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EDUCATION

- 2023** **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.), Michigan State University**
Education Policy, Department of Education Administration
- 2017** **LLB. (Bachelor of Laws), Chaudhary Charan Singh University**
- 2011** **Master of Business Administration (MBA), Bayes Business School**
- 2006** **Bachelor of Arts (BA), Soka University of America**
Social and Behavioral Sciences concentration

METHODS & CERTIFICATIONS

Certification: What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), Group Design Standards, Aug 2026
Quantitative: Difference-in-differences, regression discontinuity, fixed-effects/panel models, multilevel models, survey analysis
Qualitative/Mixed Methods: Narrative research, Thematic Analysis, Grounded Theory
Software: Stata, R, Dedoose,

ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH APPOINTMENTS

- 01/26 – Present** **Postdoctoral Research Associate with Dr. David Knapp and Dr. Jinkook Lee. Center for Economic and Social Research, University of Southern California, Los Angeles**
- Conduct quasi-experimental research on early childhood education and care policies, including compulsory schooling laws, tracking systems and access, and other life-course socioeconomic factors shaping late-life cognition and other health outcomes among older adults using studies within the *Gateway to Global Aging Data project* (NIA Grant R01 AG030153-19S1). Develop education policy datasets within international aging studies (e.g., HRS, SHARE) to support research on education, aging, and cognitive decline.
- 05/23 – 04/26** **Postdoctoral Scholar with Dr. Di Xu.**
School of Education, University of California, Irvine
Pathway to STEM Success: Improving Access and Success and Closing Equity Gaps in College-level Math in a State Community

College System (2023-2024). PI: Di Xu; Co-PIs: Laura Desimone, Florence Ran, Zachary Beamer. Funder: National Science Foundation (\$1,969,430).

Conducted quantitative and mixed-methods research on statewide developmental education reform across Virginia's community colleges, examining implementation, faculty buy-in and instructional practice, adult learner self-placement, and equity in access and outcomes. Evaluated how reforms intended to reduce gatekeeping translated into institutional practice and whether benefits were equitably distributed across student groups.

09/23 – Present

Project Manager, College of Education, Michigan State University Racial Equity in Discipline for Black Students Project (2023-2024). PI: Dorinda Carter Andrews; Co-PIs: Chezare Warren, Kenneth Frank, Bryan Beverly. Funders: William T. Grant Foundation (\$597,186); Brady Education Foundation (\$192,251).

Examining how teachers' race contributes to disproportionate discipline of Black students and whether an equity-focused intervention reduces these disparities. Managing project operations, coordinating research teams, and ensuring compliance with funding requirements to advance equity in school discipline.

08/20 – 05/23

Graduate Research with Dr. Ken Frank

College of Education, Michigan State University
Racial Equity in Discipline for Black Students Project (2020-2024). PI: Dorinda Carter Andrews; Co-PIs: Chezare Warren, Kenneth Frank, Bryan Beverly.

Conducted randomized controlled trial analyses of an intervention in 40 Michigan schools to evaluate its impact on racial gaps in referrals and suspensions for Black students. Contributed to survey design, quantitative analyses, and field-based qualitative data collection to assess the intervention's effectiveness.

05/20 – 08/20

Graduate Research with Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews

College of Education, Michigan State University
Perceptions of school culture, climate, and discrimination: Data from Student, Staff, and Parent Surveys, Dexter (MI) Community Schools. Supervisor: Dr. Dorinda Carter Andrews.

Conducting research on students' perceptions of school climate, school culture and discrimination experienced by students.

08/19 – 05/20

Graduate Research with Dr. Ken Frank

College of Education, Michigan State University
Teachers in Social Media Project

Worked on evaluating the impact of teachers' curation of instructional resources from social media on student achievement; contributed through writing a policy report on teachers' engagement with virtual instructional resources and resulting implications for teaching practices

08/18 – 05/19

Graduate Research with Drs. Scott Imberman and Kathrine Strunk,
College of Education, Michigan State University
Distribution of Teacher Quality characteristics of Special Education teachers

Worked on analyzing the distribution of teacher quality characteristics of special education teachers; contributed through academic writing and evaluating the existent literature on teacher shortage and teacher quality gaps in special education.

