MOTION IN CHINA:

Social Inclusion of Migrant Workers from Rural to Urban Areas

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Abstract

This study investigates what's known as the world's largest human migration from rural to urban areas. It examines both the destinations and the origins of the mobility trajectories of Chinese internal migrant workers which is somewhat neglected by current literature. Based on a multi-sited ethnography of the daily life of migrant workers in arrays of social setting (sheds in construction sites, urban villages, factories, restaurants) in their urban stay as well as the well-known left behind population in a rural village, the thesis explores the social and economic changes that this mass regional mobility brought to both rural and urban China. The implication of this work lies in a comprehensive and thorough examination on the regional rural-urban migration. It contributes to a dynamic assess, which deserves to study further, by providing an analysis on all the agents involved in the context of Chinese rural-urban migration: the left behind population in villages, the migrant workers and the urban citizens in cities.

This work is divided into two sections with 6 chapters included. The first section examines the economic and social changes brought by current mass rural-urban migration in mainland China. The chapter 2 lays out on three main vulnerable social groups in rural China: the elderly left behind, the children left behind and the wives left behind. Chapter 3 outlines the direct impact of rural-urban migration on rural males' socioeconomic disadvantage in the rural marriage market. On contrary to the third part of Chapter 2 which merely focuses on the retention of traditional patriarchy within the domain of migrant families with migrant males' privileges, it explores evaluates the factors impact factors of the sky rocking of bride price concerning on the weakness of unmarried rural males. The second section initiates the issues that migrant workers involved in urban China. Chapter 4 argues that, notwithstanding the enter urban China freely, migrant workers do face difficulties in social inclusion. The chapter examines the social inclusion in the opposite direction with 4 aspects of social exclusion that migrant met in their daily life. Furthermore, the chapter 5 explores the life satisfaction, which is considered as closely related to the concept of social inclusion based on the case study of migrant workers in Beijing. Chapter 6 concludes that, there is an imperative of justice and government and a long way to go for the migrant workers' social inclusion.

Keywords

Rural-urban migration   Social inclusion   Chinese study

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Chapter One   Introduction

1. The Context

1.1 Migrant Workers and Household Registration System

Since the introduction of Chinese reform and opening policy in 1979, a large group of migrant workers in China have moved from rural to urban areas. The term of "migrant workers" has been defined since 1980s according to recent literature (Lü, 2012). Migrant workers, loosely translated from the Chinese word "*nongmin gong*", is a neutral translation without stigma compared with "peasant workers" directly from its meaning. Its Chinese meaning "*nongmin gong*", which implies the dual identities-peasants (*nongmin*) and workers (*gong*), stands for a marginalized social group which is composed of the uneducated, dirty, "low-quality" people in China. However, migrant workers are the most important forces bring large social and economic changes to contemporary China. Massive movement from rural to urban areas not only brings rural surplus labor out of the countryside, but also contributes to the great economic growth of urban China (Chan, 1987; Wu,1991; Qian, 1996; Li, 2012; Ngai, 2016; Knox, 1997; Mc Granahan, 2006; Sun,2014). It is estimated that migrant workers have contributed 16 % of GDP growth in China in the last 30 years. Though the occupations open to migrant workers have been limited to specific subordinary labor sectors (the so-called "3D"-dirty, difficult, dangerous jobs) shunned by urban residents, for example, construction, domestic work, and cleaning work (Ngai, 2016; Hu, 2013; Guo, 2017).

The migrant workers are highly visible especially during the traditional Chinese New Year on railways, highways, when everybody rush back to their hometown for a reunion with their family from their working place in cities during the 7-days national holiday. This largest annual mobility of people is titled as the Spring Festival Rush (*Chunyun*), which is also seen as the largest short-term migration in human history. The Spring Festival Rush is generally marked by hordes of migrant workers, who queue overnight for train tickets, carry humbled bags of belongings on their shoulders and end up standing in

'hard-seat' carriages of the lowest old-fashioned green trains (Crang & Zhang, 2012). However, their home staying is just temporary, they need to return to cities to raise fast money soon after holidays. That is why migrant workers are also called "floating population" (*liudong renkou*) because of this salient characteristic of mobility (Li, 2006; Guo, 2017).

Migrant workers are referred to the peasants group who have migrated from rural areas to work in cities. According to viewpoint of household registration, they include all those who move out of their countryside hometown where few possibilities of transferring their *hukou* from agricultural (rural) one to non-agricultural (urban) one. It is believed that both the emergency of migrant workers and their social integration are highly related to household registration system, the so-called *hukou* system (Yue & Li, 2015; Hu, 2016; Yuan et al., 2015). *Hukou*, as a unique Chinese settlement system, has played a vital role in rural-urban migration (Chan, 1987). It was firstly implemented in the 1958 to curb the population mobility and tie the farmers to the rural countryside. Each household was allocated either agriculture or non-agricultural *hukou* to make their places of residence clear. The *hukou* of a new born baby was inherited from his/her mother before 1998, and then the regulation changed and it was stipulated that it could be inherited from either of his/her parents afterwards. In this sense, the Chinese citizens are born to be either rural farmers or urban citizens (Luo, 2014).

At the beginning, *hukou* is solely an administration's action in liaison with the centralized and planned economic which create decades of rural-urban segregation with strict control on the spatial mobility of people. But it still has far-reaching social and economic implications nowadays. It acts as a biased system with discrimination against rural populations in favor of urban residents (Cheng & Selden, 1994; Chan & Zhang, 1999). Chan *et al*. (2018) argue that *hukou* system is embedded in a territorial hierarchy that produces an urban-rural division in which people with an urban *hukou* are always superior to one with a rural *hukou*. Compared with massive rural–urban migration, *hukou* conversion is rare and tough (Zhang & Treiman, 2013). Migrant workers with rural *hukou* holders, although manage to enter cities, are merely "second-class citizens" without

access to various urban welfare (Miller, 2012; Chow, 2010). They are confined to the 3D (dirty, dangerous, difficult) jobs, and banned by formal regulations from high-wage state-owned enterprises which are conceived as high-end occupations (Song, 2016). Furthermore, the children of migrant workers are not entitled to get an equal and fair access to urban public schools just because their *hukou* remain in rural countryside (Pong, 2014). Thus, *hukou* system has created a distinctive social exclusion to migrant workers compared with their counterparts in other developing countries (Zhang, 2016).

1.2 Migrant Workers as A Disadvantaged Group

Most studies on China's rural-urban migration show that there is no obvious change in migrant workers' social status due to the geographical mobility of migrant workers. According to the research of Li (2007), migrant workers, although have worked in the city, still belongs to the lowest level of Chinese social stratification. Their identity (*hukou*) don't change at all, they are still peasants with only an urban residence. Then Li (2012) puts forward the terminology of "Bottom Elite" to describe the social status of migrant workers. This word means that migrant workers are at the bottom of the social status hierarchy in comparison with urban citizens, but "elites" compared with the left behind population in rural areas since migrant workers own better human capital and so on (see Chapter 2). Meanwhile, a lot of literature have defined migrant workers as socially excluded groups (Shen, 2005; Sun, 2002). Socially excluded groups are oftentimes referred to as "Socially Vulnerable Groups" and "Socially Disadvantaged Groups." The rural migrant workers can be seen directly as a "socially vulnerable group" from the direct translation of Chinese language in some Chinese literature (Shen, 2005). But according to a definition from American social work expert Rothman (1995), socially vulnerable groups refer to dependent people who lack of opportunities in life, including those who are physically or mentally handicapped, the elderly and orphans. Their vulnerability originates from some of their own obstacles, which are rarely social causes, resulting in their lack of essential competitiveness in economic and social life (Vourlekis,1996). However, migrant workers don't have these 'vulnerabilities' created by their environment. In this sense, we can't refer to migrant workers as "socially vulnerable groups", because

migrant workers can be involved in economic and social life independently. The essential characteristics of disadvantaged groups is their social disadvantages rather than physical disabilities. They are not only materially injured but also institutionally excluded to equality of rights. The socially disadvantaged group label may seem like a relative concept that demonstrates the inequality between migrant workers and urban citizens among the social strata. Urban citizens belong to a socially advantaged group whose working conditions, life quality and living environment are significantly higher and privileged (Li, 2007). It is important to choose the proper reference group, after all, compared to women, children and the elderly left behind in rural areas, the migrant workers do not belong to a disadvantaged group. In the current research, the social exclusion/inclusion of migrant workers will be considered in the urban areas with a comparison with urban citizens as a reference group.

Most scholars contend that a disadvantaged group belonging to a certain social strata is weaker in social production and distribution and has less economic income (Sun, 2002). This definition is mainly used to analyze the inequality in the distribution of economic and social interests. Therefore, one must understand how social stratification and social distance have become the premise of social inclusion/exclusion. Social stratification, with different social classes in a hierarchical structure of society, inevitably exists in the upper strata of the rich, with the poor as the lowest social strata. These two strata may not only be marked as an exploitative relationship, but also disparity which causes challenges to social stability. For example, the Indian caste system is an internal social stratification based on the division of ranked labor, it solidifies social class and strictly limits the inherent social mobility of people in different castes (Mencher, 1974). However, Chinese social stratification is based mostly on geographical isolation between rural and urban areas rather than occupational distribution (Li *et al*., 2008). As a means of maintaining social stratification, the current household registration system[1] is not as strict as the caste

[1] The household registration system was originally intended only as a means of population management and has now become a tool for urban-urban exclusion of migrant workers. People are labeled urban citizen or rural farmers not based on where he residents but on the type of their household registration. It causes the inequalities between the migrant workers and urban residents in social status, mainly appears in the differential treatment in employment, medical treatment, education and social security.

system, but keeps the urban residents owing more priorities than rural farmers. After rural-urban migration, it eventually became a system inducing inequality between migrant workers and urban citizens in various aspects of daily life. Social distance, as a measure of social separation between groups caused by perceived or real differences between groups of people as defined by well-known social categories, has three key types: affective social distance, normative social distance, and interactive social distance (Crossman, 2017). Bogardus (1933) proposed his social distance scale to empirically measure Americans' willingness to participate in social contacts with members of diverse social groups, such as racial and ethnic groups. The current study just put migrant workers as the research objects rather than examining the varying degrees of closeness of urban citizens (insiders) with the migrant workers (outsiders). Stigmatized as a "countryman" from the countryside while in cities, migrant workers lack of various forms of capital compared with urban citizens, by which they are defined as a socially disadvantaged group in comparison with urban citizens. It was widely accepted that there is social distance between migrant workers and urban locals based on the current social status pattern. This study therefore examines the social inclusion of migrant workers to help them to eliminate their isolation and segregation from urban residents and promote their own development in urban areas. Meanwhile, the long-term weak position of migrant workers in cities may also bring about large-scale social issues, such as feelings of relative deprivation and hatred towards urban citizens. Therefore, the study on the social inclusion of migrant workers is also concerned with the construction of a harmonious society and the process of urbanization.

1.3 Fluctuations of Migration under Government Interventions

The progress of rural-urban migration has experienced the most complex twists and several fluctuations due to heavy government interventions since the foundation of PRC China in 1949 (Chan, 1987). This fluctuation goes together with the macro circumstance changes, such as the government policy recommendation. The policy also made changes according to the situation of rural-urban migration. Thus, it affords a historical clue for researches on the status of rural-urban migration nowadays. Historically spoken, there are

four stages of rural urban migration. The first decade after the foundation of PRC China starts the rigorous forbidden stage of rural-urban migration. This isolation between rural and urban areas lasts for almost another two decades until the stage of permitting of rural urban migration since the year 1979 with the beginning of Open up and Reform. From the year 1992 to 2001, the rural-urban migration firstly grows and then be restricted by the administrative management. The open stage of rural-urban migration started from the year 2001 with the growing total number of migrant workers year by year. In the following, I introduce the situation in different periods.

From Free Migration to Strict Prohibition (1949-1978)

At the beginning of the foundation of PRC in 1949, farmers can move freely from rural areas and settle down in urban areas. Large amount of rural areas was undoubtedly the key to achieve national industrialization after a long period of Civil War. However, the expansion of the urban population has brought many difficulties to the executive of national plans (Chan, 1987). To make sure the quick realization of the industrialization of the country, it is necessary to tie the peasants with the farmland and make them be incorporated into the government's unified plan, the government eventually put the household registration system[2] as a main means for a complete control of rural-urban migration (Zhao, 1999). Rural farmers were no longer to migrate into urban areas freely and lost the opportunity to become a new urban dweller. In the following two decades, the household registration (*hukou*) system has made a foundation of rural-urban segregation not only limited in a geography way, but also expand to the division of social status (Chan, 2009; Cheng & Selden, 1994).

From the Restart of Migration to The Control of "mangliu" (1979-1991)

Chinese government has make a subtle change on the policy on rural-urban migration which leads the strict household registration system relatively loose since the issue of

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[2] PRC government adopted "*Regulations on Registration of Household Registration in People's Republic of China*" on January 9, 1958 which makes Household Registration (also known as *hukou*) system the most important influence on Chinese rural-urban migration. It is written like this: "Citizens can only migrant from the rural areas to urban areas once they hold the permit of employment from the city labor bureau, enrolment for school or certificate of permission from Urban Household Registration Office. It is the first time of the formal restrictions on rural-urban migration since 1949.

national policy-Open up and Reform- in 1979 (Shen, 1995). The State Council issued a "Notice on The Settlement of Farmers in The Town" on October 13, 1984, and it supports farmers with the management skill and technical expertise to migrant into urban areas and run business. It was significant to break the ice of the strictly control of rural-urban migration (Davin, 1996).

However, the migrant workers were just allowed to work in cities temporarily. In such situation, the return of migrant workers is inevitable, so the rural-urban migration has the feature in this decade of "leaving the countryside without leaving the farmland, entering the factory without entering the city" (Qian, 1996). It was not easy for rural farmers to conduct the progress of migration. To back up their stay in cities, migrant workers have to get a "labor certificate" which is provided by their urban employers. In addition, migrant workers must have temporary residence cards and the certificate of accommodation. The one who fails to obtain these three certificates cannot gain a temporary stay permit card (*zanzhu zheng*, an identity card together with a labor certificate), and will be labeled as a "three without" person. The group of "three without" is also stigmatized as "blind migrants" (*mangliu*) who are thought will threaten the stability of urban society and break the balance of rural-urban development by mass media (Liu, 1995; Florence, 2006). They face the risks to be caught and sent to the urban detention center (*qiansong zhan*) and be repelled back to their home in the countryside (Murphy, 2002).

From Administrative Managements to Restrictions (1992-2001)

In 1992, China's economic reform has entered a new stage after Deng Xiaoping's "*Southern Tour Address*". China has further increased the intensity and depth of economic reform, which brought the rise of economic development especially in the eastern coastal areas. The free entry of foreign investments effectively stimulated the rapid growth in cities like Shenzhen which is across eastern coastal areas. As a result, the buoyant economic also created a large scale of employment opportunities. Urban construction industry, catering services industry and other departments began to grow rapidly and become the main sectors to absorb rural labor force (Wu, 1994). At this stage, the policy

on rural labor force has been transformed from the control on the "blind migrants" to the administrative management of rural-urban migration based on the economic, legal and administrative needs. The total scale of rural-urban migration expanded due to the issue of promulgated laws and regulations[3] aiming to encourage and guide the rural-urban migration under an orderly flow (Bakken, 1998).

However, Chinese economic growth fell because of the impact of the Asian Financial Crisis in 1998. The urban residents faced unemployment problem and became laid-off workers who are out of the state-owned enterprises in urban areas (Yuan *et al*., 2015). The government began to adopt a more stringent control of rural-urban migration to limit the numbers of rural migrant workers and give more chances to unemployed urban residents from the state-owned enterprises. This made the speed of rural-urban migration thus slowed down (Chan, 2009a).

From Restrictions to Encouragements (2001-)

The policy on rural-urban migration has undergone fundamental changes from restriction to encouragement in rural-urban migration since the beginning of the 21st century. Restrictions on rural-urban migration change its tone and focus on creation of a good environment for rural farmers to migrant and protection of the legitimate rights of rural-urban migrants (Wu, 2016). It contains actively supporting labor-intensive enterprises, stabilizing the employment of migrant workers, strengthening the training of migrant workers' employ ability, supporting conditional and competent migrant workers to return home, ensuring migrant workers to be paid on time, and effectively protecting the migrant workers' rights (Luo, 2014). At the same time, the government speeds up the reform of the *hukou* system. In November 2013, the state decides a comprehensive reform on household registration system to innovate population management in a comprehensive release of small towns and small cities household registration, orderly liberalize of medium-sized cities household registration and strictly control the urban population of

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[3] In this context, the government issued the "Regulations on Provisions of the Cross-provincial Employment of Rural Labor" in 1994 and the "Opinions on Strengthening the Management of Migration" in 1995.

large cities (Li *et al*., 2018). However, though the current policy provides with limited supports and facilities to do help on migrant workers' entering cities for the burgeoning and prosperous development of urban economics, there is a call for the social inclusion of migrant workers in cities (Yue & Li, 2015).

As presented from history of rural-urban migration policies, the government start to pay more attention to the integration of rural migrants into urban areas, to make sure orderly transfer of the rural surplus labor force in recent years. First, abolish various unreasonable restrictions on employment of migrant workers. Second, pay more attention to social security issues. The rural-urban migration has entered a new period with a larger and tenser scale. Figure 1 shows the large quantity and tremendously increased rural-urban migrant workers in last decade from 2008 to 2017 (National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, 2018). The rural-urban migration is burgeoning year by year. Facing such a huge number of migrant workers, the government also realized the importance to manipulate a series of social policies to improve their situations in cities (Wang, 2013). But these policies are only concerned with migrant workers' short-term and superficial problems without a thorough overhaul on the outdated *hukou* system or a clear examination on their psychological conditions and social inclusion in cities. Rural-urban migration does not only mean the spatial movement of migrant workers. It is rather a progress of re-socialization of migrant workers, which is influenced by economic, social, culture and other factors (Liang & Wang, 2010). Thus, the social inclusion of migrant workers become an imperative issue needs to be studied further. The current study will focus on how migrant workers are integrated into all aspects of urban life, so as to provide a more detailed analysis.

Figure 1. The Total Number of Rural-urban Migrant Workers From 2008 to 2017

2. The Unbalanced Regional Developments

The imbalance economic level among different regions provides an important prerequisite for rural-urban migration (Zhao, 1999). The classical economic migration theory consider the pursuit of more profits as the most important reason for migration from rural to urban areas (Lewis, 1979a). Thus, before we go further, the context of geographical difference in economic development here should be provided.

China has such a huge population and wide regions where they perform different characteristics in natural resources, environment, social customs, economic structure and development advantages. China's mainland area can be divided into three major economic zones. The eastern region includes 12 provinces including Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Liaoning, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Fujian, Shandong, Guangdong, Guangxi and Hainan. This region is 1.29 square kilometers, accounting for 13.5% of the total land area of China. The eastern region locates near to the ocean and has good conditions of agricultural production. The eastern area plays a leading role in the entire economic development due to its long history of development and advantageous geographical location. The central region includes Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Jilin, Heilongjiang, Anhui, Jiangxi, Henan, Hubei and Hunan provinces and autonomous regions. The area is 2.81 million square kilometers, accounting for 29.3% of China's total land area. The central region is located inland, where many plains are distributed. It is an agricultural basement.

The last zone is the western region, which includes 10 provinces and autonomous regions including Chongqing, Sichuan, Guizhou, Yunnan, Tibet, Shaanxi, Gansu, Ningxia, Qinghai and Xinjiang. The area is 5.41 million square kilometers, accounting for 56.4% of the total land area. The vast western region has a complex topography like plateau, basin, desert and so on. Most of this area is not conducive to the growth of crops. The level of economic level and technology management is quite different from that in the east and the middle region. Table 1 shows the different development levels in three regions (26 provinces selected) based on the comparison of GDP, Total Export Values. On the other hand, according to data on interprovincial migration, provinces with the most significant numbers of outmigrants in the middle and western regions have been Anhui, Guangxi, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangxi, and Sichuan. Among them, the proportion of outmigrants in Anhui, Hunan, and Sichuan was around 10% of the whole national population (Lu & Xia, 2016). Thus, the underdeveloped areas in Chinese western and center regions are the main origins of such large flows of migrant workers nowadays.

Table 1 Geographic and Economic Comparison of Capital Cities in 26 Chinese Provinces

City	Land	GDP	Total Exports	Urban income per capita	Rural Income per capita
Eastern Region					
Fuzhou	12251	5618.08	1312.28	34982	15203
Guangzhou	7434	18100.4	5034.67	46735	19323
Nanjing	6587	9720.77	1962.13	46104	19483
Shenyang	12860	7280.5	422.91	36664	13498
Jinan	7998	6100.23	373.45	39889	14232
Hangzhou	16596	10053.6	3108.03	48316	25719
Shijiazhuang	15848	5440.6	455.92	28097	11609
Nanning	22099	3410.09	202.48	29106	9408
Central Region					
Harbin	53068	5751.2	146.99	30977	13375
Changchun	20571	5530	119.59	29090	11749
Wuhan	8569	10905.6	943.6	36436	17722
Taiyuan	6988	2735.34	409.79	27727	13626
Hefei	11445	5660.3	851.51	31989	15733
Nanchang	7402	4000.01	532.67	31942	13693
Zhengzhou	7446	7315.19	1947.62	31099	17125
Changsha	11816	8510.13	538.25	39961	23601
Western Region					
Chengdu	12121	10801.2	1483.88	33476	17690
Xian	10097	5810.03	819.86	33188	14072
Guiyang	8043	2891.16	491.86	27241	11918
Kunming	21013	3970	584.11	33955	11444
Lanzhou	13086	2095.99	277.71	27088	9621
Xining	7649	1131.62	98.49	25232	8865
Yinchuan	9025	1480.73	156.4	28261	11148

Data source: Fuzhou Statistical Yearbook 2016

Besides the geographic differences, the rural-urban division has also been mentioned in numerous studies (Yang & Zhou, 1999; Shen, 1995; Cai, 2010). Table 1 also reveals the income per capita between rural areas and urban areas in each capital city differs greatly. Thus, the rural villages in hinterland in China became the main origins of unprecedented rural-urban migration. Take Anhui province as an example. Located in the southeast hinterland of China, Anhui province has huge municipality populated by some 69.12 million people sprawling over a vast area of 140 thousand square kilometers. This province is famous for its giant output of migrant workers. Data from the Anhui Investigation Corp of National Bureau of Statistics shows that the total number of migrant workers in Anhui Province in 2016 reached 18.8 million. Cross-provincial migrant workers reached 13.8 million, with an increase of 87,000 than 2015. Anhui Provincial Bureau of Statistics Social Welfare Survey Center organized a special survey named "Intension of Migrant Workers to Return Home" on 2235 migrant workers in 2009 and the survey shows that the financial crisis has a significant impact on the urban employment of migrant workers. In 2008, the income of more than 40% of migrant workers fell. However, more than half of migrant workers who returned home express their will of going back to urban areas for more job opportunities again (National Bureau of Statistics, 2009).

3. The Fieldwork Sites and Research Methods

In this study, I first pay my visit to Fuli village, a rural village of Suzhou city located in Northern Anhui province, to collect information about the migrant workers, and then followed the steps of part of them to migrate to their destinations: the capital of China (Beijing), capital cities of three provinces (Changsha, Fuzhou, Hefei), and eastern coastal cities with developed economic levels (Wuxi, Cixi). The Map in Page 240 shows the routine of the fieldwork done by the author from 2015 to 2016. As we've mentioned before, there is a clear difference between the destinations and departure sites in China. The types of industry clusters and geographic situations are much different from each other and take on great representations in China.

The economy of northern Anhui province is relatively undeveloped which cause migrant workers flowing to other provinces, like Jiangsu, Zhejiang, which have relatively faster economic development and more employment opportunities in the eastern regions. Located in the northern part of Anhui province, it is at the junction of Jiangsu, Henan and Anhui provinces. According to a survey on the output of rural labors in Suzhou from 20 villages in 10 towns held by Suzhou Municipal Labor and Social Security Bureau in 2005, the total number of migrant workers in urban areas is 102 thousand, with an increase of 14.8 thousand over the previous year. The growth rate is basically the same as the data from Suzhou Municipal Bureau of Statistics. In old times, under the ideological understanding of "good people do not go out " or "migrant workers is going to beg", migration always face prejudices from rural villagers. But since the population of migrants grows faster and rural migrants brought fortune and got rich these years, the past prejudices have gone. To migrate out have become a conscious labor-export behavior of the rural villagers, which is seen as an investment to get fast money compared with farming which relies on the limited harvests once or twice a year.

Suzhou, as a less developed and agriculture-oriented city, has a large scale of migrant workers, who flow out of the rural regions to work in a relatively developed regions such as Fujian province in eastern regions. The total GDP and GDP per capita of Suzhou are quite small, but its total population is much more than other small cities. This feature decides it has a certain number of surplus labor in the rural areas. Suzhou contains 4 counties and one district, name is, Dangshan County, Xiao County, Lingbi, Si County and Yongqiao district. It has a total area of 9,787 square kilometers with 4,795 km² farming land. It has a total population of 6,540 thousand people, 85% of who have rural *hukou*. The Figure 2 shows both the rural and urban population growth in Suzhou between 1949 to 2015. It suggests rural farmers always account for a large proportion in its total population. The character of owning most peasants inside its population structure makes Suzhou famous with its rural migrant workers nowadays. In fact, Suzhou is famous for its rural farmers in Chinese history. The descriptions of farmers in Suzhou can be traced back to the BC 200 when the first national scale of the peasant revolts in *Daze* town

happened at the end of Qin Dynasty. Two farmers, Cheng and Wu, led the uprising of farmers and organized a band of villagers to rebel against the harsh pressure from Qin government. It makes the Chen's quote "Are kings and nobles given their high status by birth?" the most famous sentence in Chinese history. In Modern era, the famous American writer Buck (1892-1993) also did her investigation in Suzhou for more than four years. Her novel "The Good Earth" published in 1931, describes the stories and tragedies of the Chinese peasant farmer Wang Long and his rural family. This novel helps her get the Nobel Prize later. The original background of story in this book is the rural life in Suzhou (Buck, 2012).

Figure 2 Statistics on Rural and Urban *Hukou* of Suzhou, in Northern Anhui Province (1949-2015)
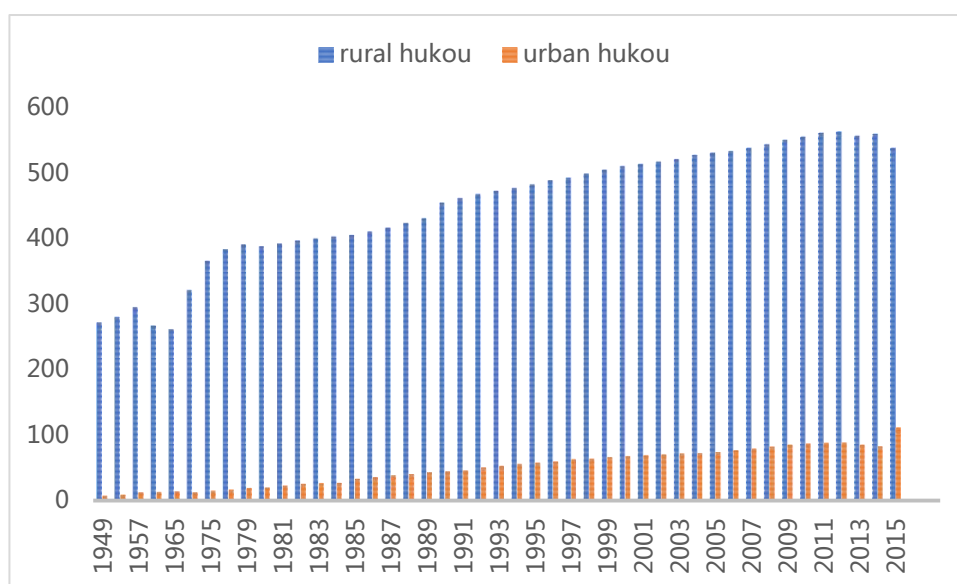
Data source: Suzhou Yearly book of Statistics in 2016 from Statistics Bureau of Suzhou

Fuli, a rural village in Suzhou city, is located in the north of Suzhou at the confluence of the Tang River and Sui River. It is only 10 kilometers away from the city center of Suzhou, and contains 16 administrative groups, 501 households and a population of 1,800 people together with 1,185 Mus (a Chinese area unit, one Mu is about 666 square meters) of farmland, and its net income per capita is around 3,000 *yuan* last year. According to words of some elders, Fuli develops much later than other districts, with quite few industrial enterprises. For a long time, the economy here mainly relies on agriculture and livestock breeding. According to an informer, the history of migration in this village starts

from 2005, when one villager found it was easier to make money in the factories in a coastal city in Zhejiang Province. The first tide of people gets rich, and a lot of peasants follow their steps. The villagers initially worked in the factories and then some switched to the construction industry. I follow the steps of part of migrant workers from this village into their destinations and done the observations. Their destinations are usually the capital cities of some provinces in China, such as Fuzhou, Hefei, Changsha, which has economic prosperity and convenience services. In contrast, other destinations are some smaller cities, such as Wuxi and Cixi city located in eastern coastal areas in China. These small cities have special industry clusters and developed economics to attract migrant workers. Furthermore, Beijing, as the capital of China, is considered as one of the destinations for both the rural migrants. Based on the investigation of the different local conditions, this research offers the possibility to analyze the status of social inclusion of rural-urban migrants in these regions.

This research uses a mixed approach that combines survey data and interviews. I mainly use qualitative methods, but quantitative methods and secondary data analysis will be also supplementary. One example of qualitative research on migrant workers is conducted by Nels Anderson on "*the hobos*", who were homeless migrant workers, worked mainly in construction for limited periods of time (generally until that specific job was finished), and then moved on to look for a job elsewhere. When the author decided to do his doctoral dissertation on the life of the hobos, he moved to the Chicago neighborhood where the greatest number of homeless people could be found. In order to investigate this phenomenon and to enter into the workers' culture, the researcher worked for 10 months (between 1944 and 1945) in a small workshop that produced components for railway carriages. Similarly, I took a job as a waitress in Zixin Restaurant in Beijing for one month, staying with a group of migrant workers to get an empathetic result and describe their lifestyles, worldviews and living conditions. Pure observation is taken when I immersed with migrant workers (not revealing the aims of the study either to the owners or my workmates to avoid those workers aware my aim). My subjects of observation could be classified into the following areas: (1) Physical setting. E.g. the location of the

place where they work, the working conditions, the living conditions of the migrant workers. (2) Social setting. E.g. how they dress in their daily life, their social life, their family income, expenditure, the purpose of their movements like meeting friends. (3) Formal/informal interactions. E.g. what they usually do in their working time, how they spend their leisure time, how they make friends with other migrant workers, how they take part in the local activities.

Other than partly of pure observations and partly of interactions with the migrant workers in Beijing, I did my field study in both rural and urban areas with interviews and observation methods. In Fuli village, I found cases and interviewees to study how internal migration change the rural areas in China. Here are some reasons why I chose the village. First, from a representative point of view, the economic development and geographical location of Fuli have shown it is one of net output areas of migrant workers in northern Anhui with the highest percentage of rural-urban migrants. The village committee told me that nearly 70% of the villagers had migrated out of this area. This convinced me that it was an ideal choice to do study, and I could inquire about various impacts on rural life caused by rural urban migration. Second, I also did a survey here with the One Hundred Village Survey covering arguably 100 rural villages across mainland China, which is conducted by Renmin University of China for a short period when I was a master student in 2010. The author is a native of Suzhou, and is more familiar with the dialect, which all provided convenience for the field study. Besides, I also follow some clues of migrant's social inclusion from their social media software (such as QQ, wechat), record their QQ messages and what they have posted on their weibo or wechat (social media platform like twitter), in which they always post their feeling and express their life attitudes.

Relating to specific research topics on different social groups in rural areas, I choose the interviewees accordingly. Furthermore, in order to achieve a better understanding of their personal life both before and after their rural-urban migration, this research will also be integrated by the life stories of 10 young migrant workers who were left behind by their migrant parents and spent their childhood in Fuli village. In the Appendix, there is a list about the locations and basic information about the interviewees.

Together with qualitative research method, quantitative method is also used as an auxiliary support for qualitative findings. I have obtained the quantitative dataset from survey of Renmin University of China in 2010 on migrant workers in Beijing, this survey is hosted by Prof. Guo, and is a research project founded by Beijing Planning Office of Philosophy and Social Science (Project Number: 07AaSH 028). Because of the relative low education level of the migrant workers, the survey uses a structured interview- a questionnaire with open questions. It contains several necessary parts: basic personal information and family background, information about employment, information of the internal migrants' social inclusion and administrative participation aiming to monitor systematically their quality of life and social inclusion in Beijing (See Appendix). In the end, 303 valid questionnaires were collected. Combined with my personal fieldwork in Beijing, I got a total of 20 interviewees in Beijing, ranging from the exploration of living spaces of migrant workers, such as an urban village called Jinzhan, to workplaces, such as restaurants and construction sites.

Some invaluable data were from the China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS), which is a national wide survey, which aims to collect a high-quality representative sample of Chinese residents, ages 45 and older, to serve the needs of scientific research on the elderly. I obtain descriptive data as a supplement for the qualitative data on rural elderly left behind (see Chapter 2). Other national wide survey such as CLDS is used in Chapter 2 to give a descriptive data for the education of rural children left behind. Moreover, data from international organizations (UN, UNICEF) together with the latest Chinese Census have been chosen to support the findings in specific motifs accordingly.

4. Literature Review

4.1 International Migration Literature and Its Expansion in China

Western scholars provided an early start to research on internal migration, with most of them focused on the reasons behind, or the decision-making mechanisms related to this

phenomenon. The earliest research on the topic of migration can be traced back to 1880s when the sociologist Ravenstein (1885) published his famous paper "The Laws of Migration". In the US, the beginning of the sociology of immigration can be traced back to the Chicago School of Sociology in the 1920s and 1930s, whose studies on immigration and its consequence were among the central themes and remained the dominant sociological paradigm until the late 1960s. Research on immigration virtually exploded after the Second World War, and this topic gained newfound attention from sociologists and economists. Of these important works, Lee (1966), Elizga (1972), Ritchey (1976), DeJong and Gandner (1981), Findley (1987), and more, considered a wide range of factors influencing individual and household migration. These include demographic factors such as age, gender, education level, marital situation, race, and household size, geographic factors (like distance), social-psychological factors (like the desire for health, status, comfort, stimulation, autonomy, affiliation and morality), economic factors (like income, employment, cost and benefit), attitudinal factors (like aspirations for improving one's social-economic status, being close to friends and relatives), and so forth. These factors inform the following theories to be discussed, economics macro- and micro-theory, segmented labor market theory, historical-structural theory and social capital theory.

Although most of these theories are directed at international labor migration, they are also widely used in Chinese internal migration studies. Internal migrant workers and international migrants have numerous differences in economic and cultural contexts, though they do have similarities, especially when it comes to the disadvantaged social status on the host society (Yue & Li, 2015). Thus, these theories have also been applied directly to analyze in Chinese rural-urban migration. For example, the Dual Labor Market Theory can be used in the analysis of Chinese current urban labor market structures after the large amount of labor flow between urban and rural areas (Chen & Hamori, 2013). Moreover, the push and pull theory can also be used to describe the structural pull force of rural labors in China.

Neoclassical economics: Macro-Theory and Micro-Theory

Probably the best-known theory of international migration has its roots in models developed originally to explain internal labor migration in the process of economic development (Lewis, 1954; Ranis & Fei, 1961; Harris & Todaro, 1970; Todaro, 1976). According to this theory, migration is caused by geographic differences in the supply and demand for labor (Todaro & Maruszko,1987). In this perspective, migration is clearly related to differences in wage and employment. However, economic disparities alone are not enough to explain the migrants' movements. Wage difference is a necessary but not sufficient condition for labor migration to happen (Lewis, 1954).

Similarly, some scholars reveal the motivation of Chinese rural-urban migration follow the legacy of western researches and they agree with the argument that rural-urban migration is a rational choice to pursue the maximization of interests and the minimization of costs for migrant workers. From this point of view, the massive influx of rural-urban migration is not at all a blind flow (*mangliu*) as the political rhetoric characterized it in the 1980s. Migrant workers always have clear motives and goals before their migratory behaviors and this quest for rational choices has created a large swarm of Chinese migrant workers today. Other scholars argue that rural-urban migration in China is not the result of the pursuit of a maximization of utility, but merely the attempt for rural farmers to survive and earn income from non-agricultural activities to make up for the gap in farming incomes. For example, Huang (1986) takes peasants' participation in rural-urban migration as a necessary condition for survival. He points out that a poor peasant cannot survive by farming alone, and consequently they need to move to cities to meet the minimum living cost. In the opinion of Huang, a farmer must firmly grasp what he calls the "two abdications" which means two kinds of livelihoods (farming and handicraft) to obtain indispensable supplementary income to survive. Fei (2013) also mentions that peasants are required to carry out family manual business or migrate out of the village to work to maintain the basic needs of their families, including household items, daily expenses and agricultural taxes. However, Fei still emphasized that rural industrialization, such as the development of the handicraft industry or other

entrepreneurship offers another solution for the problem of rural surplus labor. It could be an important means to solve survival issues for rural farmers in a stagnant, closed environment. Otherwise, the farmers will go out to work to raise more family allowances. The arguments of both Fei and Huang have the common limitations of the focus in specific eras based on rural studies in the 1980s, which is too outdated to explain today's large-scale rural-urban migration in China. Wen (2004) divides the rational behavior of immigrants into three types: the survival rational choice, which means the pursuit of survival rationality of "avoidance" (of poverty); the economic rational choice, which means the pursuits of "profit maximization"; the social rationality choice, which means the pursuit of "satisfaction rationalization" (broaden ones' horizon). In his narratives, the social rationality and the economic rationality become more and more prominent with the increase of economic development.

