My overall research agenda focuses on the role of multi-dimensional poverty patterns in shaping children’s health and well-being, particularly for children of immigrants. Specifically, my work focuses on three domains: (1) identifying multi-dimensional patterns of poverty/economic experiences during childhood, and how these multi-dimensional poverty experiences could shape children’s health and well-being; (2) examining the mechanisms linking multi-dimensional poverty and child outcomes; (3) exploring the contextual role of immigration in the relationship between multi-dimensional poverty and child outcomes.

**Multi-Dimensional Poverty Patterns.** The recent insecurity and instability in economy has resulted in more complicated poverty experiences than ever: transitions into and out of poverty, various levels of economic deprivation, and extended period of poverty exposure. These poverty patterns, in terms of income volatility, poverty depth, and duration, are likely to compromise children’s development in complex ways. To capture a more complete picture of poverty through childhood, my research examines children’s poverty experiences by incorporating multiple layers of poverty, and how such multi-dimensional poverty experiences shape children’s health and well-being during early school years.

**Mechanisms linking Multi-dimensional Poverty and Child Outcomes.** My research is guided by two evidence-based models: the economic investment model and the psychological stress model. The economic investment model emphasizes parent’s investment of resources, time, and support in child development. The psychological stress model suggests that economic hardship can lead to increased family stress such as parental depression, lower-quality parenting, and higher rates of marital conflict as well as environmental stress such as high crime neighborhoods. These multiple domains of risk/protective factors can interact with each other to account for the association between multi-dimensional poverty patterns and child development.

**Immigration Background.** My research pays particular attention to the health and well-being of children from immigrant families. Two opposing patterns of evidence explained how children of immigrants fare differently with economic deprivation relative to children of native-borns. The immigrant risk perspective posits that poverty has a stronger adverse effect on children of immigrants than for their counterparts due to a variety of risk factors such as racial discrimination. In contrast, the immigrant paradox perspective suggests that despite the risk factors, children of immigrants are resilient to poverty due to protective factors such as social support within their ethnic communities. These paradoxical results guide my study on how children with various immigration backgrounds (e.g., country of origin) may fare differently relative to native-borns in the face of different poverty patterns.

My dissertation focuses on children’s socioemotional well-being and examines (1) patterns of multi-dimensional poverty experience including income volatility, poverty depth, and duration, and the association between multi-dimensional poverty and socioemotional trajectories during early school years; (2) family investment (availability of cognitively stimulating materials and parental school involvement) and family stress (negative parenting and parental depressive symptoms) as pathways linking poverty and child outcomes; and (3) the contextual role of immigration background defined as country of origin in the association between poverty and child socioemotional outcomes. Findings from my dissertation will form a primary framework on multi-dimensional poverty patterns in shaping children’s socioemotional well-being under the context of immigration.
During my three years’ doctoral study thus far, I have amassed extensive experience working on longitudinal-designed projects that serve to identify how economic experiences, as well as other familial and sociocultural factors (e.g., parental work schedule, immigration background) interact in a dynamic way to shape children’s health and well-being. I have been able to examine how the different poverty dimensions may shape children’s academic and socioemotional trajectories, by utilizing the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten (ECLS-K) and developed two articles. In addition, using the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), I explored the relationship between changes in parental work and family economic experience during early childhood years. This study provides important evidence on whether families’ poverty status change when parents’ work schedule or work status fluctuate. Moreover, I have collaborated in a cross-national comparative study of parental work schedules and child well-being, in which I functioned by collecting global policy datasets (e.g., from OECD and World Bank) and conducting data management on comparability of data and measures to facilitate the cross-national analysis. In addition to studies in the U.S., I have worked for the Institute for Social Development at NYU Shanghai to examine social determinants of child and family health using data collected in China. I have been able to collaborate with scholars both in the U.S. and in China on peer-reviewed publications and research reports to inform policy-making. As such, I am dedicated to examining social determinants of children’s health and well-being in various sociocultural contexts using a longitudinal design.

My short-term goal is to continue working on large-scale datasets to advance and test the framework on multi-dimensional poverty patterns and its impact on child health and well-being. I will (1) include more dimensions such as the timing of poverty exposure to identify economic experience during childhood and adolescence; (2) examine more domains of child development outcomes such as physical health from a life course perspective; (3) investigate multiple domains of risk/protective factors, such as school and neighborhood environment by combining these factors into a more comprehensive framework; (4) test the framework for children of immigrants with various immigration backgrounds such as racial/ethnic and generational differences. My long-term goal is to integrate this framework to inform policymakers and professionals in devising appropriate policies and programs for economically disadvantaged families and children, particularly for children of immigrants. To achieve these goals, I will secure external funding opportunities including the Young Scholars Program of the Foundation for Child Development and R40 Maternal and Child Health Secondary Data Analysis Research Program.

In summary, I believe my research program will extend previous studies on poverty and child development in the following ways: (1) providing a more nuanced approach to capture children’s poverty/economic experiences from a multi-dimensional perspective; (2) extending prior theoretical frameworks (e.g., economic investment model and psychological stress model) on the mechanisms linking poverty and child health and well-being; (3) shedding new light on how children with different immigration background fare with different patterns of poverty; 4) utilizing advanced statistical methods (e.g., latent class analysis, growth curve modeling) by taking advantage of large, longitudinal and national representative datasets.