PUBLICATIONS

Peer-Reviewed Journal Articles

Chhikara, D. (2026). Peer Victimization Among English Learners: The Protective Impact of Dual Language Programs. *Educational Researcher*, 55(3), 173-185.
<https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X251378466>. Also available as (EdWorkingPaper: 25 - 1149). <https://doi.org/10.26300/2wwd-7862>
Media Coverage: [UCLA Center X](#), [India Today](#)

Chhikara, D. (2025). The Effects of Student–Teacher Ethnoracial Matching on Chronic Absenteeism: Exploring the Role of Relational Dynamics in Early Education. *Early Education and Development*, 36(5), 1066–1091.
Cited in [State Education Standard](#)

Working Papers

Li, X., Ran, F. X., **Chhikara, D.**, Beamer, Z. M., & Xu, D. (2026). *The access–enrollment disconnect in corequisite math reform: Causal evidence and stakeholder perspectives from a community college* (EdWorkingPaper No. 26-1577). Annenberg Institute at Brown University. <https://doi.org/10.26300/8cq3-a502>

Manuscripts Under Review

Warren, C. A., Carter Andrews, D., Beverly, B., Frank, K., & **Chhikara, D.** (Under Review). Towards continuous improvement of a racial awareness and knowledge intervention (RAKI): A Case from the field.

Chhikara, D., Beamer, Z., Sajjadi, M., Desimone, L., Bickerstaff, S., & Xu, D. (Under Review). Instructor Buy-In and Instructional Practice in Corequisite Mathematics Reform: Evidence from a Mixed-Methods Study of Virginia Community College System.

Li, X., Ran, F. X., **Chhikara, D.,** Beamer, Z. M., & Xu, D. (Under Review). The effects of corequisites on math enrollment behaviors and the perspectives of students, instructors, and advisors under developmental education reform: A mixed-methods study at Virginia Community College.

Beamer, Z., **Chhikara, D.,** Bickerstaff, S. Implementing Direct Enrollment Mathematics: Variation in Course Structures, Grading, and Supports Across a State Community College System.

Chhikara, D. (Under Review) Beyond Connection: A Conceptual Paper on Student-Teacher Relationships as Essential Measures for Equity in Socio-Emotional Learning.

Manuscripts in Preparation

Chhikara, D., Frank, K., Carter Andrews, D., Beverly, B., & Warren, C., Wei, J. Examining the role of teacher racial identity in disproportionate disciplinary actions: A multilevel analysis.

Chhikara, D. & Ran, F. X. Direct Enrollment Reform and Adult Learner Success in Gateway Mathematics: Evidence from a Difference-in-Differences Analysis

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistantships

Fall 2021	Teaching Apprentice for Dr. Amita Chudgar, <i>Economics of Education</i> (PhD), Michigan State University. Assisted in designing and delivering content for this PhD-level course, focusing on economic theories and their applications to education policy. Provided one-on-one support to students and contributed to discussions on the global economic impacts of education systems.
Fall 2021	Teaching Apprentice for Dr. Amita Chudgar, <i>Comparative International Education Policy</i> (PhD), Michigan State University. Helped design and deliver case studies in comparative international education policy for this PhD-level course.
Spring 2021	Teaching Apprentice for Dr. Kristy Copper Stein, <i>Organizing for Learning</i> (PhD and EdD), Michigan State University. Taught regression analysis and regression discontinuity design (RDD), focusing on applications and assumptions for principals and school leaders. Developed materials to support participants in applying these methods to educational data.