Push-pull Theory

Written in the mid-1960s, Lee's (1966) push-pull theory of migration is another neoclassical theory that emphasizes the tendency of people to migrate from low-income areas to high-income areas. Push-pull framework assumes that migration enables equilibrium between forces of economic growth and contraction in different geographic locations. The paradigmatic application of the push-pull framework is Brinley Thomas' analysis on the great transatlantic migrations of the industrial era. Thomas (1973) discovered that oscillations in the British economic cycle had countervailing ripples on American shores, creating successive waves of migration in which the forces of push and pull predominated at different times on different sides of the Atlantic: Periods of push in Britain coincided with eras of pull in America, while periods of pull in Britain coincided with times of push in the U.S. The push-pull theory is also suitable to explain the macroeconomic factors of rural-urban migration. Scholars compare the push-pull model in China with the international push-pull model by using empirical data from the survey on migrant workers (Li 2004, Cai 2017). Accordingly, here are the similar points of Chinese case, e.g. the rural push factors include low farming income, a lack of development opportunities, rural poverty and backwardness and so on. Meanwhile, urban

pull factors include higher income and broader horizons and visions outside. However, one of the most prominent differences is that the household registration (*hukou*) system makes Chinese rural-urban migration be not in line with the universal push-pull model. It shows that institutional and political interventions are involved in the Chinese rural-urban migration (Li, 2003).

New Economics of Migration

According to the main idea of the new economics of migration, families (or households) are the appropriate units of analysis for migration research. Migration decisions are not made by isolated individuals, but by large units of related people - typically families or households, and sometimes by communities, in which people act collectively not only to maximize expected income, but also to minimize risks and to loosen constraints associated with various kinds of market failures (Stark & Levhari,1982; Stark & Lucas, 1988; Lauby & Stark,1988; Stark & Taylor, 1989; 1991). Similarly, the finding in China also indicates that migrant families that have more social networks in the cities generally stay longer (Tan, 2003). However, the type of family stage migration is so rare that it leaves the large quantity of the left behind population as a social cost in rural China (Biao, 2007; He & Ye, 2010; Ye *et al.*, 2013; Ye & Wu, 2008). All these provide illuminations to Chapter 2 which illustrates how rural-urban migration reshapes the life of rural left behinds within a split migrant family to evaluate this social cost.

Historical-structural Theory

Although the economic theorists Todaro (1979) and sociological theorists such as Lee (1966) who view migration as a rational calculation made by individuals to secure their material improvement, historical-structural theorists link migration to the macro-organization of social-mechanisms of power and domination. Singer (1971, 1975) applied this principle to the study of internal migration, seeking to link rural-urban migration to specific historical contexts and transformations in the economic structure of rural and urban areas (Massey *et al.*,1999). Following the guidance of this version, Huang (2006) makes a new theoretical explanation, which considers rural-urban migration to be an

interactive process of the individual pursuit of "interest maximization" and the state's institutional factors. From his comments, it can be concluded that rural farmers could go out of the village for great profits with the loosening of restrictions on rural-urban migration (Huang, 1998). On the other hand, the institutional barriers such as the *hukou* system are meaningless for migrant workers without their impulse to search for non-agricultural profits (Huang, 2003). As we mentioned before, the *hukou* system have played a vital role in the progress of rural-urban migration of migrant workers. In Chapter 4, it will deepen the issue of the *hukou* system as an institutional barrier and see it as an aspect of social exclusion for migrant workers in urban China.

Social Capital Theory and Social Network of Migrant Workers

Glenn Loury (1977) introduced the concept of social capital to designate a set of intangible resources in families and communities that help to promote the social development of young people. Building on this, Bourdieu (1986) points out social capital's broad relevance to human society:

 "Social capital is the summary of all actual and virtual resources, which is accrued by an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network with more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition"

People can gain access to social capital by membership in networks and social institutions, and then convert it into other forms of capital to improve or maintain their position in society (Bourdieu,1986). Theorists generally emphasize the positive role played in the acquisition and accumulation of other forms of the capital (Coleman, 1990). Social ties of friendship and kinship can bring about greater control over wayward behavior, and provide privileged access to resource (Portes, 1998; 2000). Each act of migration creates social capital among people, thereby raising the odds of their migration (Massey *et al*., 1987;1993;1994).

Many surveys show that migrant workers rely on their local social networks, which called "*guanxi*" in the Chinese language is an important social resources instead of the formal

support provided by the government (Li *et al*., 2006; Li *et al*., 2007; Yue *et al*., 2011). For example, Xiang (2000) argues that migrant workers do not shift from an existing social structure to another but change the social structure during the migration to form a so-called "non-state space", which is a confined and independent social network that they rely on in their daily life and rules out government intervention. Other scholars use the Granovetter's framework of "strong and weak ties" to argue that migrant workers rely on a strong relationship within their rural communities. They further believe that the key to finding a job for migrant workers is not an acquisition of information in the framework of "strong and weak ties" analysis, but rather an accumulation of information retrieved (Li, 2002). Therefore, Zhai (2003) suggests that the acquisition of information for migrant workers is mainly based on the credibility or the trust of "*guanxi*". Then he divides the trust of *guanxi* into strong trust and weak one, pointing out that migrant workers rely on strong trust in the process of job hunting. This results in the sparse social network of migrant workers with different "small group" patterns in cities (Feldman *et al.*, 2008). However, the current literature on the acquisition of social networks can only offer an examination of the progress and the routes that migrant workers take to leave the countryside and enter cities. Thus, the research on social networks can also offer us a theoretical basis for the research on the social inclusion of migrant workers in urban areas since the unique social networks of migrant workers are required to make an impact on their ways of social inclusion. Despite being in urban areas, they mostly rely on private or personal social networks to give the prerequisite for closing the social interaction into a rural circle. In this sense, it's another way to understand the social inclusion of migrant workers in cities (see Chapter 4).

Segmented Labor Market Theory and The Urban Employment

Segmented labor market theory inherits assumptions of the labor heterogeneity and emphasizes that institutions determine the wages; that is to say, after entering the labor market, institutional barriers create unequal opportunities, which then lead to inequality in wages (Doeringer & Piore, 1985; Piore,1970). The main points of the segmented labor market theory are that, first, labor market is strictly divided into two parts, primary sector

and secondary sector, the former is stable and characterized by high income and welfare, with good career prospects and chance of education. The latter has no job security and is marked by low income, almost no benefits, high mobility, and no career prospects (poor chance of education). Second, in the primary sector, a variety of rules and norms are important, and the wage is determined by a job. In contrast, in the secondary sector, the supply and demand of labor is important, and the wage is determined by both sides of supply and demand. Third, there is almost no flow of labor between the primary and secondary sectors. Piore (1970) argues that international migration is caused by a permanent demand for immigrant labor that is inherent to the economic structure of developed nations. Similarly, the issue of employment equality/inequality for migrant workers has always been a hot topic in Chinese academia. The commonality of the current literature emphasizes the release of rural agriculture surplus labor and the cost reduction of the urban labor force (Li, 2012; Meng *et al*., 2015; Zhai, 2004). However, research shows that migrant workers oftentimes enter the secondary labor market with low income, poor working conditions and welfare, and this bad treatment causes difficulties for them to raise their professional status (Chen & Hamori, 2013; Dickens & Lang, 1985). The migrant workers are mainly concentrated in labor-intensive industries such as construction and manufacturing that require few advance skills. Therefore, relevant scholars call for a unified urban-rural labor market without inequality in an aim to reduce the social distance between urban residents and migrant workers (Li & Li, 2010; Xie, 2007). However, economic studies and sociology studies are mixed on this topic. It's very difficult to distinguish the domain of research on the employment issues of migrant workers, but as a main activity of migrant workers in cities, it is a topic that deserves to be included in the domain of social inclusion (see Chapter 4).

4.2. Other Research Topics on Chinese Migrant Workers

Urbanization and Citizenship

China is experiencing rapid modernization and urbanization, which means not only the transformation of rural peasants into urban citizens, but also the influx of large numbers

of rural people into urban areas (Liu, 2013; Liu & Cheng, 2009; Wang *et al*., 2008). Scholars have reached a consensus that migrant workers are socially disadvantaged, thus ensuring a long time for their urbanization (which refers to the process that migrant workers follow as they move into urban areas and then transfer gradually to urban residents). It is broadly admitted that an important symbol of urbanization is that the migrant workers become urban residents and enjoy the same welfare as urban residents (Cai, 2011; Hu, 2015; Huang, 2009; Liang & Wang, 2010). Most scholars have discussed the urbanization of migrant workers under the macro background of "Rural-urban Dual Structure", which emphasizes the long term of rural-urban segregation with disparity between rural and urban residents (Liu & Cheng, 2009).

With more and more migrant workers entering the city, great improvement has been made in the urbanization of migrant workers, and many scholars have also affirmed this. For example, Wang and Wu (2011) suggest that 54% of migrant workers in China have reached citizenship, especially in non-material dimensions, such as social relations and psychological identity. However, more scholars argue that the urbanization of migrant workers hasn't been achieved by defining the terminology such as "virtual urbanization" and "semi-urbanization", arguing that the changes in occupations and living spaces have not given migrant workers the complete transformation from peasants to citizens, although the migrant workers have their jobs in cities (Guo & Hu, 2006; Liu & Xu, 2007).

They've pointed out the practical barriers to the urbanization of migrant workers. For example, Jian (2011) has pointed out five major obstacles of the migrant workers' urbanization: *hukou*, capitals, current laws, personal characteristics and conservative backward conceptions. In summary, the barriers lie both in the macro factors such as *hukou* system and government interventions, and in the micro factors such as personal characteristics and the cultural differences with urban residents. Liu (2006) contends that it is necessary for the government to provide a good social atmosphere for the migrant workers and to improve government administration and provide better services to migrant workers. In addition, the household registration system is still the biggest obstacle to the urbanization of migrant workers (Huang, 2009).

Urban Habitats of Migrant Workers

There is an old saying, "home equals to house ownership", which means every dweller must have their own house. But migrant workers who inhabit urban areas don't have many opportunities to have their own houses. Some scholars point out that migrant workers did not significantly improve their living conditions after their migration, their residence in cities is a kind of "rootless living", which means their habitats literally do not have family functions (Deng & Guo, 2016; Zhao, 2013). The essence of this form of living is the social community's deconstruction (Gan & Wang, 2008; He, 2014). Scholars believe that the living conditions of migrant workers to some extent reflect the social interaction with urban residents (Wang & Wu, 2011). Scholars say migrant workers gather in communities as "Chinese style slums", a type of settlement that leads to a new prediction of polarization between the rich and the poor, which they believe severely impedes the interaction with urban citizens, solidifies and enlarges the class confrontation between the rich and poor, and poses a threat to social stability (Jing, 2014). Therefore, they propose a mixed governance strategy for migrant workers.

It has been pointed out in Chinese studies that the distribution of migrant workers in urban space shows the characteristics of "large concentration and small decentralization"- most of migrant workers have lived in large clusters scattered around the suburban areas which called "urban villages" far away from the city center or the collective rented accommodations distributed in all corners of the city. The analysis of the urban village also occupies a certain amount of research, such as Xiang Biao's research on "Zhejiang village" in Beijing (Xiang, 2000). Migrant workers' dwelling styles are dominated by accommodations provided by employers and self-renting, with low rents, inadequate infrastructure, low comfort, decentralization (far away from the city center) and a willingness to centralize. Most studies concern income limitation as a major reason for this living style (He, 2014; Lu, 2011). Other factors, such as occupation, age and marital status of migrant workers, have also been investigated and show a significant correlation. Furthermore, few scholars have pointed out the significant correlation between social inclusion and the dwelling segregation (Jing , 2015; Qi & Zhang, 2017). Thus, the

Chapter 4 will just concern this living segregation as a dimension of social exclusion of migrant workers in cities to illustrate a further discussion.

Intimacy Relationships: Love, Marriage and Family Relationships

In addition to the employment and living conditions, the nuances of migrant workers' daily life have begun to attract more and more attention from scholars. The topics gradually change from the public domain to the private personal sectors (Wang, 2009). This ranges from the superficial aspects of rural-urban migration phenomena to details of the migrant worker's daily life. The advent of research on migrant workers' love, marriage and family relations can well reflect this trend.

Changes in Marital Conception and Spouse Choice

Current research reveals that migrant workers' love and marriage have experienced a transition and their intimate relationships may be a symbiosis between tradition and modernity as their location changes from traditional agricultural communities to modern industrial communities (He, 2007; Xie, 2008; Shi, 2008; Fan & Huang, 1998; Fan & Li, 2002). This is mainly manifested in modern marriage and dating consumption, traditional and modern interweaving norms regarding partner choice, and increasingly open sexual conceptions (Feng, 2006). For example, a study of migrant workers' attitudes toward premarital sex and extramarital sex shows that female migrants are more motivated and more against premarital and extramarital sex than male migrants. This change has promoted the assimilation of migrant workers in values with urban residents, but the increasingly open sexual conception may exacerbate the above phenomenon among migrant workers (Xie, 2008). Furthermore, the migrant workers' intimate relationships have undergone a profound overhaul with the emergence of the "flash marriage" style-getting married soon after a short period of dating (Shi, 2008).

Rural-urban migration not only creates employment opportunities for migrant workers, but also provides them with a platform for "cross-*hukou* marriage", which means that a farmer with a rural *hukou* can marry citizens with urban *hukou* to achieve the promotion

for social status. The increase of cross-*hukou* marriages among migrant workers reflects the expansion of the rural marriage circle, and it also exerts challenges to the traditional "match-up" matchmaking marriage model, which emphasizes that it is not suitable for people from different social status to get married (Jin & Duan, 2017; Song, 2010). Some scholars have also pointed out that cross-*hukou* marriage is the manifestation of the urbanization of peasant workers at the family level, which shows their assimilation with urban values to seek marriage freedom. Relevant empirical analysis also shows that cross-*hukou* marriages among migrant workers is at about 13%, which means the homogeneous marriage is still the main form of marriage in China (Jin & Duan, 2017).

Meanwhile, researches show that the rate of cross-*hukou* marriage among women is significantly higher than that in men, which also raised the issue of a 'marriage squeeze' in rural areas (Guo & Jin, 2016; Jia, 2008; Li, 1998). This marriage squeeze is a direct result of a serious gender imbalance. According to data from the Chinese 100 Villages Survey, massive groups of unmarried men exist in rural villages. The gathering of "bachelors" not only has a significant negative impact on the public safety of rural communities, but also form a true portrayal of the current rural marriage market (Jin *et al.*, 2012). Currently, the age of first marriage for rural men mainly locates the age group of 22 to 27. The probability of marrying for unmarried men over the age of 27 drops sharply. The worse their own personal characteristics and social resources is, the less likely they are to marry. Under such circumstances, women who have had a history of marriage (are divorced) become coping strategies for men who have a poor economy and are disadvantaged in the first marriage market (Liu & Jin, 2012). However, this does not mean that this bachelor group is changing its attitude towards women who have a marriage history before. In this context, a phenomenon of burgeoning of rural bride price comes out in rural villages, and the Chapter 3 gives an overall explanation on the rocketing of bride price and presents the nuances of rural marriage nowadays.

Evolution of Marital Relations

Existing research on migrant workers' marriages mainly focuses on the stability of

marriage, the quality of marital life, marital violence, extramarital relationships and the impact of migration on the family relations of migrant workers (Li & Jin, 2012; Li, 1998; Shi, 2006; Xu, 2009; 2010). A large number of rural women migrate out to work in the city, which causes changes in the social status and social roles of migrant women and family relations (Feng, 2006). Research shows that migrant workers have a higher probability of marital instability, and that migration patterns and gender differences have different influences on this instability. Among them, the young migrant workers who were born after the 1980s (who are defined as the new generation of migrant workers) have the highest proportion of marital instability (Shi, 2006). Rural-urban migration has brought new family pattern and new marital conception, and this further affects the quality of marriage for migrant workers (Wu & Ye, 2010; Ye & Wu, 2009). Some scholars pay attention to the phenomenon of marital violence and extramarital relationships among migrant workers. They point out that the change of the economic power structure and emotional relations among migrant workers will have an impact on marital violence. Marital violence among migrant workers families is prevalent; mainly expressed as "cold violence"-couples treat each other indifferently like strangers without oral communications instead of fighting with physical injuries, while the rate of women who encounter violence is significantly higher than that of men (Li & Jin, 2012). To deepen the study on marital life within a migrant family, the third part of Chapter 2 will examine the gender relationship between rural wives left behind and their migrant husband based on both examination on the changes of social status of rural women within 10 migrant families.

Migrant Family Issues: Child Care and Old-age Support

Inter-generational relationships in migrant families have also been the focus of scholars. Most of the young male laborers migrate out, leaving the vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women and children behind in rural areas. The traditional extended family is gradually divided and torn by rural-urban migration, replaced by increasingly small nuclear families (Du *et al*., 2007). Migrant workers, from a long-distance in urban areas, face challenges for old age support and child care in such a social context (Gruijters, 2018;

Lei, 2013; Song, 2014; He & Ye, 2010).

The study on children of migrant workers mainly consists of two parts, one is concerned with children who are relocated in cities and another is on children left behind in rural areas. There are plenty of researches on the status of migrant children who have migrated with their parents. However, the issues are confined to the educational inequality of migrant children compared with their urban counterparts and their urban adaptation. The problems mainly cover the following issues: unbalanced distribution of education resources in urban China; marginalization of social status; low school enrollment rate; less family education and supervision; less sense of belonging of the city and vague identification in urban space (Ruan, 2016; Chang *et al*., 2011; Xu, 2010). In fact, the majority of children in migrant families were left behind in rural areas, and data reveals that it accounts for 80% of migrant parents who chose to leave their children in rural areas (unicef, 2017). Socialized in the circumstance of rural-urban migration without parental guardianship, rural children left behind are prone to become a new generation of migrant workers and leave the rural villages when they grow up. The well-being of rural left behind children is that they will been given more explanations on their "differentiated childhood" (Ye & Lu, 2011a) in Chapter 2.

The research on rural elderly left behind always strengthen the weakness and the desperate status of rural old people (Cai *et al*., 2012; He & Ye, 2014). Besides these findings, this study aims to show the other side the coin-how the rural elderly left behind reshape their rural life even though with less support and negative psychological outcomes. I extend the previous work done by Ye *et al,*. (2013) in looking at rural left behind population rather than merely migrant workers in cities. The focus on the old-age care of rural elderly thus offers a lens to look at the actual life of the aforementioned vulnerable social group suffering from lack of social support from their migrant family members by examining the changes in support patterns in rural Chinese migrants' family are important topic to be discussed.

4.3. Literature Review of Migrant Workers' Social Inclusion

There is no doubt that Chinese migrant workers are embedded in different social, economic and cultural background with international migrants. International migrants are revealed to reach a better economic situation although faced with a huge cultural lag with local residents (Latham, 2015; Portes & Bach, 1985; Vertovec, 2013). When it comes to social inclusion, most international migrants are reported to have their own race-relation cycle or ethnic minority group which makes them in a disadvantaged position in the host society (Park, 1950; Santini *et al.*, 2011). And this situation of disadvantaged position is similar to what the Chinese rural-urban migrants face in urban China now (Liu *et al.*, 2015). Furthermore, it is believed that Chinese migrant workers are similar to illegal Mexican migrants in the US in particular aspects of socioeconomic status (Yue & Li, 2015). Thus, the international literature on the social inclusion of migrants can offer insights for this study on Chinese case.

Social inclusion has been widely used in migration studies to examine the relationship between immigrants as new arrivals and the local society (Chan *et al.*, 2014). The Chinese translation "*shehui rongru*", which means the new comers fully participate into the host society, can be seen as a both goal and progress. It has the similar meaning with multiple words including assimilation and integration. For example, in American researches on international migrations, assimilation is the most used word, which concerns how different ethnic minority groups adapt themselves into the mainstream society (Gordon, 1964; Zhou & Portes, 2012). It emphasizes that different ethnic groups voluntarily eliminate heterogeneity and converge toward a common mainstream culture and tend to integrate with each other in the fields of politics, economy and culture. The melting pot, which was first proposed by Crevecoeur in 1782 in his book "Letters from an American Farmer", is the most famous argument in social assimilation theory. Park (1950) then developed the theory of assimilation based on the empirical studies in northeastern and mid-western America. He argues that the interaction among racial groups known as the "race relation cycle" is an irreversible progress including four stages: contact, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. Gordon (1964) disassembles the process of

assimilation into seven steps: cultural adaptation, integration of social structures, assimilation of marriage, assimilation of identities, elimination of prejudices in consciousness, elimination of discrimination among communities and assimilation of society. It focuses on the ethnic groups of American with multicultural background, while the case of Chinese internal migrant workers, however, stays in the same cultural environment as urban citizens. More specifically, Chinese scholars use the term "urbanization"-meaning that the farmers change their identity into city dwellers- to describe the similar progress of assimilation. Thus, the assimilation of migrant workers in China could by roughly linked with urbanization rather than social inclusion in such context (Liu, 2013; Wen, 2004).

Most Chinese literature choose to use the social integration "*shehui ronghe*" to reveal how migrant workers integrate into urban areas (Jing, 2015; Yue & Li, 2015). The literature will also be cited here because of the little difference of the Chinese meaning between social integration and social inclusion. Nevertheless, in English literature, the social integration has different notions with social inclusion. Social inclusion is regarded by UN (2008) as a broader notion compared with social integration, and one that improves and enhances access to channels for social integration as a policy goal to reach a harmony society is to create a "society for all" -which means all social groups can equally participate into social activities.

International literature on the Definition of Social Inclusion

The concept of social inclusion as social policy terminology stems from the studies of European scholars on social exclusion, which was a counterpart concept of social inclusion (Lenoir,1974). It was first proposed by Lenoir (1974), who specialized primarily in economic exclusion. However, most of subsequent scholars have state that social exclusion is a highly multidimensional conception that shows a person or a group that is systemically excluded (Agulnik, 2002; Burchardt *et al*., 2002). For example, Burchardt *et al*., (2002) have noted the following aspects of social exclusion: Consumption (people lack the capacity to purchase goods and services); Production

(people are unable to find employment); Involvement (people lack of the participation in local and national politics and organizations); Social interaction and family support.

As a contrary concept of social exclusion, social inclusion is conceived by a lot of literature as a fundamental goal of society is to enable its members to participate fully, as valued, respected and contributing members (Mitchell *et al*., 2002; Toye & Downing, 2006). At the same time, it is linked with many social policy and organizations. For example, the European Commission (2005) defines the social inclusion as:

"a process which ensures that those at risk of poverty and social exclusion gain opportunities and resources that are necessary to participate fully in economic, social and cultural life, and to enjoy a standard of living and well-being which is normal in the society in which they live. It ensures that they have a greater participation in decision-making which affects their lives and access to their fundamental rights."

This definition is easily understood and widely accepted in policy circles, yet it is often elusive in actual terms. There is no consensus on the definition of social inclusion among current scholars. Some scholars contend that social inclusion reflects the opportunities to participate into social activities (Huxley *et al*., 2012). However, others think it is a conception of social policy to measure poverty and multiple deprivation (Ngok, 2012; Mitchell *et al*., 2002). It is seen as a more holistic term compared with "inequality" in social policy researches (Atkinson *et al*., 2004). Although with such arguments, social inclusion is widely agreed to be multidimensional and multilateral (UNESCO, 2013). Accepting this point, the multidimensional social inclusion of migrant workers will be examined in this study (see Chapter 4).

Multi-dimensions of Social Inclusion

The subsequent researchers have noted that the complexity of measuring social inclusion due to its diversity (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2011; Nelms & Tsingas, 2010). For example, Entzinger and Biezeveld (2011) argue that the social inclusion of immigrants is embodied in four dimensions: economic inclusion, social inclusion, political inclusion and cultural

inclusion. It is suggested that economic and social inclusion mainly refers to the employment, income levels, social security, education and housing, the isolation of local residents and so on. Till now, much of the social inclusion literature concentrates on tangible and required activities in the former two dimensions, such as employment and residence (Toye & Downing, 2006). Based on the four-dimensional model of Entzinger and Biezeveld (2011), the research of Latham (2015) reveals that Chinese immigrants in Italy have a very high level of economic inclusion from their wages, employment, housing and deposits although located in the migration enclaves isolated with the host society. Cultural inclusion includes the attitudes toward local social basic rules and norms, spouse choice, language skills, criminal behavior and so on. Political inclusion mainly includes the acquisition of legal status, the participation of political activities and civil society. Among international literature, scholars may focus more on civic participation. For example, Burchardt *et al.* (2002) argue that, "if inclusion is about participation, then voting will be an effective measurement of social inclusion because it taps a purely voluntary willingness to participate". Based on this view, Bevelander & Pendakur (2011) take the electoral participation as a measurement of social inclusion for natives, immigrants and descendants in Sweden. They find that place of birth and citizenship make a big difference in the odds of voting. However, the current Chinese voting policy is a representative system, which means not all people have the right to take part in public affairs, although it is regulated by the Constitution that everyone has the right to vote for their representatives to stand for them. Thus, based on the special characteristics of political system in China, the migrant workers' political participation will not be considered in this study when we examine the aspects of the social inclusion of migrant workers. The socioeconomic aspects of the social inclusion will be the main focus in this research on Chinese rural-urban migrants.

The Social Inclusion of Chinese Migrant Workers: Definitions and Dimensions

As to Chinese literature on social inclusion of migrant workers, different scholars give their own definitions and explanations (Li & Tian, 2012; Liu, 2010a; Wang, 2011). Some scholars argue that migrant workers have not been included in urban society, and that they

are excluded out of the realm of urban social welfare due to employment inequality, residential exclusion, narrow social contacts and unfair social security treatment (Wang, 2011; Zhang, 2000). Others argue that migrant workers have begun to adapt to urban life and urban culture, and they have gradually been included into urban society (Liang & Wang, 2010). However, they all agree that social inclusion is a progress by which migrant workers have integrated into all aspects of urban life such as employment, residence and culture. This agreement is similar to the one defined by European Commission (2005) which has strengthen on "fully participation" into urban life.

Similar to international literature, Chinese scholars have reached a consensus on the plurality of social inclusion and taken multi-angle studies on the social inclusion of migrant workers, mostly based on quantitative analysis on empirical data (Yue & Li, 2015). However, Chinese scholars have not reached a consensus on what the concrete dimensions of social inclusion in rural-urban migration studies until now. Similar to the western researchers, some scholars (Huang & Ga, 2010) believe that migrant workers should participate into the following four aspects: economic (including occupation, income, residence); social (including leisure time, social network); and cultural and psychological (including the sense of belonging, willingness to stay). The economic and social aspects are seen as the basis for the cultural and psychological inclusion. As a migrant worker, normally included in the urban economic system, has a job or invests in small business. Meanwhile, he or she can also get access to social system and has the possibility of having a family and getting into other social networking and interacting with urban residents. On this basis, the psychological needs are the final stage to integrate into urban life. However, Chinese migrant workers, as a group from traditional rural areas to modern urban areas, still live in a homogeneous society, which means they don't face the racial or language obstacles as international migrants. So, several scholars limited social inclusion of migrant workers into three dimensions: economic, social and psychological aspects (Zhu, 2002). Following this, Liu (2010b) has specified the concept of social inclusion further into 12 indices covering the following areas such as residence and living condition, healthy and security, employment and income, life satisfaction and

confidence.

To specify the dimensions of migrant workers' social inclusion, the socioeconomic factors where migrant workers located should be considered (Zhou, 2012). Unlike international migrants, Chinese *hukou* system and a list of institutional policies based on it have been seen as the main obstacle of migrant workers' social inclusion in urban areas (Huang, 2009; Liu & Cheng, 2009). Migrant workers, though resided in the city, still cannot have the same rights and welfare as urban locals. For example, the children of migrant workers still have no access to urban public school like their urban counterparts, rural migrants in the city engage in informal jobs that urban people do not want to take. They always work in a harsh working condition, have long working hours and high labor intensity, and it is difficult for them to achieve an upward mobility from their current social status. These disadvantages in turn often lead to difficulties for them to develop family relationships and contribute to a vicious cycle. Some serious social problems will be generated if those excluded individuals or parts of the population cannot be taken care of or be included into society as soon as possible. Thus, this study will examine the influence of *hukou* system on the inclusion of migrant workers into the urban mainstream society by measuring *hukou* segregation as one dimension of social inclusion.

In summary, along these lines, this study aims to just address various aspects of migrant workers' social inclusion and their survival strategies within urban areas by categorizing the social inclusion of migrant workers into four aspects: the economic inclusion, the residential inclusion, *hukou* inclusion and psychological inclusion (see Chapter 4). Although most studies about social inclusion of migrants have been conducted in the Euro-American context and have concerned international migrants, Chinese internal migration offers an interesting case to understand how similar process of social inclusion can be reproduced within one country and to what extent this case differs from the ones previously analyzed by Western researchers. It is the important task of this research to help and give a voice to the disadvantaged migrant labor force and boost China's urban and development.

Additionally, current literature on the social inclusion of migrant workers have seen migrant workers as "outsiders" or strangers that enter urban society (Liang & Wang, 2010; Wang & Luo, 2007). They write that conflict arises from the conceptions that: migrant workers come into the city and grab resources and opportunities from urban residents; that migrant workers face discrimination and exclusion from urban residents and are labeled or stigmatized as "countrymen", "low-quality" or "not well-educated"; and that people's exclusion was seen as the barrier to migrant workers' social inclusion (Li, 2007). So, most scholars recognize the basic presupposition of this dualism between urban and rural areas, and this puts forward the basic framework of this study within the dual structure of the urban and rural dynamics. However, there is a lack of dynamic investigation into social inclusion which also offers a prism of rural areas and rural life. In order to reach a full understanding of social inclusion, we cannot only analyze how migrant workers adapt to urban areas. The rural areas, from which they have migrated, must also be considered to give an overall research. The situation in rural areas provides a context for their urban inclusion. Thus, we need to examine the dynamic progress of migrant workers' social inclusion in all aspects of urban life (see Chapter 2 and Chapter 3).

5. Structure of The Thesis

This thesis aims to do two things: First, it provides an overall empirical study on the micro changes of Chinese rural village in the context of large-scale rural-urban migration. It focuses on three main vulnerable left behind groups: the elderly, the children and the wives. Second, it examines the social inclusion of migrant workers in urban areas with a reverse respective of social exclusion based on the reality that migrant workers belong to a social disadvantaged group in urban society. Although the two parts of the thesis seem distinct, they are closely correlated and follow a chronological order of the routes of rural-urban migration. As a migrant worker, he/she exists as a rural peasant in the countryside and turns into a migrant worker once he/she enters cities. This arrangement could not only provide a background examination but also offer an inspection on the

impact of his/her rural-urban migration.

The first section of the thesis (Chapters 2-4) depicts a blueprint of rural society carved by rural-urban migration as a knife, which attempts to answer several questions that are related to understanding the rational choice or the quest for migrant workers' maximization of interest in defecting from rural areas toward urban areas for non-agricultural activities. Starting with a brief description of the nickname "386199 troops" coined by Chinese mass media for the three-overall rural left behind groups, it provides this point: migrant family has been separated by rural urban migration with a family strategy- "hoe and wage"-which means part of family members who are left behind in rural villages. And the groups of rural children, elderly and women are usually the left behinds who are forced to meet and adapt the new rural life.

Particularly, the first part of Chapter 2 investigates the vulnerability of rural elderly left behind by the examination on the changes of rural elderly' economic and social life after their children's rural-urban migration. Based on both description data from CHARLS and the qualitative data collected during my field study in Fuli, it describes their physical and mental health, economic transfer, elderly care service, social interaction, and the changes of family relationships among rural elderly left behind. The second part doesn't examine the situation of rural children left behind directly, instead, it uses a method of life history to examine how the migration of parents shape the childhood of a group of younger-generation migrant workers, which means that they have followed their parents' choice and made preparations for rural-urban migration themselves. The third part focuses on a group of left behind wives with the comparison of their migrant husbands based on the framework of gender stratification under the traditional patriarchy. It depicts a patriarchal trap for rural wives left behind that is formed by the pressures of their husbands' rural-urban migration. From the pre-migratory stage to the attitude towards extramarital relationships after migration, it still shows the secondary status of rural wives left behind. In contrast to the married wives in rural areas, the unmarried migrant young women may gain a better situation and even more privileges, a situation which Chapter 3 lays out in intimate detail.

Chapter 3 shows the liberation of migrant girls and the diminish of the patriarchal system in line with the research of Hondagneu-Sotelo (1992) on Mexican women who overcome patriarchal constraints through international migration to the U.S. However, the topic here lies on rising bride prices in rural marriage before the migrant girls fall into the "trap of marriage" and shows the reverse situation between rural males and females. It firstly provides evidence for the skyrocketing rural bride prices, and then illustrates the factors that cause this phenomenon, including the unbalanced sex ratio, the different strategies of rural parents to raise their boys/girls, and then it discusses the newfound independence and increased choices for migrant girls offered with the potential of cross-*hukou* marriage, which makes the rural power worse in marriage negotiation.

The second section of the thesis (Chapters 4-5) looks at migrant workers' experience in urban settings in terms of concrete aspects of social inclusion. The social inclusion of migrant workers is discussed in a reverse perspective of social exclusion given the premise that migrant workers belong to a socially disadvantaged group in comparison to urban residents.

Chapter 4 is divided into three parts, with the first two parts offering a short interpretation on why and how migrant workers enter cities. The first part uses the classical push-pull theory to present explanations for the determinants of migrant workers' mobility. The second part examines migrant workers' social networks, which can be loosely translated into the Chinese word "*guanxi*", that exist at the core of Chinese social life. Given that data shows that the migrant workers rely mostly on private social networks instead of formal channels like job market recruitment, it then divides migrant workers' social networks into three categories: kinship, friendship and fellowship (peer ties). Later, the third part explores four aspects of social in/exclusion of migrant workers in urbans, namely, economic exclusion, residential exclusion, *hukou* exclusion and psychological exclusion. It reveals that rural migrant workers still live in a confined space that is parallel to the living space of urban locals.

Chapter 5 discusses the life satisfaction of migrant workers, which is broadly accepted as

an issue closely related to social inclusion studies. Here, life satisfaction is defined as an indicator which describes how social inclusion of migrant workers contributes to their subjective well-being in cities. Instead of overall life satisfaction, it concerns life satisfaction as a combination of economic life satisfaction and social life satisfaction, including eight specific domains accordingly. It reveals migrant workers' negative assessments on their living environments, working conditions, income, leisure time, social status, and relationships with urban residents in contrast to their positive assessment of their relationships with family members and colleagues. Later, it examines both objective and subjective factors' impact on the former eight domains of life satisfaction separately. The result shows that the experience of discrimination has a significant correlation with social and economic life satisfaction.

The Methodology part (Chapter 6) combines together all of the observations during fieldwork to develop an overview of a dynamic framework of Chinese rural-urban migration. Here, the biography of interviewees is fleshed out due to the excessive discussion in each chapter separately.

Figure 3   The Main Focus and The Framework of This Study
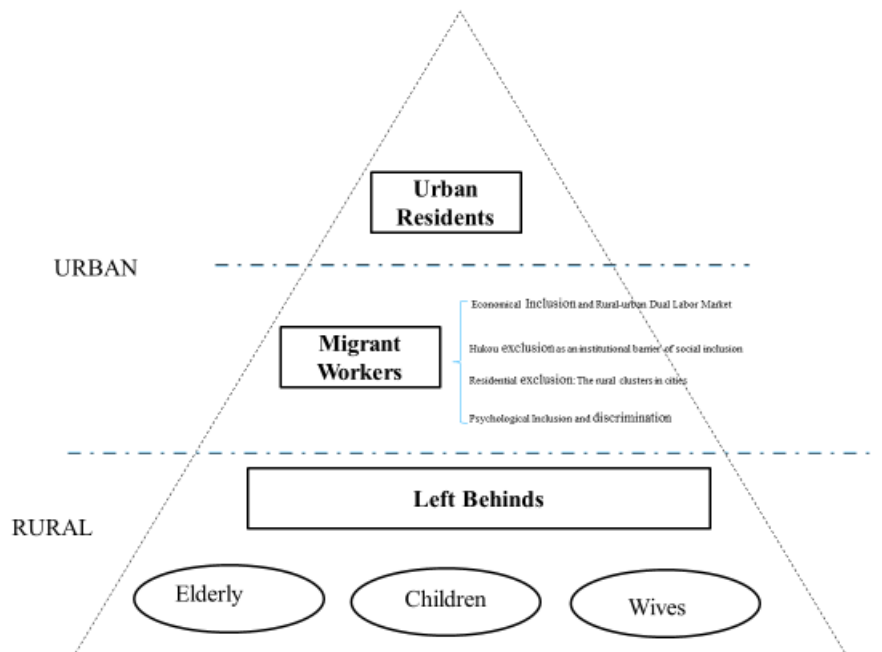
Chapter Two   The Rural Population Left Behind

Who is left behind during the rural-urban migration?

