

### Research proposal:

Research on Perceptions of Quality of Life and Family Financial Decisions

### Abstract

This research is to investigate perceptions of quality of life and family financial decisions in the United States. The theoretical framework for this study was family systems theory. Financial resources can be classified into internal and external among family systems.

Two realities are obvious. First, the research to date has been limited with regard to quality of life and family financial situation (internal or external resources). Second, many community human services are provided according to the profit principle, funding source preference, or resource availability. So, there is a gap between theoretical approaches and actions taken by social service providers to improve quality of life.

This research will use the U.S. existing data -- both national and institutional research data. SPSS software will be used for the research results.

This study will make some initial inroads in the research on quality of life and family financial decisions, the results will reveal

(a) national and regional (Ohio) perceptions of quality of life and financial decisions, (b) the impact of current financial crisis to national and regional (Ohio) families, and (c) broader and deeper understandings of the quality of life construct and household financial decisions, thus contributing to research and the improvement of quality of life.

The significance will be shown in the following three subtopics: (A) family financial system and quality of life, (B) prior assessments of factors affecting perception of quality of life, and (C) quality of life indicators in household finance.

The significance of this research is inestimable. It is intended that this study will promote the development of further research on the relationship between perceived quality of life and family financial decisions and community-based services. Its theoretical and methodological contributions will serve as guidelines for actions to improve existing community-based services, and thus its quality of life. These findings can be shared not only locally, but also nationally, allowing community-based services to offer optimal assistance.

### Goal(s) and Objective(s).

The goals of this research project are (a) to identify and measure the factors that affect perceptions of quality of life, especially family financial decisions; (b) to analyze the latest data

on perceptions of quality of life and family financial decisions over the past five years with the financial crisis.

The objectives of the research are to access the existing data to (a) report the factors in family financial decisions that affect perceptions of quality of life, and (b) to report on perceptions of quality of life and family financial decisions over the past five years with the financial crisis.

The hypotheses being tested will be:

- a) Family financial security is highly collated with quality of life;
- b) When experience family financial difficulties, low income families tend to search for help from family, while higher income families tend to search for help from community services.

After the hypotheses are tested, the results could be used for policy considerations regarding to how to use the limited resources to develop community service programs to help families in general and families in need.

**Procedures.**

Month	Activities
Feb/March	Be informed of funding by the funding committee
April and May	Have advisory meeting Travel and finalize the data sets Start to analyze existing data ( national data, Ohio data and Institutional data)
June	Continue to work on existing data Begin data analysis Finalize the research model
July	Using SPSS to analyze the data Writing up the report of findings
August through Oct.	prepare the report of findings Report to funding source and prepare for presentations Submit for peer reviewed journal publication and conference presentation
Nov.	Finalize the report package to NBER Household Finance Working Group

**Collaborators.**

There will be a group of 4 members in the Advisory Committee, they will serve as consultants and advisors for the research, and give critical feedback on the data analysis, future research needs, and publications.

1. Dr. Claudia Heath, Professor, Family Studies, University of Kentucky  
Phone: 859-257-7737 Fax: 859-257-4095
2. Dr. Jing Jian Xiao, Professor and Editor, Journal of Family and Economic Issues, University of Rhode Island, Phone: 401-874-2547 Fax: 401-874-4020
3. Dr. Gladys Hildreth, Department of Technology and Cognition, University of North Texas, Phone: 940-369-7046
4. Dr. Irene Leech, Professor and Resource Management Specialist, Virginia Cooperative Extension and Virginia Tech, Tel: 540-231-4191 Fax: 540-231-1697.

**Budget.**

<b>Items</b>	<b>Amounts</b>
A. Personnel compensation	\$8,600.00
B. Travel expenses	\$1,000.00
C. Advisory Committee	\$400.00
<b>Total cost (A through C)</b>	<b>10,000.00</b>

**A. Personnel compensation**

A-1. This project will be implemented mainly by the principal investigator from The University of Akron and a research assistant. The Principal Investigator (PI), Dr. Baomei Zhao, will be an essential part of guiding and implementing the project. She will contribute 45% of her time to the project during 2013, and will be paid **\$10,000.00** for compensation, which includes partial compensation on research.

A-2. A research assistant (current graduate assistant from the University of Akron) is to work 20 hours a week, for 3 months with compensation of **\$3,600.00**.

**B. Travel**

The PI and the research assistant will travel to (a) National Center for Family and Marriage Research (NCFMR) at Bowling Green State University, Ohio, and (b) Health Workforce Information Center, Virginia, to access existing national and regional data. (c) Present the research paper to HF conference and National Association of Social Sciences. The budget for travel-related expenses is **\$6,000**.

**C. Honoraria for advisory committee**

There will be an advisory committee of four members, Drs. Claudia Heath, Jingjian Xiao, Gladys Hildreth, and Iran Leech. They will serve as consultants and advisors for the research. In late April or early May, there will be a meeting or telephone conference, for which each member will receive \$100, totaling **\$400**.

