

# Research Statement

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## 1. Overview

My research examines how government regulation and digital technologies shape youth behavior, family decisions, and human capital formation in emerging economies. I focus on China, where rapid digitalization coincides with expanding state intervention. Methodologically, my work combines quasi-experimental designs—difference-in-differences, regression kink, and event-study frameworks—with large-scale data collection, automated scraping, and causal inference in Stata and Python. My broader goal is to integrate empirical microeconomics with digital policy analysis to understand how institutional design and technological change jointly affect welfare and inequality.

## 2. Job Market Paper

*“Restricting Video Games in China: Effects on Time Use, Educational Achievement, and Health.”*

This paper, rejected and invited to resubmit at the *Journal of Development Economics* (resubmitted October 2025), evaluates one of the world’s strictest behavioral regulations: China’s 2021 ban on weekday gaming for minors and the one-hour weekend limit. Using five waves of the China Family Panel Studies (2012–2022), I employ a difference-in-differences design and a complementary regression kink framework to measure impacts on Internet use, academic performance, and well-being.

The policy drastically reduced minors’ online time but did not increase study effort or academic achievement. The decline was stronger among girls and children from smaller families, while effects were similar across regions with different Internet coverage. Peer effects within boarding schools indicate behavioral spillovers to untreated students, yet self-reported well-being fell modestly, suggesting short-term mental-health costs from lost digital leisure. A city-level RK analysis of administrative exam data confirms no systematic test-score improvements. Overall, the regulation curtailed screen exposure but yielded limited human-capital benefits, showing that strict enforcement without complementary support can reduce welfare without enhancing learning.

## 3. Working Paper

### **Digital Regulation and Market Responses: Evidence from Chinese Mobile Apps.**

This paper extends the analysis to digital markets. Using Python-based scraping and data processing, I assembled a unique dataset of app-level downloads, revenues, and user activity for thousands of games before and after the 2021 restriction. Difference-in-differences and event-study estimates show a sharp decline in youth-oriented games, partial shifts toward weekend use, and a rise in substitute apps such as e-books and social media. Firms adapted by rebranding products, adjusting monetization models, and retargeting adult audiences. The findings demonstrate that digital regu-

lations create ripple effects across platforms and industries, reshaping competition and innovation in the broader digital ecosystem.

#### **4. Future Research Agenda**

I plan to deepen my research on digital governance and family economics in three directions. First, I will track the long-term effects of China’s gaming ban on educational and labor-market outcomes as new data become available. Second, I intend to develop a structural framework for regulatory design in digital markets, integrating firm strategy and consumer welfare. Third, I will extend my empirical focus on institutions and family behavior to study how property-rights reforms and housing policies—such as China’s 2011 Marriage Law interpretation and the “monetized shantytown redevelopment” program—affect marriage, fertility, and intergenerational welfare. Across these projects, I combine micro data, causal inference, and computational methods to illuminate how policy and technology jointly shape well-being in the digital economy.

#### **5. Concluding Remarks**

My research agenda builds a coherent framework for understanding how digital regulation and institutional design affect individual choices and market dynamics. By blending empirical rigor with policy relevance, I aim to contribute to the economics of development and education while informing evidence-based governance in the digital age.

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