-The 386199 troops

The so-called "386199 troops" living in a Chinese village of Anhui province comprise a group of elderly people, middle-aged women and young children who have been left behind in the process of rural-urban migration. The nickname, coined by Chinese mass media and reflecting the importance of numerical values and symbols in local culture, follows a particular pattern. The "38" stands for March 8th (International Women's Day) and represents the women. Similarly, "61" refers to International Children's Day on June 1st and it means the village's children. Finally, the Chinese traditional festival for the elderly, which is called "Double Nine Festival", is on September 9th according to the Chinese lunar calendar. Together these three left-behind "troops" form community or kinship structures struggling to adapt to new realities after their sons, daughters, husbands or parents have been away to find possible urban work opportunities.

In this chapter, I will introduce the situation of these "386199 troops" in rural China, address existing literature on the subject of Chinese rural-urban migration, and then discuss whether the perspective of social exclusion can be well adapted according to the analysis of the rural-urban migration. Currently, the left-behind population is the largest contingent formed naturally in Chinese rural areas after the massive rural-urban migration of young and middle-aged laborers in the progress of Chinese urbanization. The data from the National Bureau of Statistics of China shows that there were 230 million migrant workers in 2009, who contributed to 87 million "left-behind" dependents and caretakers in rural areas, including 20 million children, 47 million women and 20 million elders (Chu, 2013).

Among this group, rural women become the main force of agricultural production and

provide the bulk care for children and elders. Children, who are supposed to grow up under the care of their parents, often live with grandparents, since their mothers follow their husband to migrate to the cities. The intergenerational care pattern, however, cannot replace the parental love in the end (Zong *et al.*, 2005). Arguably the nation's most vulnerable left-behind group, the rural elderly, find themselves navigating uncharted territory because of absence of the local support from their adult children, who traditionally should have been responsible for their care (Ye & He, 2008).

Previous rural-urban migration studies have much more focused on the results of migration, particularly the impact of economic conditions on immigrants and their family members. Furthermore, existing research has mainly focused on the urban destination of migrants rather than their rural place of origin. This dissertation thus tries to understand the phenomenon of urban migrant workers and those who have been left behind in villages in a dynamic sense from the focal point of the rural, and study rural left-behind populations that has only recently begun to take shape. While some of this literature addresses the impact of migration on the economic and psychological wellbeing of left-behind populations, few research has investigated the impact of migration specifically on rural children, elderly and women yet (Ye, 2017; Xiang, 2007; Ye *et al.*, 2013).

There is an argument on whether the left behind population chooses to or is forced to stay in rural areas. Some researchers define migration as a family strategy that migrants went out to make money to support the rural family, while the left behinds stay home automatically (MA Abas *et al.*,2009). Others consider it as a form of social exclusion and think that the left behind population is indeed a vulnerable group faced with chronic poverty according to the selection of rural-urban migration. The progress of migration calls for economic and social costs and requires a certain level of human, physical, social and economic capital, thus some scholars characterize it as a selective progress that is not available among the poor (Kothari, 2002). From the perspective of social exclusion, Kothari (2002) analyzes the characteristics of left-behind populations and migrants. As shown in the table below, we can see how the elderly, children and women comprise the left-behind population in rural areas. After comparing factors like social capital, cultural

capital, human capital, economy, geography and political status, he argues that migration is a strategy for poor people from rural areas to get away from poverty. From his idea, migrants were selected based on factors such as age, gender, level of education and race. The left-behind population members are excluded from the group of migrants because of structural reasons or personal reasons. For example, those excluded may not have existing knowledge about the labor force and may not be easy to be accepted into city during a large tide of labor migration. It is thus decided that the left behind should remain in the countryside to live a life with nearly no direct care and support from their family members who are working outside. Therefore, Kothari (2002) regards migration as a kind of social exclusion. Equally binding left-behind populations to rural areas are other exclusionary factors, including cultural mores around familial responsibility, disability or illness, age, educational level and skills, as well as a lack of social networks to get a job. Croll and Huang (1997) reveal that migrant workers' absence from agriculture and land increases the burden of housework and farming on left-behind populations, which undoubtedly aggravates the social exclusion and poverty of this population. Although Benjamin (2005) shows that temporary migration out of a village does not cause inequality among rural residents, this research data was collected from 1987 to 1999 when the rural areas were not experiencing such large-scale rural-urban migration. Updated data is necessary to accurately reflect the current socioeconomic situation of rural left-behind populations. The following case study thus lays the groundwork for a current understanding of how the "left behind" segments of this population are living and coping in the context of rural-urban migration.

Table 2   The "left behind" Population Linked with Chronic Poverty

Elderly left behind	• Family and "community" networks may decline • Increased dependence on government services and social welfare mechanisms • Loss of young people and subsequent decline in the agricultural sector • Consequences of an ageing population • Social security systems undermined
Children left behind	• Children socialized into a 'culture of migration' • Loss of educational opportunities
Women left behind	• Increase in female-headed households • Feminization of poverty • Impact on reproduction and population growth in sending areas • No formal entitlements to land or ownership • Dependent on irregular and insufficient remittances • Loss of social and other support networks • Not enough labor to work the land • Limited political participation

Data source: Migration and Chronic Poverty (Vol. 16). Manchester: Institute for Development Policy and Management: Chronic Poverty Research Centre.

Part 1 Rural Elderly Left Behind: A Case Study of Fuli Village in Anhui Province

> My son, Xinfeng made many calls to me, and wishes that I can do help to ask his farmland back. He wants to come back home this autumn. He has lost his job for more than twenty days. It will be really good for him to be back and raise ducks again along the riverside.
>
> Mr. Ma, 76-year-old resident of Fuli

Since the famous opening up and reform of China in the late 1970s, many young laborers have migrated into cities from Chinese rural villages to pursue more job opportunities. In this segment, I investigate the 'elderly left behind', who are defined as older adults left alone in villages while their adult children have migrated to urban areas to make a living. The difficulties met by rural elderly left behind in the process of rural-urban migration, as described in the introduction to this chapter, have become an urgent social problem in China that must be addressed (Cai *et al*., 2012). In order to solve this problem, it is necessary to examine the social and economic changes brought about by the migrants in question.

Accordingly, this dissertation will try to understand how the 'elderly left behind' navigate their new sociopolitical situation and address their (lack of) social inclusion as a vulnerable group by using empirical data from both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data is derived from nationwide statistics from the 2012 China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS), which describe the health (both physical and mental one), economic transfer, old-age support and social interaction of rural elderly. The qualitative data is based upon four-months field study conducted between June and

September 2015 in part of Anhui Province, where there is a mountainous region with beautiful natural view and located across the basins of the Yangtze and Huai rivers and is between 200 and 400 kilometers away from Shanghai.

1.Rural Elderly Left Behind

The current study examines how rural elderly left behind (characterized as a vulnerable group) adapt to their new environment in the wake of massive rural-urban migration. The economic inclusion of rural elderly will be studied in terms of livelihood, economic transfer and health status. The social inclusion will be examined through the change of family relations and social interaction. Benjamin (2000) suggested that the livelihood of the elderly in rural areas will deteriorate without external social policy intervention. It then calls for the health care support for the rural elderly. It is my ultimate hope that the information provided in this work will contribute to drafting and promoting effective social policies that ameliorate the material and psychological conditions of these aged people.

The English-language colloquialism, "empty nesters", usually signifies working or retired parents whose children no longer live at home, is a loose translation of the Chinese term currently used to describe the 'elderly left behind'. However, the "elderly left behind" has an underlying meaning of abandonment and vulnerability compared with the term "Empty nesters". Elderly left behind (*kongchao laoren* in Chinese) is a descriptor for older parents who are living in an empty house. This is much like a bird who has an empty nest after its hatchling have grown big enough to fly away and survive on their own. Another common phrase, "That will fly, flies at last," can describe the sense of loneliness that the elderly left behind may feel. It is not unique for the elderly in developing (also known as Low- and Middle-Income [LMIC]) countries to stay in rural areas, but unlike established high-income countries that may have institutionalized social welfare systems, China has not built a welfare infrastructure to keep pace with the rapid socioeconomic changes yet.

To date, scholars have been more concerned with the mental health and loneliness of elderly left behind in LMIC countries (Savikko, 2005; Wood & Johnson, 1989). For example, Savikko's (2005) study of elderly people in Finland shows that the loneliness of elderly individuals is more common in rural areas than in urban areas. He points out that elderly loneliness is correlated to an increase of age, social isolation, and low education and income levels. In addition, poor health, especially the loss of sight and hearing, increase feeling of loneliness. In rural areas of China, even basic medical and sanitary services are inadequate to meet elderly populations needs (He & Ye, 2014; Liu, 2014). The elderly in rural areas are more prone to depression and loneliness (MA Abas *et al*., 2009; Coles, 2001; Antman, 2010; Vullnetari & King, 2008).

In line with the theory of immigration economics (Borjas, 2008), research in the rural areas of Thailand argues that the migration of adult children increased the economic wellbeing of the elderly in rural areas (Knodel *et al*., 2010; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007). However, Antman (2008, 2013) indicates that international migration from Mexico did not bring much improvement to the elderly's financial support there. Thus, the findings in existing literature for other LMIC countries are ambiguous. In the Chinese context, while anecdotal accounts sometimes point to the potential of migrants' higher earnings eventually boosting the economic situation back in their villages and increase the economical situations of rural left behinds, my research has shown no evidence that the migration of adult children can raise the economic situation of their parents left behind. Furthermore, as Liu (2014) argues, the Chinese rural elderly is a group of vulnerable people who have been deprived of a state pension and other welfare provisions available to urban residents. Some scholars describe the rural elderly left behind as "the lonely sunset" (Ye & He, 2014) to call attention to this vulnerable group. This invokes the bittersweet image of a very beautiful sunset that sometimes makes people feel sorry for its short duration and the announcement of the end of a day.

The rural elderly life in some literature has been characterized as a poverty trap. Some scholars argue that the caring for grandchildren and farming have added an extra burden to rural elderly left behind because of the loss of support from the younger labor force.

However, the rental market of farmland has eased some financial and labor burdens for the rural elderly. More and more migrating villagers rent their farmland to others before leaving so that it will not create a burden for their parents left behind. At the same time, some elderly is still busy with the farming day after day, year after year since there are quite few leisure activities for them in the countryside. Most of the rural elderly have enough farming experience to make farming as a popular individual livelihood strategy. For the elderly who can take care of their grandchildren, this may become their main task in the countryside. As to other families especially those whose young labor is available, develop livestock breeding businesses in this village, e.g. raising chickens, ducks, cows or pigs, which requires some professional knowledge and physical strength, can be outside the feasibility of older villagers (who might focus, rather, on smaller-scale farming or animals). The position of older villagers finds themselves is both precarious and ambivalent, and is reliant on a number of economic, physical, and social factors that this study seeks to more deeply analyze.

The following literature review will explore these concepts further concerning how to understand (the lack of) social inclusion of the rural elderly left behind, as well as highlighting the dilemmas they face in the current context.

2.Literature Review

The existing sociology literature related to the state of the rural elderly left behind mainly focuses on the following: physical and mental health; old-age support and economic transfer; well-being and life satisfaction. However, this literature remains scattered without producing a consensus about the effects of rural-urban migration on the elderly left behind. Furthermore, as will be discussed below, the literature directly addressing the social inclusion of China's rural elderly is scant (Giles 2010; Cai *et al*., 2012).

Chinese scholars have published many journal articles on issues about definition, classification, and reasons for rural elderly left behind (Mu, 2002; Zhai, 2008; Zhao, 2003; Li, 2007). For example, Huang (2009) analyzes the possible reason from two aspects.

From a material view, he argues that industrialization and urbanization changed the mode of agricultural production, which will generate too much surplus labor force in rural areas and motivate younger adult children to seek development opportunities. This induces social effects like that migration causing the separation of adult children and their elderly parents. Huang (2009) writes that, due to changing social perspectives, some young adults are unwilling to live with their parents, due to a newfound emphasis placed on economic independence as well as differences of values between the two generations. At the same time, some older adults are reluctant to increase their children's financial burden and are more open to living separately (He & Ye, 2014). Since the reasons for a contingent of rural elderly left behind is based on multiple and variable factors, including changes in social economics, the events of one's own life, and the difficulties brought about by the general process of aging, this study chooses to pay more attention to literature on the physical, economic, and socio-emotional state of the rural elderly after the migration of their adult children.

2.1 The Health of Elderly Left-behind

Few studies have examined the impact of internal and international migration on the health status of elderly left behind in rural areas in LMIC countries, although related literature's number is fast expanding. While there is some gerontology literature focused on the physical and mental health of left-behind elderly, there are few associated sociological texts on the topic (Giles & Mu, 2007; Antman, 2013; Kuhn *et al*., 2011). Antman (2013) examines how international migration affects the health of older people in Mexico, indicating that the migration of adult children increases the likelihood of poor health for elderly left behind. Similarly, research in Thailand indicated that rural-urban internal migration had negative effects on the psychological health of the rural elderly. The migration of adult children thus may cause negative emotions, such as sadness and loneliness, to their parents left behind (Kuhn *et al*., 2011). Current literature also shows that parental health in turn affects the migration decisions of their adult children. Giles and Mu (2007) reveal that adult children tend not to migrate for work if any of their parents get unhealthy. Yet when there are other siblings who can remain and help, the

poor health of their parent(s) is less likely to affect an adult child's migration decision.

In one argument for a health benefit from rural-urban migration, Antman (2010) argues that the existing social security system and the rural land lease market have reduced the amount of rural elderly people's farm work, and accordingly reduce the incidence of work-related illness and disease to a certain extent. In a short summary, we can see that scholars do not easily reach a consensus on the impact of migration on the health of elderly left behind (Guo, 2015). This study aims to add to the literature empirically by collecting and analyzing data on the physical and mental health of rural elderly left behind based on a nationwide survey and make a comparison with other studies in order to make a more robust argument for the impact of rural-urban migration of adult children on aging parents in rural settings.

2.2 Old-age Support

Current literature mainly separates old-age support into three categories: economic support, instrumental support and emotional support (Wang, 2007; Zuo & Li, 2011). Scholars argue that adult children can provide more financial support, and less instrumental and emotional support to their parents left behind (Lei, 2013; Giles *et al*., 2010). Research on the "left behind" reveals that resources for old-age support usually come from family, government and society (Giles *et al*., 2011; He & Ye, 2010; Iecovich *et al*., 2004; Zhang & Li 2005). The family, most notably adult children, serve as the primary source of old-age support for the rural elderly, especially in rural China, where the elderly rely on their children instead of social welfare or government subsidies (Song & Li, 2008; Liu, 2014; Stöhr, 2015). However, this family support model has been challenged due to the rural-urban migration which brought a large quantity of adult labors out of the villages. The elderly left behind must adapt themselves to a new environment and a new old-age support model due to the absence of their migrant children. Moreover, the gender of children also matters deciding who are responsible for the old-age support of the elderly. In Chinese traditional culture, the old age support system relies heavily on the sons and the daughters-in-law rather than daughters (Yeoh & Huang, 2006). However,

more daughters have joined the old-age support system, which shows that the traditional filial culture which heavily relies on the sons is gradually weakening (Zuo & Li, 2011;Gruijters, 2018).

Migration studies focus not only on the gender but also the numbers of adult migrant children on the influence of old-age support for rural elderly left behind. Research in Thailand has shown that the number of children migrants affects the old age support of the elderly. MA Abas *et al*. (2009) contend that left-behind elderly with only a few migrant children are better than the ones with all children migrating out because they have both remittances and intergenerational support. In addition, left-behind elderly, who are over 60 with all children migrated out, are more depressed than the one with their children around. Other scholars focus on the interactions between siblings about arrangements and time distribution for the old-age support of elderly left behind (Baldassar, 2007; Coll, 2008; Quah, 2009; Antman, 2012). For example, Baldassar (2007) points out three features that collectively affect old-age support: the ability of individuals; the result of consultations and interaction among family members; and the promise of filial responsibility and obligation. Thus, to get a clear understanding of the old age support of rural elderly, we should also study the bilateral interactions between parents and adult migrant children.

2.3 The Remittances of Elderly Left-behind

Research on LMIC countries shows contradictory results regarding the influence of migration on the economic support of elderly left behind. For example, scholars have explained both the negative and positive effects of internal migration on the economics of the rural elderly in Thailand (Knodel *et al*., 2010; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007). In the research of Antman (2010), findings indicated that Mexican elderly left behind received more remittances from their migrant children working in the U.S., and so the economic situation of rural elderly with migrant children was better than that of rural elderly with non-migrant children. On the contrary, Ma Abas *et al*. (2009) reveal that the migration of adult children poses a negative impact on rural elderly due to a slump of economic and

material support. The amount of remittance is influenced by the actual income of the migrant children and the remittance send back home can't be guaranteed.

Knodel *et al*. (2010) think that migration can be seen as a family strategy, which means family members who are left behind can receive financial support through remittances and members within families who find appropriate ways to keep in touch. They argue that it does not necessarily jeopardize intergenerational relationships because of long distance between family members. The migration children often favor the material support of the elderly left behind, in general the mobile phone greatly supports their social contacts and adaption with the change of social life. As a counterargument to this, however, elderly people at different ages and with different levels of health may also experience little of the commonly espoused conveniences that modern technology such as cell phones can bring. Degradation of various physiological functions of the elderly, especially the loss of hearing and vision, provide new barriers to this family strategy. In the current study, we will study further whether the convenience brought by mobile phones can benefit and support the rural elderly left behind in China.

Most migration literature states that the income levels of the elderly left behind decrease over time, even though most of the elderly people received assistance from the remittances in developing countries. Li (2014) points out that more than 70% of Chinese migrant workers send remittances to their home. Their contribution to rural income is far exceeds that of other countries. The high percentage of remittances is mainly based on the social responsibilities of traditional Chinese family culture and also the psychological factors like homesick of migrant workers in the city. However, there are some studies arguing that although the elderly may receive some economic support, it does not account too much. For example, Ye and He (2009) indicate that the rural elderly has not received so much net economic transfer from their migrant children which keeping them in poverty. Giles *et al*. (2010) then use descriptive data to show that rural elderly with migrant children and the ones without migrant children receive about the same level of money transfer, indicating that rural elderly left behind especially the ones with grandchildren to care for are more likely to fall into poverty. The elderly is also faced with the uncertainty

of their adult children's economic support. The job and wage instability of migrant workers in the city does not guarantee regular money transfers. Furthermore, materialism also reduces the filial commitments to their parents left behind (Ye & He, 2009). This research will regard economic transfer as an aspect of the economic inclusion of the elderly. At the same time, it will also define economic transfer as an interactive progress to examine whether the economic support the elderly received will be given back to other family members.

2.4 Wellbeing

Much of the existing literature examines the wellbeing of rural left-behind populations by using quantitative methods (Gassmann *et al*., 2012; Lu, 2008; Guo *et al*., 2009; Chen & Silverstein, 2000). For example, Guo *et al*. (2009) produced the longitudinal study called The Wellbeing of Older People in Anhui Province Investigation, which indicates that the rural elderly left behind have less instrumental support and lower depression level compared with more financial support from their migrant children, and the elderly with more migrant children are not satisfied with their life. In sum, scholars do not reach a consensus regarding the impact of migration on the wellbeing of rural elderly left behind (Guo, 2015; Gassmann *et al*., 2012). Gassmann *et al*. (2012) examined five aspects of the wellbeing of left-behind elderly: physical health, economic transfer, living arrangement, social and psychological wellbeing. Their conclusion is contrary to the general research, showing that the migration of adult children does not affect the wellbeing of left-behind elderly. But Guo (2015) offers the opposite finding by examining also five dimensions of wellbeing of Chinese rural left behind: economic transfer, physical health, housing conditions, living arrangements and life satisfaction. Based on this, the main aim of the current study is to examine different aspects of social and economic inclusion of rural elderly left behind.

Most of the research shows that the cares for grandchildren and farming have added an extra burden to rural elderly left behind, which further affects their health and well-being (Zuo & Li, 2011; Murphy, 2002). On the contrary, Lu (2008) reveals that the care of

grandchildren has a positive effect on the wellbeing of elderly left behind and caring for grandchildren directly ameliorates the psychological conditions of elderly left behind. It is revealed that these wellbeing conditions are also apparently affected by both the gender of the elderly person and the gender of their adult child (the parent of the grandchildren). To care for the son' child, for example, reportedly increases the psychological wellbeing of the parents, while the act of caring for the girl's child reportedly improved the wellbeing of grandfathers more than that of grandmothers.

Wood and Johnson (1989) argue that qualitative research should be included if you want to capture the quality of human experiences in a survey of life satisfaction among rural elderly in Canada. According to this view, I will mostly utilize a qualitative research method in this study. As noted prior, the descriptive data comes from 2012 CHARLS Survey in China will be given here to support qualitative findings, while the qualitative data comes from my participant observation and collection of oral histories during four-months of fieldwork in Fuli village from 2015 to 2016. In the qualitative study to come, the study employs a form of ethnographic narration from left behind elderly in Fuli village in central China, examining how they adapt to these changes, maintain existing family relations, and (re)define their later years of life within this new social environment.

3. Quantitative and Quantitative Findings

The China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) is a nationwide survey, which aims to collect a high-quality representative sample of Chinese residents ages 45 and older to serve the needs of scientific research on the elderly. The baseline national wave of CHARLS and includes about 10,000 households comprising 17,500 individuals in 150 counties/districts and 450 villages/resident committees. The individuals will be followed up with every two years.

From this data, the study utilizes three separate databases on three aspects characterizing the Chinese elderly: demographic background, economic transfer and health status. The research on the demographic background covers 17,500 Chinese residents ages 45 and

over. However, in the current study, rural elderly left behind are defined as those older than 60 years old, whose *hukou* is an agricultural one, and who have at least one child migrating out of the countryside. As a result of these adjusted parameters, there are 6,390 samples of rural elderly left behind in this study. In addition, the analysis separates this sample further into three age groups: the rural elderly at their sixties, seventies, and eighties.

To get a general picture of rural elderly left behind, this study presents four demographic variables: gender, age, education level and marital status (as presented in Table 5) just to give a descriptive data. This breakdown of the CHARLS data shows that there is slightly more female rural elderly than male elderly, likely due to trends of longer lifespans of female. Rural elderly who are in their sixties are the main body of the sample. It shows that the number of rural elderly decrease as their age decreases. In the ancient times, when a man is 70 years old, he is generally thought to be very old. The Chinese poet Du Fu in Tang Dynasty also described in his poetry that "A man seldom lives to be seventy years old in the ancient times." (Zhu & Han, 2009). From this sample, 43.8% of elderly people are illiterate while more than 90% have lower than the elementary school education levels. These facts demonstrate why the rural elderly are considered to be a group with less human capital and could be easily excluded from the progress of migration. In regards to the marital status, 73.5% of rural elderly were married with the spouse present, and only 0.5% divorced.

Table 3 The Demographic Characteristics of Rural Elderly

	n	%
Gender		
Male	3,100	48.54
Female	3,286	51.46
Age		
60-69	3,979	62.27
70-79	1,784	27.92
80+	627	9.81
Educational level		
No formal education illiterate	2,796	43.82
Did not finish primary school	1,383	21.68
Sishu (traditional private school)	63	0.99
Elementary school	1,495	23.43
Middle school	536	8.4
High school	69	1.08
Vocational school	30	0.47
Two/Three Year College	5	0.08
Four Year College / Bachelor	3	0.05
Marital Status		
Married with spouse present	4696	73.49
Married but not living with spouse	280	4.38
Separated	47	0.74
Divorced	32	0.5
Widowed	1,257	19.67
Never married	78	1.22

Data source: The China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) in 2012

The qualitative part is based on four-months of field study conducted between June and September 2015, together with several subsequent visits of a shorter duration in 2016. During my research in the Fuli village, I conducted several dozens of home visits in the area, interviewing elderly villagers who are mostly aged between 60 and 80, while also collecting data through participant observation. Based on the sensitivity of a few issues, some open-ended interviews were conducted via casual conversations with rural elderly left behind, many of which understandably exhibited caution about my real identity and motivation. Nonetheless, as mutual trust has grown over time, many interlocutors have been willing to tell their own stories.

Mr. Ma and his wife Mrs. Ma are one of the typical rural elderly I encountered. As shown in Figure 4, there are more than twenty members in their big family, but only couple is

left in the countryside now. On one damp, rainy and misty morning of early June 2015, I started my survey in Fuli village. It used to be a crowded area, hosting about more than 500 households. However, only several dozen elders remain in the village now. Compared with their children, who have work outside the village, the villagers left behind have spacious accommodation; preferable to the tiny dormitory rooms migrant workers must rent from their employers. I visited Mr. Ma and Mrs. Ma, an older couple left behind. They have three houses on two floors, along with two courtyards and a vegetable garden. That's just part of their owned property. On the other side of a river in the village, the Ma family also owns open farmland, most of which have already been rented to other villagers. The newly built house with two floors belongs to the second son of Mr. Ma, who migrated to Fujian 10 years ago. The style of this house is quite rare in this village with shining green windows and a giant balcony. This is also a symbol of the fortune that gained by the migrant life. Once it was built without paying any tax for self-owned property later, villagers know that the son of Mr. Ma did raise money from the city. Mr. Ma told me that his son sent him around 100,000 yuan in total to build this house for the marriage of his grandson. Compared with the high housing price in the city, most villagers prefer to build their house in the village by themselves to save the expense. It is a tradition for parents to build a new house for the marriage of their sons in rural China. Building house for their sons was seen as an intergenerational exchange- the parents build houses nearby for the sons and daughters-in-law in order to gain care and support from the sons' families when they get old. However, the migration of their three sons to the city nearly a decade ago broke this tradition and left this old couple alone with these new additional empty houses.

Figure 4. Family Tree of A typical Rural Left-behind Couple
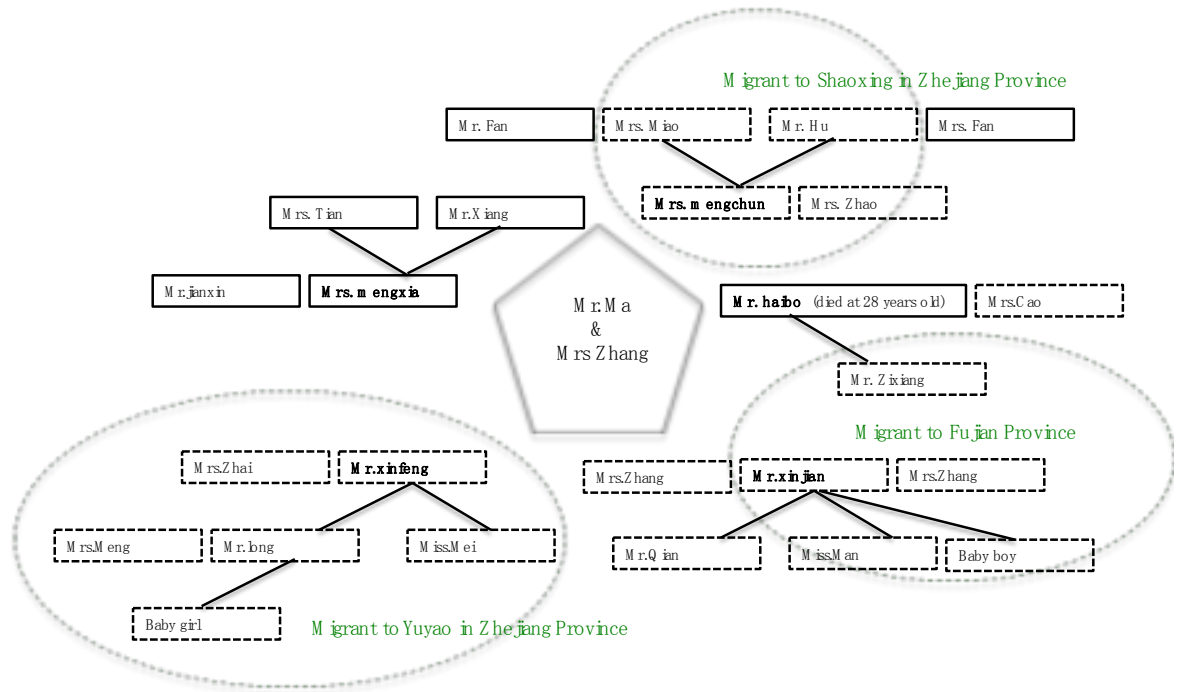
The whole family of his first son has moved to Cixi city, and they only come back during the Spring Festival, which is the most important Chinese holiday for family members to gather around and celebrate. His second son has already bought a house and settled down in the city with his second wife. Though Mr. Ma still has hope that his sons may return to their waiting houses, it's more likely that the migration of the young adult labor force in the village is irreversible.

During the period of my stay, another traditional Chinese festival, Middle Autumn Day (or Lunar Festival), was approaching. That occasion means that all family members will have a chance to have a reunion where Mr. Ma can meet his missing sons and grandsons. Mr. Ma was happy and doing preparation work for this treasured family meeting. A good family dinner is one of the holiday's traditions. They would buy four chickens from the chicken house in the village, and they even withdrew 2000 RMB from the bank as a first money gift to his youngest grandson who was born in Fujian province. As to the coming wedding of his granddaughter, he had already been preparing since May. This family

reunion is quite precious and rare, after all it is unusual for their house to have more than two members. In the past decade, rural-urban migration has brought great change to this rural couple and their joint family. The members are separated with few chances to meet each other during the year. Being alone late in life is not what the rural elderly expected, and they have high expectations to live with adult children. However, they were "left" home in the end.

"You are useless when you become old," Mrs. Ma told me, appearing a little sad. We were basking in her courtyard to enjoy the sunshine. She wished to join the family of her eldest son in the city, but she also didn't want to disturb or put a burden on them there. When they were in their sixties and still in good health, she and Mr. Ma helped to take care of several of their grandchildren. However, those grandchildren had also migrated to the city since they grew up. She says that their grandchildren don't like the boring village life and try to find opportunities in the city. So, now in their seventies, Mr. and Mrs. Ma live their lives isolated. They cannot offer any help for other family members any more, and so they think they should be self-reliant. Similar to them, their disabled neighbor, a mother of two migrant children, has been left behind in the village. Her son bought a small apartment in the center of Suzhou city and moved his family there. Unfortunately, they live on the top floor and the building doesn't have an elevator. It is impossible for her to climb the stairs due to her limited mobility. Her husband, however, has gone to the city several times to take care of their grandson, and that time is even tougher for her when she is alone at home. She is a quiet woman, and Mrs. Ma said she seldom saw her out even though she lives next door.

The duties of grandparents change according to their age and declining physical capabilities. For example, Mrs. Zhu, who is in her sixties, was taking care of her granddaughter when her son was working for domestic decorations in the city of Lu'an. She said that her later life is better than the other rural elderly left behind, because she has her daughter-in law as a companion. She supports the migration of her son and made it a family strategy as the migration literature in Thailand indicated (Knodel *et al*., 2010; Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007), in the sense that the young adult laborer works outside

the home and sends remittances to increase the family income while their older parent(s) stays at home to take care of their children in their absence.

> "It is better for my son to go to Lu'an. He gets more money there and the boss likes him. You know, he can get at least 300 yuan per day if his boss gets a lot of business. The city is much more developed than Suzhou. In our city, the salary is too low. If he can raise more money, why not leave? We can stay at home to take care of the baby (her granddaughter). Otherwise, we have nothing to do at home. Our granddaughter needs to go to kindergarten, the family has a large amount of expenses. We don't have any [other] income."

Mr. Zhu, 63, explained the reasons why he was left behind: The urban life was considered too rushed and difficult for the rural elderly. He and many of his peers preferred to stay in a familiar and cozy environment.

> "We are not well educated, so we can just do the hard jobs. It requires more physical strength. We are old and cannot do the hard job. One of my friends died in Shanghai last summer. It was too hot — 40 degrees. The road is so hot that you can feel heat goes through your shoes. Sigh! The guy was diagnosed with cancer several years ago. He wanted to stay home and take care of his grandson but his grandson was afraid of him, so he went to Shanghai to work on a construction site. Luckily, the company paid 500,000 yuan after he died. How can we raise such a big amount of money? .... I don't want to push myself a lot. We should enjoy our late life since we've work so hard for our whole life to support our family. I want to stay with my family and play with my grandchildren."

Based on these interviews, the rural elderly is excluded out of the process of rural-urban migration automatically because of their low human capital, health status, and age. However, it should also be seen as an independent choice for elderly left behind to make a family strategy. They don't want to go outside the village and choose to stay in a relatively close and familiar circumstance. As an isolated group in the countryside, how will the rural elderly left behind integrate into the new circumstance brought by the migration of young labor? Based on the special characteristics in rural China, in the following, this study focuses on how economic and social factors such as their daily livelihoods, income, health status, the changes of family relationship and the social interaction.

3.1 Remittances and Contributions

Families sometimes help one another in a variety of ways, and each type of help can be important. In this study, there are 1,398 respondents for the economic transfer including cash and in-kind transfer in CHARLS. In former studies, researchers checked only the monetary or in-kind support from immigrant children to the rural elderly, but the research at hand will check not only the transfer from adult children but also the economic transfer to adult children. Moreover, other people comprising the social relationships of rural elderly will also be examined to reach a more comprehensive understanding regarding the social nature of the economic transfer for rural elderly left behind.

The analysis of rural elderly populations' economic support from different family members and friends will be based on the following question (according to its six variants): "In the past year, did you or your spouse receive any economic supports from your non-co-resident parents/parents-in-law/children/grandchildren/relatives/friends?" with the response coded "yes" or "no". The number of elderly who received money transfer in the past year is shown in Figure 5, demonstrating that they received economic support mostly from their adult non-co-resident (or migrant) children while other family members and friends contribute less in comparison. We can see that the economic support of rural elderly relies heavily on their children. However, as the age of rural left behind increased, fewer of them received economic support from their children. There are roughly equal numbers of the rural elderly who have received (or not received) the economic transfer from their children. The economic transfer from children might show that the filial commitments of rural children are weakened because there are 499 out of 1019 (less than half) respondents have received the economic transfer last year. In this situation, more and more rural elderly should rely on themselves to get economical support.

Figure 5 The Economic Transfer Received from Non-co-resident Family Members and Friends
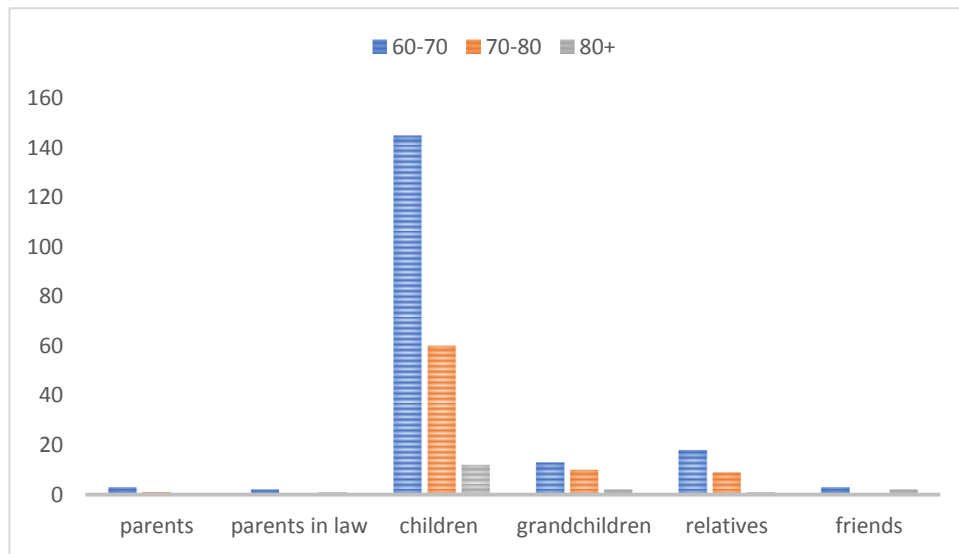
Data source: The China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) in 2012

Next, a similar format is used to examine the converse progress of the rural elderly population's economic transfer via another six-variant question: "In the past year, did you or your spouse give any economic support to your non-co-resident parents/parent's in-law/children/grandchildren/relatives/friends?" with the response coded "yes" or "no". The number of elderly who sent a money transfer in the past year is represented in Figure 6. It shows that the rural elderly made economic transfers mostly to their non-co-resident grandchildren rather than their non-co-resident children. This data shows the rural elderly thus receives economic transfers mostly from their adult children, while most of them give the economic transfer mostly to their grandchildren.

Figure 6 The Economic Transfer Sent to Non-co-resident Family Members and Friends
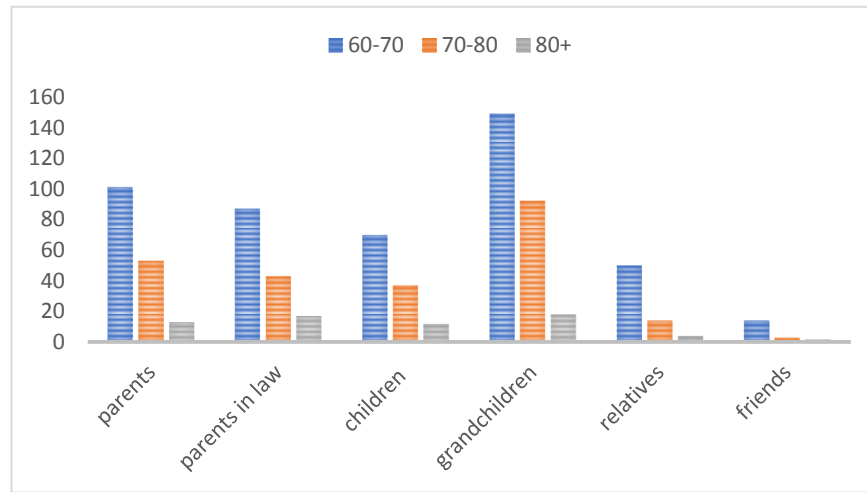
Economic inclusion in the context of the next section primarily concerns the livelihoods of rural elderly, investigating and examining their economic status and activities in the countryside. As stated prior, the age, physical capacities and health status of this group has a great effect on their ability to take formal jobs that produce stable payment as an income. In order to measure the concept of their economic inclusion, this study considers several variables: the amount of money transfer from/to their non-co-resident adult children, subsidies from government sources, and, in a broader sense, individual health status, which we may include as a type of "invisible wealth".