FELLOWSHIPS, GRANTS, AND AWARDS

Postdoctoral & Early Career Awards

- 2026 **Semi-Finalist, NAEd/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellowship**, National Academy of Education / Spencer Foundation

Selected as one of 57 semi-finalists from 470+ applicants (≈12% selection rate)
- 2025 **Equity and Inclusion Young Professional Fellowship**, Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)
- 2025 **Social Justice Dissertation of the Year Award**, Leadership for Social Justice (SIG), American Education Research Association (AERA)

Research Grants

- 2026 Xu, D. (Principal Investigator), Li, X. (Co-Principal Investigator), Yu, R. (Co-Principal Investigator), & Chhikara, D. (Grant Writer & Research Affiliate)
A Multi-Inquiry Study of Condensed Course Formats
Program: Ascendium Education Group
Role: Research Affiliate; administrative constraints related to institutional transition prevented formal Co-PI designation.
Funding: \$1,492,013
- 2022 **AERA-NSF Dissertation Grant Award**
Program: American Education Research Association and National Science Foundation
Funding: \$27,500

Other Funded Projects

- 2022 **The Impact of Dual Language Programs on Socio-Emotional Outcomes of English Learners**
Program: D. H. Nickerson Fellowship in Cultural Diversity & Minority Concerns
Funding: \$2000, MSU College of Education
- 2021 **Examining Student-Teacher Relationships across Racial Lines and associations with Student Outcomes**
Program: Keith Goldhammer Endowed Scholarship
Funding: \$1375, MSU College of Education

Doctoral Fellowships & Awards

2022	David L. Clark Seminar Scholar , American Education Research Association, Division L
2021	Summer Research Fellowship , MSU College of Education
2020	Summer Research Fellowship , MSU College of Education
2019	Summer Research Development Fellowship , MSU College of Education
2018-2023	Dean's Scholar Award – Doctoral Fellowship . Michigan State University College of Education
2004-2006	Dean's List , Soka University of America

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Chhikara, D., (2025). Unpacking The Role of Student Health Challenges in Chronic Absenteeism. [Session Chair]. Association for Public Policy Analysis & Management Annual Conference.

Chhikara, D., (Jan 2025). Equity and Student Success in Education. [Guest Lecture]. EDU 512: Educational Leadership and Societal Change – Distinguished Practitioners Series (Session 7), Soka University of America. [Link](#)

Chhikara, D., (2024). The Effects of Ethnoracial Mismatch on Chronic Absenteeism: Exploring the Role of Relational Dynamics. AERA-NSF Grants Fall Research Conference. Washington, DC.

Cooper Stein, K., Rigby, J., & **Chhikara, D.** (2022, November). Understanding Research Grant Writing and Budgeting. [Panelist]. Annual Convention of the University Council on Educational Administration, Seattle, WA.

Chhikara, D., (2015). *Education for Global Citizenship*. [Seminar]. Apeejay School in Saket New Delhi, India.

Chhikara, D., (2015) *Education for Nurturing Humanity* [Seminar] Jamia Milia Islamia University, New Delhi, India.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Chhikara, D. (2026, Apr). *Does Same-Race Representation or Racial Diversity Matter More? Evidence from Peer Composition and Reading Outcomes in U.S. Elementary Schools* [Conference Presentation]. American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA, United States.

Chhikara, D., Desimone, L., Beamer, Z., & Ran, F. (2026, Apr). Instructor Buy-In and Instructional Practice in Corequisite Mathematics Reform: Evidence from a Mixed-Methods Study of Virginia Community College System [Conference Presentation].

American Educational Research Association (AERA) Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA, United States.

Li, X., Ran, F. X., **Chhikara, D.**, Beamer, Z. M., & Xu, D. (2024, Nov 21–23). *Understanding students' experiences in math course-taking and the impact of corequisite developmental education: A mixed-methods case study in Virginia* [Conference Presentation]. APPAM Conference, MD, United States. Presented by Xunfei Li.

Chhikara, D. (2022, Nov 17-20). *Relationship effects in schools: associations with race and absenteeism in classrooms* [Conference Presentation]. UCEA 2022 Annual Convention, Seattle, WA, United States.

