

Qianhui (Alice) GaoEmail: alicegao1994@gmail.com | Website: alicepsychology.com**Education**

East China Normal University-NYU Shanghai – Shanghai, China

PhD, Applied Psychology

Sep 2020 - Dec 2024

Syracuse University – Syracuse, NY

Master of Arts, Marriage and Family Therapy

Aug 2017 - Aug 2019

Syracuse University – Syracuse, NY

Certificate Advanced Study, Child Therapy

Jan 2018 - Aug 2019

Dalian Medical University – Dalian, China

Bachelor of Science, Applied Psychology

Sep 2013 - July 2017

Research Interests

1. Integrating generative AI technologies into the design, personalization, and delivery of psychological interventions, with the goal of enhancing accessibility, engagement, and scalability.
2. Developing and evaluating theory-based interventions to improve mental health through cognitive and behavioral change, drawing on frameworks such as evolutionary psychology.

Academic Papers

Manuscripts Published

[1] Gao, Q., Antfolk, J., & Santtila, P. (2023). An experimental study using a sexual strategies explanation to reduce homophobia toward gay men among lay people and healthcare professionals in China. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1143584>

- Designed and conducted a randomized experiment (N = 492) comparing Sexual Strategies Theory and Minority Stress explanations in reducing homophobia.
- Found that the Sexual Strategies explanation reduced pathologizing attitudes, especially among healthcare professionals, indicating potential for use in training contexts.
- My role: Led the study independently from design to publication, based on idea developed jointly with advisor.

[2] Gao, Q., Antfolk, J., & Santtila, P. (2023). An Experiment Using a Sexual Strategies Explanation to Alleviate Internalized Homophobia Among Men Who Have Sex With Men in China. *Evol Psychol*, 21(2). <https://doi.org/10.1177/14747049231179151>

- Designed and conducted a randomized controlled trial (N = 255) among Chinese men who have sex with men, comparing the effectiveness of Sexual Strategies Theory and Minority Stress explanations in reducing internalized homophobia.
- Found that the Sexual Strategies explanation more effectively reduced pathologizing self-attitudes and risky sexual behavior than the other conditions.
- My role: Led the study independently from design to publication, based on idea developed jointly with advisor.

[3] Gangamma, R., Tor, S., Whitt, V., Hollie, B., Gao, Q., Stephens, A., Hutchings, R., & Stone Fish, L. (2020). Perceived Discrimination as a Mediator of ACEs and Psychological Distress. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 49(3), 282-298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01926187.2020.1813656>

- This study examined whether perceived discrimination mediates the link between adverse childhood experiences and psychological distress in a clinical sample (N = 125); found full mediation after controlling for race, gender, and income.
- My role: Contributed to the literature review and supported manuscript preparation.

[4] Zheng, Y., Li, Q., Zhang, Y., Li, Q., Shen, H., **Gao, Q.**, & Zhou, S. (2017). Reward processing in gain versus loss context: An ERP study. *Psychophysiology*, 54(7), 1040–1053. <https://doi.org/10.1111/psyp.12855>

- This study examined how gain vs. loss contexts influence neural dynamics of reward anticipation and consumption using ERP components in a gambling task.
- My role: Assisted with background literature gathering and supported parts of the data analysis.

[5] Cui, Y., **Gao, Q.**, Liu, X., Zhou, S., & Jin, Y. (2016). Olfactory Impairments in Major Depressive Disorder findings and perspectives. *Medicine & Philosophy*, 37, 60–67. <https://doi.org/10.12014/j.issn.1002-0772.2016.08b.21>

- This study summarized research on olfactory impairments in major depressive disorder, focusing on clinical findings and potential mechanisms linking olfactory processing to mood symptoms
- My role: provided assistance with background literature gathering.

Manuscripts In Preparation or Under Review

[6] **Gao, Q.**, Wen, G., & Santtila, P. (manuscript in preparation). Discriminative Parental Investment in Chinese Stepfamilies Based on Reports from Stepparents and Stepchildren.