Money transfer: An Economical Altruism

In checking their economic situation, I found that although elderly villagers often didn't have much cash with them, they usually lived a simple life, some of them deposited small amounts of money in the bank. Their stated logic was that rather than consuming for themselves, they preferred to save and leave this money to their offspring. The following exchange I had with the Ma couple acts as an example of this philosophy:

> "We gave our children's little baby 200 yuan yesterday because she is too cute and we like it very much."

> "Why don't you keep those funds for your own daily use? I mean you guys

don't even buy some fresh fruits for yourselves…"

As demonstrated earlier by the data, the rural elderly receives economic transfer or remittances mostly from their children while they give economic transfer mostly to their grandchildren. The primary reason of this phenomenon is that grandparents have little time left in their life just as Mrs. Ma told me that "You will be like a monkey when you grow old. The smile of a child is the most beautiful around the world." They can see that their own lives are being renewed for the next generation. The oldest and the smallest, the disappearing and the newborn, are the two extremes of family members. The intimacy with grandchildren will appease the lonely grandparents.

As the quantitative results show, few rural elders get money transfer from their migrant children. Mrs. Zhu explained to me that, in her family, the monetary transfer she received depended on the economic level of her three children. She also cares for another granddaughter for her second daughter who well off financially. Yet a big part of the money is set aside for the daily use of her granddaughter. Her son never sends her money transfers and she feels this is understandable under his circumstances:

> "Never it is easy for him to ask for money back from his boss. They are not paid regularly. The boss will give him the salary whenever they finish one project and then he gets the money from the decoration company. My son has his own family; the wife is jobless and the baby needs more money. We can't ask for money from him."

Mrs. Cheng, 64, confirmed that she receives a regular money transfer from her oldest son. She lives alone with her grandson who is in middle school. Her husband died thirty years ago. Her son leads a construction team in a construction site in Hefei, so the money transfer she receives is adequate. The son married again in Hefei, so she doesn't want to join his new family with her grandson. She lives in the countryside with a relatively wealthier life than the other rural left behind. She says she needs to stay in the village and wait until the grandson goes to high school in the city center. Then they will move to the new house which her son has prepared for them. Taking care of her grandson doesn't add any burden to her, and she is free from farming because they rent out all of their farmland

to others. In her own words:

> "I raised several chickens in my courtyard. My grandson is growing and he needs nutrition. He is good at studying. We all hope that he can pass the exam to enter the high school. We will move to the city center." The life for her is meaningful because of her grandson and the adequate remittance from his son. She is jobless and make the caring for his grandson a job now."

In the former two cases, the elderly who take care of their grandchildren get money transfers from their migrant children, so their situation is better than the elderly who are without grandchildren, or with worse health. On the other hand, it is also quite common for Chinese adults to ask for financial transfers from their parents when they meet some economical problem. Mr. Ma told me that two of his daughters borrowed some money from the couple and they have not returned it yet, though he won't plan to ask for the money back. His elder daughter also borrowed 1000 Yuan from him when her personal business met a cash-flow problem.

> "At that time, the amount on my deposit book was 1,001 Yuan. To keep it going, I left only one Yuan and withdrew nearly all of my savings to give it to her."

> "Ten years ago, my younger daughter raised ducks along the river and she does not have enough money to buy baby ducks, so she borrowed five thousand Yuan from me. Until now she hasn't even mentioned when she will return the money. Well, her life is not so good. So, I just let it go. After all, she is my daughter. I am not going to ask for my money back."

Mrs. Zhu's second daughter married a wealthy man in another city, and this man gave them some cash as a marriage gift, by which this poor family is improving their life by building a new three-story apartment. As a result of the apartment, her son later married a woman from a neighborhood village. She said to me that people are always snobbish, telling her that, without this new apartment, no woman would have married my son. It is true, however, that after they built this new apartment, their situation greatly improved. Indeed, the elder sister of her son's wife also married a man in this same village. "No house no wife" becomes a default marriage rule now in China. Even with his apartment and wife, her son still chose to migrate to the city to work for more opportunities for his family, leaving his wife and a newborn baby at home.

What about the rural elderly without children? What will they do for old age support? Lao Hua is an old bachelor in this village. He lived in a small house made of clay, but the villagers had helped him build a sturdier house with bricks during my stay in the village. From the village leader, I heard some information about his past. He was considered ugly and his family was poor, so he never married. A decade ago, he did migrate out to work but his relatives cheated him to get his money. Now, he is too old to work. Before getting his new house, he lived alone in his old broken home and relied on "d*ibao*", which is a minimum living standard guarantee program that provides subsidies to a household living below a locally determined minimum income threshold. This is quite an ideal age for Lao Hua to support himself. He can get 200 yuan per month for his expenses. However, *dibao* is not easily accessed by all the poor rural elderly who may be eligible or in need. The program's resources are limited, and applicants must apply through a lengthy process to qualify and receive *dibao* subsidy.

"It is not easy to get *dibao*. Some people will not let you get it smoothly. They are jealous of you. they will do dirty things after you," said Mr. Zhai, who also receives *dibao* after a kidney operation.

Mr. Ma's farming field is on the other side of the river. He and his wife must cross the river by boat since the only available bridge is still in the process of construction. All his three sons' farmland has been rented to another villager because of his migration, limiting the remaining land the couple must cultivate to be self-reliant. Mrs. Ma always compares their plants with those of other villagers and complains that their wheat is not so good. But Mr. Ma said that it was because they are too old to give enough labor and attention to their plants. Looking after themselves has already costed them too much effort. During the period of my fieldwork, I saw them harvesting wheat, growing corn and beans. They told me that this autumn has arrived earlier than usual, so they will begin with their agricultural activities before the 18th solar term (they arrange their agricultural activities according to the timetable of "The traditional 24 Solar Terms in China". See Appendix 1).

Sometimes Mrs. Ma takes a bus to the village morning market and sell their fresh

vegetables. This means she have to get up very early in the morning, and after a simple and fast breakfast of rice porridge with salty soybeans, Mr. Ma drives his wife on his electrical three-wheeled motorcycle to the bus station. During lunchtime, Mrs. Ma comes back with an empty basket, and waits for her husband to pick her up at the station. They count the money that they take back together, usually only a few coins, and then prepare their lunch. Although it is not too much money, with it they can feed themselves and become self-reliant. Mr. Ma gave his positive comments on their daily life of farming and small business, "We make our lives by ourselves and this is our style to do exercise."

The rural elderly with good physical strength often are not limited to just farm. For instance, dogs are kept in the countryside not only as guards but also as a kind of business. Mrs. Zhu, as we mentioned before, also raises female dogs for producing puppies to sell on the pet dog market. Two purebred female dogs (a golden retriever and poodle) are in her care. She has learned how to do the vaccine injections, how to find purebred males to mate with her female dogs, and how to take good care of pregnant dogs. Two months ago, her golden retriever gave birth to four puppies, which were sold at the Sunday pet market at the south part of Suzhou city, bringing her a 1200-yuan income. As to Mr. Yuan, one informal representatives in Fuli village committee at his 67, his situation is not as good as Mrs. Zhu's. His pigs are fat enough and are going to be sold in these days but handling and transporting the large livestock will be a quite heavy work for him. He had been searching for help from young people nearby for quite some time before getting a man from another side of the village to assist him.

3.2 Health Status

We checked the health status of rural elderly aged more than 60 and the sample size is 1,016. The physical health of rural elderly is assessed by the question, "Would you say your health is excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor?" with response code with five scales (see Table 7). 39.3% of the respondents describe their state of health as fair and 33.9% describe it as poor. This means more than half of the rural elderly left behind deny themselves in good health. The CHARLS survey has done the checked of 14 different

kind of disease, requiring respondents whether they had been diagnosed by a doctor, or not. About one-third of the rural elderly have arthritis and hypertension, and 23.9% of them get stomach or other digestive disease. These diseases, though bringing inconvenience and difficulties to daily life, are not immediately lethal. There is no evidence to show that the migration of adult children has an impact on the health status of their parents left behind. However, we can conclude that the rural elderly is a vulnerable group since their health deteriorates as a result of advancing age. As demonstrated during the quantitative section, they have a high risk in poor physical health. At the last stage of their life span, most of them suffers from different kinds of health problems, e.g. heart disease and cerebral thrombosis, diabetes and even cancer.

"It is boring to take pills after every dinner," Mr. Ma complained. But his cerebral thrombosis is getting worse day by day. Last year, this had forced him to stay in hospital to recover for one month. His grandson delivers some fish oil capsules as an adjunctive therapy for his health, but Mr. Ma does not like to take it regularly.

These health conditions are not helped by the sanitary and living conditions within the village itself. In the summertime, the village is rampant with flies and black mosquitoes that bite your legs and leave many ugly red dots. When I communicated my dislike of the constant bug bites, the elderly villagers did not think it is a problem, and instead of telling me that the flies are not dirty as they look. They suggested that I wear long trousers and shirts with long sleeves under temperature of around 37 degrees. Although the government reportedly has made investments to improve their living environment, for example, building a relatively clean system of toilets, the infrastructure did not always work well. During my fieldwork, I stayed in Mr. Ma's house for several nights fighting with the itchy bug bites and the strong smell of the toilets an added distraction.

The loneness and weakness always make the them preys of frauds and fall into their traps easily. Mrs. Ma tells a story about her golden earrings:

> "One day I was on my way home along a country road, and there was a guy
> around thirty years old who stopped me and told me that the village commission

is calculating the total population now and we want to take photos for each villager. We visited your house, but your husband is not at home, could I take a photo of you?"

Mrs. Ma agreed and were asked to take off all her jewelry, including these golden earrings. When he returned them back and put them on for her, he replaced the former ones with fake copper rings painted gold. When she came back, she realized this was a cheat, however it was too late.

I heard that there was a public welfare agency inside the village, and they organized the old people nearby to take free healthcare activities. They declared that the activity was free under the name of charity. As a result, Mr. Ma joined the activity because he had chronic pain in his legs ever since he fell off the roof when building the house for his smallest son. Mr. Ma told me he bought a microwave therapy device to treat his leg pain for more than four thousand yuan at the urging of a salesman. He told me that the machine worked very well when the preys are there. Skeptical, I checked the price of the general therapy equipment online and found that it cost only between 500 to 1,000 yuan. Then I checked the device brand "Jian-Bo" and found that it was understood as a scam designing specially to prey on the rural elderly. This physical therapy equipment on which he had spent so much money is a potentially dangerous product.

These stories turn out the rural elderly left behind, are easy targets of scam artists. Here is a notice from a website warning consumer:

> "July 12, 2017, Qiaolou Town Government, Qiaolou Town Police Station and County Health Bureau. During the supervision in Qin Miao Village, it was found that Jian-Bo Zhengzhou Medical Devices Co., Ltd. was carrying out Free physical therapy for elderly patients. As the company staff is without a certified medical practitioner and illegal practice, the County Health Bureau banned the free treatment point. The company without the relevant permit documents shall not be allowed to carry out sales activities. Now the company's business activities have stopped."

This is not the only scam they've encountered. When I revisited the village the following spring, I found a broken water purifier. It's another kind of fraud. It was called "To be

sold in seven days Trick" also in name of health-care. Dubious scammers made promises to the elderly villagers about the product's efficacy and quality, however, when we tried to call the warranty phone number, there was no response all the time.

3.3 Old-Age Support: Living Arrangement Preference

"Raising a son to provide against old age" is still the belief of most of Chinese rural elderly. However, their adult sons are leaving the countryside nowadays. Research from the China Health and Nutrition Survey (CHNS) shows that nearly 70 percent of elderly in rural areas lived with an adult child in 1991, but by 2006 this percentage had fallen to just over 40 percent (Cai *et al*., 2002). Giles *et al*. (2010) suggest that the decline of co-residence with the elderly affects whether the elderly can receive adequate and timely care, and this also reflects the increased risk the elderly may face in lacking of adequate support from their adult children. While CHARLS does not provide any basic data related to living arrangements of rural elderly, it surveyed the preference of living arrangements in its sample of respondents by asking two questions (See Table 4). The situation 1 is "supposing that an elderly person has a spouse and adult children, and also develop a good relationship with them. What do you think is the best living arrangement for the elderly?" The situation 2 is "supposing an elderly person has no spouse but adult children, and also develop good relationship with them. What do you think is the best living arrangement for him/her?" As shown in Table 4, 61.5% of the rural elderly left behind prefer living with their adult children, and this response rose to 62.8% with an assumption that their spouse will die before them. It shows that most rural elderly still have the expectation to rely on their children's support and care in old age. A traditional custom is continuously and increasingly challenged by the migration of their adult children together with the decline in co-residence. On the contrary, the elderly who want to live in a nursing house in both cases just account for 2.6% and 2.8%.

Table 4 Living Arrangement Preference of Rural Elderly in China

Best Living Arrangement	Situation1		Situation 2	
	Freq.	Percent %	Freq.	Percent %
Live with adult children in the same house	307	61.52	201	62.81

Live with adult children in the same village	151	30.26	86	26.88
Live with adult children in the village nearby	25	5.01	16	5
Live in a nursing house	13	2.61	9	2.81
Other	3	0.6	8	2.5
Total	499	100%	320	100%

Data source: The China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) in 2012

Some scholars pay attention to the intense loneliness of elderly left behind and emphasize that they may have few social contacts with the world outside, but that is not congruent with what I observed. According to what I saw in the village, most of the elderly left behind had their own ways of being included by the society. An important part of this had to do with their remaining family supports in the form of children and relatives. I investigated the frequency of family members and relatives who made calls to elderly left behind. The result is that it is quite rare for them to call or receive calls from others. They use a special phone designed only for old people with giant number keys and loud sounds since they have hearing and vision problems. Mr. Ma does have a cell phone, but he does not answer it and often keeps it power off, which always bring trouble once someone tries to reach him. He does not know how to save phone numbers of his relatives and children, so he writes them down on a notebook or just memorizes them. This finding is different from the research on internal migration in Thailand (Knodel & Saengtienchai, 2007), which found that mobile phones do offer the convenience for elderly left behind to contact their migrant children, though it also brings new challenges for them because of the degradation of their hearing and vision.

As having stated prior, monetary transfers are not frequent for elderly villagers who are not caring for their grandchildren. However, during the period of the Spring Festival and Middle Autumn Day, which are the most important festivals for Chinese families to reunite, the children and even some married grandchildren and relatives will send in-kind or money transfers to show their filial piety. This, of course, may also depend on the relationship between family members and the filial responsibility of the children.

At the time I was back at the Ma family house, the Middle Autumn Day was just a few days away. His relatives arrived with two boxes of special food and two boxes of white

wine. After placing these gifts in the corner near the side of the fridge, they sat around the table. Mr. and Mrs. Ma's daughter-in-law prepared food for lunch, the other relatives talked about the approaching wedding of Mr. Ma's granddaughter to a man from Hefei. There is a problem they are discussing that his granddaughter does not want to hold her marriage ceremony in the countryside, and she has been fighting with her parents about it. Because the rural identity makes her humiliate and the marriage ceremony will not be as good as the one in the city. Her behavior has been causing a lot of emotional stress to the Ma couple who have raised her and her brother for over ten years when her parents migrated to the city to work and later divorced.

"You can raise one benefactor with one meal when he is hungry, but if you raise him more than ten years, he turns out to be your enemy," Mr. Ma told me sadly. He felt disappointed with his favorite granddaughter. He had raised her since the age of 9, but as he says, she turns out to be against him in the end. The two generations have different values and life choices, which finally collide with each other strongly.

"I don't think it should be named a gift! This girl has changed a lot and she is not polite now." Mrs. Ma speaks angrily about the gift brought by the young couple from Hefei.

> "She knows nothing and lives in the guy's house even before the marriage. Now she thinks it will be okay for this situation, but who knows what will happen once something unhappy occurs in their relationship."

Although the countryside has fresh air, some young people still dislike living there and they report the countryside life is too boring for them to bear. They hate the life even this is very where they grow up (see quotes in the part of rural children left behind). Before the Middle Autumn Day, one granddaughter of Mr. Ma's comes back from the capital city of Anhui Province to visit them but chooses to stay with her husband at the Green Hotel Inn in downtown, rather than in their countryside house where there is plenty of rooms. She says that it is time for her to enjoy the comfortable urban life and forget her village experiences, noting, "It is almost impossible for me to be back in Fuli after my marriage." Now her father has migrated to Fujian province, remarried and developed a new family,

which makes her feel even more homeless. She says her mother is a beautiful rural woman, but that she is too lazy to do anything except gambling. Although married again with a man in another city, she still usually haunts around the village to play Mahjong and refuse to look after her son and daughter.

The migration has brought distance among the family members, but it also makes the adult daughters play a more important role in their old age support. Daughters, it is assumed, especially married daughters, have their first obligation for their parents-in-law and not to their own parents. However, the migration of male labor has made their female siblings take on more and more responsibility for the old age support for their parents. Mengchun, the smallest daughter of Mr. Ma, lives in the city center of Suzhou. She comes visit her elderly parents at least every two months. She helps with some heavy chores like cleaning the courtyard.

The situation of Mrs. Zhu is even better. Her first daughter lives in the same village as she does. This daughter passes by to see her almost every day.

> "I have three good children. My two daughters have their own houses in this village. My son has gone out of the village but he came back to see me when I went to the hospital for an operation last December. I almost died and rely on a stick to walk for a long time. The doctor said that I would have died if they fail finding me one hour later. Luckily, they found me in time. Two of my daughters paid for my medical fees since they have a better economic situation."

These high expectations of staying with adult children are colliding with the tides of rural-urban migration. As this chapter shows, the rural elderly is coming to grip with their new circumstances. Although they have already recognized the fact that their sons will be not likely to takeover farming responsibilities and live nearby, they still keep in their mind that their sons or daughter-in-law are the main caregivers. However, it is likely that their daughters or even themselves will be the main source of support in old age.

3.4 Social Interactions

In order to measure social interactions, this study utilized the question, "Have you done

any of these activities in the last month?" (corresponding to a list of activities in CHARLS), with the caveat that the list does not contain all the probable activities in which they had taken part, but it could offer a general overview of their leisure time. The most popular game among Chinese rural elderly is playing Mahjong and cards. Among 1,210 respondents of this question, 21% rural elderly reported spending their leisure time with friends, while 46% of respondents participated in none of the activities listed (see Table 5). This data allows for the reasonable assumption that either they are too busy to have leisure time or have other activities interests. In the following qualitative part, we will examine their social inclusion in more detail.

Table 5 The Answers for "Have you done any of these activities last month?"

Activities	N	Percent
Interacted with friends	255	21%
Played Mahjong, played chess, played cards	154	13%
Provided help to family, friends, or neighbors	80	7%
Went to a sport, social, or other kind of club	81	7%
Took part in a community-related organization	29	2%
Done voluntary or charity work	8	1%
Cared for a sick or disabled adult without payments	12	1%
Attended an educational or training course	7	1%
Stock investment	7	1%
Used the Internet	22	2%
Other	3	0%
None of these	552	46%
Total	1,210	100%

Data source: The China Health and Retirement Longitudinal Study (CHARLS) in 2012

Since the village is a place where they have spent their whole lives, the village elderly knows each other so well that they are not so interested in community life. As such, the elderly left behind usually fall into their own individual circle or personal business. Oftentimes, they live a solitary life with few friends. One day in the courtyard, Mr. Ma complained to me about Mrs. Ma, "She always argues with me." Hearing this, Mrs. Ma replied, "If I don't argue with you, who will be the one I argue with?" It is true. There are only two of them living in this house.

From my interviews I realized that they know almost everything that happens in the

village but seldom take part in it. One old Chinese saying vividly gives an accurate description of their solitary life, "Sweep the snow just near your own doorstep, and don't care about the frost on others' roofs." It is common to see a group of older women dancing in public squares (which is called "*square dance*"), and this activity is very popular in China during their leisure time. Mrs. Ma tells me that there is a place for the square dance but when I ask her why she does not join them, she says she is too old to dance. Instead, she says she prefers staying at home to watch TV. I can easily recognize channels she often watches, although her television can receive more than 100 channels. She likes to watch the Weather Report first and then CCTV News, the local opera channel and several TV shows. They don't watch TV during the daytime and tell me that it will do waste of electricity. When I stayed in Mr. Ma's house, the old couple watched one program at a fixed time in the evening. 7:00pm, to watch CCTV news, most other TV channels will rebroadcast at the same time. This show is very popular among Chinese families and contains the economic, cultural, political and social news happened both inside and outside China. Recently, the theme of politics is how to achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and the central government named it "Chinese dream". This political terminology vividly expressed the common ideal and aspiration of the Chinese people.

> "Shortly after the closing of the Eighteenth National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), Xi Jinping became the newly elected General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, went to the National Museum of China with other Chinese leaders, to view the exhibition "The Road of Rejuvenation" about the modern Chinese nation's 100-year struggle. After viewing the exhibition Xi Jinping said that everyone has ideals and aspirations ……"

Viewing the development of China, the elderly left behind are quite happy and develop a more positive attitude to the lead of PRC. They firmly believe that China will achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation and a prosperous, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious modern socialist country soon. The following quotes indicated this confidence with the government.

"You work on the farmland and the government gives you subsidies, PRC is not bad anyway……We could have many benefits from the policy."

However, there is little chance for them to take part in the election or other political activities in the village. One day, I went to the village commission for interview with Mr. Yuan. He is the only empty nester with a middle-school education. He told me that most of the elderly left behind are illiterate, which prevent them to have the opportunity to take part in the election although the law allows for their right of election.

There are difficulties for the elderly to react quickly and even think reasonably, which is also the reason why it is hard for them to win when playing mahjong with younger people. Two men ride a motorcycle come across the house, they invite this old couple to join the mahjong gambling, saying that they just want to play a small bet. Mr. Ma and Mrs. Ma refuse this invitation because they have guests at home. Mrs. Ma likes playing mahjong very much, and it is quite common to see that she always come back home with an unhappy face. In fact, you can easily distinguish whether she win or lose by her face. Her husband always laughs at her, saying that, she has just donated in the village.

But it is easy for younger villagers to join in the gambling. Mr. Zhu is 63 years old. He is good at playing mahjong and has run a kind of "casino" in the village. Sometimes he takes a part-time job in Suzhou. His house is popular in this village and always attracts lots of villagers to come to play cards or mahjong. This also offers him a little amount of income especially in his spare no-farming time. So, age and healthy status also play an important role in their active participation in the village.

4. Conclusion

The present study has investigated the changes of economic and social life of rural elderly left behind as a result of the rural-urban migration. The elderly left behind not only face this daunting change in their later years, but also face a dramatic shift of family circle from co-residence to empty nest. Some social problems have been generated and influenced the quality of life of elderly left behind. Unlike other surveys, we find that the

elderly left behind are not included by the rural-urban migration but included by the only rural life.

The rural elderly is a vulnerable group with less human capital who are easily excluded by migration patterns that purport to ease and eradicate poverty. However, their age and health status significantly influence their daily life. In sum, this chapter demonstrates that the conception of old-age support remains traditionally family-based one, but this collides with the reality that their migrant children are reluctant to offer them adequate support to match their expectations. This situation is affected by the decline of co-residence with adult children, which raises the worry that the rural elderly may lack instrumental support when they are too weak to care for themselves. In some ways, as this chapter has shown, the migration that purports to bring income back to improve the living standard of rural elderly may be slowly or unevenly delivered. The non-co-resident children may be reluctant to offer adequate support for their old parents. Nevertheless, although the houses of the children are quite near, the fact is that there are no longer sons to fill those houses. As a result, the daughters start to play an important role in the old age support of rural elderly instead of their sons.

Although former researchers show that elderly with migrant children are at greater risk of falling into poverty, and this vulnerability is absent since welfare guarantees causes low economic inclusion among the rural elderly, there is no evidence here to show their poverty. Despite this, the rural elderly left behind always find their own way to support themselves even in difficult circumstances like lacking family members to provide economic transfer.

In terms of policy recommendations, the lack of family members nearby to provide instrumental and emotional care calls for a rural pension scheme from the government. However, the rural care regime remains traditional, relying heavily on the family because the Chinese state is reluctant to assume more responsibility for funding and provision. Although, as discussed previously, the *dibao* offers some necessary support, many elderly livings on *dibao* are still below the nutrition-based poverty line (Giles 2010). It will be a

long journey to reduce the risks of absolute poverty of rural elderly behind.

The main finding of the current study is that the social support system for the elderly is inadequate and even quite backward in rural areas. Therefore, the government should pay more attention to the group of rural elderly left behind, especially those with advanced age and poor health. Indeed, traditional old-age support based on family has been undermined by rural-urban migration. Rural pension schemes and long-term care insurance should be put forward to improve the living standard of rural elderly left behind. For the health care of rural elderly left behind, the government must play an important role in maintaining social support of the elderly left behind and should take on more social responsibilities to build and improve the current rural health and care system, such as social medical insurance and necessary sanitary services. In terms of social support, this chapter is a reminder that both family members and society should maintain a sense of filial piety that emphasizes respect and holistic care for the elderly.

Part 2 Tracing back to the "Differentiated Childhood": The Narratives of The New Generation of Migrant Workers

This part investigates the experiences of rural "left behind" children and the impact and implications as they become the new generation of migrant workers. Using life stories of 10 adult interviewees from a Chinese rural village and part of descriptive statistics from national wide surveys such as CLDS 2012, Chinese 2010 Census, it traces back to the childhood as rural children left behind from three levels: guardianship arrangement, school education and rural communities. The findings have implications for a better understanding of socialization of this vulnerable social group under the background of Chinese massive rural-urban migration, and for linking the knowledge of transferring from children left behind to the new generation of migrant workers.

1.Introduction

Left-behind children (LBC) are defined as children who at least have had one parent migrate out of their rural villages to work and live in cities (Zhou & Duan, 2006; Unicef, 2017). This concept is not unique in China, and recent literature on left-behind children has mostly been conducted in countries with a tradition of international labor migration and transnational families, such as Mexico, Philippine, Kyrgyzstan. The research into such patterns of migration reports that most of migrant parents are working abroad as temporary migrants without the proper permits to take their family members with them (Antman, 2011; Kroeger & Anderson, 2012; Parreñas, 2005). Similarly, Chinese migrant family was also spit by a livelihood strategy "hoe and wage"[4]-a combination of internal

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[4] The hoe and wage was proposed by Cordell, Gregory and Piché (1996) in the study of labor migration involving colonial and contemporary Burkina Faso. The "hoe", which stands for the subsistence-based dryland farming systems of the interior, is linked to the "wage" from the the plantations and the urban service sector. The authors contend that the livelihood of "Hoe and wage" has marginalized Burkina's rural migrants and kept them reliant on poorly paid, distant plantation work to meet their financial obligations in

migration and agricultural production with different labor division among adult family members- which have exerted an enormous influence on socialization of rural children (Du et al., 2007;Ye, 2017). Ye & Pan (2008) describe the experience of being an LBC as a 'differentiated childhood' with children growing up without the regular contact with one or both parents. All China Women's Federation (2013) has issued "Report on the Status of Urban Migrant Children and Rural Left-behind Children in China" which reveals that there are about 61 million children left behind in China. It accounts for 37.7% of the total number of Chinese rural Children. The scale and complexity of this issue has attracted interest with regard to the social price that may be incurred alongside the rapid economic development and associated rural-urban migration (Ye & Pan, 2014).

The experience of being left behind provides the formative foundations for a new generation of migrant workers. The new generation of migrant workers, usually defined by Chinese scholars as the young migrant workers who were born after the year 1980 and started to migrant out of rural villages at the late 1990s according to current literatures (Liu & Cheng, 2007). Liang (2011) has pointed out that 18.7% of migrant workers in China belong to this young social group, among which, 15.1% of the migrant workers have the experiences of being left behind. It shows a majority of the new generation of migrant workers are used to be children left behind. However, their characteristics are different to those of their parents and the heterogeneity of two generations of migrant workers has been highlighted as being characterized by a willingness to live within an urban setting, work across a range of occupations and motivated by income (Huang, 2014; Liu, 2010; Xie, 2016). For example, the new generation of migrant workers especially the ones with left behind experiences are more prone to stay and work in the city (Liu, 2010; Xie, 2016). They often experience social isolation and disconnection within their adopted urban settings and yet do not wish to return to their rural homes. The experience of being left behind can contribute to a sense of "double dis-embeddedness" in which migrant workers feel disconnected from both their rural and urban environments (Huang, 2014). The experience of being left behind does not only mean that they experienced what their

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rural areas. Ye (2017) use this term to describe the double income raised by Chinese migrant families.

parents had not experienced in the childhood, but also means that they were socialized in the context of their parents' migration. This study seeks to explore the impact of the experience of being an LBC on their motivations and experiences as part of the new generation of migrant workers.

This study aims to examine the past and the present the children left behind mainly through the life histories of 10 (now adult) new-generation migrant workers who used to be the left-behind children when their parents migrated into urban areas, it is collected from the field study in Fuli village in Anhui province during 2015 and 2016. Compared with the researches focus directly on rural LBC, the life story could have a clearer examination on the impact of parental migration on their childhood rather than focusing on immature children who are still under guardianship. Moreover, it links their past better to their migration life later as an adult. By sharing narratives about their past and the perceived impact of rural-urban migration on their development, the group of respondents reflect on their childhood about their guardianship arrangements, education and the changes of rural communities. For up-to-date analysis, it offers a deeper understanding on the progress of their present-day migration to examine how they react to ongoing changes in family relations and rural environments.

2.Literature Review

Available literature relating to children left behind due to parental migration focuses mainly on two issues, the emotional well-being and educational outcomes of children. These studies, however, are usually based on quantitative data collected directly on the children either by the authors themselves or secondary data (Lv, 2014; Adhikari *et al.*, 2014; Lee, 2011; Duan *et al*., 2013). For example, the Dynamic Supervision Survey of Floating Population conducted by the State Family Planning Commission in 2011, China 1% Population Sample Survey, the 2010 Census are widely used data sources to examine the LBC issues. Previous approaches have relied heavily on quantitative methods, e.g. questionnaires and rating scales. However, this study uses some descriptive data just to offer a auxiliary support for the qualitative findings.

Most of the research reveals the negative impact of parental migration on the wellbeing of children left behind. The absence of parents may cause loneliness, stress and behavioral problems in children and adolescents. Children left behind, who grow up without the companionship and supervision of their parents, are perceived to bear the brunt of the social costs of migration (Adhikari *et al.*, 2014; Gao *et al.*, 2010; Ye & Lu, 2011b; Lee, 2011). For example, Gao *et al.* (2010) suggest that parental migration does cause emotional problems and unhealthy behaviors among adolescent school children in rural China. The similar findings could also be revealed in the literature related to their international counterpart in labor export countries in Latin America, Asia and so on (Asis, 2006; Graham & Jordan, 2011; Parreñas, 2005).

Scholars also mention the significance of migrant parents' gender on the impact of the children's wellbeing. Current literature does agree that parental migration in general has a negative effect on the wellbeing of children left behind (Parreñas, 2005; Graham & Jordan, 2011; Asis, 2006; Vanore *et al.*, 2015). Graham and Jordan (2011) find that children whose fathers have migrated are more prone to poor psychological wellbeing and suffer from more emotional and conduct disorders in Indonesia and Thailand compared with children of non-migrant parents. In addition, parental migration, particularly the migration of fathers, was shown to bring alienation to intimate family relationships. For example, Parreñas (2005) found that children left behind in the Philippines suffered an emotional gap, or social discomfort and emotional distance, in their relationships with their migrant fathers. The children left behind actually preferred to spend less time with their fathers in order to avoid an embarrassed feeling. Similarly, due to the traditional gender preference of family labor division in China, mothers, are most often left behind to take care of the children. The rural women are left to fulfil the family duties according to the traditional culture and custom (Ye, 2017). There is a greater tendency for children to migrate with their parents when the mother is migrating alone or with her partner. One importance reason to decide whether the children left behind or migrate together is whether the mother migrates out (Yang, 2011). However, there are also other guardianship arrangements which deserves to be talked further.

Scholars generally agree that remittances sent from migrant parents can raise household income and allow children left behind to have increased access to education. For example, Mansuri (2006) finds that children left behind were not only more likely to attend school, but they were also more likely to stay in school and accumulate more years of schooling compared with children from non-migrant households. Children in migrant households were also less likely to be involved in economic work for substantially fewer hours. The same findings could also be argued in research by Chinese scholars. Using the data drawn from the 1995 China 1% Population Sample Survey, Morooka and Liang (2009) find that migration has a positive effect on educational opportunity of the children left behind. First, children from migrant households are more likely to be enrolled in schools than children from non-migrant households. Second, it shows that parental migration has increased girls' educational attainment. However, according to an analysis of 1% Population Sample Survey in 2005, Duan and Yang (2008) find that up to 20% of left-behind children in rural areas could not successfully complete their studies in high schools. Furthermore, the quit of high school education of children left behind will have a negative impact on their future career development and become the new generation of migrant workers (Lv, 2014). Both of the researches are national wide data without considering the gender of migrant parent in neither of the aforementioned studies. Furthermore, given a paradox of a better educational attainment and a high drop-out rate of high school of rural children left behind, other subtle nuances such as basic educational infrastructures and educational investments of rural family are seldomly mentioned in current literature. This study sheds light on the lived experiences of children left behind at school together with data on the school attendance rate and the drop-out rate in different educational phases.

Once again, scholars point to the significance of the gender of the migrated parent in terms of educational outcomes (Bennett *et al* 2013; Giannelli & Mangiavacchi 2010; Basttistella & Conaco, 1998; Cortes, 2015). In particular, Cortes (2015) finds that children with migrant mothers are more likely to fall behind in school compared to children with migrant fathers in Philippine. It reveals that a mother's absence has a

stronger detrimental effect on education outcomes. As a whole, the current literature seems to show that the migration of mothers has more often a negative effect while the migration of fathers can have positive influences on the educational outcome of children left behind (despite other poor effects on their emotional wellbeing). Similarly, children left behind with migrant fathers have more educational opportunities than those with migrant mothers (Yang & Duan, 2008). Descriptive data will also be used here to examine the different influence of parents' migration on the educational investments.

Besides wellbeing and education of rural LBC, the guardianship arrangements and the rural communities after parental migration should also be considered when we examine how the rural children left behind transfer into the new generation of migrant workers as a socialization progress. As Hoang *et al*. (2015) reveal in a study across Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, children left behind respond to their parents' migration through strategies of resistance, resilience and reworking within constrained circumstances. Thus, the guardianship from the family level and the rural communities from an environment level could offer a comprehensive understanding of how the children left behind respond to shifts in intimate family relations and care patterns and managing the aforementioned identity transformation.

3. Methodology

Life story, as a relatively concrete research tool, can offer the sort of data that generates insights into the situation of their parents' rural-urban migration from the views of the respondents. This study seeks to present the perspectives of individuals who were encouraged to trace back to their childhood when their parent(s) migrated out and consists detailed analysis on their life histories. It focuses on the life history of 10 new generation of migrant workers who used to be left-behind children in a Chinese rural village in Anhui province.

Life story, views the respondents as people with the unique life, asks them to tell or recall about their own life, which covers from the life span ranging from birth to the present,

from important events, experiences and feelings of a lifetime (Atkinson, 1998). It represents a crossroads of linguistic structure and social practice as a narrative form (Linde, 1993). Life story has evolved from the oral history which gives us the vantage point of view on how one individual experiences over time. It is a qualitative research method for gathering information on the subjective essence of one person's entire life (Bertaux & Kohli, 1984). By carrying out an in-depth study of individual lives through daily chores of life and every stage of life circle, life story can both highlight the most important aspects of life and present biographical information of the respondents. This research method is widely used by Psychologists, Anthropologists and Sociologists especially to measure personality development in individuals (Bertaux & Kohli, 1984; Linde, 1993; Allport, 1942; Hareven, 2003). For example, Thomas & Znaniecki (1996) used a similar approach in their study of Polish migration to the USA and presented rich qualitative data that reported on individuals' reflection on cultural identity, and the emotional, social and economic impact of their migratory experiences. The current research aims to redress this imbalance by presenting the life stories of 10 grown-up migrant workers who have the experiences of being left behind in their childhood. With 10 new generation of migrant workers from Fuli village that I interviewed, I not only looked for the life as a whole perspective, but also explored how the themes of continuity and the meaning were expressed in their stories.

To address the dimensions including individual characteristics, family background and rural community to give an explanation, the interviews are used to give a vivid description of the childhood of the young migrants as children left behind in rural villages. Table 6 shows their basic information including their age, gender, marital status, educational level, the family members who migrated out and the caring arrangement in their childhood. The findings in this part are presented in the form of representative excerpts from the interviews. The names of the interviewees were changed in order to protect their privacy.