Chhikara, D. (2022, Oct 27-28). *The Impacts of Student-Teacher Relationships and Race-Match Moderation of Absenteeism: A Four-Wave Longitudinal Data Study* [Conference Presentation]. Midwest Sociology of Education Conference 2022, Notre Dame, Indiana United States.

Chhikara, D. (2022, April 21-26). *Optional Practical Training: Lived Experiences* [Conference Presentation]. AERA 2021 Annual Convention, San Diego, CA, United States.

Chhikara, D. (2022, April 21-26). *Teacher Pay, Teacher Motivation and Student Achievement: Comparative Literature Critique*. [Conference Presentation]. AERA 2021 Annual Convention, San Diego, CA, United States.

Chhikara, D. (2021, November 11-14). *Impact of Dual-Language education programs on Socio-Emotional Outcomes for English Learners*. [Conference Presentation]. UCEA 2021 Annual Convention, Columbus, OH, United States.

Chhikara, D. (2020, April). *Teacher Autonomy Perspectives in Education*. [Conference Presentation]. AERA 2020 Annual Convention, San Diego, CA, United States.

Torphy, K., Chen, Z, Yang, X. & **Chhikara, D.** (2019, Oct). *Teachers' Curation Has Impact on Students' Academic Growth*. [Conference Presentation]. Midwest Sociology of Education Annual Convention, Chicago, IL, United States. Presented by Kaitlin Torphy.

Strunk, K., Cowen, J., Imberman, S.A., Jones, N., Lai, I., Wood, J., & **Chhikara, D.** (2019, Mar). *Equity in the Distribution of Special Education Teachers: Comparing Teacher Quality Measures across Student Demographics*. [Conference Presentation] AEFPP 2019 Annual Conference, Kansas, MO, United States. Presented by Jesse Wood.

MEDIA COVERAGE

UCLA Center X. (2025, October 3). *Peer Victimization Among English Learners: The Protective Impact of Dual Language Programs* featured in *Just News from Center X*. University of California, Los Angeles.
<https://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/just-news-from-center-x-october-3-2025/>

Chaturvedi, M. (August 2025). NEP 2020: Multilingual education, mother tongue teaching, and inclusive classrooms. *India Today*. Retrieved from <https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/featurephilipia/story/nep-2020-multilingual-education-mother-tongue-teaching-inclusive-classrooms-dr-daman-chhikara-2773504-2025-08-19>

Shruti, D., (2025). “‘Inspiring Conversation’ with Dr Daman Chhikara,” - The Shruti Dutt Show [Audio Podcast]. *Ten News Live*. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HON5O1Tycng>.

HT Education (July 2025). Indian Scholar’s research shows trusting teachers can curb dropout rates. *Hindustan Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.pressreader.com/india/hindustan-times-gurgaon-city>

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Committee Appointments

Member, *ASHE Dissertation of the Year Committee*, Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), 2025–2027.

Peer Reviewer

Chhikara, D. (2026). “Understanding School Absenteeism in Japan and Its Consequences: What Are the Disadvantages and Who Is Affected?”. *Frontiers in Education*.

Chhikara, D. (2026). “Unequal Help: How Student–Teacher Relationships Reinforce Socioeconomic Inequality in Math Achievement Worldwide”. *Frontiers in Sociology*.

Chhikara, D. (2026). “The School Mental Health Policy Rubric: Creating a Vision for Improved Systems of School Mental Health Through Youth Participatory Action Research”. *American Educational Research Journal (AERJ)*.

Chhikara, D. (2025). “Parents and Teachers Support Student Academic Motivation and Engagement”. *Child and Youth Care Forum*.

Chhikara, D. (2025). “STEM Teaching Experience Effects of Classroom Environments”. *Education Policy*.

Chhikara, D. (2025). “Assessing Student Perception Toward Teachers' Professional Competence, Learning Environment, and Intrinsic Motivation Effects on their Academic Success: A Structural Model Approach” [Manuscript review]. *Frontiers in Education*.

