

October 29, 2021

Report on 2021 ICSA Nan Lin Student Award Competition

The 2021 ICSA Nan Lin Student Award Committee (consisting of W. Jean Yeung, Weihua An, and Anning Hu) reviewed 21 eligible papers submitted for this competition in October 2021.

Of all papers, the committee selected the following paper as the winner:

“Closing the Gender Gap in College Attendance: Variation by Family Background in China Over Time” by Mr. Yapeng Wang, Ph.D. candidate at the University of Virginia, United States of America

Based on data from the 2006-2015 Chinese General Social Survey (CGSS) data, Mr. Wang Yapeng extended previous literature on the gender gap in college attendance in China to examine whether women from all family backgrounds reach parity with men in college enrolment over time. This study is theoretically and practically motivated by shifting scholars' attention from the “marginal” to the “conditional” gender disparity of educational access. It shows that an overall decrease in gender inequality over time can mask the differential experiences of women from different family backgrounds. The author found that only women from socioeconomically advantaged family backgrounds had reached parity or surpassed men. Moreover, gender inequality has become more contingent on family background over time such that women's opportunity to access college relative to that of men increasingly depends on their family background. As such, this study expands the horizon of the scholarship in the Sociology of Education and gender research that brings about new insights for sociologists in these fields. The research questions are important, the analytical strategy is rigorous, sophisticated, and comprehensive, and the empirical findings are clearly presented. In addition, this study has the merit of providing a rich socioeconomic background about the Chinese society, thus helping provide a comparative perspective for scholars outside of Chinese society. This effort is especially appreciable as it echoes a mission of the ICSA – to articulate the general sociological significance of the research in the social context of China. With the merits noted above, the committee thus selects Mr. Yapeng Wang as the winner of the 2021 ICSA Nan Lin Student Award competition. Congratulations, Yapeng!

The committee also wishes to acknowledge the excellence of two other papers that tie as a close runner-up:

“Effect of childhood parental unfair treatment on midlife and older Chinese adults’ psychological well-being: The moderating role of gender” by Yifei Hou, Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology and Gerontology, Purdue University, United States

“A Longitudinal Study on the Educational Consequences of Child Migration in China”, by Hanzhi Hu, Ph.D. Candidate, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

Submitted by Weihua An, and Anning Hu, Wei-Jun Jean Yeung