Table 6   Ten Migrant Workers Who Have Experience of Being Left Behind (2015-2016)

Name	Age	Gender	When[5]	Educational Level	Who Migrated	Caring Arrangement
Dalong	28	Male	15	Junior school	Both	Grandparents
Longmei	26	Female	12	Junior school	Both	/
Manman	25	Female	10	Vocational school	Both	Grandparents
Tiantian	23	Male	7	Primary school	Both	Mother
Zixiang	17	Male	3	Junior school	Mother	Aunt
Lian	29	Female	15	Junior school	Sibling	Mother
Xiang	26	Male	12	Junior school	Both	Grandparents
Miaomiao	27	Female	12	Junior school	Both	/
Huzi	25	Male	10	Junior school	Both	Aunt
Dan	19	Male	12	Junior school	Father	Mother

Data source: Field study in Fuli Village in Anhui province from 2015 to 2016

The data presented in the paper, which aims to give an auxiliary support to the qualitative findings, are drawn from several national wide research projects for analysis on the children status and population statistics. China Labor-force Dynamic Survey, the so-called CLDS, was conducted by Sun Yat-sen University in 2012. The survey, which is taken every two years, follows up survey of both urban and rural areas in China and establishes a comprehensive database of labor force surveys that covers three levels of data including individual workers, families, and communities. Targeting 15 to 64-year-old labor force, CLDS has investigated the political, economic, and social development of the communities where the labor force is located, the population structure of the labor force's family, household consumption, family donations, rural family production, and so on. The descriptive data mainly focus on revealing the educational investments in rural families with (and without) migrant father/mother and the data on the educational frustrations.

In accordance with the Regulations on National Population Census promulgated by the State Council in 2010, China conducts decennial population census in years ending with 0, and the 1% population sample survey in years ending with 5. The 6th National Population Census in China was taken in 2010. Accordingly, the 1% population sample survey in

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[5] The age when the LBC was being left behind in Fuli village.

2015, also called "Micro Census", is the latest national wide survey related to Chinese basic population data. These two databases are the most frequently used ones to do analysis on Chinese rural children left behind in Unicef reports on Chinese children in 2015 and 2017. This study will highlight the part of rural children left behind to give the description on the educational situation and the guardianship arrangement of the children left behind.

4. Findings

Looking back on the experience of being left behind, several clues will be revealed from the narratives of the new generation of migrant workers to explain why there is a low sense of belonging to rural villages among them. Family, school and rural communities are the main spaces in which we see their transformation into the new generation of migrant workers as a progress of socialization. Rural-Urban migration has changed the face of many rural areas, and these changes in the local economy and society have seeped into traditional family patterns. The migrant family search for a surrogate care pattern due to the absence of migrant parents. However, this can be very difficult and complex in terms of attachments and roles. The finding in rural school as a second important space shows that rural migrant households have less educational investments in their children left behind. The outdated conceptions of education in rural settings, the lack of parental supervision together with the fragile rural educational resources cause a high rate of drop-out among children left behind and a continuity of migrating and following the paths of their parents as a solution. Socialization in a "hollowed-out" rural community which highlights the rural-urban migration as a profitable and successful life, the public space of their childhood then offers a stimulus to push the children left behind to pursue migration to the cities.

All 10 interviewees all report their intention to stay in the cities and an unwillingness to go back to their villages of origin. From their narratives, they report the rural life is "boring", "nothing to do" in the countryside. Due to the physical absence of their parents, the respondents reported facing behavioral problems and psychological weaknesses

during their childhoods. Interview patterns indicated that the absence of migrated parents was bearable if the parents maintained regular visits and sent enough remittance, but such conditions became less predictable if their parents divorced. According to Manman, now 25, she experienced feelings of abandonment when her parents divorced. She was brought up by her grandparents when her father migrated to Fujian province when she was 13, she told me she would never come back to Fuli village after her recent marriage with an urban man from Hefei, the capital of Anhui province. The home in her memory has disappeared. She now reports satisfied with the affection she has found from her mother-in-law in Hefei. The village is now something she looks back to from the distance of time and geography with feelings of negativity.

> "We have no roots there. My parents-in-law treat me as their daughter now, so there is no need for me to miss my hometown." (Manman, age 25)

4.1 Guardianship Arrangement

Among 61 million of rural children left behind, 47% of them have both migrant parents；36% of them have migrant fathers; 17% of them have migrant mothers (Duan, 2010). Several care patterns then form alternatives to parental care. Table 7 reveals that the main care givers of rural left behind are mothers (30.6% and 36%）and the second important guardians are grandparents (26.3% and 33%）while (20.4% and 17%）of them are cared by fathers. Among the 10 interviewees, 5 of them spend childhood with their grandparents (two of them only for a short period and join the parents soon after "rebellions"). 3 of them were cared by mothers while none of them cared by fathers.

Table 7   The Guardianship Arrangements of Rural LBC in China

Guardianship Arrangement	1% Sample Survey 2015	Census 2010
Living with Grandparents	26%	33%
Living with Mothers	31%	36%
Living with Fathers	20%	17%
Living with Others (relatives, friends…)	23%	14%

Some researches highlight the social costs of rural families as a result of parental migration, arguing that the care provided by grandparents and other relatives is often limited (Lee, 2011; Ye & Lu, 2011). The transition from a nuclear family structure to a more diffuse network of extended family members' care affects rural children left behind. The parents expect to send remittance back home not only to their children but also to their parents. This highlights another vulnerable population, the so-called "left behind elderly"(Biao, 2007; He & Ye, 2014) in rural areas. The elderly may in turn have difficulties caring for their grandchildren. Children's basic daily care and personal safety could become problematic since elderly surrogate caregivers are often exhausted from balancing caring responsibilities and employment. Another weakness in this intergenerational care pattern are the differences in values between grandchildren and grandparents. Children left behind often do not understand the upbringings of their grandparents, especially the indulgent or brutal methods of education and discipline. Generational differences cause misunderstandings between grandparents and grandchildren.

> "I moved most of my stuff and lived with my grandparents then. At that time, I was taught to wash clothes, cook and other housework. My grandparents thought it was useless for me to get a high score in an exam. They said I should make sure that I could be independent first. The way of their education is crude and raw. I don't think it is a good way to let me grow up. I was scared of him; he beat people too much. I saw him beating my cousin with an iron chain last time. It was only because he skipped school and went to an Internet bar. Well, he is so small. No matter how angry you are, you cannot be so strict with him. I do not agree with his way of teaching. My father can grow up in this environment but I cannot stand it."

One parent left at home offers better companion for the children left behind, and this care giver is usually played by mothers, who were conceived as the ones who shoulders the family duties and childcare according to traditional gender norms. Unicef (2017) has

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[6]http://www.unicef.cn/cn/index.php?m=content&c=index&a=show&catid=203&id=19743

illustrated that the children left behind who are staying with their mothers have a lower possibility to drop-out in primary and junior high school, there are only 3.1% of them haven't finish school on time or can't finish mandatory education. It is much better than other guardianship arrangements. In fact, the mothers, also been named "rural left behind women" belong to the third vulnerable rural social group left behind who often suffer from the long-time loneliness and bear the instability of marital life (Ye & Wu, 2008). The long-time spousal separation usually causes difficulties and challenges for an intact family. Dan and Tiantian both grew up in the care of single mothers. They care about their mothers more than their fathers, who divorced with their mother years after the migration. Dan, now 19, tells me about his plans:

> "I will raise my mother as long as I have a mouth of food to eat. My mother depends on me. Wherever I go, I will take my mother with me. My father had a son outside so that he can rely on that son. My girlfriend especially likes my mother. That is why I chose her."

Tiantian, now 23, another child left behind, also expresses his affection for his mother and antipathy for his migrant father.

> "I just want to stay with my mom. Her life is too hard. She got throat cancer two years ago. The situation is better after the operation, but she still needs good care. She can only rely on me. My father has his new life; I won't join him. I don't want neither."

The experience of being left behind enhances the close relationship between left-behind children and their mothers (usually called left behind women), but it does not enhance their sense of belonging to the countryside. Many respondents said they would prefer to bring their caretakers out of the village. However, the research findings of this study suggest that respondents rarely pay attention to the practical issues, such as whether their parents and grandparents could adapt to urban life, or not.

Relatives may be the third main surrogate guardian of left behind children during the absence of migrant parents. They do not get the same care in the house of their relatives because they are not their own children and beating or scolding will affect the relationship

between relatives. Huzi, now 25, lives in Suzhou city and works as a medical seller, his childhood story is a sad one, which leads him to quit middle school and migrate out to meet his parents and older sister.

> I was studying in a junior-middle school when my parents followed other villagers to migrate out. Then my sister gave up studying after finishing junior school. So, they all went to Fujian, to work in a decoration and shoes factory. One year later, I felt lonely and disappointed when I was living with my uncle. I had two cousins, Jingun and Yingun. They teased me and never played with me. They were very cruel, I was afraid of them. Most of all, I was afraid of my aunt. She likes to frighten me and made me angry sometimes. I often hid from her in a small room. Then I gave up my studies and went to Fujian with the rest of my family.

In sum, the most common guardianship arrangement for children left behind is to stay with the elderly relatives who are also left behind. However, elderly left behind are often overwhelmed by their new roles and also many experience health issues relating to their age. In addition, such intergenerational maintenance often results in deeper generation gaps between them due to different growth backgrounds. To stay with a single mother would be better than the intergeneration care arrangement, but the breakdown in the family causes them to be alienated from one of their migrant parents. The split in the family caused by the relocation results in their closer relationship with left behind mothers who also suffer from a lower level of martial stability. Children left behind supported by their relatives are more devoid of parental love and communication, they are more likely to drop out early and migrate out to reunite with their parents.

4.2 Rural Education in China

Although the respondents to this study had varying care arrangements during their childhoods, they all ultimately left education early and joined the labor migration. Table 8 show that the school attendance of rural left behind children is lower than the average rate of the whole country (92.7% vs 93.0%) while the drop-out rate is higher (4.1% vs 3.6%). Other than familial factors, the school system plays a vital role in their childhood. It is stipulated that children who are six years old should be admitted to compulsory education

without paying any tuition fee by the Chinese compulsory education law. That is to say, children basically end nine-year compulsory education at the age of 14.

When it comes to different educational phase, the differences come out. Under the guarantee of the Compulsory Educational Law, the attendance of primary school remains the same (94.8% vs 94.8%). However, the attendance rates of junior high school (96.4%) and senior high school (82.9%) are both lower than the national average rate. As to the drop-out rate, the primary school drop-out rate of rural children left behind is even lower than the national average (4.9% vs 5.0%). Under the guarantee of the compulsory education system, rural children left behind can get universal access to primary school and junior secondary school, but the issue of inequality in education is highlighted after they enter the school-age stage of senior high school. Although most left-behind children in rural areas have the opportunity to continue their education in general secondary schools, a considerable proportion of them stop their studies after graduating from junior high school or drop out of high school. It shows the drop-out rate of junior high school (2.2%) and senior high school (3.9%) are both higher than the national average rate.

Table 8 The School Attendance Rate and Drop-out Rate of Rural LBC compared with the Chinese National Average Level

	School Attendance Rate		Drop-out Rate	
	Rural LBC	Average	Rural LBC	Average
Age Groups of Children 6-17	**92.7%**	**93.0%**	**4.1%**	**3.6%**
Primary school (6-11)	94.8%	94.8%	4.9%	5.0%
Junior high school (12-14)	96.4%	96.7%	2.2%	1.6%
Senior high school (15-17)	82.9%	85.6%	3.9%	2.6%

Data sources: Unicef 2017

In terms of education level, all of the 10 respondents dropped out of school earlier and did not finish or even join senior high school education. There is only one young migrant worker I interviewed who didn't finish primary school when their parents migrated out during their childhood, and although 9 of them attended junior school, few of them graduated. None of them went to high school even if only one (Manman) went to a

private vocational training school instead of high school. Once they left school, they joined the rural-urban migration labor force in neighboring cities. It is in line with McKenzie and Rapoport's (2006) study in Mexico which indicated that the parental migration exerted a negative effect on the children aged from 15 years old to 18 years old.

A pair of nearsighted glasses is always seen as a symbol of a student who is hardworking at school and you can see a lot of students in universities wearing nearsighted glasses. It will be hilarious to see a migrant worker with a lower educational level and it will be labeled as "irregular" or "abnormal". Zixiang, a 17-year-old boy with a pair of nearsighted glasses, related his life story to me in 2015 in a shoe factory where he worked as a team leader in Fuzhou city. His colleagues don't call him his name, instead, his nickname "nearsighted glasses" is quite popular. He is the only one who wears nearsighted glasses, which is rare among migrant workers. However, he doesn't graduate from junior school during his early childhood in his aunt's house in Suzhou city.

Parents and even children themselves generally think studying is useless. Da Long, now 28, who is working as an iron mold-making technician in a private piston factory in Zhejiang Province, stopped his studies when he graduated from junior-middle school. He reports it is useless to go to high-middle school and he admits that his grades were not good enough to pass the entrance exam to join the high-middle school in the city. When online games had just become popular, he often skipped classes to play games and make friends online. From his narrative, I heard a feeling of abandonment. Migration can offer him a good way to stay with his parents, furthermore, he can make some money.

> "The teacher does not care, he cannot manage us. Even our own parents don't care; when will they care about us?"

In addition, there is also different educational expectations between boys and girls. A good marriage for girls, rather than a high educational level, was perceived by rural parents as an ideal choice for a better life for their daughters. This traditional conception even allows parents to give up early on the girl's education investment, instead push them to make money earlier. Rural girls are more prone to give up schooling, in the backdrop

rural gender conception, which biased the subordinated social status and access to equal right as men. Thus, the rural girls are not expected to get too much education. The sister of Dalong, Long Mei, quit school even earlier than him - before the end of her first semester. At that time, she did not want to stay with her grandparents, so the only way to leave was to drop out of school and follow her parents to city. Long Mei went to work in a private small factory because there was no labor contract and the labor bureau would not check such a small factory. Da Long seems to agree that it's useless for his sister to finish the compulsory education.

> "A girl doesn't need to have a good education. All that she needs is just to know some words. If she does not want to study and she is not good at it, she should just give up and come home. We do not expect her to go to university. We prefer to find her a good husband."

Other than the conservative rural conception on education, the children left behind also face the lack of supervision and investments from his migrant parents. Take the data from CLDS for example. The first child undertaking the mandatory education by the rural respondents were compared in 4 groups: children with migrant father, children with migrant mother, children with both migrant parents and the children with non-migrant parents. Using the indicator "if take the paid extra course after school" to stand for the educational investments in rural families, Table 9 shows that 25.1% of the children with non-migrant parents have taken the paid extra courses after school, which is more than the children left behind with both migrant fathers (19.0%), migrant mothers (16.0%) and children with both migrant parents (15.0%). The remittances sent from developed countries in the context of international migration may be adequate for the daily use of children left behind (Mansuri, 2006), but, it is another thing if one examines the impact of Chinese rural-urban migration on children left behind because the income level of migrant workers is not as high as with other international immigrants. The average monthly salary of migrant workers are only 3,485 yuan (about 500 euro), together with the high living costs of urban areas, the remittances sent back would not be such a lot that could benefits the education of their children.

Table 9 Comparison of Educational Investments in Rural Family

If Take the Paid Extra Course After School								
	Migrant Father		Migrant Mother		Migrant Parents		Non-migrant Parents	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	151	18.7%	66	15.9%	51	15.0%	340	25.1%
No	657	81.3%	348	84.1%	290	85.0%	1015	74.9%
Total	808	100%	414	100%	341	100%	1355	100%

Data source: CLDS 2012

In sum, the poor investments of migrant family could be revealed in this study and it goes against the findings aforementioned literature which shows that the remittances give a positive motivation for the educational investments. The parents just want to ascertain their children join the school but they don't care about their educational attainment. Most of them never even come for our annual parent-teacher meeting. Receiving schooling in such a place is almost certain to have low educational returns.

> "The headmaster went to our home to find my parents. But they went out. Then they asked my grandparents to persuade me to go back to school. I didn't listen to them, so they just leave me alone."

However, it is not only due to the few educational investments and the traditional conceptions of rural migrant parents, but also due to the outdated rural teaching infrastructure and facilities. In 174 rural villages covered by the CLDS in 2012, only 84 villages have kindergarten, 112 villages have primary school and only 25 villages have junior high school. However, wealth from rural-urban migration has so far not improved rural teaching infrastructure and faculty members because it belongs to China's basic fiscal dominance. In Fuli village, there was only one primary school for 500 households. The playground in the primary school was still covered with soil. There is a total of five grades and each grade has only one class with around 30 students. There are only seven teachers plus the principal. One teacher is even in charge of both the teaching of mathematics and Chinese. The situation Fuli villagers facing is that farmers with better

economic conditions will bring their children with them into the city. Only the left-behind children and children from poorer families join this primary school. Parents are not at home and the guardians can not replace parents' role to care about their children. Children come to school only to waste time. There is no junior high school in this village, so the children need to go to the town to study. The equipment and teachers here are not at a high level either. Many teachers also do not have a college degree. Young, well-educated teachers choose to go to the city center or better schools to teach. No one wants to stay in rural middle schools. The wage provided here is not attractive to talented teachers. As Dalong recalls his school life to me,

> "Who wants to study here? It is too difficult for us, and my teacher cannot explain to me clearly. I don't learn, so I came here just to meet my friends and play. In this school, only one or two students can join the No. 1 high-middle school in the center each year."

Studying in the best No.1 high-middle school in the city center offers a chance to enter university once they pass the entrance exam. Their scores need to surpass 640 (full score is 850) to enter the two best high schools in the center. If they fail the exam, they face the choice of migration. And most of them choose it first and foremost. They think the return of education is not high even if they can finish high-middle school and join the university, so it is useless to take on further education after the junior-middle school.

> I did not get the graduation certificate in the end. It is useless. What is it for? You can find a job even without a graduation certificate. Nobody cares about this, all what they want is just someone who can sell their labor force. Now I regret what I have done……However it is too late now."

In sum, three main factors here affect drop-out of school and migration later after their school life: the traditional conception of education from parents; the lack of educational resources in rural areas; the lower educational investments from their migrant parents. Most of my interlocutors said they lacked abilities for educational performance and considered learning useless for their life. Parental migration had impressed this philosophy deep in their minds. Compared with joining high-middle school, there is an easier way to get out of the countryside, so they always chose the easier one.

4.3 Rural Communities: Conspicuous Consumption and "hollowed-out" Villages

Besides the fragile rural education, the rural communities that profoundly affected with a "migration culture"(Liu, 2011). This is another important factor which should be considered when examining the transformation of rural children left behind into the new generation migrant workers. Rural-urban migration brought profound changes to the village after a tidal wave of the labor force left for cities. The majority of the rural population rushed out urban areas for job opportunities and it thus caused rural "hollowed-out" villages with vulnerable left behinds. In the village, public affairs and activities became rare and compressed because of the outflow of villagers. The conspicuous consumption of the first generation of migrant workers has created an illusion of successful migration life, together with the pale of once colorful rural life and the "hollowed-out" rural images, have shaped their lonely rural childhood and given them an improper propaganda for going out of the villages.

The term "conspicuous consumption" used by Veblen (1899) to describe the behavioral characteristics of the new rich in the social and historical context of the 19th Century, was then applied narrowly in association with the men, women and families of the upper class who use their new, great wealth as a means of publicly manifesting social power and prestige, either real or perceived. But I argue that it is a universal phenomenon that can be applied across a range of contexts including that of migrant workers in China. When I surveyed Fuli village, I found that the first generation of migrant workers (who are usually over 40) used the income gap between urban and rural areas to make more conspicuous consumption in their hometown. The migrant workers work hard, live frugally, and their consumption is to meet day-to-day needs in city. On the contrary, their consumption in their hometown is different because conspicuous consumption can enhance the social status and reputation of the migrant workers when they are back to hometown. The rural society a familiar rural community called "Acquaintance Society" (Fei, 1992)- rural people know each other and live in a village rich in a variety of rural activities. A short-term gathering home offers a platform for a competition of their urban achievements. The migrant workers came back to the countryside and try to show off the

success they get in the city. Conspicuous Consumption of migrant workers can also be revealed in all aspects of their daily life: the food they eat, the clothes they wear, the daily appliances they use, and the cars they drive. Da Long recalls this about his uncle, who migrated out when he was in primary school:

> "My uncle drove a back car, and everybody in this village thinks he is successful in Fujian. Many villagers came to ask if he can take them out…… He used the newest smart phone at that time. But when I joined him in Fujian, I found that he was not as successful as he looked. The car was a secondhand one and he was only a team leader in a private shoe factory……He never smokes, but he brings the best brand of cigarettes and distributes them to other villagers whenever he comes back."

In the village, you can also hear elderly people saying things like this: "My boy just bought a new apartment in the center. He married a girl from the center." They regard a successful life as one which can only be obtained in the city. According to the narratives of the villagers, rural-urban migration becomes a subtle source of glory. Villagers exemplify the migrant workers who left the countryside to settle in cities. This creates a false impression for others, especially children left behind, who come to understand rural-urban migration as a profitable investment. Staying in the countryside, one can only remain poor. Socialized in such a context, the left behind children may quickly affirm the migration of their parents. When they grow up, they will imitate their parents. For the new generation of migrant workers, they don't need to build a house in the countryside to support their aging parents, instead they might spend that money on a luxury brand to show off their achievements in the city. And it extends soon to their peer groups. For example, Zixiang bought an iPhone 6 Plus with his half year income. When he brought it back home, it caught the attention of his friend Madan. Madan then followed him into the shop factory in Fujian. For a young person, the monthly salary of 2000 yuan is a great sum of money. In the short-term, by staying in school, they earn nothing - so they often choose to leave school and make money.

The parents of these 10 interviewees belongs to the first generation of migrant workers in Fuli village, and their parents' childhood was not embedded in the "migration culture"

while most of villages remained home conducting agricultural activities. Rural life was rich in a variety of rural activities such as local rituals taken part by the whole village. Although their conditions were poor, by all accounts, their childhood was rich with activities and a sense of community. It seems that the rich, colorful village and social life for their children left behind has disappeared since the migration of most of the labor force from the countryside. In the process of their growth, children left behind did not experience as dynamic a public life as their parents. They did not get involved in the social interaction of the village's "public domain". It should be highlighted that their childhood experiences are basically unparalleled and incomparable to that of their parents. This layer of rupture is of great significance to their disinterest in rural life.

After rural-urban migration, the disrupted internal linkages in the villages markedly weakened public activities and reduced community cohesion. In Fuli village, although people still attach importance to feasts such as marriages and birthday ceremonies, most gatherings are held in a rush during the New Year and other festivals when there are long-term public holidays. The duration of several days for wedding banquets in the past is now usually compressed to one day. The ceremonial process has also become highly simplified and be held in a rush. Corresponding to this, people in their daily life are also concerned about the activities of making money and buying private cars while other activities such as the cultural life of villages rarely enters the discussion. Huzi, now 25, narrated his migration story to me in his apartment in Suzhou city and described his early years in rural areas as boring and lonely:

> "I don't want to go back, it is empty now. My mother always goes back to visit her friends. As to me, all my friends move out of the village and want to live their lives in the city. Nobody wants to go back. It is too boring and my children almost have no place to play."

5. Conclusion and Policy Implications

This study has offered a window into the past of the new generation of migrant workers with the experience of being left behind in their childhood. Their past as children left

behind shows their adaption to the departure of their migrant parents and the ways in which they construct their present sense of belonging and cultural identity in different ways to village versus city life. When left-behind children leave rural areas and enter cities, their identity evolves into a new generation of migrant workers. The young migrant workers experience some incompetence when exposed to new environments. It is unlikely for them, no matter boys or girls to backflow to the countryside. This will make the countryside an abandoned "hollowed-out" areas in the end. The following are policy recommendations regarding the rebellion of the new generation migrant workers who have a "differentiated childhood" in rural China on the basis of the main findings described here.

First, we must admit that the absence of parental roles in migrant families is extremely detrimental to the growth of children and realize the disadvantages of the alternative guardianship arrangements. Family policies should be made to satisfy special needs of children left behind and provide them with targeted care. Based on the heterogeneity of the surrogate care givers, more attention need to be paid on how to provide specific help for different alternative parenting arrangements. For children with grandparents, the vulnerability of care givers themselves and shortcomings of intergeneration difference should be emphasized. For children with mothers who are also left behind, regular visiting and contacts of migrant fathers should be maintained not only for family responsibilities but also for marital stability. For children of relatives, special care must be given to promote parental regular visits and emotional bonds. Other than children left behind, left behind mothers and grandparents who usually belong to other two vulnerable groups should be given enough care. It calls for more care from the whole society.

Second, encourage rural parents to abandon the rural traditional conception which emphasizes the uselessness of education and encourage them to increase investments on children's education. Eliminate the educational inequality between rural and urban areas and provide high-quality rural educational resources and better educational facilities. The corporation between parents and school should be strengthened to offer enough supervision and assistance for left-behind children.

Third, the root of children left behind and rural-urban migration origins from the unequal geographic economic development between rural and urban areas. Therefore, more measures should be taken to develop rural regional economy and create more local job opportunities to curb the trends of "hollowed-out" village and maintain the integrity of rural family and the activity of rural communities. Provide convenience for the returnees of migrant workers for their local employments for a better adapt to rural life.

Part 3   Falling into The Patriarchal Trap: Rural Wives Left Behind

> You act like a single mother but you do have a husband. He always plays with phones when he comes back home. While he's migrated out, we seldom contact each other, but it is okay if he keeps sending remittances home.
>
> Pan,27 years old, one left behind wife with 2 children

After her husband migrated to the city to work, Pan stayed in the countryside and took on the responsibility for the daily care of their children and her parents-in-law. She is one of the wives left behind amidst the tide of rural-urban migration. The term 'rural left-behind wives' refers to married women who remain in rural villages when their husbands migrate out to work in the city. Like Pan, their primary role is to stay at home and take on family duties like looking after children and elderly relatives. Although this group may share some characteristics with full-time housewives in urban areas in terms of care provision, they do have key differences. Full-time urban housewives, for example, usually live with their husbands and have better economic situations. They usually make a voluntary choice to stay at home. Similar to other rural left-behind populations discussed in this chapter, rural wives could be considered as a vulnerable group excluded from the process of rural-urban migration. Their husbands' work commitments in urban areas afford them few visits back home. Left-behind wives have been documented in literature in other developing countries such as Mexico and India, countries with large numbers of international and internal migrants (Desai and Banerji, 2008; Archambault, 2010). In China, rural wives left behind in the countryside are estimated to number about 47 million , which is a huge number and has drawn social attentions (Chu, 2013).

The study of Hondagneu-Sotelo (1992) suggested that rural Mexican women may

overcome certain patriarchal constraints through international migration to the U.S. Literature discussing the role of migration in helping women to gain power and autonomy, on the other hand, also discuss the ways in which migrant men may lose authority and privilege. This diminishing of patriarchal gender relations in the literature has only been demonstrated by migration at the family migration stage, meaning that wives managed to join their husbands at the intended destination. Contrary to the Hondagneu-Sotelo study, I will examine how Chinese rural wives left behind are excluded by the progress of migration instead of granted further autonomy from the authority of migrant husbands. The current study asks what happens to the social and autonomous status of women who cannot manage to migrate to meet spouses. In the following, we will examine gender relations between left-behind wives and their migrant husbands to understand better how they are influenced by migration. Will rural-urban migration bring forth the liberation of women left behind, or will it allow them fall further into the trap of patriarchy?

1. Literature Review on Gender and Migration

1.1 Chinese Traditional Patriarchy and Gender Inequality

Chinese traditional patriarchy has a long history and a profound influence. According to the traditional Chinese patriarchy, women are expected to take over childbearing and child caring, and this gender labor division is still entrenching in rural China. The old saying going like this，"men control outside and women control the inside"，literally means the masculinities at home take the role of breadwinner while the feminized role should take the household labor and children bearing (Brownell & Wasserstrom, 2002). Among all of this, the long-standing feudal family ideology which emphasizes the male dominance or female subordination should be the first and foremost. The husband, as the leader of household, allows his wife to control domestic sphere activities such as daily household tasks and child bearing/caring while he acts as the linchpin provider of the family income. For example, *jiaxun*, namely "household regulations" in Qing dynasty, contends that the test for the capability of a man as a leader is whether he can control his wife who is seen as "the outsider" in a secondary status at home. The term *"tianzhi"* or

"benfen", translated into the natural duties and responsibilities were used to distinguish the gender roles of wife and husband in the family. And the *tianzhi* of a husband is to be the house owner while the *benfen* of a wife is mothering and nurturing at home. Chow and Berheide (1994) write like this,

"In traditional China, family relationship as prototype of other major social relationships were deeply rooted in the ethnic principle of filial piety, in which paternal authority reigned over children and women, demanding their obedience. Maintenance of patrilineage instilled a feudal ideology that valued fertility, favored sons to carry on the family name, and emphasized primogeniture (the inheritance right of the eldest son), thus devaluing the worth of women."

It shows that Chinese traditional family has been basically patriarchal in nature and has played a vital role in perpetuating male privilege, gender inequality and the exploitation of women. Women are prescribed to be subordinates and have been assigned the primary duty in childbearing and childcare. Based on this gender biased ideology, the migrant mothers, are always risky in facing the critics of "bad motherhood" (Onica, 2009) for escaping from responsibility of family duties.

However, the requirements of the times for women's duties are not static. The era of president Mao calls for an empowerment of women and proclaims that women can hold up half the sky which means that they can do whatever man can do. While women enjoy more job opportunities, the burden of household work and child care rely mostly on them. This revolutionary policy reflects the special needs in the era of post-inner war for social and economic development. Just as Song (2010) argues, the predominance of male is barely challenged. In fact, it overburdens women with both the labor involvement and family responsibility. The reform has literally strengthened gender disparity rather than undermined it.

Gender inequality still prevails nowadays in rural families under the background of large scale of rural-urban migration. In a traditional rural family, the typical labor division was

"Men plough in the fields, women weave in the house" (*nangeng nvzhi*) which lasts for thousands of years in feudal Chinese society. This traditional familial labor division has been changed after a large scale of migrant workers, mostly are males and unmarried females, who rushed into urban areas for job opportunities. There comes a new labor division in a split migrant family-*nangong nvgeng,* which means men migrate out to work in cities and women left behind take over farming in the countryside. Scholars point out the three main factors for the left behinds of rural married women, including the disadvantage of women migrants in urban labor market, the household registration system and the traditional gender norms that associate women with family responsibilities and motherhood obligations (Shan *et al*., 2015).

The migration tends to have a negative impact on the labor market participation of married women, especially those with dependent children which was conceived as "motherhood penalty". This finding could be always revealed among domestic workers studies (Cooke, 2007; Coser, 1973; Yilmaz & Ledwith, 2017). Similarly, the difficulties for female migrant workers could be also found in China. Once they become pregnant, it means they are kicked out of the urban labor market. A restrictive mechanism to their fertility, the logistical implication of pregnancy, in some instances force migrant women to postpone their decisions to procreate (Rene, 2013; Zhang, 1999; Luo, 2006). In recent years, Chinese scholars have noticed this gender disparity of female migrant workers especially married women by focusing on their experiences in urban labor markets. The current occupational gender segregations make women tend to have fewer opportunities in labor markets than men wherever they are. Most rural migrant women take low-paid gender specific jobs. The proportion of the returnees among married women is much higher than that of their male counterparts. And it is seen as a family livelihood strategy to let women stay at home taking family responsibilities because of the marginalized social status of migrant workers in urban China (Fan, 2003; Liu & Zhang, 2005; Lin & Ghaill, 2013; Zhang, 2006).

1.2 Gender Relationship and Migration

In this study, discussing the gender relationship, we will focus both the narratives of wives left behind and migrant husband to understand how rural-urban migration reshape or reconstruct the traditional gender relationship within the split migrant family.

There is a debate on whether the out-migration of male is a positive empowerment or a negative gender exclusion for rural wives left behind among international literature. The positive effects of male out-migration on rural wives left behind have been demonstrated in plenty of empirical international migration studies in Morocco, Nepal, Tanzania, Mexico and so on. They mostly admit the monetary remittances sent from migrant husbands bring benefits to women left behind by improving their living standards and broaden women's involvement in rural community (Hadi, 2001; Khalaf, 2009; Haas & Rooij, 2010; Maharjan *et al*., 2012; Archambault, 2010). Only few of these studies suggest that the migration cannot improve the social status of women or change the oppressive gender relationship. Scholars contend that the out-migration of males is not an emancipation of traditional gender labor division for wives left behind, rather it leads to the disempowerment of women and enhance their reliance on men for both economic and emotional support thus expose women to new vulnerabilities (Maharjan *et al*., 2012; Haas & Rooij, 2010; Khalaf, 2009; McEvoy, 2008). Their research scope is limited only in the context of transnational migration, most of these studies only concern on the gender inequality after migration without looking at the stage of migration decision making. In fact, gender inequality also influences who migrates and who is left behind, the progress of making migration decision could also offer us a prism to examine the gender relationship within the migrant family. Thus, the study will focus on both the decision making of migration and the post-migration to give a dynamic overview of the gender relationship between rural wives and migrant husbands.

Same as the international literature, it is not easy for Chinese scholars to reach either a negative or a positive conclusion related to the effects on rural wives left behind. On one hand, the rise in female-headed rural households makes the wives benefit from the

remittances and get sort of autonomy at home during the absence of their migrant husbands, although the remittances are not of equal scale as the transnational migration brings. On another hand, it keeps maintenance or even strengthen on the women's subordinate position in the patriarchal system which underpin the dependence on their husbands. For example, Ye and Wu (2008) use a metaphor of "*sanzuo dashan*", which means three giant burdens, to depict the burden of rural wives left behind including farming, elderly people and children. Zhang (2013) argues that the return of married migrant women to rural villages for family responsibility makes the patriarchal power relations within rural households remain intact, although they've gained the freedom through migration before. Yet, the study of Zhang focuses on the female returnees instead of wives left behind to examine the patriarchal relationships although most of wives left behind might do have migrant experiences before. Ye *et al*. (2016) further demonstrate clearly a gender exclusion and gender inequality for rural wives left behind from the views of migrant husbands, rural community members and the local government officials. It offers a multi-faceted research perspective to reveal a subordinary position of rural wives left behind (Ye *et al*., 2016). However, this study will focus on only the wives and their husbands within 10 migrant families and explore the effects of rural-urban migration on the gender relationship of wives left behind.

1.3 The Impacts of Migration on Wives Left Behind

Current literature reveals the impact of husbands' migration mostly on the wellbeing of rural left behind wives including the physical and mental health, the agricultural feminization, and the quality of marital life. However, scholars haven't reached a consensus on the impact of the labor migration on aforementioned factors. Most of studies conclude on the negative effects while others argue that women are positively empowered in various aspects of rural life during the absence of migrant husbands.

As to the feminization of agriculture, the foremost impact of male migration according to most literature, is that it has increased the burden of farming and posed a disadvantaged status because of the absence of the main labor force within the family. At the meantime,

the rural wives still shoulder the major task in the traditional gender division of labor as caregivers for children and elderly left behind (Huang, 2012; Constant & Zimmermann, 2013; Mu & Walle, 2011; Nelson, 1992; Wu, 2010). On the contrary, a few of literature argue that it makes women's contributions in the house highly visible and empowers them more freedom over money and decision making in agricultural production (Wu & Ye, 2016). But there is also evidence showing a different argument that no empowerment is found, the migrant husbands still control their wives through cellphones far from cities on the investment and arrangement of agricultural production (Ye, *et al*.,2016; Ye & Wu, 2008).

Regarding physical and mental health, wives left behind suffer worse psychological problems in terms of loneliness, restlessness, depression and stress. The absence of migrant husbands contributes to women's greater independence; however, it has also meant more insecurity and worry (Xu, 2010). Especially for the wives who have migrant experience, a mental adjustment is needed to face the hardship of rural life alone (Davin, 1996; Liang *et al*., 2014; Jacka, 2012; Wu & Ye, 2016). Compared with large quantity of sociological studies on the mental health, only several medical studies reveal the negative impact of spouse separation on the physical health of married individuals (Chen *et al*., 2015).

As to marital life, current literature has shown, unsurprisingly, that the marital satisfaction among rural left behind wives is low (Xu, 2010; Wu, 2010; Wu & Ye, 2016). Rural wives left behind were conceived by Xu (2010) as "walking on the brink of the marriage" which demonstrate their low level of marital quality due to the long-time separation. The out migration of husbands increasing risks of extramarital affairs and even divorce thus undermining the marital stability. However, few studies examine the effects of rural-urban migration on their marital life from the perspective of gender inequality. The mainstream literature always illustrates the negative outcomes without distinguishing gender differences. Although male out-migration has increased the possibility of men and women to commit infidelity, it might increase women's vulnerability to abandonment and jeopardize women's position as a subordinate. Thus, this study offers a lens to look at the

different attitudes between migrant husbands and left behind wives towards the marital life especially the extramarital affairs after rural-urban migration.

1.4 Masculine Compromises and Patriarchal Bargains

The impact of migration on rural households can be observed not only from the perspective of migrating males, but also from the perspective of migrating females. The first perspective is called "masculine compromises" (Choi and Peng, 2016) while the second one is called "patriarchal bargains" (Kandiyoti, 1988). However, no research explores the gender relationship within a migrant family from the views of rural wives left behind.