Chhikara, D. (2024). “The School Mental Health Policy Rubric: Visioning Improved Systems of School Mental Health Through Youth Participatory Action Research” [Manuscript review]. *American Education Research Journal (AERJ)*.

Chhikara, D. (2024). “Post-Secondary Enrollment Behavior: Evidence from Pakistan” [Manuscript review]. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* (EEPA).

Frank, K. & **Chhikara, D.**, (2020). “How teachers form educational expectations for students: a comparative factorial survey experiment in three institutional contexts” [Manuscript review]. *Sociology of Education* (SOE).

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Jan 2015-July 2018 **Managing Director, Chhikara Institute**, New Delhi, India, a test preparation, and overseas education consulting center.

Founded and directed a test preparation and overseas education consulting center, achieving \$100,000 in annual revenue and student admissions to top business schools. Taught standardized tests (LSAT, GMAT, GRE) to over 200 students, covering verbal reasoning, logical reasoning, and grade 12-level quantitative skills. Designed curriculum, led admissions workshops, and recruited and trained instructors to deliver instruction that consistently produced above industry-average improvements in test scores.

Oct 2015-May 2016 **Education Consultant, Logiquet, Thinkcell Learning Solutions Pvt. Ltd**, Hyderabad, India, certified provided of Kaplan Test Prep, India.

Designed and implemented processes for functional areas such as recruitment, training, and development of teachers.

Apr 2012-Dec 2014 **Academic Head, TC Global**, New Delhi, India, an overseas education consulting company.

Taught standardized test preparation courses (GRE, GMAT, SAT) in verbal reasoning, logical reasoning, and quantitative skills. Curated monthly training sessions for 60+ teachers, improving lesson delivery and student outcomes, and developed teacher evaluation systems using value-added models to strengthen accountability.

Oct 2008-May 2010 **Industry and Community Connect Lead, NIIT Foundation**, New Delhi, India, a non-profit education society making critical interventions in marginalized sections of society.

Led partnerships with community organizations serving economically marginalized neighborhoods and coordinated the establishment of 20 Career Development Centers. Designed and facilitated instructor training focused on recognizing bias and adopting asset-based approaches to students and led employability and soft-skills workshops for youth.

Oct 2007-Sep 2008 **Test Prep Instructor, TC Global**, New Delhi, India.

Tutored 500+ students in test prep, ensuring highest growth in student achievement.

Sep 2006-May 2007 **Test Prep Instructor, Kaplan Test Prep**, Irvine, California, U.S.A.

Tutored 200+ students for the GMAT and LSAT tests, achieving feedback score in the top 80th percentile.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Comparative International Education Society
American Educational Research Association
University Council of Education Administration
Association for Education Finance and Policy
Association for Public Policy and Management
Midwest Sociology of Education

RELATED SKILLS

Data Analysis Software: SPSS, Tableau, MS Office
Methodological Experience: Quasi-Experimental Research, Causal inference techniques, including regression discontinuity design (RDD), instrumental variables (IV), and difference-in-differences (DiD).
Soft Skills: Team Management, Growth Mindset, Communication, Collaboration
Language Proficiency: Advanced Hindi, Intermediate Japanese, Basic Spanish

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCES

April 2011 **Strategy Project**, Emerging Markets Consultancy Week, Poland:
Participated in a consultancy project focused on market analysis and strategic development for emerging markets.

Sep 2005-Dec 2005 **English instructor**, Chit Chat Club, World Language Center, Soka University of Japan, Tokyo: Taught English to Japanese students, fostering cross-cultural communication and educational exchange.

Sep 2005-Dec 2005 **Exchange Student**, Study Abroad, Soka University of Japan, Tokyo: Engaged in an academic exchange, participating in cross-disciplinary courses and cultural immersion.

Mar 2004

Head Delegate, Harvard Model United Nations Conference, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt: Led a delegation representing global policy issues and facilitated negotiations among international participants.