In sum, the **total cost is \$20,000**. All are direct costs without any indirect costs.

## **Curriculum Vitae**

**Baomei Zhao**

### **Education background:**

**Ph.D. Family Studies**, University of Kentucky, U.S.A. (December, 2004)

**M. A. Economics**, Zhejiang University, China (December, 1998)

**B. A. English and Business**, Zhejiang University, China (July, 1985)

### **Professional Experience:**

Jan, 2012- Present	Associate professor School of Social Work University of Akron
Aug, 2011- Dec. 2011	Associate professor School of Family and Consumer Sciences University of Akron
Aug, 2005-July, 2011	Assistant Professor School of Family and Consumer Sciences University of Akron
Jan, 2005-July, 2005	Instructor Department of Family Studies University of Kentucky
Jan, 2001-Dec, 2004	Teaching Assistant/Research Assistant Department of Family Studies/ 4-H Youth Development Extension, University of Kentucky
Jan-Dec, 2000	Visiting Scholar Shawnee State University, Portsmouth, Ohio
July-Dec, 1999	Associate Professor College of Business Administration Zhejiang University of Technology, Hangzhou, China
Jan, 1995-June, 1999	Researcher and Lecturer, Zhejiang Small and Medium-sized Business Development Institute, Zhejiang University of Technology, China

### **Refereed Journal Articles:**

Schulze, P., Zhao, B., and Young, C. (2009). Beliefs about infant feeding in China and the United States: implications for breastfeeding promotion. *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, (48:345-368, 2009)

Zhao, B. and Wilburn, V. (2008). Gender analysis on perception of quality of life regarding urgent needs and limited resources. *National Social Sciences Journal*, 33 (1), accessible at <http://www.nssa.us/journals/2009-33-1/2009-33-1-20.htm>

Zhao, B., Schulze, P., and Wang, Y. (2007). Chinese teenager tobacco consumption & perception of quality of life. *Consumer Journal*, 3, 81-97

Zhao, B. (July, 2007). Quality of life analysis regarding resources for different income levels. *National Social Sciences Journal*, 30 (2), accessible at

- <http://www.nssa.us/journals/2008-30-2/2008-30-2-21.htm>
- Zhao, B., Wilson, S., and Li, P. (2007). Chinese adolescent individualism & collectivism in the parent-adolescent relationship. *National Social Sciences Journal*, 29 (1), accessible at <http://www.nssa.us/journals/2007-29-1/2007-29-1-24.htm>
- Zhao, B. (2005). Community self assessment data assistance and editing, published and accessible at [http://www.lexlinc.org/needs\\_assessment/file\\_list.htm](http://www.lexlinc.org/needs_assessment/file_list.htm)
- Zhao, B. (1999). Hong Kong second board & new ideas for smb financing. *Zhejiang Economy*, June 1999 (CN33-1007/F)
- Zhao, B. (1996). The five C's pursuit of the Singaporean. *Zhejiang Economic Management*. April 1996 (Zhe01-1065)

### **Membership in Professional Societies:**

National Council of Family Relations, American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences, National Social Sciences Association, and American Council of Consumer Interests.

### **Grants:**

- Zhao, B., (July, 2012). *University of Akron and the Enterprise Holdings Foundation Joint Service Learning Project*. Grant proposal submitted to the Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Grant funded (\$2,500).
- Zhao, B., Liu, H. et al (Jan, 2012). *Faculty advisor for the Delphi Innovation Competition Grant*. Grant proposal submitted to the Delphi Pachard Electrical Company. Grant funded (\$2,000).
- Zhao, B., (March, 2011). *University of Akron and the Enterprise Holdings Foundation Joint Service Learning Project*. Grant proposal submitted to the Enterprise Holdings Foundation, Grant funded (\$2,500).
- Zhao, B., (Jan, 2009). *University of Akron and the Enterprise-Rent-A-Car Joint Service Learning Project*. Grant proposal submitted to the Enterprise-Rent-A-Car Foundation. Grant funded (\$1,500).
- Zhao, B., (Nov, 2007). *University of Akron and the Enterprise-Rent-A-Car Joint Service Learning Project*. Grant proposal submitted to the Enterprise-Rent-A-Car Foundation, Grant funded (\$2,500).
- Zhao, B., (May, 2007) *Comparative Research on Teenager Tobacco Consumption in China and the U.S.* Summer Fellowship of 2007, funded by The University of Akron (\$8,000).

### **Honors & Awards:**

1. Award by the Fifth Year Anniversary & Recognition by Freedom House for Women (Oct. 2012)
2. The Outstanding Professional of 2010 award from the Ohio Association of Family and Consumer Sciences District B (Oct. 2010).
3. 2008 Women of Achievement Awards by Women's Network Inc. YWCA of Summit County (June, 2008)
4. Dedicated Service Award by Ohio Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (April, 2008)
5. Certified Family Life Educator (CFLE) by National Council of Family Relations (NCFR) (Nov, 2007)