Choi and Peng (2016) mention the new changes brought to male migrant workers as different roles of husbands, fathers, and sons with a specific term "masculine compromises". It depicts how migrant men strive to preserve their symbolic dominance within a split family by making concessions on domestic division of labor or by redefining filial piety and fatherhood. As to gender priority, masculine compromises encapsulate how migration has forced migrant men to concede certain aspects of male dominance within their families as they find ways to symbolically maintain their superiority within the shifting gender patriarchy.

The concept of "patriarchal bargains", proposed by Kandiyoti in 1988, refers to the migrant women come to challenge traditional gender roles without the breach of patriarchal structures to gain certain benefits themselves. The relationship in migrant families in urban areas offers migrant women new chances to redefine the conventional gender roles and norms and question the men's priority and superiority in patriarchy system (Kandiyoti, 1988). The case of Turkey also reveals that the rural-urban migration can improve the patriarchal bargains of migrant women in challenging the traditional gender roles and relationships (Erman, 1998). International literature also has few studies on patriarchal bargains of Chinese rural migrant women (Gaetano & Jacka, 2012; Gaetano, 2015; Jacka & Sargeson, 2011; Jacka *et al*., 2013). For example, Jacka & Sargeson (2011) suggest that the gender inequality on the distribution of leisure resources

(time and money) between husbands and wives within rural family. The finding reveals that the involvement of paid work of rural women could confront their husband's privilege over leisure distribution to feel justified. Gaetano (2015) further reveals how migrant women realize their desires and change their lives in the context of rural-urban migration.

Nevertheless, rural women left behind especially rural wives left behind in the context of internal migration, still receive little attention (Biao, 2007). Even few researches focus on how Chinese rural-urban migration changes the lives and gender relationship of rural wives left behind (Duan, 2010). This study aims to portray a picture of family life of wives left behind and their migrant husbands to display salient gender differences within the migrant family. Based on the qualitative data from the left behind wives in Fuli village and their migrant husbands scattered around Chinese cities, the purpose of this study is to examine empirically the extent to which the migration of husbands has influenced the Chinese rural family and the gender relationship in it from the narrative of both migrant husbands and left behind wives.

I interviewed both migrant husbands in the city and wives left behind in Fuli village to study how migration affected gender stratification in migrant families. I chose 10 women (see biography in Appendix) who had resided in Fuli village for a minimum of one year whose migrant husbands had been working in different locations (e.g. Fuzhou, Ningbo, Beijing, Wuxi). The ten couples discussed in this study ranged from young to middle-aged when I met them. The age of the wives left behind ranged from 24 to 42, and their migrant husbands aged from 27 to 46. Except for one couple, all are parents to children and only one cared for her grandchildren left behind.

The educational level of wives left behind ranged from illiteracy to junior high school. Prior to their staying in the village, eight of 10 wives had the experience of migration before. Four of them were divorced with their migrant husbands, among which, one wife at her 20s and other three at their 30s during the migration of their husbands. The migrant husbands in this study have been away from their villages for a period ranging from 1 to

15 years. As they get older, they tend to stay longer in the city and the periods of spousal separation become longer in turn. Periods of spousal separation among the 10 couples averaged about six years. During these periods of separation, the men came back for several visits during the holidays and harvest season. A few men conducted extramarital affairs in the city due to the long-term separation, which has brought many changes to their family relations. The study uses a small sample and qualitative methods for the current study in order to shed a light on intimacy and gender relationships within rural migrant families, as well as to reveal the unequal status between male migrant workers and their wives left behind.

2. Migration and Family Division of Labor

2.1 Migration Decisions: When Women Stay and Men Migrate

As noted, gender discriminatory practices and attitudes in the pre-migration phase play a significant role. Men dominate the migration decision, which is often considered a family strategy, because they are considered as the brain of the family and are usually the main source of household income. In these situations, women are dominated or supported in the process of following their husbands' decision. When I asked the men if their wives agreed with their migration, the most common answer was that their wives had to agree because they regarded migration as a more financially rewarding investment than farming. Their migration was considered as a lucrative business. Gangzi, 35, who left his wife and two children in the village, said, "Why not? It is impossible to suffer from a lifetime of poverty. " But the women in the village voiced complaints. For example, Hui, 37, whose husband went to Zhejiang Province to open a small business, said to me, "He went out to work, and all the things at home were done by myself. What should I do? There was no other solution." Their answers suggested to me a kind of helplessness due to life pressures.

Another frequent answer, spoken in a strongly patriarchal way, was that "a woman always has long hair but short vision. You'd better take care of the children and stay at home." Unlike in examples of Mexican international immigrants to the US, when husbands

sometimes disagree with a wife's immigration choice due to risks of death and imprisonment in the progress of crossing the border (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992), Chinese migrants overwhelmingly consider the economic factors first (Li, 2004). Though they have no guarantee that they will ultimately be able to reunite their family in the city, the economic pressure is the reason enough to hinder their wives from migrating. Xuzhou, the husband of Pan (who appeared at the beginning of this section) told me, "Who does not want to stay with his wife and children? We don't have such an economic condition. I want to have a lot of material things, but how could it be achieved?" Some of the left-behind women do follow their husbands into the city, but eventually come back prematurely for family reasons related to childbearing and elderly support.

Many studies have shown that female migrants are often victims of discrimination in the urban labor market (Fan, 2003; Espiritu, 1999). Companies often like to recruit young, unmarried women without offering any paid maternity leave or benefits, which is another reason why you can find a lot of young wives staying home with their newborn infants. They must quit their jobs once they plan to give birth. In addition, the migrant workers' wages are meager, and the various kinds of urban expenditures are too high for a migrant family to raise a child in the city. The best solution then is to send one's pregnant wife back to the village to minimize living expenses. However, this state of being left behind is unsustainable, especially for younger wives. They usually plan to go back to work again when their children grow older and become independent. Zhengzheng, for example, who was staying at home to take care of her two-year-old baby, just returned from Hangzhou. She said that she only needed to wait another year to be back in the city. Her husband's monthly salary was only five thousand yuan, which was not enough for the expense of the whole family. When the baby is three years old, they can send her to a private kindergarten there so that she can also work. "Our kids are too young. I can do nothing." Many wives compare themselves with their neighbors and their friends, admiring them for migrating out with their husband to earn money. Yet they have to remain in the countryside, suffering the pressures of reality.

Of course, there are also left-behind wives opposed to the migration decision from the

very beginning because of the uncertainties it brings for the future. They feel worried because the return from working is not guaranteed, and the familial responsibilities that remain are too heavy for them. One woman told me, "Basically, all the men in our village are out, and many of their families are broken." Women are scared that their husbands will not be able to bring enough money back, and instead escape from familial responsibilities. At home, there is a giant burden of farming, housework, childcare and elderly support left for them to do alone. Many women also choose to abandon their responsibility to children and the elderly, following their husbands once their children reach school age. However, among these left-behind wives, children or grandchildren are still too young to let them go. The migrant parents don't have any securities or the maternity leave with their babies who fully dependent on them.

2.2 New Rewards or New Burdens?

Many middle-aged women play multiple roles in their family with intensive labor. They not only take on the important task of farm work, which was usually handled by their migrant husbands, but also take care of the elderly and their children. Meng, 42, recalled the period when she was left behind with her son about 10 years ago, "You were too tired to straighten upright. Sometimes, I only ate meals twice a day because I was so busy." Current literature shows that rural women left behind have a bad health situation (Xu, 2009; Zhong & Yao 2012). While young wives have often been freed from farm work through the lease of the farmland, they still have many other duties. Their limited ability and energy cannot cover all their work commitments. Research conducted in Chongqing reveals that rural wives under such pressures have the impulse to escape from the countryside (Zhou *et al*., 2007).

Bearing the dual burden of agricultural production and housework, they often have no time to care about their children's education. Growing up with a feeling of abandonment from their fathers and in reaction to their mother's divided attentions, children's physical and mental health may be negatively affected. Furthermore, many left-behind women's low level of education limits their capacity to tutor their children or encourage their

schooling. It can easily lead to an erratic development of their children's psychology and personality, making them "problematic children" (Zhou *et al.*,2005). Therefore, the education of children is also an issue for left-behind wives, as well documented in the last section. For example, two children of Guizhen, a single mother in Fuli village, both dropped out of school and migrated out of the village in the end.

Rural wives left behind often become *de facto* heads of the family after the departure of their husband. For example, the study of women left behind in Mexico revealed that the husband's migration increased their mother's social status and fostered better autonomy and self-esteem (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992; McEvoy, 2008). Current Chinese literature also shows the autonomy of wives left behind was improved and that they have more control over their family after the migration of their husband (Wu, 2008). However, the resources under their control is quite limited. The money sent back from the husbands is scattered and often less than expected, especially in the beginning of the migration. They have invested part of the family savings as the cost of migration, which further delegates the wives to poverty in the countryside.

As Marxists pointed out, the women only are liberated if they participate in social labor, but the rural wives can only be liberated if they take part in rural-urban migration. Some women do engage in small money-making activities in the village, such as spinning and ironing hats, earning 50 yuan each time. There is a small leather workshop in the village, but the wages here are low, at about 1,000 yuan per month. Their work in the village does not guarantee their independence. The economic pressure is great, especially in case of emergency. They need to rely on their husband as a main source of family income. Meng, now 42, had a heart attack two years ago when she did not have any insurance. The operation cost more than 10,000 yuan. This is not small expense for the family. All she can rely on is her husband. After borrowing money from relatives and friends, her husband finally collected all the money for surgery.

2.3 Remittances

The economic transfer of left-behind women cannot be guaranteed. Their migrant

husbands are engaged in low-level jobs with small wages such as construction workers, and drivers. At the same time, the cost of living in the city is so high that most migrant workers have no substantial savings despite years of working outside and they are often caught in the debt trap. In this situation, the economic expenditures of left-behind wives must also be reduced correspondingly, and since so their living standards remain very low. As some left-behind wives say, they cannot adapt the urban lifestyle. Nianyi, 24, the wife of Fanfan (who worked on a construction site), complained that, "We have tightened our belts to live. We only eat what we grow in our courtyard. We have no money even to buy meat in the market. Even the eggs, I always ask for them from my parents-in-law. We can only eat vegetables." Fanfan, for his part, explained to me that, "The boss will not pay your wages on time. They have their money back usually when we finish the project." Some women suspect their husbands have squandered money on another woman in the city. This causes even more complaints about their husband. Wives look forward to receive remittances as a compensation of their staying in the countryside. Once this expectation is broken by reality, they complain and feel that the situation is unfair. For example, Guizhen, 38-year-old, the wife of Xinjian Ma who migrated out to Fujian, lamented to her husband, "You enjoy your sweet life in the city but leave the bitter of life to me. You come home twice a year and bring back nothing. Our children need money to go to school, but you have nothing. Our farmland needs me to cultivate, our house needs me to clean. Well, I am just a woman, how can I bear such a burden?" This imbalance makes some married women so desperate that they leave and become economically independent, and they may leave their children and elderly dependents at home. Guizhen had also joined her husband's factory, but she could not handle the physical requirements of strength required to do the work, and finally went home to the village with complaint.

The result of rural-urban migration is that men relieve their direct responsibilities to (and benefits from) the household but are still responsible for distributing the family income. Their wives left behind, on the other hand, are responsible for most familial duties, but do not have the economic power. This imbalance makes women once again at a disadvantage in the internal financial situation of the home. One research on the well-being of the "left

behind" population in Asia has shown that married men give less than 20 percent of their remittances to their wives when there is more than one receiver in the family (they always pay their parents and children first), and that the wife is the last one to receive these remittances (Nguyen *et al*., 2006).

In addition, many migrant husbands express a longing for their own financial freedom without any restrictions. They have insisted to me that they are free to spend their money and do what they want since they are the moneymaker. Zhao Gen's income is relatively high among migrant workers, so he leaves more money for himself. In his view, his wife, who is living with his son, certainly will not spend too much in the village, so he provides them with enough expenses for food and drink. He expressed his priority as a sole breadwinner this rural family. "I've worked hard outside all year long, then I will not cook at home. I will never cook even if all of you starve to death." Then Zhao Gen reported his freestyle urban life and the pride with a higher income.

> "The whole family is not hungry if I am full. I worked hard to make money; I can spend as much as I want. I usually send 5,000 yuan to the family every three months. If there is a good construction project, I can earn 10 thousand yuan per month. There are a lot of drivers on the construction site, sometimes we were drinking and chatting together. Driving is not so easy. We have the right to have fun."

Xuzhou (28, migrated to the city of Lu'an) expressed his worry about Pan's capability for money management. "My wife cannot have too much money, or she will spend it all very soon. I worked hard all day long. I don't want nothing left in the end. What should we do then?" Some men cite concern for safety reasons; they do not want to send too much money back to the village. "We have only women and children in the countryside and they have less prevention awareness. If a thief broke in, it will cause a lot of troubles."

No matter which reasons they gave, the general message among male respondents was that migrant husbands did have the right to control and distribute the money they've raised. From the former interviews, we conclude that the left-behind wives do not have a substantial control in her family's finances, and just play a supporting role even when

they functionally become the head of the household. Their status in the family is not fundamentally changed by the migration of their husband. The migrant husbands are still managers and commanders while the left-behind wives are only partners and followers.

2.4 Emotional Wellbeing

Many studies point out the negative impact of husbands' migration on the psychological wellbeing of left-behind women in rural areas. On the one hand, the women report that they miss and worry about their husbands. On the other hand, they have to send their husband out to earn money to support their families for various reasons, leaving them with deeply contradictory feelings (Sun, 2006; Jacka, 2014; Duan *et al*., 2017). For example, Duan *et al*. (2017) point out that economic and psychological conditions are still not optimistic based on data from a series of national wide surveys, such as the 2010 Chinese National Survey.

Because of the absence of men, left-behind women generally lack of a sense of security. They are worried about the elderly, children and themselves, worried about property, safety and other emergencies in the countryside. Moreover, they also worried that their husbands may not be able to bear temptations in the city and abandon them. Shufen, alone with a two-year-old baby, said to me:

> "I am afraid of living alone with a baby in such a big house. During the night, it is dark everywhere because we don't have streetlights in this village. It is dreadful. I have to sleep with the lights on. What if there is a thief trespassing at the house, what should a do? I am just a weak woman."

Yanzi, whose husband works as a car technician, also expresses her loneliness and feelings of abandonment. "I am feeling lonely in the countryside. Everybody left the village, leaving us at home, sick and weak." In their hearts, they think women are weak and only their husband at home can protect them. This mentality suggests that they have completely internalized male-dominated social positions, and even if they were not economically dependent on their husbands, they would still underestimate their capabilities.

Research from India shows that family structure is another factor affecting the wellbeing of left-behind women (Desai & Banerji, 2008). For a left-behind woman living in a nuclear family without any support from elderly parents, a sense of loneliness is stronger and mental stress tends to be greater. However, for left-behind women in extended families, one must consider tensions between mother-in laws and left-behind wives in addition to the pressures to take care of both the elderly and children. Studies in Albania show that the mother-in-law's status has declined after the migration of her adult children (Coles, 2001), but there is no research showing the decline of rural mother-in-law's status after the migration of their sons. On the contrary, many studies show that left-behind women tend to have good relationship with her side of the family because of the absence of her husband (Duan, 2010; Xu, 2009). Pingzi, for example, currently lives with her parents now. Although the hometown of her husband is in Guizhou province, she chooses not to go. "I cannot understand their dialect. I prefer staying in a familiar place." The intergeneration difference between left behinds and mother-in laws might be the reason for tensions of relationship within the migrant family. For example, Nianyi fights with her mother-in-law, and the bad relationship put an end to her marriage with Fanfan. She explained to me:

> "My mother-in-law is unreasonable and I have to listen up to her. She treats me not so well although she declared that she treats me as her daughter. It is a lie. She made me act as a slave. Why should I obey her? She is such a troublesome person. I got tired of her."

3. Spouse Separation and Temporary Spouses

Current Chinese literature have shown, unsurprisingly, that marital satisfaction among rural left-behind wives is low (Wang, 2008; Xu 2009; 2010). For example, Xu (2010) argues that personality differences between husbands and wives are exacerbated by their physical separation. As a result, it enhances mental stress and reduces the satisfaction of their marital and sexual relationship. Wang (2008) explores the impact factors of marital and life satisfaction of rural left-behind wives, such as the distance between the spouses, their husband's income in the city, housing quality, burden of children's education, burden

of elderly care and communication between the spouses. Low marital satisfaction consequently fosters conditions for extramarital relationships among wives left behind. One villager told me that there was a man in his forties who was ignorant in this village. He has nothing to do but haunting the village in order to seduce women left behind in the countryside. He took advantage of their emotions and then robbed their money after the women were hooked. Since extramarital affairs are regarded as very shameful in the village, the women are often afraid to speak out even if they have been robbed. They have to tolerate such scummy impunity silently. The villagers also use many dirty words to curse these kinds of women, calling them broken shoes, bitches, and prostitutes. In the countryside, there is even a punishment for women who have extramarital relationships. In the old days, the "dipping into a pig cage" was a private punishment for a woman who was not loyal to her husband. The villagers usually put the suspect woman into a cage, which was used for carrying pigs, and sent her into the river until she drowned to death. Nowadays, the conception of loyalty to marriage is not so conservative and cruel, but the threat of a bad reputation and bringing shame to one's parents is still an effective deterrent. However, the migration brought the rural community far away from the young migrants' life in a parallel space that was absent for villagers.

When chatting with a group of rural women in this village, they tell me that there are many wives having extramarital affairs here. "That Yanzi fell in love with the principal. Her man came back and beat the principal in the playground. All the villagers knew it. She moved away to the center of Suzhou, selling porridge in the streets. Shame on her." When I asked why the man did not divorce. Their answer was this: "Their child has grown up. How could they divorce? It will be better to stay in the marriage for the wellbeing of the child. Her husband just accepts this green hat (A common colloquialism for a man whose wife has cheated is that he's 'wearing green hat'.) It's better that she left, otherwise the dirty words of the village would impair her." This is a common story of the extramarital relationships of women left behind. There are also some migrant husbands who can't bear the idea of a 'green hat'.

As noted, rural people use the term "broken shoes" to describe women who have

extramarital relationships. On the wall of an empty house in front of the village, someone painted a sentence with red paint: "Your daughter-in-law is a broken shoe." A villager told me that a fat woman once came to the house to force the youngest daughter-in-law of the owner to confess to her affair with the woman's husband. The daughter-in-law escaped from the village, but the fat woman still smashed the yard and kitchen, saying it was just a warning. She said she would burn the house down if she seduces her husband. This episode humiliated the old couple so much that they moved to leave with their daughter in the end.

Of course, migrant husbands are not "fuel-efficient lights" outside the village, either. Couples who, for many years, face separation and a lack of communication produce an "isolation zone" between one another. Another result of long-term separation is the phenomenon of temporary spouses in migrant workers' groups. Such private things are dictated by villagers because the derailment of such families is generally not exaggerated. The saying "do not air your family's dirty laundry" rightly descripts the conception of maintaining family privacy. The extramarital relationship of Liya was unveiled to me in this way. It was a rainy day; Liya lay on the road and cried, "I don't want to live!" The commotion attracted many people in the village to come see what was going on. A villager who was there and knows the details told me what happened.

Liya had been planting cotton for a long time in Xinjiang province, western China, where he met one of the Anhui women who also worked there. The two migrant workers have lived together and formed a "temporary spouse" since then. The wife of Liya stays at home and takes care of the children. The eldest son of the family graduated from junior high school to go out to study car-repairing, and his wife is now free to play mahjong every day. Liya went home to ask for a divorce and confessed everything. The temporary wife of Liya had already secretly given birth to a baby boy three years ago. In response, his wife didn't cry much, but instead quickly responded to the request of Liya on the condition that he took nothing from the house. Liya was unwilling to do so because he had no savings after such a long time of migration. Although he lay on the country road, it was useless. He had nothing now but his temporary wife and illegitimate son.

The ex-wife, Yunzi, 41, now often plays mahjong in the village. She said to others after her husband left, "Who wants to save money? For whom? Women have to love themselves." Clearly this is the lesson she learned from her last marriage, that women need to care about their own business. When she plays cards, very few will talk about her husband except to curse the "son of bitch!".

Liya is just one of many migrant workers who have "temporary spouses" outside the village I encountered. The "temporary spouses" is a term to describe the special form that some extramarital relationships take among migrant workers in urban areas. As can be gathered, it refers to those married migrated men and women with spouses left behind in rural areas who live together with another partner while in urban areas, free from the constraints imposed by their marital status.

The study of migration offers an ideal opportunity to examine how migration processes reshape gender relations in some transnational families. The analysis on Taiwanese migrants who came across the Taiwan Strait to open factories in Mainland China is a helpful case study of spousal separation. Shen (2016) used the concepts "situational singles" and "gender breaks" from marriage to describe Taiwanese couples who have children but experience long separations and feel free from the daily responsibilities related to their families and from the social and normative constraints imposed by their marital status (Deborah & Friedman, 2014, p 262). It is common for Taiwanese businessmen to engage in a variety of sexual liaisons, including taking local women as temporary wives or long-term mistresses with their competitive economic capacity and their international mobile status (Shen, 2008). While wives' tolerance for their migrant husband's extramarital sexuality sometimes allows them to stay in their marital situation, compared with the example of wealthy Taiwanese businessmen, male rural migrants have uncompetitive economic capacity and unattractive social status, thus only affording them "temporary spouses". Temporary spouses are a reasonable but unlawful phenomenon among this group of rural-urban migrants and keeps the partners under great ethical and legal pressures. Guo (2013) suggests several reasons for this phenomenon including the pre-existing rural-urban due structure which is blocking the integration of migrant

workers in urban life, and the psychological feeling of loneliness is coupled with a less spiritual well-being and weaker sense of social norms (Guo, 2013). According to my field study, however, "temporary spouses" were not just the product of the physiological needs and spiritual emptiness of migrant workers. The long duration of spousal separation does contribute, but the values of sexual freedom and openness in urban China as well as the lack of basic emotional and sexual needs may also be a factor in this bandwagon effect among migrant workers.

Since the 1980s, dramatic revolutions in sexual behavior in tandem with enormous economic and social changes have taken place in China. Sex and sexuality have become visible and publicly discussed components of everyday life in China today (Jeffreys & Yu, 2015, p 2). Increasingly, younger generations approve of and participate in pre-marital sex, which challenges traditional understandings of sex and gender roles in the country. Survey-based studies of Chinese sexual attitudes show that China is currently undergoing a sexual revolution, which brings more freedom and openness to Chinese sexual conceptions. One recent study conducted interviews with 136 male migrant workers at four construction sites in Beijing, and analyze their behaviors of buying commercial sex and the relationships among the trio of status, gender, and sexuality (Huang *et al*., 2011). Another survey on 3,200 migrant workers taken in nine cities in Yangtze River Delta district suggests that, non-marital sexual behaviors (including extramarital sexuality, buying commercial sex, and sexual assault) are very serious and frequent among migrant workers. In fact, 36.5% of the interviewees had bought sexual services in urban areas, while 30.6% reported having extramarital sex (Yang & Zhang, 2013). Miao, a 27-year-old girl who I met in the city of Wuxi, told me she was dating a married man. Miao picked up me in the train station with a man in his car. She told me that this guy was from the same village as her in Suzhou and worked in Shanghai now. He has a family, and I was sure I saw a picture of a baby girl in his car. We were hanging out and shopping together for one whole day. This man bought Miao bags and beautiful clothes and even "lent" money to her. When I asked Miao if she had a new relationship, she just told me that there was a rich guy who wants to buy a new apartment and a car for her. Then I was wondering

whether it was the married man, or not. Miao told me that the guy tried a lot to with her. This man did not feel shame about his extramarital relationship with Miao. He thinks that it is a symbol of success to have an extramarital relationship. Many other migrant workers cannot afford the large expenditure for another woman besides their wives.

> "When I first saw you, I knew you were too young and simple. I recommended that you watch a TV show called marriage battle. Go to see the TV show "marriage battle", you will know that marriage is troublesome and the relationship between men and women is not as simple as you think. You will see different kinds of family problems."

In the car, the man answered a phone from his wife. He behaved impatiently and tried to hang up the phone as soon as possible since everything he telling his wife was a lie. He could not tell her that he was on a date with his lover if he wanted to keep his family intact. Miao called and begged me to keep her situation a secret and say nothing when I came back to Fuli village. It was shameful for a girl to have this type of relationship. When I asked who his wife was, Miao told me that it was Shufen, who has a baby girl at home. I began to remember a silent girl with a baby girl in Fuli village. She is always quiet when I pass in front of her family house. She is a good daughter-in-law and housewife in the eyes of the villagers. She takes good care of the baby, stays with her parents-in-law, and never complains about her husband. Perhaps it is useless to complain.

Once in urban areas, migrant husbands suddenly found themselves living isolated, far away from home and having to work hard to satisfy their employers. They feel lonely just as their wives left behind do. Contrary with their wives, though, they have no constraint to find temporary partners. Zhaogen, who migrated out alone to work on a construction site without any support from his own family, hid his relationship with a local woman for almost two years until his daughter found this situation. Then the wife knew and had a heart attack. When he came back, his son and daughter beat him and the entire village knew it. He finally promised to stop the relationship and continued to live alone. It caused irritation of his son and daughter, because they found it very unfair to their mother who took on the housework and childcare at home. In his words, he explained:

> It was my fault, but everyone around me behaves like this. It (the extramarital relationship) is common outside (in the city). I will return to my family when I become too old to drive.

Her wife believed in Jesus. Now they keep in touch and behave like nothing different from married couples. When Zhao Gen comes back to his hometown during the Spring Festival, they still live together. This May, he broke one of his legs in a traffic accident and needed to come back home to have an operation, which was expensive in Zhejiang. His son took him to the local hospital and his wife took the responsibility of caring for him. He is still a member of his family now. His wife does not care what he has done in Zhejiang on the condition that he sends remittances back home because it is impossible for her to find a job outside. All she can rely on is her husband.

Guizhen's husband, Xinjian also had a temporary spouse. There were many teenage girls from Sichuan province in his shoe factory and a relative of Xinjian told me that he was dating a lot of girls in the factory. Some of the girls knew he was married but they did not care. He is a talkative guy and good at flirting with women. Xinjian had a lot of relationships with different kinds of women, ranging from teenage migrant workers to married women in the city. Although being married again, Xinjian still hangs out with several friends, telling his second wife this is due to the needs of his work. The world outside never seems to satisfy his curiosity.

In summary, this section has examined the differences between migrant husbands and left-behind wives in the conception of extramarital affairs. Male respondents admitted that extramarital relationships were "a common thing outside," which sometimes were pursued as a form of status, while left-behind wives were meant to feel ashamed of their dalliances and keep it as a secret. In the city, due to shifting values and peer influence, a massive influx of male migrant workers finds themselves in extramarital relationships, while many rural wives left behind are focused more on the traditional concept of keeping their husbands. Even if some rural wives have extramarital relationships they will be sure to do it in a very secretive way.

4. Conclusion

The goal of the above section was to investigate the gender relationships between wives left behind and migrant husbands in the context of Chinese rural-urban migration. Similar to former studies that emphasized the importance of gender stratification in migration, this study also demonstrates that women are different from men in their migration experiences. This study, however, focuses on the wives left behind who belong to a vulnerable group in the countryside in cross-comparison to their migrant husbands.

Based on various perspectives on gender stratification, we first examined the decision-making progress of migration and the interactions between rural wives and migrant husbands before migration, showing the dominant role rural men play in making the migration decision while wives are passive participants.

In this rural village, we found that the left behind wives took on more duties after their husbands' departures and suffered more physical and psychological burden. The larger burden, though making them the actually head of the household, does not improve their social status. Despite the increase in responsibility, left-behind wives are still economically and psychologically dependent on their migrant husbands. Many of them suffer from feelings of loneliness and helplessness. Their wishes to stay with their husbands often strengthen the gender stratification they experience.

The same as other Chinese research, this study shows a low level of marital satisfaction of rural wives left behind. Unlike other existing research, we examine the gender differences between rural wives and migrant husbands through their different attitudes and conceptions regarding extramarital relationships to show the privileges of migrant husbands and the vulnerability of their rural wives. In the current study, we have examined the gender outcome of Chinese rural-urban migration in a small village and find that a disadvantaged position of wives left behind in rural migrant families is reflected in all aspects. These findings call for the whole of Chinese society to pay more attention to the issue of wives left behind and give more care to this vulnerable group in

rural China. The limitations of the study are reflected, however, in the fact that it focuses only on women in rural areas without considering the situations of migrant women who take both family duties and urban jobs. The chapter 3 will explore whether the participation of more women in social labor can bring liberation for migrant wives and diminish the patriarchal systems that negatively affect these married couples and their families.

Chapter Three   The Rising Price of Wives: An Analysis of Bride-Price Increases in Rural China

"There is little chance to find a suitable girl now, because the young girls all went out to work. The countryside life is too boring for them and they want to stay in city. The girls always want to find an urban husband. A rural girl is worth more now and the parents do not need to worry too much about her marriage when she grows up. There are more rural boys left now. If the boy and his family do not have the ability to pay the bride price, he will never find a wife here. It is common. To find a wife, you need to build a two-story house, right? And it will cost ten thousand yuan at least. Then you need to do the decorations and this will be another giant payment. So, it all depends on if you have money or not. Without money, nobody will marry you.

A rural matchmaker, at his 54, in Fuli Village

I once asked one of my interlocutors about the current situation of rural marriage. She gave me the above explanation, which shows the surplus of unmarried rural boys in the countryside. Rural-urban migration causes vast numbers of youth to choose urban areas over their rural origins. There is little chance for a rural man to find an urban wife in urban areas due to social status. So rural males choose to go back to the countryside to find a local wife and form a relatively stable and reliable marriage. At the same time, rural girls often remain in urban areas to try to find an urban husband to settle down there. This mismatch in movements of unmarried young people is causing a scarcity problem in the rural marriage market. Marriage has become one of the hardest things to achieve for rural boys and their families now. Individual factors, family factors and local circumstances contribute to this difficulty. For example, if the rural boy is unattractive or from a poor family located in a less developed area, which is far away from the city, it will be nearly impossible for him to get a wife. He is left to a fate of lifelong bachelorhood without any doubt.

1.Introduction

Marriage is a strategy for women to migrate, and research about this social phenomenon has been popular among both international and Chinese internal migration studies (Piper & Roces, 2003; Adrian, 2006; Wang & Chang, 2002; Fan & Huang, 1998). Constrained by institutional characteristics, like rural origins, low education and social status, migration through marriage is a fast and efficient way for women from rural areas to move to cities and enter the urban labor market. Few studies concentrate on the changes the young migrant workers experience in marriage after the process of their rural-urban migration (Feng, 2006; Song, 2010). Rural marriage, however, has been undergoing profound change over the last few decades due to rural-urban migration of young labors as several scholars have documented (He, 2007; Xie, 2008). One factor worth study is the increase in bride prices in these rural areas. This study has thus far examined the changing dynamics of marriage in a Chinese rural village brought by the onslaught of rural-urban migration and will continue in this task by focusing in this chapter on rural marriage markets' process of exchange in bride-price and dowry. To do this, the chapter analyzes the increasing simplification of marriage ceremonies, the commercialization of marriage exchanges and the sharp increase in bride prices in contrast to Chinese traditional marriage culture in the recent past.

The chapter is divided into four sections. In the first part, I describe the phenomenon of the rapid increase of bride prices in rural areas in tandem with the rising tide of rural-urban migration. The next part provides a brief overview of major prospective on marriage exchange in both rural and urban areas. Then I turn to the core of the study - factors that influence the skyrocketing rural bride prices. Using a combination of primary data from the 2010 census and interviews from my field study, the chapter examines factors such as the unbalanced sex ratio, and the ways in which rural parents use different strategies in raising their sons and daughters to best suit their own hopes for marriage prospects. I next discuss the disadvantaged position of rural men in the marriage market, made worse by newfound independence and increased choice among more mobile rural

women and the phenomenon of cross-regional marriage, as well as the addition of some public policies that accelerate the decline of patriarchy. The last section spells out a framework of migration's influence on rural marriage according to my finding's theoretical and policy implications. The rise in bride prices is causing a higher number of 'bare branches' (bachelors) in rural villages, which will bring unforeseen challenges to the stability of society.

2.Skyrocketing Rural Bride Prices

One case study by Yan (2003) in a village named Xiajia, located in Heilong Jiang province in Northern China, gives a list of payments for marriage from 1950 to 1999 (see Figure 7). There is a dramatic increase in marriage payments over the course of five decades in this village, reflecting various factors like rising incomes (Yan, 2003). Today, the cost of a bride in rural areas is even higher, which causes a large number of men at marriageable ages to remain bachelors (Tucker & Van Hook, 2013).

Figure 7. Payments for Marriage in Xiajia village in Heilong Jiang Province in Northern China in the Past 50 Years (1950-1999).
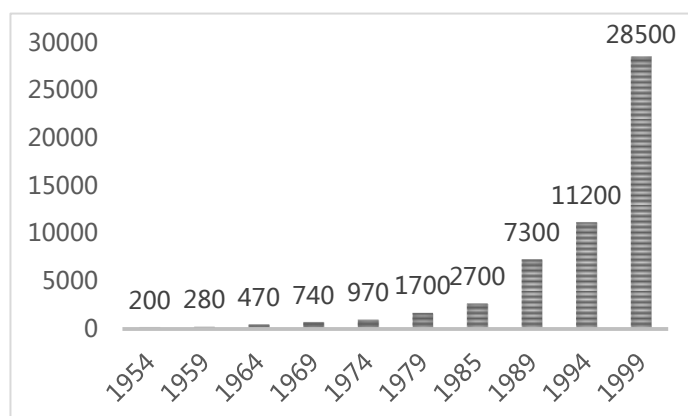
Data source: "Private Life Under Socialism: Love, Intimacy, and Family Change in a Chinese Village, 1949-1999"

Checking the details of marriage payments, one can see that more and more material requirements are now included in these transactions in rural areas. For example, cash, car, a new house and gold jewelry become add-ons. There is even a saying about the

prerequisite of marriage for a rural man: "one movable property, one immovable property, ten thousand purple and one thousand red, together with a large quantity of green". The movable property is a car, the unmovable property is a house, and ten thousand of purple stands for 50,000 *yuan* in cash (the color of the 5 *yuan* paper currency is purple). A thousand of red stands for 100,000 *yuan* cash (the 100 yuan paper currency being red) and, finally, green is the color of 50 yuan RMB. Therefore, the total payment for marriage to a rural girl is nearly 200,000 yuan in cash plus a house and a car. Compared with the yearly income per capita 10,772 *yuan* in 2015[7], this equals nearly 30 years of income for a farmer. In this context, a rural boy at a marriageable age (usually at their earlier 20s) needs to pay the amount of his life's income to his bride's family upfront, a task that is nearly impossible even with the whole family savings. Rural men who find it is economically difficult to find Chinese wives, instead sometimes choose to marry Vietnamese women because of relatively cheaper economic requirements, causing a small flow of cross-border marriage migration of Vietnamese women to China (Su, 2013).

During my field study in Fuli village, I had the opportunity to attend a migrant girl Long Mei's marriage ceremony just four days before the Chinese New Year. It was December 26th according to the Chinese Lunar Calendar, which was a good day to hold the ceremony due to a cultural preference for lucky numbers such as 8 or 6. Most of the couple's friends and relatives who had seldom seen each other over the last year came back home from the cities for the event. In fact, it is common to hold weddings during the period of Chinese spring festival when a lot of migrant workers flow back to their hometowns. There are usually two marriage ceremonies host separately in the bride's family and groom' family. The ceremony of the bride family is just to show their relatives that their girl is married and will be taken earlier in the morning away from her natal family to reach the best time for the marriage ceremony in the groom's family. If they cannot hold the marriage ceremony on time in the groom's family, it will be considered unlucky. The prospective husband of Long Mei was from Henan province that was too far away from his city and he need to drive at least five hours on the highway. So, the groom

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[7] General Situation of China's Agriculture and Rural Economy in 2015 and Prospects for 2016, Chinese National Bureau of Agricultural Investigation Corps.

negotiated about the date with the father of Long Mei and decided to came and receive her at early in the morning around five o'clock. At that time, it was still dark outside. He came to Suzhou one day before the ceremony. According to a local saying, it is bad luck if the groom meets the bride before their marriage ceremony. So, he stayed in a hotel in the city center and planned to receive Long Mei next morning at 5 o'clock so that they can arrive the hometown of the groom to hold their marriage ceremony right on time. The ceremony of the bride with her side of the family is relatively subordinate to the marriage ceremony of the groom's family. Beforehand, the groom should send everything needed for the marriage banquet to the bride's house, but the groom gave cash to the bride's parents instead. The parents of the bride just hold the ceremony to show that their daughter has gotten married.

Due to the limitations of preparation time, the father of Long Mei booked the wedding catering in a small restaurant in the center of Fuli town and we needed to drive 10 minutes to get there. "500 yuan per Table. It is really affordable," one of their older relatives told me in approval of this arrangement. From his point of view, the cheaper the marriage payment, the better for the family of the bride. When I asked how much they paid for the bride price, the father of Long Mei explained to me:

> He is from a remote village of Zhu Ma'dian city in Henan province and worked as a driver in Cixi city in Zhejiang province together with us. He is not so young anymore and has a three-year-old daughter from a former marriage, who is raised by his parents in the countryside in his hometown. We don't like him so much, but my daughter is not so young now, and she wants to marry him. He paid 60,000 yuan in total as a bride price to us; it is not a small amount, anyway.

