2018-2021 Supervised by Dr. Qiangyuan Chen (**Shanghai University/Renmin University of China**), and Dr. Yao Luo (**University of Toronto**)

Academic Services

International Studies of Economics

Awards, Fellowships, & Grants

2025-2026	IER Project Research Grant (IERPK2527), Hitotsubashi University, Japan	<i>JPY 500k</i>
2024	E. C. H. Veendorp Award, Clark University	<i>USD 0.5k</i>
2023/2025	Sheftel Travel Award, Clark University	<i>USD 1k</i>
2021-2024	NSFC Grant (72073093), National Natural Science Foundation of China	
2020	Joint Program Grant for Graduate Students Studying Abroad, Shanghai University	<i>CNY 10k</i>
2018	Shanghai Municipal Government Consulting Project Grant (2018-Z-D02), Pudong New Area Government, Shanghai	
2019	National Scholarship, Ministry of Education of China	<i>CNY 20k</i>
2017	Shanghai Municipal Scholarship, Shanghai Municipal Education Commission	<i>CNY 8k</i>

Language & Skills

Language: Chinese (native), English (fluent)

Computer: Matlab, Julia, Stata, R, ArcGIS, Python (web crawling)