- Examined evolutionary predictions that stepparents invest less in stepchildren than in biological children, using survey data from both stepparents (N ≈ 230) and stepchildren (N ≈ 230), and assessed associations with adult psychological outcomes.
- My role: Led the study independently from design to manuscript, based on idea developed jointly with advisor.

[7] **Gao, Q.**, Wen, G., & Santtila, P. (manuscript in preparation). An Experimental Study Using Inclusive Fitness Theory to Improve Relationships in Stepfamilies.

- Conducted intervention studies testing whether an evolutionary-based explanation of stepparent–stepchild dynamics could improve psychological well-being and parenting in Chinese stepfamilies.
- My role: Led the study independently from design to manuscript, based on idea developed jointly with advisor.

Proffered Communication

Gao, Q. (Oral Presentation, 2022). Using an Evolutionary, Adaptive Explanation to Alleviate Internalized Homophobia.

2022 International Forum on Psychology and Cognitive Science & Doctoral Forum of the School of Psychological and Cognitive Sciences. Peking University.

Gao, Q. (Oral Presentation, 2022). Using Mating Strategy Framing to Reduce Homophobia Among the General Public and Mental Health Professionals

24th National Conference of Psychology, Chinese Psychological Society (held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic)

Mental Health Practice

Therapy Delivery

Shenzhen University — Shenzhen, China

Mental Health Counselor (Part-Time), Student Counseling Center

Oct 2019 — Dec 2019

- Provided psychotherapy, crisis intervention (e.g., safety planning, referrals), and risk assessments for students, including mental health screenings for incoming freshmen
- Delivered psychoeducational sessions on mental health awareness and adaptive coping

St Joseph's Hospital Northeast Medical Center & Child and Adolescence Outpatient — Syracuse, NY

Intern Therapist, Behavioral Health

June 2018 — June 2019

- Delivered intake and psychotherapy (individual, group, family) to diverse clients; collaborated on care plans with clients and medical staff
- Liaised with external systems (e.g., CPS, schools) to ensure coordinated support

Syracuse University Couple and Family Therapy Center — Syracuse, NY

Student Therapist

January 2018 — January 2019

- Provided intake, individual, couple, and family therapy under supervision; developed safety and treatment plans; coordinated care with schools and child protection services
- Delivered psychoeducation to university students through the Couple Enrichment Program
- Co-led Trans Support Day as part of the clinic's gender-affirming care initiative

Dalian No.7 People's Hospital (Psychiatric Hospital) — Dalian, China

Intern Therapist, Inpatient and Outpatient

April 2017 — May 2017

- Assisted in organizing group therapy, EEG/ECG monitoring, and relaxation sessions under clinical supervision
- Supported psychiatrists in medication planning, safety documentation, and multidisciplinary case discussions
- Facilitated communication across departments and supported cross-hospital collaboration for co-diagnosis and joint care.

Dalian Sanatorium for Aircraftmen — Dalian, China

Intern Therapist, Psychology Department

March 2017 — April 2017

- Trained in administering psychological assessments and using tools such as EEG, relaxation systems, and standardized questionnaires
- Practiced therapeutic methods including sandplay and relaxation techniques under supervision

For Children with Autism — Dalian, China

Volunteer Tutor

April 2014

- Provided one-on-one tutoring in mathematics and Chinese to children with autism
- Facilitated play-based activities to support the development of social and communication skills

Training Delivery Based on Counseling Expertise

Topic: Interacting with the Participants.
Sex Research Shanghai Lab

Sep 2022

Topic: Recognizing and Responding to Mental Health Issues Among University Students.
Shenzhen University

Oct 2019

Academic Service

Ad hoc reviewer
Journal of Homosexuality

Aug 2023

Professional Memberships

Association of American Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT)
American Psychological Association (APA)