The words of Long Mei's father portray a traditional attitude towards marriage in rural China, which is still common in the countryside. The father of the bride agrees with her free choice on the condition that the bride price can be paid before the marriage. In this case, the bride's family did not need to contribute any funds for their daughter's marriage. Rather, they receive the bride price from the groom or the family of the groom. As Randeria and Visaria (1984) point out, the bride price in India may be seen as an economic compensation to the bride's family for the loss of her labor. This is also true

among Chinese villagers, where it has long been accepted in traditional Chinese culture that a daughter will eventually move out from her parents' house and join her husband's family, thus providing an additional labor resource especially important in rural areas. Therefore, a valuable labor source is transferred from wife's family to husband's, although the woman's family is thought to have assumed the cost of raising the girl.

Another villager who has a daughter told me regarding bride price, "I deserve this. It still cannot neutralize the payment I have spent to feed my daughter. I spent the money on raising my daughter. He takes her home in the end. Then my daughter becomes his family member. There is no such business." In his view, the daughter will be transferred into a stranger's family and she will have no relation with her own family after her marriage. The old saying "*married daughters are like water spilled out, you can never take it back,*" best describes normative social attitudes around this phenomenon. On the contrary, raising a son, as popular thinking goes, can bring the fruits of the labor force back home, as well as secure a bride who will help the family and bear children. The bride price is a big return on investments. "My son will bring one more person to the family in the future, and my daughter will eventually become a stranger," one of their relative who sit near me on the table during the catering told me her logic of bride price. So, it is evident why parents are still willing to pay for the marriage of their sons. The father of Long Mei got drunk and said to her, "We can say goodbye to each other finally after your marriage."

In the eyes of rural villagers, it is useless for parents to bring up a girl because she will leave their house when she is apt for marriage. Some people even considered certain girls to be 'bargains' because the parents thought the bride price was too small compared to their investments in raising their daughters. They expected a higher bride price to compensate for their investment and contributions. After a daughter's marriage, her family not only suffers a loss of manpower but also experiences various financial losses. So, it is deemed reasonable to give some incentive and compensation to the bride's family for what they have invested in their daughter during her growth. In his book *"Peasant Life in China",* Fei Hsiao Tung argues, "The point must be made clearly that, from the economic point of view, the marriage is in fact disadvantageous to the girl's parents. The

girl, once she is mature, and grows up to be a good labor resource, will be taken away from her own parents, who have taken on all the expense of her upbringing, and then transferred to her husband's family, since the bride will live and work at her husband's house, this means a net loss to her parents"(Fei, 2013b). On the other hand, there is little incentive for the girl's family to invest in her at all, since she will eventually leave the household. Boys will always keep the family name and serve as a major labor force of the family.

Some Indian research argues that the bride price received by the father or brothers of the girl will then be used to get a wife for her brother (Randeria & Visaria, 1984). In China, similarly, a family that also has a boy at a marriageable age, will use this money as a bride price to bring a girl to the house. At the age of 26, Miao Miao, a rural woman, has already been married three times. For the first marriage, her father received 160,000 yuan from her groom, although this new couple divorced six months later because she found out he was sleeping with another woman. With this money, her father bought a car and her younger brother got married soon after, along with a first payment for a small second-hand apartment in the center of Suzhou city. The marriage of Yanling, the second daughter of Mrs. Zhu, provided a similar boon. Yanling married a wealthy, urban man who is 20 years older than her after she migrated out to work in Hunan Province. This man gave the family some cash as a marriage gift, which allowed the poor family to improve their life by building a new three-story apartment. Because of this apartment, her son was able to marry a woman from a neighboring village. But the marriage life of her second daughter was not so happy and led to divorce after three years with a 2.5 year-old-girl raised by the young women. The 27-year-old single mother still has one apartment in Changsha Hukou as well as one American-brand car.

As noted in Chapter two, Fuli Village is crowded with multi-story houses (often empty) because of the pre-requisite house necessary for an impending marriage. The house is not only a symbol of financial resources, but also a guarantee for the marriage. Long Mei's parents borrowed a great sum of money for the marriage of her older brother, Da Long, at the age of 25. His wife is a rural migrant worker from a neighboring village. He left

school at age 15 and followed his parents to go to Zhejiang province to work in a machine factory. Compared with other men from Dalong's village, his family is not that rich. Initially his parents were not so confident to help him find a wife. Dalong's father added a second story to a small bungalow they had to satisfy requirements of the girl. Dalong recalled to me that the marriage arranged by his parents help him figure out the practical issues of marriage, "I was 24 years old then. They arranged me to go on dates with girls. And some relatives also helped to find some suitable candidates from their towns. Then I started to meet different girls when I came back to my hometown those two years. But when it comes to marriage, girls are always very down to earth and it became utilitarian. They care about some practical issues, such as how many floors our house has, what is my job, and what they can get from my family." Mrs. Zhu also said to me, "People are always snobbish; without this new apartment, no woman will marry her son." However, after the family of Mrs. Zhu got this new apartment, this situation improved. Indeed, the elder sister of her son's wife also married a man in the same village. "Without house, without wife" becomes a default marriage rule now.

But a house is only the first step for marriage. Paying for the bride price and marriage ceremonies is the second step. The bride price is also called the 'payments for leaving the mother', and it includes the cash bride price and the in-kind bride price. In addition to paying for the wedding ceremony in the groom's house, the items for the wedding catering for the bride's family ceremony should also be paid by the groom. For example: 6 chickens, 6 fish, 6 cigarettes, 6 boxes of wine, 6 boxes of apples, 6 boxes of milk, 6 boxes of oranges, 6 boxes of beverage. Every item should be six-a lucky number. Now though that everyone is working in the city all year round, the in-kind bride price is converted into cash to save the time of marriage ceremony planning. "The rural families, which have sons in the house, always need to face the problem of bride price. The bride price for Dalong is to choose one of these three bride price options: 66 thousand yuan, 88 thousand yuan and 99 thousand yuan. And all the numbers were lucky numbers and could be unaffordable to a farmer's family. The father of Dalong spent 66 thousand in the end for the bride price to get married. Altogether, the marriage of Dalong cost his parents

roughly 160,000 yuan and a large amount of the funds was borrowed from their relatives and friends. After their son's marriage, the elderly couple migrated out again to work together with the new couple. It is urgent for the family to return the borrowed money. In the old paradigm of rural marriage, the new wife would have been taken into the family home to give birth to babies, do housework, and help with farming. Now, however, the groom will take his new wife along with him to work in the city.

A villager who knows Dalong's situation said, sighing, "This marriage made the father poor. The rural girls are really expensive now." Faced with the prospect of financial ruin over a marriage, parents always give a similar explanation, such as, "I have if my son has." They think the son's assets are also their own good fortune. Mrs. Zhu felt lucky that her son had married earlier. She had just built the house and only spent a thousand and one for the bride price for the marriage of her son. The implied meaning of the amount of money is that her daughter-in-law will be cherished since they chose her as the bride out of 10,000 candidates. But the old rules have recently been changed. She told me that, "The rural people live better than before. They go out to work for many years to save money for the marriage of their sons. Others have a tremendous and prodigious marriage ceremony. If you cannot afford it, it will be a joke." The bride price reflects inherent ideas in rural areas valuing customs that respects the bridal family. The higher a bride-price that is given, the more the man honors her family and the higher the woman's perceived status.

"In the past, whoever took ten thousand yuan for a bride price was the best one, but now fifty or sixty thousand is not sufficient to handle everything,". The neighbor of Mrs. Zhu told me, recalling her own marriage and commenting on the stark rise in costs since then, "When we got married, we could send to the woman's house just several baskets of food as a bride price, and the new bride just took farming tools to the groom's house." Times have changed from these simpler agricultural and farming focused gifts. Why are these shifts happening and how ends? At present, why is it so difficult to make a rural marriage transaction? The current study will examine rural marriage in terms of its function as an exchange between two families in a commercial marriage market that is simultaneously still based on older rural marriage conceptions of compensation to the bridal family.

3. Marriage Exchange Between Two Families

"Marriage has the primary function of ensuring the continuity of the lineage, without compromising the integrity of the heritage. The family not only contributes a family name ordered at the beginning of a full name, but also, to some degree, stands for the index of an individual's position in the social hierarchy, and the source of his renown and the reminder of his low status… It is hard to understand that the agreement between the two families should take the form of a transaction subject to the most rigorous rules" (Bourdieu 2008:12). From the narrative of Bourdieu, the marriage is not an incident just involve two young people, it is rather an exchange between two families which has a premise that the marriage will benefit the groom's family on the continuity of their lineage. As a social institution recognized by custom or law, marriage not only connotes a life event including affection and love between men and women, it also contains an exchange progress of economic materials between two different families. In rural areas, bride price was usually negotiated between brides' and grooms' families through matchmakers (Zhang, 2000). As noted previously, the pervasive perception of marriage in rural areas is that after a girl leaves her familial home and marries into her husband's home, she and her children should be the assets of the husband's family. She does not need to obey filial piety toward her own parents since the moment of her marriage. Therefore, marriage has never been the relationship between two people but between the two families. Marriage is a family choice rather than a strictly personal choice. Parents are always involved in the marriage of their adult children, especially when their children are bound by issues such as housing, social welfare and security. The high cost of housing in China means that single people often depend on financial and other supports from their family. In turn, the cultural and legal expectations that children will support their parents in old age means that their parents have a strong investment in the marital decisions of their children (Jeffreys & Yu, 2015).

Due to the conception of gender inequality and one-child policy, the urban parents contribute all they have to the marriage of their children (no matter sons or daughters).

Thus, the skyrocketing of bride price could be only observed in rural villages. The bride price as a backward marriage conception is discarded while most of the urban marriage patterns therefore tend to follow a sponsorship pattern rather than a compensatory one (Wei,2008; Chen,2016). In this sense, the dowry and the bride price are a reciprocal exchange rather than solely the responsibility of the groom's family. The sponsorship pattern points to the conception that "the marriage gifts are actually the contribution of couples' parents to sponsor the new family, and this is the periodic renewing of the material basis of the household for each generation" (Fei, 2013). Then Fei points out, "It is far and over to regard the bargaining of marriage gifts as a kind of economic transaction. It is not a compensation to the girl's parents. In fact, all the gifts, excepted to offer to the girl's relatives, will finally flow back to the boy's family as the dowry, to which the girl's parents will add nearly as much as the marriage gift" (Fei, 2013). This may be a reciprocal conception of marriage. The bride price is transformed into a dowry and taken into the nuclear family by the bride, which shows the financial support of two families for the new family. This relatively progressive concept of marriage mainly happened in urban areas because of the burgeoning of the nuclear family, relatively more rational concept than their rural counterpart (Chen, 2016). In more economically developed cities, this marriage pattern became the dominant one.

Randeria and Visaria (1984) show that both men and women from high castes in India pay for their marriages to reach a balance. The groom gives a bride price to show respects for the bride's family and he also expects some kind of dowry from the girl and her family. Fei (2013) writes that the dowry should match with the bride price in order to not humiliate or undermine the status of the bride and her family. Fei argues that, "How much the girl's parents will give is difficult to estimate, but according to the rule generally accepted, they will be disgraced if they cannot match at least the marriage gift, and the girl's family position in her new family will be an embarrassing one." Case studies in Indian and in some Muslim societies show that the payments of dowry can be substantial enough to affect the welfare of women after marriage (Rastogi & Therly, 2006; Ashraf, 1997). This sponsorship pattern of marriage is not a rare occurrence in urban areas, and

the pressure on men's families is correspondingly lower. Generally, the men's families will be responsible for the preparation of the house, but the woman's family is responsible for the house decor. This marriage mode reflects equality for each family and is also generally accepted by most young people. In contrast with the high rural bride price, the concept of marriage is increasingly open in urban areas. Some young people with exposure to urban centers cannot understand the more traditional, rural conceptions of their parents. Manman, the girl who married an urban man (as described before), resents her parents' and grandparents' requirement for the bride price, asking, "Is it a sale of a daughter?" She thinks of a marriage as the ultimate outcome of love and romance between two people, and that the bride price is unfair to the man and his family. Despite these protests, rural marriage, bride price and all, are becoming more and more commercial now in the countryside.

Goody provides a description of his influential model of marriage exchange in his studies on dowry and bride wealth in Eurasia and Africa, pointing out that some societies in Eurasia transmit property through daughters via dowry or inheritance while some African societies do not (Goody, 1971). Nevertheless, the Indian dowry institution is quite different. In Xiang Biao's research on Indian overseas IT workers, a family with a successful IT worker son could attract a giant amount of dowry from his wife's family (Xiang, 2007). In the traditional rural Chinese case of patrilocal marriage, the husband gains claim to his new wife's labor and the children she will bear. The wife also gains some privileges through marriage, such as the claim to maintenance on her husband's estate and a place of honor in ancestral rites (Watson & Ebrey, 1991). Every marriage provides a chance to gain or lose economically for each family. Just as Bourdieu (2008, p. 7) pointed out, "Thus, the logic of marriages is dominated by one essential objective, the safeguard of the patrimony; it operates in a particular economic situation, characterized in particular by the scarcity of money". Within this connect, then, the negotiation of a bride price between two families is the lynchpin to the marriage market.

Other China-focused literature studies the population of bachelors in rural areas, especially in less-developed rural areas due to the rise in bride price (Shi, 2006; Li &

Du, 2009; Jia, 2008). For example, Jia (2008) argues that the difficulties for rural men to get married lies on the scarcity of marriage resources and the increase of bride price, but few scholars offer an illustration as to why the rural bride price has risen along with rural-urban migration. In the current study, we will give three impact factors as to why this may be: the one-child policy and unbalanced sex ratio; the phenomenon of cross-*hukou* marriage; and greater independence and value placed on women.

4.Factors That Influence the Rising Costs of Marriage Gifts

One-child Policy and The Unbalanced Sex Ratio

In the 1980s, the Chinese government put in place a one-child policy to limit population growth in this highly populated nation. The policy slowed down the growth ratio of China's population, but also resulted in some unintended consequences, one of which is an unbalanced sex birth ratio due to a bias for having a male child. A more detailed picture of the unbalanced sex ratio is provided by the 2010 Population Census, which surveyed 34 provinces in the whole country. There were 1,190,060 newborn babies in China with the sex ratio of 121:100 from November 2009 to October 2010, meaning that 121 boys are born for every 100 girls (see Figure 8). This is far more than the Demography meaning of balanced sex ratio (100:104).

Figure 8 The Overall Sex Ratio of China Including 34 Provinces
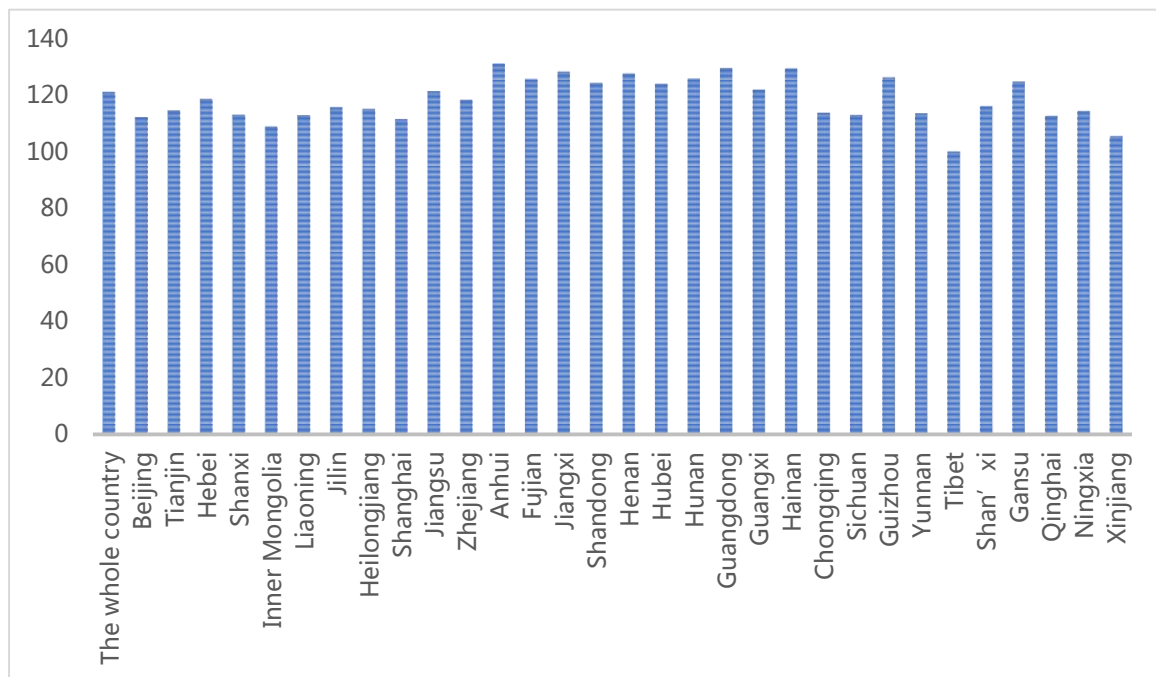
Data source: 2010 Census from Chinese National Bureau of Statistics

Researchers attribute China's unbalanced sex ratio to three reasons: rapidly falling fertility, a preference for sons, and technology revealing the sex of the fetus. Son preference has persisted in the face of sweeping economic and social changes in East and South Asian countries such as China, India and the Republic of Korea (Gupta, 2003). Boys are generally regarded as the heir to the family bloodline, while girls are considered as eventual outsiders. This traditional conception resulted in the prevalence of patriarchal phenomena in rural areas. However, due to the one-child policy, many rural people are restricted in their procreation in a new era of legal abortion. Coupled with sonogram technology to detect an unborn child's gender, abortion became a technique to limit the birth of female babies. Although it is illegal for a doctor to tell the gender of fetus just in case of the abortion because of the son preference, there is still space to cross the law. China's unbalanced sex ratio at birth leads to an unbalanced sex ratio at marriageable ages and to more unmarried men at older ages (Tucker &Van Hook, 2013). Figure 9 shows the marriage status of rural male and female individuals above 15 years old according to 2010 Census data. The number of rural girls above 15 is significantly less

than males at the same age, while the number of married female is far more than that of married males. From this data, one can conclude that there is growing difficulty for rural men to marry in the countryside.

Mrs. Jin, a villager who has three daughters, who are all married, said to me with a happy voice, "All of you want boys, now you suffer, right? All boys around you now. Look, how to find a wife then?" One of her daughters married into Jiangsu Province to a local businessman, and the other two found their husbands when they were working in mold factories in Zhejiang province. She doesn't have to take care of her grandchildren for her daughters either. She just grows plants in her garden and plays mahjong with other villagers. She said, "Life would have been being tough for me if I had one son. My husband and mother-in-law pushed me to keep giving birth. My husband got angry because he paid a lot of fines for having more than one child to the village commission. Then I even felt guilty because I did not give birth to a son. People even look me down. But I am the happiest person now."

Figure 9 Marital Status of Rural Males and Females above 15 Years Old in 2010 Census
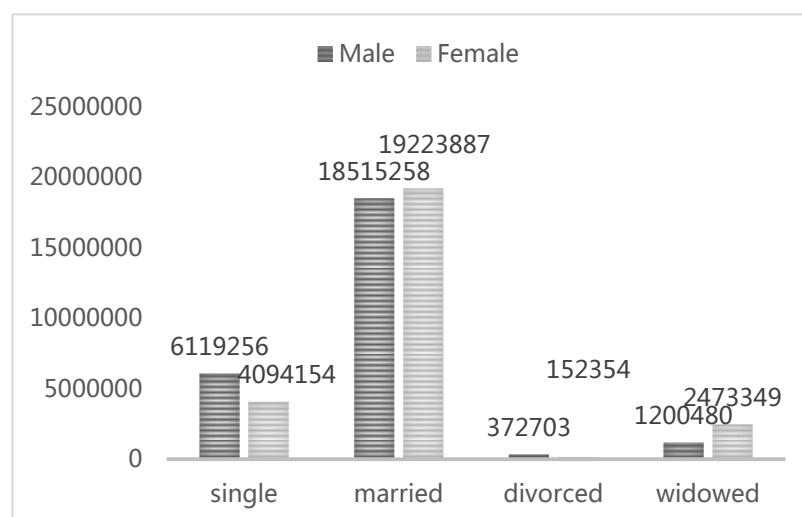
Data source: 2010 Census from Chinese National Bureau of Statistics

The unbalanced sex ratio's bias toward males not only reflects women's secondary social status as a result of patriarchal family institutions, but also embodies the differentiated investment strategy rural parents have for their children. Take the different levels of

investment in the education of their sons and daughters, for example. Rural parents prefer to invest more in the education of their sons. In the eyes of Chinese rural parents, there is no need for a girl to have much knowledge, all the social skills she needs focus on how to take care of her husband and parents–in-law's household. There are some sayings that best describe these attitudes, such as, "It is better for a girl to know nothing" (*nv zi wu cai bian shi de*). Although official policy provides equal education opportunities for males and females, and these concepts were even written in the education law of the People's Republic of China, as noted in Chapter 2, more girls are prone to drop out of school when their families face economic difficulties. This is also apparent in Figure 3, which show the gender differences of education in schools at all levels. This is not a trend across all cultures with bride prices, however. Research on Indian dowries shows that rural girls are advocated to be well educated in order to cut down the net dowry the family must pay (Xiang, 2007). In sub-Saharan Africa and in parts of Asia that have the custom of bride prices, higher female education at marriage is associated with a higher bride price payment received. This provides an incentive for parents to invest in girls' education (Ashraf *et al*., 2015). Yet, there are no empirical studies in China showing that the educational level of brides has a significant impact on the rise of the bride price.

Rubie S. Watson and Patricia Buckley Ebrey (1991) suggest that marriage choices can be compared to market choices, with the various decision makers weighing an assortment of factors, including the age and attractiveness of their children, the supply of potential spouses, and other demands on their resources. In China, individual traits pale in comparison to the influence of the income level of the groom's family and the level of local economic conditions on the negotiation of bride price. If the groom's family is poor, women prefer to ask for more money as a future living expense, if rich, the woman will instead ask for relatively less money as a bride price, since economic support can be expected from the husband's family. Similarly, research on India shows that landholdings by the parents of perspective spouses significantly influence the net dowries the female should pay, while none of the individual traits of the bride and groom (such as educational level, height, age) have an equally significantly value (Rao,1993).

Furthermore, the main educational level of both rural females and prospective grooms are, on average, no higher than high school according to the 2010 Census (see Figure 10). Therefore, if we consider only the supply and demand in a finite local rural marriage market (and not individual characteristics), rural girls occupy an advantageous position that increases their bargaining power, while rural men are under enormous pressure due to the high cost of marriage.

Figure 10 The Educational Level of Rural Females and Males Above 6 Years Old
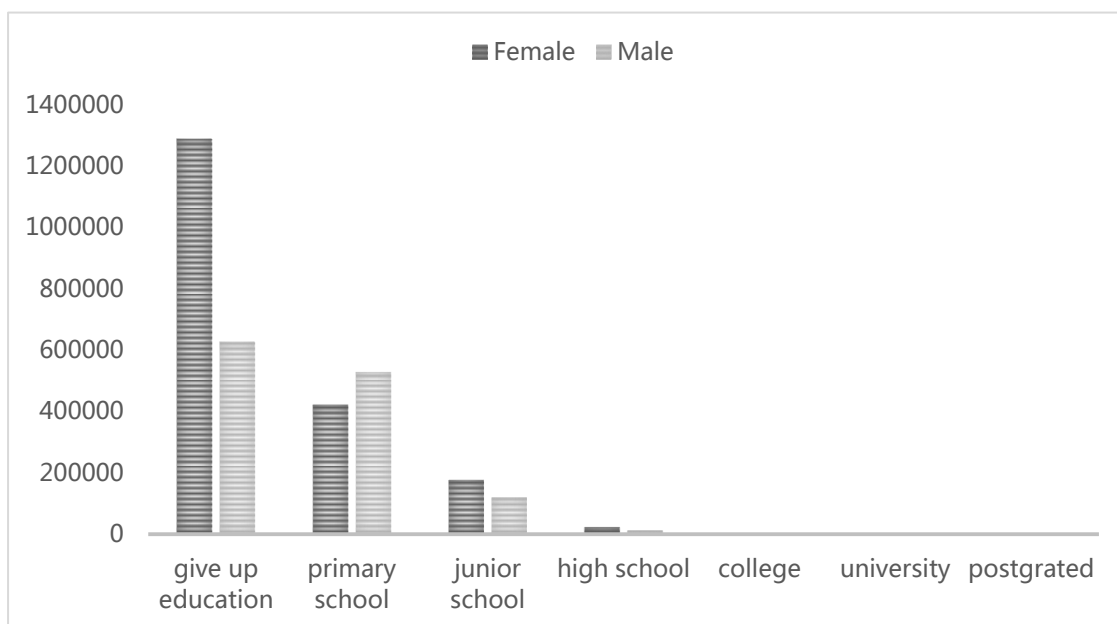
Data source: 2010 Census from Chinese National Bureau of Statistics

Phenomenon of Cross-*hukou* Marriage

Research on migration often defines it as "a ticket out of poverty" based on the imbalanced development of geographic areas and the associated opportunities therein (Kothari, 2002; Siddiqui, 2012). As stated previously, marriage is a highly efficient means to relocate to a favored destination, especially for women (Kalpagam, 2005). The uneven development between Chinese rural and urban areas not only provides favorable conditions for what is called cross-*hukou* marriages for rural females. The kind of marriage means the spouse has different household registration. Here, a girl with a rural *hukou* get married with a boy with an urban one could be seen as a cross-*hukou* marriage, and vice versa. Table 10 shows that, according to the 2010 Census, 8,519,050 women

have managed their rural-urban migration through marriage, which is roughly six times bigger than the number men who have done so. There is no significant gap in the total number between male and female migrants in China. Since the demand for men at marriageable ages rises while the supply of marriageable women decreases, there is no doubt that bride prices will also rise in the marriage market.

Table 10 Migration Reasons for Females and Males in 2010 Census

Migration reasons	Male	Female	In Total
China in total	88617297	86444308	175061605
Labor and business	31247814	22350350	53598164
Job change	5023992	2899195	7923187
Learning and training	12867261	13144998	26012259
Following one partner	12424969	16572006	28996975
Following a relative	3833937	4360868	8194805
Change of household	12480836	11055339	23536175
Borrowing a household	959161	791750	1750911
Marriage	1876815	8519050	10395865
Other reasons	7902512	6750752	14653264

Data source: 2010 Census from Chinese National Bureau of Statistics

Rural women are equally involved in this tide of migration as, and not just as passive movers (Fan & Huang,1998). It seems in contrast with the statement in the rural women left behind (see Chapter 2). However, this study is about the unmarried young girls without family burden who face their choices to marry. The research of Li and Long (2009) shows that female migrant workers are more prone to stay in the city than male migrant workers. Female migrant workers become more independent, and some of them have enough ability to give up possibility of going back to rural areas, which causes the shortage of marriageable women there. Most rural girls report feeling more confident and liberate themselves from rural villages (Fan & Huang,1998). When I met Yanling, the second daughter of Mrs. Zhu who married an urban man, in her apartment in Changsha, the capital of Hunan province, she told me

> "You are young and you need to find a job. If you have a good career first, you can find a man easily. Don't waste time on that man. You have a bright future."

Yanling told me that she preferred to stay at her mother' house while she was pregnant because the mother of her husband is too old to take care of her daughter. Her sister-in-law was pregnant at the same time. Mrs. Zhu was quite busy with caring for two pregnant women. After the birth of a baby girl, Yanling chose to go back to her apartment in Changsha and hire a baby-sitter to look after the baby. But it was costly to raise a baby in this way. Her husband needs to pay 5,000 yuan per month and she needs to buy clothes for the baby-sitter twice a year to make sure that her baby is well kept by the woman. This early spring, the babysitter was fired. Yanling brought her baby girl back to her hometown to save money and wait until she can send the girl to a local kindergarten together with her niece. Afterward, she would go back to Changsha and continue her work in a famous spa shop.

The marriage radius of a rural bride becomes bigger than ever after the influx of rural-urban migration. A survey in late 1980s found that most rural marriages did not exceed a 25-km radius because of poor transportation infrastructure, patriarchal lineage and a strong desire for kinship networks. But this local tradition and stable marriage circle were completely undone during the progress of rural-urban migration and increased demand for brides across a greater geographic area. According to the 1990 Census, marriage accounted for 28.2 percent and 28.9 percent of inner provincial and interprovincial female migration between 1985 and 1990. Song (2010) mentions that inter-provincial marriages occur more frequently in rural communities based on the data of six rural Chinese villages. Generally, Chinese brides need to move a short distance to join their husband's families. With a relatively weak awareness of the law, the old concept of rural marriage of the villagers is still popular nowadays. They prefer a bride to be not too far away in an "acquaintance society" in the case of the incidence of fleeing brides. So, a matchmaker was always necessary to find candidates for a prospective spouse following the direction of a boys' family in the same village or in a village not too far away. Due to many of the best-quality matches having already moved to the cities, matchmakers must widen their scope.

"The daughter-in-law outside is unreliable. The bride usually tends to escape due to the

poor conditions in the village." The matchmaker in Fuli village told me why the rural parents chose to find their son a local wife nearby. The research of Song (2010) suggests that the occurrence of fleeing brides has happened in several villages in Fujian, Guizhou and Henan province. Miao Miao, who appeared earlier in this chapter, did escape from her third marriage. It is not easy for a woman, who has a child and divorced twice, to find a new husband again in this small city. Miao Miao married a man who is really ugly and poor but willing to pay her 30,000-yuan (about 5000 euro) cash as bride price from a remote village in another town. Soon after the marriage, she decided to migrate to Wuxi in Jiangsu province, and work in a factory. But the poor guy migrated to a city nearby and work in a construction site. This led to the end of her third marriage after five months. Her third husband threats to sue her in court because she just takes the bride price and doesn't fulfil the duty as a wife. But they didn't get the marriage license with a secular marriage ceremony in the village. It means they just have a marriage *de facto* rather than a legal marriage. In this situation, the man will not get the bride price back even he sent Miao Miao into the court. At the same time, they are not working in the same city so that it is not easy for her third husband to catch her. Every time the man phoned her, she would power her telephone off. "He is too ugly, you cannot bear to see him for a while." Then she showed me photos in her WeChat with an embarrassed face.

With the rise of rural-urban migration, the marriage circle of Fuli Village has gradually expanded. The local marriage circle, which was originally closed to a lesser extent, has been increasingly involved in the national marriage market. Many rural young men and women must compete in the national marriage market, in which urban males occupy a more advantageous position compared with rural men. Generally, the expansion of the rural marriage pool can enrich spouse selection of rural youth, enable marriage resources to break through the restriction of traditional intermarriage areas, and achieve optimal allocation within the broader marriage market. However, the disparities between rural and urban individuals competing for marriage resources exert great pressure on rural males who are less desirable in the nationwide marriage market. As a result, large groups of rural males return to rural areas to search for their brides but find few marriageable girls

left. For example, Dalong told me that it is was not easy for his matchmaker to find him his wife in Fuli village.

Since marriage becomes a means to achieve urban residency for rural girls, such marriages often involve a young, rural woman and a significantly older man with failing physical and/or mental health. Despite this, his urban residence offers the rural woman improved living conditions and employment opportunities for the young woman that will ultimately help her family. Men, who are socially or economically disadvantaged, but locally privileged, can draw brides from a far distance (Fan & Huang, 1998). Yanling told me her mother's comments on her husband:

> "I even don't want to see the face of my son-in-law. He is bald. I want to suggest him to wear fake hair whenever he comes to my house."

When Yanling found herself pregnant, she didn't want to hold the wedding ceremony in her hometown. But Mrs. Zhu opposed the idea. She said it would induce the tongues of gossips and humiliate the whole family if you bring back a baby without getting married. So, she came back and asked the younger brother of her husband to pretend to be the groom in the ceremony. For Yanling and her family, they just want to show their neighbors that it makes sense that Yanling have a baby within a marriage. They don't care about if the marriage is recognized by law. In the end, Yanling legally married her urban husband to give a household registration of the baby. (The law regulates that the household registration of a new born baby should present the policemen the marriage license and both of parents should present.)

> My marriage almost walks to an end now. My child's father works and lives in Shaoyang (another city of Hunan province). I live with my baby in Changsha. As time flies, our relationship has become not so good."

Her husband is wealthy and can afford Yanling's urban life, at least for the moment. Moreover, the fortune of Yanling's urban husband brings a lot of benefit to her whole family. However, they have little affection for each other and this may lead to an end of her marriage. The cross-*hukou* marriage is not only a choice for the rural young woman,

but also a family strategy that helps the family acquire and save social capital. For the case of Yanling, her marriage provides stable economic conditions for the eventual marriage of her small son and improves the fortune of her family. The case of rural India shows similarities. The research of Kalpagam (2005) on "America varan marriage" suggests that the family of Tamil Brahmans seek to enhance their social status in their own communities and save their social capital for the future by arranging their children's marriage with prospective spouse studying or working in North America. This diasporic matrimonial arrangement based on the residential or visa status of the immigrant male in America and also the comparatively disadvantaged status of the bride. In the Chinese context, however, both rural men and women have the same right to migrate out to work, so we do not have to consider the gender difference in rural-urban migrations. When we look at marriage choices for male and female migrant workers, the internal male migrants to not have this privilege to offer his prospective wife. Nevertheless, urban citizens can offer a citizen *hukou* for his rural wife. Therefore, we consider that cross-*hukou* marriage is a more optimal choice for rural girls and their family.

The Independence and Value Increase of Rural Girls

The fundamental source of women's subordinate status is not economic institutions but the patriarchal family, which is a kind of traditional system of gender stratification with roots in traditional Chinese Confucian culture (Greenhalgh, 1985). Confucian culture imposes the men's dominant position both inside and outside the household, which ranges from the country and the government to everyday family life. Traditional China holds that there are three cardinal guides (*san gang*) in human life which are the essence of moral obligation, namely: king guides subject, father guides son and husband guides wife (Han & Watson, 1964). This manifest itself in an unequal status between men and women in their family life. Marriage in China in the ancient time (The era of Feudal Society) was under parents' orders and with the help of matchmakers (*fu mu zhi ming, mei shuo zhi yan*). Grooms and brides didn't always know each other before their wedding. This was a secular arrangement, and divorce was easy but not frequent, because one man can have more than one wife (a main wife and the other wives which were called concubines) in

his house, as long as his family can afford this. And there is a saying, "three wives and four concubines" (*sān qī sì qiè*) to depict this polygamous institution which particularly aids in the production of sons and brings benefits to the name of the whole family. Divorce traditionally meant getting rid of the wife (*xiu qi)* and sending her back to her family. This brought humiliation to the wife's family and it was almost impossible for those women to marry again or find a better groom than her ex-husband. For example, Southeast the Peacock Flies is the first long narrative poem in Chinese literary history to describe a tragic love story of a divorced woman during Jian An era (196-220) in the Eastern Han Dynasty. The story goes like this: Liu, wife of Jiao, a clerk in the Hujiang Prefecture, vowed not to remarry after being kicked out of the house of her husband by the arrogant mother-in law. She drowned herself when pressured by her own family. At the bad news, Zhongqing hanged himself on a tree in his court (Minford & Lau, 2000, p 396). However, the victory of Chinese communists in 1949 meant that a full-scale assault on the most ancient and elaborate patriarchal institutions in China was mounted (Therborn, 2004, p 93). The Chinese government issued a new marriage Law in May 1950, proclaiming the establishment of a new democratic marriage system based on the free choice of partners, on monogamy, and on equal rights for both genders (Chinese Marriage Law, 1950). The marriage laws and regulations later on gave women even more rights and brought them into a more equal status with men. Rural girls now technically had the right to choose a future partner as her social status improved. As one of my interlocutor's in Fuli village told me:

> However, as a rural girl, life is quite easy now. She can afford to take care of herself from the jobs in urban areas, although her wages is not so much, and she doesn't need to worry about the house. She is free to choose her life. The countryside is poor and backward, while the rural men are not so well educated. So why should she marry a rural boy and trap her future in rural areas? And this will not do benefit to their children.

From this narrative, one sees that rural-urban migration has not only brought forth increased freedom of choice and independence for unmarried rural women, but has also improved their social status accordingly. Rural girls generally take on family duties and

domestic work without income, which will be consistent with the expectations from their future husbands. Migration, however, can change this. A rural girl can now engage into a money-making career and support herself. Young women from rural areas can do other work besides taking on family. According to Marx′s theory (Marx, 1992) of the unity of social use value and value, the use value of one commodity determines the value of it. If we see a rural girl as a commodity in a rural marriage exchange, the use value of her increases, so her intrinsic value should also increase accordingly. Research from the International Organization of Migration (IOM) shows that migrant daughters must give their income to their fathers before marriage, while this amount of money is transferred into the hands of her husband after marriage (Piper, 2005). There is no evidence to show the practice of China is similar, but the saving of the daughter is considered as the fortune of her natal family, while she and her savings will become the fortune of the family of her husband after marriage. Nian, a villager who has a daughter told me about her calculations:

> "How much can the little girl raise per year? (She means a big amount of money.) She married him, works to make money, gives birth to children, takes care of the children and the parents- in-law. It is merciful to charge him just 66 thousand yuan. The daughter becomes your labor force after marriage, and all her savings should be yours in the end."

5.Conclusion

The current study attempts to investigate the reasons behind the increase in rural bride prices that have been observed in Fuli village amidst the background of rural-urban migration. It adapts the perspective of the marriage market and finds that there is currently a marriage squeeze caused by the imbalanced, male-biased gender ratio in China. As a result, there is a surplus of unmarried young men in rural marriage markets, which has significantly caused the rise in bride prices.

In rural society, the prevailing conception of marriage is that a bride price is compensation for the labor force participation of the bride that her family loses upon giving her up to the groom's family. By contrast, urban marriage conceptions view the

exchange of the bride price and dowry as a sponsorship for the new spouse in their future family from both sets of parents. This chapter primarily focused on the concept of compensation, which is popular in rural China. At the same time, it critically examined a marriage market in rural areas in which rural women are commodities that the grooms or the family of grooms ostensibly 'buy' from the bride's parents. From this perspective, pervasive gender stratification in traditional, rural areas have provided objective conditions for forging a sellers' market of marriage which may benefit the bride and her family during the negotiation of bride price. The supply of rural young women cannot meet the demand of rural men in the context of rural-urban migration, which offers young people the opportunity to work in urban areas, while also allowing for fresh analysis of the marriage market in the rural-urban context. The increasingly disadvantaged position of rural men in the marriage market compared to urban men is worth further study.

Marriage as an urban migration strategy has become an efficient way for many rural girls to transcend poverty and rural life. On the opposite end of the spectrum, rural men are forced to return to local, rural marriage markets as a back-up plan for married life. Yet the continued scarcity of rural women induces the rural groom faces fiercer competition than ever along with the highest bride prices in Chinese history. Though this chapter has shown that rural-urban migration for unmarried women may change their status and make them more independent, this may change after they marry and are beholden to the groom's family. As discussed in this chapter, further study is necessary to examine the potential social and policy implications moving forward as a result of the growing population of rural men who cannot afford to marry and may de-stabilize certain aspects of society. Furthermore, rising bride prices could begin to be a source of contentiousness and conflict between families in rural areas if prices continue to rise. A limitation of this study is that it only considers the general state of marriage and did not consider remarriage or second marriage. For the purpose of the chapter, marriage was analyzed in terms of its function as a process of resource exchange between two families, yet marriage is also often a symbol of affection and commitment between two young people. Future studies should pay more attention to the subtle nuances between the intimacy of

relationships and purely economic motivations.

Chapter Four   Social Inclusion of Migrant workers in Urban China

Introduction

Since the beginning of the 1980s, China's large rural population has moved to urban areas to search for employment opportunities. According to classical theory in development economics, the progress of urbanization and industrialization goes hand in hand with rural-urban migration (Lewis, 1954b; Lucas, 2004). It also should be made clear that the process of urbanization also occurs in the context of rural-urban segregation (Chen & Lu, 2009). There are few countries in the world like China, which has a huge population of migrant workers who have few equal opportunities in urban employment, and virtually no signs of significant upward mobility in their social status (Bian, 2003). This large-scale population migration has provided continuous human resource support for the social and economic development of the country and has contributed tremendously to urban construction. In the meantime, the segregation of migrant workers into urban areas has also drawn widespread attention as to whether migrant workers experience social inclusion in their place of residence (Li & Li, 2010; Tan, 2003; Wang, 2001; Li, 2012). Chapter Four will include three parts. The first part considers the motivations of the migration of rural migrant workers. The second part analyzes the specific modes of migration from rural to urban areas. The third part looks at the various aspects of urban migrant workers' inclusion/exclusion and proposes policy recommendations accordingly.

Part 1 Determinants of Rural-Urban Migration: Rural Push Factors and Urban Pull Factors

In many countries, labor migration from rural areas to urban regions includes two processes: The first being the process of a labor force moving from hometown to outside regions, and the second being the process of migrants settling down in that outside destination. Owing to previous restrictions on mobility, rural localities have been isolated from national and region-wide market and information linkages. When there is the possibility to migrate and make more profits, rural migrants use their own experiences and resources in local areas to engage in urban areas. The funds they bring back home also promote changes to the local policy environment and infrastructure, thus creating more development in rural locales. One manifestation of this significant to my primary field site is the newly constructed houses in Fuli village. In the following section, I examine how labor migration is happening in urban areas and which factors most influence their decisions. I then describe the monetary and non-monetary factors affecting migrant workers' willingness to stay in the city.

Why do so many migrant workers intend to work in the city? According to the Survey on Chinese Migrant Workers (Li, 2003), the factors that affect migrant workers are as follows: urban income is high; rural income is lower; they want to go out to see the world, do not have the opportunity to make money, too poor in rural areas, hard living conditions, lack of better opportunities in rural areas, other people are out, affected by the others, urban living conditions are good, occupation is not satisfied at home, rural taxes are too heavy, stay at home with nothing to do, the rural educational condition is poor, fewer educational opportunities, reluctant to do agriculture, conservative ideology in the countryside, willingness to go out. Both push and pull factors demonstrate that rural-urban inequalities exist in resource allocation in comparison to the privileged position of urban areas (see Table 11). It was mainly due to the economic reform that could be traced back to 1979 when the incumbent president Deng proposed an Open Up Reform to give

the priority to develop the economics in the eastern coastal areas (Deng,1979). According to my doctoral research, the huge difference between urban and rural areas is seen as the main motivation for the rural-urban migration of migrant workers.

Table 11 Push and Pull factors of Rural-urban Migration

Push factor in rural areas	Pull factors in urban areas
The low-income levels in rural areas	Urban income is high
No opportunity to make money	Urban living conditions are good
Too poor in rural areas	Go see the world
Hard living,	Other people are out (peer effect)
Lack of better opportunities	
Occupation is not satisfied at home	
Rural taxes are too heavy	
Nothing to do	
Rural educational condition is poor	
Unwilling to do agriculture	

Poor family cannot bear anything!

Bao Laoban, a team leader in a construction site in Beijing, is from Anyang in Henan province. He was born in 1973 and migrated away from his mountainous hometown in the 1990s. At the beginning of his migration, he went to Taiyuan in Shangxi province, working in a construction site. He told me that his house in the countryside is right behind the mountains, and that they could also hear the birds sometimes. Before migrating out, he was farming in his village, but their family did not have enough farmlands. He left his wife at home to look after the children and farming. They rent out their farmland to other people in the town, with only 0.8 mu (1 *mu* ≈ 666.67 square meters), not even one *mu* for themselves. They have agricultural machines to use which helps his wife to manage the land without becoming too tired. He told me that he harvests his two acres of land in the old village and it does not surpass the harvest of the 0.8 *mu* that they rent out. When I asked him why he left, he emphasized that the reason was economic. He told me about his poor childhood in the village, showing that migrating out is the only way to solve the economic problems in his family.

> "Listen! When I was a small child, there was no fertilizer for the farmland. We
> had to take a small basket to gather the shits of cows around the whole village.

> Then the chemical factory came out, but we had no money to buy the fertilizer, so we still took the baskets to collect the feces of animals and livestock. Usually, I took a shovel to pick up the dry feces and delivered them home with the baskets."

> "Farmers who have migrated were generally after the 1980s. That is to say, look at our situation, we find it's useless to farm and stay at home, so we chose to go out. In addition, after the reform and opening-up policy (since 1979), some villager pioneers came back with more money and we followed them and migrated out."

When I asked if he belongs to the later ones that followed the pioneers of migrant workers, he gave me an affirmative answer. He followed his friend and worked as a construction worker in Shanxi province because the work in a construction site does not require any level of education. He admitted he had a low education level, recalling of his student life:

> "I am not well educated, and I have been in high school for only a month or three months. I remember my first English class and I know that Karl Marx was born in Germany, because everyone was forced to recite the chapter. Some of my classmates can communicate with the teacher in English but I had difficulty. I am not a smart person and my mind is not so clear in class. There were nine classes in our year, each class had about sixty students, and I was under the average. In the end, I gave up studying and engaged in a construction team. I was only a young boy and did not finish my high school. I followed one friend and worked in Shanxi for one year. Then I moved to Tianjin city. In the beginning, I did some simple work, such as pushing the car, moving bricks, and stirring the mud."

He continued telling his story, saying that he felt pride in his working experience. He insisted that it is not very easy to join a construction site:

> "But it is also not easy to become engaged in the construction industry. But if you engage in construction industry, like the previous two years, the real estate developers have run away without paying us the salaries in the end. I got panic! No money left for us. [Payment problems.] But the situation is okay now. We usually get a part of the money before. There is pocket money at least. It is much better than before. I have done this for such a long time. I feel that there is no chance to achieve success. I have not seized the opportunity; people say that it is destiny. I feel content with everything now. That is to say, we also have a lot

of college students finally engaged in the construction industry. Like some students graduated from the university, they still have to return to the construction team. It is not easy to find a job. We also have some college students on this construction site. They go out to do the job-hunting for a long time, but they cannot find any job, so they come back in the end. Because college students, after all, they know a little knowledge about computers and they can do some practical things: Tabulate, the project budget, etc. They reflect fast and learn fast. In general, there is a way out of school. The knowledge to determine the height [the soul, he means that the high educational level can bring a high social status], it is true. Well, but college students, they only have theoretical knowledge. They don't have practical experiences. When we work together on the construction site, they always ask me, including the design paper. I know the actual experience at least and tell them how to deal with the problems they encounter. I know it all, and I can directly communicate with the design institute. The students cannot see through the drawings. In fact, the drawing is not necessarily useful. Workers cannot get handle when they fact serious health problem [for example, the accident is inevitable in the construction site]. So, it is an accumulation of practical experience [that is most important]. You must work hard with people. You also need to think after practice. Slowly and slowly, you have your own experience. You must have a little bit of experience after 10 years, right?

He was forced to migrate out to make money because of his poor family roots in the village. He wishes to go back home, but his hometown cannot offer him a good opportunity to raise money.

"Who is not willing to be at home? Our house is also ready now. But I have no way but to come out. Poor family cannot bear anything! What can I do if I stay at home? I have three family members to feed. I have to work outside to earn more! It is fake that young people do not want to go home. How comfortable it is at home! But no money!"

In 2007, Bao Laoban went back to his hometown to drive a taxi to make a living. He passed the test for a driving license in 2003 when he was a team leader in another construction site. He was a small boss then, so he made the effort to manage his time and learn driving. But afterward, he felt it was too hard to drive a taxi in his hometown.

"I began my era of migrating out when I started my career at the construction site. I built my own house last year. Then I gave up constructing and drove a taxi for a short period. It was not so easy. I drove out early in the morning at six

> o'clock and did not go back home until midnight. Even so, I can earn no more than 100 yuan per day. It is too tiring!"

There were also a lot of people who owed him money when he was working in construction site. It was particularly difficult to ask for money back. So, he quit, and during that period he got married, built a house and left his village in the mountain areas. He decided to find a better place with better living conditions. Then he bought a piece of land in the suburb of Anyang City, one of the largest towns in Henan province, and built his own house there. There is good infrastructure and transportation in the area, such as a full monitoring system (CCTV camera), natural water, and natural gas. The road is not muddy any longer like his old village. The bad economic situation pushes him to migrate out again.

> So, I migrated out again this year. Before this May, I organized a construction team of 60 people in my hometown, but I lost ten thousand yuan after a month. It was estimated to lose thirty thousand yuan if I didn't quit at that time. The longer you work, the more you lose in this situation. It is annoying, so I quit. Some friends in this city called me right at this time, saying that I can come to help. I have been jobless in my hometown for more than a month. I was just playing and watching TV at home. I could not figure out what was going on. I kept on struggling for half of my life. Anyway, my living standard is just in the middle ranking. Compared with other migrant workers in the construction site, I am richer. But compared with other bosses, I am not doing so well. But some people do make good business in the city and settle down in urban areas. They can buy a house, buy a car, some of them are even millionaires. All people are the same; I just need a chance to become rich. If I seize an opportunity and develop my business until now, I could become rich. But I do always feel that I can never make enough money. Money is always tense for me. This year I came here as a manager who is responsible for the quality of technicians. I have my own house now, my son and daughter are both at school, I should have a feeling of contentment. It is my destiny. If I cannot catch this opportunity, there is no possibility to get it whatever I do. I just live a normal life. I always want to find a suitable job.

As a kind of successful migrant worker compared to the other team members in his construction site, he feels content about his life. But he did complain about the harsh working conditions in the construction site. Bao Laoban also has the risk of not getting

his investment back, which means the migrant workers on his team could not get their salary.

> I want a fixed job, too. But constructing is not a fixed job at all. I want to engage in other industries. I am tired with construction after such a long time. Working in the vegetable market is much better than my current job. I don't know what I really want to do, but this job can feed their families at least. (There are four people inside my family. Our living expenses are at least 2,000 yuan per month. I have no other solution but to work outside.)

Bao Laoban told me the story about his rural-urban migration since the 1990s. The course of his internal migration is even more like a tour around China from the south to the north. In the beginning, he followed his fellow peers in the village to engage in the construction industry. He first migrated to the neighboring province near his hometown. Then he followed the steps of his boss around several provinces for construction projects. After a long period, he worked as a team leader, and brought more migrant labors from his village to work for projects in the city.

> "I was in the city of Shijiazhuang (the capital of Hebei province) from 1990 to 1992. That city was better than Taiyuan, but not so prosperous as Tianjin. After the year 1993, my boss moved to a changing district, the northern part of Beijing, to build a private school for the rich. The school is very big now and the director is the son of Haidian District Education Bureau. His private school has a cooperation with the state of California in the United States. People like us could not dare to think about this kind of life. It costs 200,000 yuan, just the tuition fee, to enroll in its high school. Then they will send you to California in the third year. They say it is for an internship. They will spend three months to learn English and get an American driving license. They got them prepared for the university. They made the students manage two technologies, one is computers, and another one is driving. At that time [in the 1990s], how could we have computers? It was mysterious stuff. In 1993, I had no conception of the smart phone. The bus ticket was only 0.5 yuan. …
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> Later, I was in Beijing for a few years. The capital changed particularly fast. Half a year, anyway; if you left half a year, you could not recognize this place. At that time, I worked as a team leader. In the year 2000, the boss left. I had no way to stay. I went to Tianjin together with him. After a month, I decided to go to Qiqihar, a city in Heilongjiang province in northeast China. I went there on the first of May in 2000. At that time, the leaves did not sprout, it was super cold and the wind was strong. People there don't have good manners. Slowly and

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slowly, the environment there influenced us. The men don't go to bathroom to pee. When we went out of its train station, there was a man peeing in front of the door. They just turn around and pee. I stayed there for three years in northeast China. Qiqihar is relatively far although the wages are higher. The weather is not good and the overall feeling is not good. Then I moved here to lead my new building teams. There is division of labor in my team, and workers just do the specified work. In the beginning, I had a team of 70 members. As a leader, the life is too hard.

For an eye-open experience！

Migration is a rational choice after comparing the situations between rural and urban areas. Bao Laoban could not raise money in his hometown when he went back. From his narratives, economic opportunities could be considered a primary determinant in his migration out of his hometown. But the case of An Qing (a 29-year-old construction worker from Anyang city, Henan province) demonstrates even more reasons behind rural-urban migration. An Qing, a construction worker from Henan province in Beijing, had more reasons to migrate out besides economic factors, including the pollution in his hometown, no land to farm, and few job opportunities there.

Like other migrant workers, An Qing aged 29 from Henan province, has a rural hukou. His hometown is a small village near Anyang city. He was working at a construction site in charge of water and electrical utility with a monthly salary of 1,800 yuan. There are five people in his family, his parents, an older sister and a younger sister. His mother's health status has always been bad. His old sister went to learn about computers a few months after she graduated from high school. The salary of his sister is only enough to spend for her own expenses. His younger sister dropped out of school after graduating from junior high and she just started working in a supermarket this year. His family conditions are not very good. They just built a house with two levels this year. Their house is still relatively simple in decor and the living conditions are not very good. The main source of their household income is from the salaries of An and his father, who both work at the construction site. They can earn 20,000 yuan a year.

His father has been working in the construction industry for a long time and he changes

his job frequently. Generally, he works there for a few months and then switches sites for a few months. An Qing followed his father to work in the construction site for four months after he graduated from junior high school in 2000. When he goes back home, he doesn't want to farm although their family has plenty of farmland. So, he found some part-time jobs in his hometown. Two years ago, he returned to the city for a second time, but then went back home again after a month. His third time of migration was in September of last year. He stayed at home for one month and had nothing to do in the countryside, so he came back to work. He told me about his reasons for migration:

> "We have few farmlands left in my village now. Different factories have occupied them. A cement factory, steel factory, and a textile factory…The pollution in my hometown is very serious; half of the village people have no land to farm now [due to contamination].
>
> Our family moved to the village from mountain areas, so the head of the village didn't distribute farmland to us. At that time, the family income was all based on the salary of my father as a migrant worker. My mother's [health] situation is not so good, so she stays at home and has no income.
>
> I had been working in the factory when I went back home from the city, but the salary at home is too much less. Generally speaking, the salary is 700 to 800 yuan per month without holiday. You have no free time. It is better to work outside the village.
>
> I cannot be idle at home every day. I have no other way but to migrate out from the countryside to work. Since my father has an acquaintance at this construction site, I followed my father here. The first year I followed my father, but the following year he switched sites. So, I work with the acquaintance of my father."

In addition to the above reasons, natural disasters caused by climate changes are also seen as a push factor for rural-urban migration although the direct relevance between climate change and migration remains an internationally controversial topic (Barrios et al., 2006; Reuveny, 2007; Tacoli, 2009; Yan & Shi, 2009; Yu et al., 2011). For example, based on a field survey conducted in Xundian County, Kunming, Yunnan Province, from August to September in 2010, Yu et al. (2011) reveal that there are no large-scale migration activities, either temporarily or permanently, caused by the extraordinary drought

experienced in southwest China. These results show that with the help of the government, the farmer households have taken diversified adaptation measures themselves to alleviate the pressure on farmers' livelihoods due to severe drought, thus making inessential any family members' migration. Moreover, localized disasters caused by climate change are still rare occurrences. Therefore, this section will not categorize climate change as an impact factor for rural-urban migration. It will focus, rather, on economic factors as the main reason for migrant workers' rural-urban migration. According to my interviews with migrants in urban areas, economic reasons account for a large part of their motivations for migrating from rural areas. Most of them come out of their hometown to earn more money. Thus, we put the economic factors as a staple impact factor of the internal migration by the amount of income that the rural farmers can get from farming/working.

According to Lewis' dual economy model, in traditional sectors, before surplus labor has not been fully transferred to the modern sector of the economy, wages are determined by the survival wages with a long-term stability (Lewis, 1979b ; Fields, 2004). According to this model, the modern sector just needs to pay slightly more than the traditional sector wage with a living wage level to get an unlimited supply of labor (Chan, 2010; Cai, 2010b ; Zhang et al., 2011). In order to attract workers from the traditional sector to continue to flow into the modern sector, relatively higher wages in urban areas could be seen as a driver of rural-urban migration. For example, the devaluation of Mexican currency increased international labor migratory flows from Mexico to the U.S. in 1994 (Deléchat, 2001). However, it is indisputable that there is still a significant amount of surplus labors in the agricultural sector. This shows that economic factors cannot be the only reason behind rural-urban migration, which is why this study also concerns itself with the individualized experiences of migrant workers in urban areas (see Part 3).

Part 2 Migration Strategies of Chinese Migrant Workers: Using "*guanxi*"

1.Introduction

The literature shows that most of Chinese migrant workers rely on social networks as we defined as "*guanxi*" formed on a basis of hometown kinship, friendship and fellowship, to get by in urban settings (Yue *et al.*,2013; Li et al.,2006; Li & Liu, 2011). The Figure 11 show that the descriptive data on the ways for job hunting of 303 respondents based on the Survey on Migrant Workers in Beijing by Renmin University of China. Construct with the rely on their private *guanxi* (such as kinship, fellowship, friendship), almost no one reply on the formal labor market in urban areas with few supports from the government. About 54% of interviewees (164) found jobs through their relatives and peers known from their hometown; And just 33% of respondents (99) found jobs by themselves. The local labor market and job hunting only accounted for 1%.

Figure11   The Ways for Job Hunting of 303 Migrant Workers in Beijing
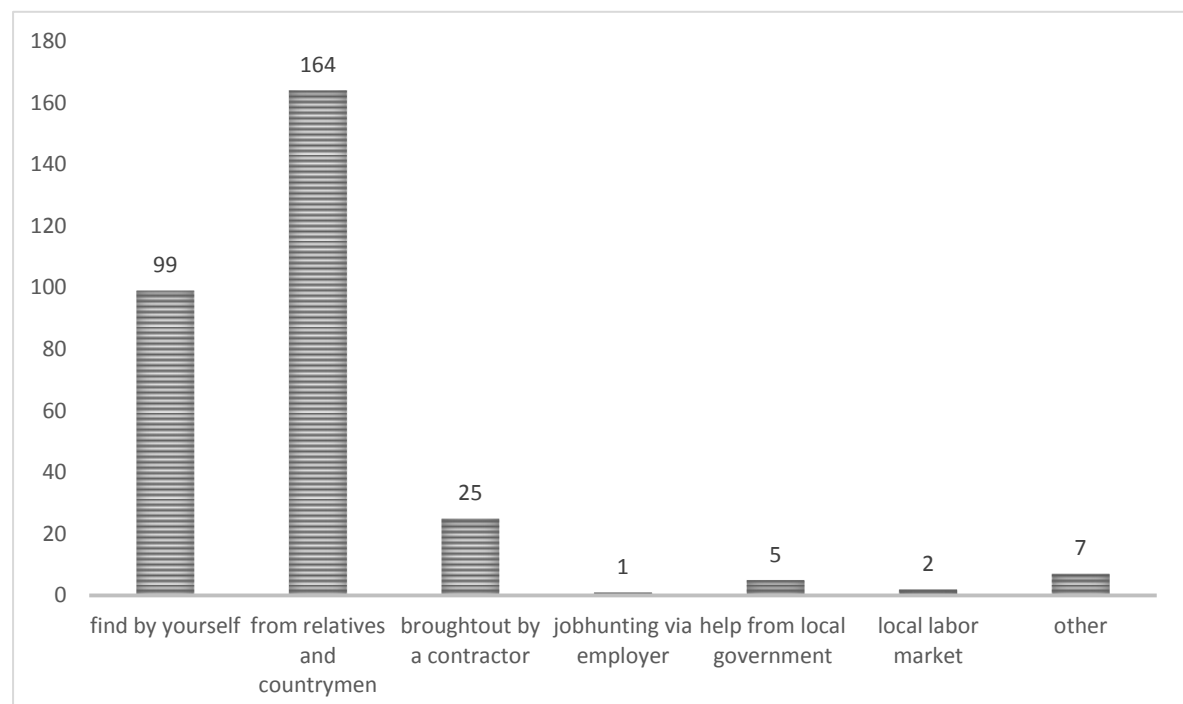
The following part categorizes the relationships of the "*guanxi*" mostly used by migrant workers for their rural-urban migration into three types: First, *guanxi from relatives*. The providers of this social network often have settled down in urban areas for years and have acuminated enough social resource to offer the help. However, the *guanxi* from relatives could also be unreliable due to the limitation of their social networks or duration of urban stay, they cannot provide enough supports expected from the migrant workers, who may then change jobs soon after entering the city. Second, *guanxi from friends*. This kind of social network is not close enough to provide sufficient social supports, so migrant workers will often change jobs, relying in the end on new social relations made in cities. Third, *guanxi from peers from the same original locations.* This is mostly used by migrant workers during the early stages of migration and is relatively stable and reliable both in urban and rural areas, which can provide more social supports for migrant workers in a new environment. These types were divided by Fei's hypothesis on the water ripples model (2003) in Chinese social networks, which conceptualizes that China's social relations are like water ripples with the center as the individual himself, spreading from near to far, from small families to large extended families, relatives, rural communities outward to the whole country.

2.Social Networks and the Chinese Word "*guanxi*"

Social networks can be loosely translated as the Chinese word "*guanxi*", which is similar to "relationship". *The guanxi* lies at the heart of Chinese daily life from social order to economic structure. It is considered the most important aspect in every realm of life, from political areas to economical areas, and from officialdom to street life (Gold, et al., 2002). As a source of social capital (Bourdieu; 2002), which makes use of kinship, friendship or community ties, *guanxi* provides unique advantages, and thus help migrants become more smoothly integrated at their destinations (Feldman et al., 2008; Boyd, 1989). The *guanxi* can bring about privileged access to social resources and secure benefits by virtue of

membership. The recipients of *guanxi* want to gain access to valuable assets while the donors are requested to give the assets without any immediate return. Through *guanxi*, actors can gain direct access to economic resources (subsidized loans and investment tips), cultural capital through contacts with experts or people of refinement (Portes, 1998). As to migrant workers, urban life is more elusive for rural farmers compared with their familiar countryside. This makes previous migration experiences the strongest predictor for new migrants' decisions to leave. Social networks (or *guanxi*), to which migrants already have accessed, therefore facilitate the process of migration and reduce both economical and psychological costs in the host society.

Baker (1990) defined the concept of social network as "a resource that created by changes in the relationship among actors", thus the heterogeneity of the relationships- "friends, colleagues and more general contacts through whom you received opportunities"- need to be discussed further. Granovetter (1995) has divided this relationship into "strong ties" and "weak ties". Strong ties refer to the close relationship in which members have a high level of similarity and rely heavily on emotions while the weak ties refer to the distant relationship in which members have a high level of heterogeneity. Granovetter (1995) coined "strength of weak ties" to stand for the power of indirect employment referral system (Portes, 1998). However, Lin et al. (1981) contend their emphasis on dense networks (Granovetter might call "strong ties"), the opinion that might go with the common sense that dense networks such as kinship would be most efficient to find a job. In Chinese literature, Zhai (2003) argues that the job hunting of migrant workers relies heavily on "strong trust" which is contrary to the findings of Granovatte (1995) in American society. As we've mentioned before, migrant workers rely heavily on strong ties to find jobs. For the purposes of clarity, this study will divide migrant workers' strong ties into three categories according to the relationship between actors and donors: kinship, friendship and peer ties, in order to facilitate discussion according to the reliability of their social networks in the dynamic process of rural-urban migration.

There are large quantities of literature specialized on the role of social networks in both

rural-urban and international migration (Brown, 2002; White & Ryan, 2008 ;Collyer, 2007; Silvey & Elmhirst, 2003;Kuhn, 2003;Banerjee, 1983;Philpott, 1968;Stockdale, 2002). For example, Ryan (2011) suggests a deep investigation into the actual resources flowing among different kinds of networks based on the qualitative data on Polish migrants in London. Chinese researchers point out that not all social networks have positive effects on migrant workers' job-hunting in urban areas (Li *et al.*, 2007). Thus, it is also necessary to pay attention to the specific ties in which migrant's access and maintain over time different types of relationship in different locations with numerous people.

A study, for example, on Mexican migrants to the U.S. also shows the important role of social networks, especially family ties, in raising the wages of Mexican migrants (Amuedo-Dorantes & Mundra, 2007), where social networks might offer a stimulus to successive migration due to these increased wages. Thieme (2006) examined Nepalese labor migration to India based on qualitative studies among male and female migrants in Delhi coming from four villages in Far West Nepal. It was found that the male migrants occupy a distinct business area, in which men have been working as watchmen and car cleaners for generations. The job market of migrants is highly organized since jobs are handed over and sold within kinship networks. Chinese literature also shows that relative ties are the closest guanxi used by migrant workers (Yang, 2006). Hong (2007) finds that the bigger relatives ties in urban can benefits migrant workers more in their urban inclusion. The social status of the urban relatives is also important based on their capability to secure benefits for the urban stay in migrant workers (Yue *et al.*, 2011).

In fact, the international migration studies of the role of peer *guanxi* in shaping the economic clusters of ethnic groups, so-called "immigrant enclaves" with self-closed entrepreneur clusters conducted by specific ethnic minor groups (Wilson & Portes, 1980). It is common in international immigration researches, such as Filipino maids in Hong Kong, Korea's small business in the United States, Chinese stone factories and shops in northern Italy, and Pakistani street vendors in Southern Italy (Harney,2006; Light, 1984;

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Tong,2009). Similarly, there is also clusters of small business done by migrant workers from the same origins in China. For example, Feng (2010) reveals that the printing houses around the whole country are mostly run by villagers from Xinhua, a rural town from Hunan province. These all reveal the importance of the similarity of original locations (peers) in shaping the urban economic inclusion of migrants. Research shows that peer ties could afford the convenience of employment of migrant workers and help to increase the wages of migrant workers (Zhang & Xie, 2013). Furthermore, the peer or the original community also plays a vital role in the formation of ethnic niches (Chinatown, Koreatown or other ethnic residential forms) in international migration literatures (Jones *et al.*, 2015a; Thunø, 2007). Similarly, Chinese literatures find that most of migrant workers from one village are prone to live nearby, forming "urban villages" as their residential clusters (Hu *et al*., 2010; Liu & Zhang, 2007; Xiang, 2000). For example, Liu (2001) argues that *guanxi* of rural peers play an important role in migrant workers' residential inclusion through a case study of "Pingjiang Village"-residents are mostly from a rural area named Pingjiang- in Shenzhen.

Friendship, as one form of the strong ties of migrant workers, is not stable as the relative ties based on consanguinity or peer ties based on geography (Shan, 2007). It was labelled as weak trust, giving limited support for migrant workers' job hunting. The stability of the job supported by friends is challenged by the distance between the expectations and the reality. Once they got chance, migrant workers will refer to relative ties and peer ties (Zhai, 2003).

Existing research on Chinese migrant workers' social networks mainly concern the short-term impacts of social networks on their rural-urban migration (Li & Liu, 2011; Li, 2001; Yue *et al.*, 2013; He & Wen, 2009). Social networks can, however, change during the progress of migration, both strengthening and weakening in various directions over time (Hagan, 1998). Few studies examine this evolving role of social networks in the dynamic progress of migration. Therefore, the following section will explore the influences of social networks in the progress of rural-urban migration based on in-depth interviews

with rural migrants in Beijing, Fujian province, Jiangsu province and Zhejiang province. I asked how migrants build their own *guanxi*, how this influences their decisions about the duration of their urban stay, and the implications of the accumulation of *guanxi* on their inclusion in cities as part of their migration dynamics.

3.Multiple "guanxi" from Relatives, Rural Peers and Friends

The guanxi from Relatives: Kinship

In the process of job-hunting in the urban labor market, there are most often two cases that are helpful to migrant workers. The first is to get work through the help of an "insider" (e.g. the urban relative who has already worked in the company or has ties there). Zhao Di, a construction worker in Beijing, had a relative who is a building designer and has a close relationship with a construction site, where he recommended Zhao. This *guanxi* would be called a 'good guanxi' particularly from a rural area. The case of Cao Fei is similar to Zhao's. His relative had settled down in the city for decades and this social network could afford him a relatively easy way to ingrate into urban life.

Cao Fei, born 1988, is a barista in a café located in a shopping mall. His hometown is in Hubei Province. He is unmarried and has a rural hukou in his hometown. Like other migrants, he has a small salary of 1500 yuan per month. His family has four members: his parents, himself, and one older sister. His parents are farmers, but the family has only about two acres of farmland. He told me that the yearly income from the farmland is not more than his monthly salary. His sister was born in 1985 and works in a local insurance company after having received her bachelor's degree. Before coming here, Cao Fei also worked in a state-owned manufacturing factory. He decided to quit this relatively stable work to go out for new challenges. He told me that he believes that everything depends on personal ability.

He took barista courses in order to work in the café, which is a comfortable working environment with good facilities. Though he should work an eight-hour shift every day,

he often works overtime without extra pay. He is still a temporary worker now, which means that there is no labor contract without any insurance. He felt that there was little significance to having a labor contract. As for insurance, he did not want to buy it for himself because it is too expensive compared to his salary. He says he is basically satisfied with the job itself, but he is very dissatisfied with the manager of the café. The manager always extends the working hours with no reason, and the manager has spoken to him derisively sometimes. He lives in a dormitory provided by his boss. The boss offers his staff members accommodations and daily meals. He and his colleagues, several guys, live in a small apartment within 15 square meters. Although he does not have to spend money on living and eating, he basically has no savings at all. He always goes out and drinks wine with his roommates. They go together to the Internet Bar to waste time when they are not working.

Wang Ge, 46, has relatives who are also migrant workers in the city. He is from Anyang, Henan Province and has two children; the older one is a boy, 21 years old, who might take part in the college entrance examination this year. The younger one is a girl, 18 years old. Wang Ge has an educational level of college school. When he serviced in the military, his specialty was firearms repair. He came out of the army in 1987. He has a rural hukou at home and worked in Hebei province with a labor contract, after which he studied a year in accounting at a Chinese Accounting College in Anyang, Henan province. He worked as an accountant in Zhengzhou, Dunhuang for almost 20 years. Two years ago, he quit the job and migrated to the construction site to join her daughter. Since he is older and cannot do hard labor, he works as a security captain on this site. His monthly salary is 2000 yuan, which can afford the basic costs of living. The boss offers him accommodation and food, so he can basically save this 2000 yuan. His wife was born in the year 1964 and attained the educational level of junior school. She is staying at home and farming their three acres of farmland. Wang Ge does not think that the farmland offers enough security for his family members. He said that only by migrating out to work could he guarantee their daily expenses are met. Almost all of the youth laborers in his village are working out in the cities.

His daughter is working as a cashier at a five-star hotel. She went out to the city even earlier than her father when she graduated from junior high school. The annual income of his family is more or less combined from the salaries of he and his daughter: 2000 yuan for him and 1000 yuan for her. This annual income still brings their family to the middle level in his hometown.

Wang told me the reason why he migrated out of the village is mainly because his daughter and nieces are migrant workers in the same city:

> "My daughter and my two nieces are working in this city. They introduced me here. Then I came alone by train. Two of my nieces have been here for a long time, probably 8 years, the big one is engaged in IT work, the second one is also working in the same hotel as my daughter. My nephew also came, and I have a close relationship with them."

His living conditions are relatively better than the other construction workers because he is a security captain. He has a single room at the construction site. He used to work for security companies, but he went to work in several communities with a relatively better living condition. He told me why he chooses to work as a security captain, "It was mainly because I went to the army before. Security companies should consider the soldiers as a priority." He is also a political commissar of the security team, who is usually responsible for clearing the materials. He has a lot of things to do, and there is not so much leisure time. He is satisfied with the current life in general. He met his daughters and two nieces quite often.

Although researches have shown the positive effects of relative *guanxi* in the social inclusion of migrant workers into urban society (Li et al., 2007), the key is not merely to "find the acquaintance", but rather to "find the right one". The same urban relative may provide a migrant worker different effects of social integration into a city. For example, when Zixiang (a migrant worker in a Fuzhou shoe factory) came out to work, his uncle Ma Xinjian had seven years of work experience in Fujian and had successfully settled down in the city with a Fuzhou *hukou* and an apartment. He was therefore equipped to

provide effective help for Zixiang, who has been at the same shoe factory for years and has never changed jobs. Unfortunately, his cousin Dalong (see Chapter 2) was not so lucky. When he migrated out to Fujian province, Xinjian was just working in the factory as a team monitor, the help he could offer was limited. Dalong went back home after several years' of jumping around job to job in Fujian.

Lu Yuting, aged 26, worked as a waitress in a hotel from Anhui province. Her father and older brother have a small business in her hometown. Her mother is a housewife. The yearly income of their family is about 60 thousand yuan. Her hukou is still in her hometown. After the introduction of a relative, she began to work in this city. Lu has three aunts. Their husbands all have stable jobs in this city. One has a small company, another is a stock manager and the third one is a chef. They all have been migrated out of the countryside for a long time, more than ten years. But they have no urban hukou and they rent their houses to live. Lu came out in the year 2006. A relative introduced her first to a job in an advertising agency. She resigned after a month there. She then found herself a job as a waitress through the Internet. The boss offers her daily meals, but he does not provide her with accommodation. So, she lives in her aunt's home. Her monthly income is only 1750 yuan, so it is impossible for her to rent a house or apartment.

She only has contacts with her colleagues and relatives. She explained to me that she has different ways to deal with people. She is timid with her colleagues. But she is much more open with her relatives.

> "I did not know much about city residents. I mainly have contact with my relatives and colleagues. I usually talk about working issues with my colleagues because we don't know each other's background. But I do have a good relationship with my relatives. We can talk a lot, ranging from work problems and personal issues. More than a half of my colleagues are local residents. My two supervisors are citizens. But we also have to communicate about working issues. You must respect them because they are your leaders. But the leaders are not so easy to deal with. They like picking problems about your job. Sometimes they even make trouble for me. They certainly have a sense of pleasure after, but I am not so comfortable."

She told me that she had encountered an unreliable relative. This network cannot work in the end. She attributes it to her relative's discriminatory attitude against migrant workers.

> "My relative promised my parents to find me a job, but they could not find a decent one in the end. Later, I went back home for some months. Now I feel like it is a stable job and it is not bad. I have a relative who is a local resident here. My parents spent a lot of money to pay him to find a job for me. He has both a car and a house here. He also owns a small company. When my parents treated him for dinner, he asked me which kind of job I preferred and told me to learn social skills for the future job. He was polite and promised to contact me later. But I haven't heard from him after two months. Then I called him. He politely agreed to help me find a job, but still no news later. Damn it! Relatives are also unreliable. I can see the resistance to outsiders from him. You can work well at home, why come to the city? You can find a job yourself. Why do you need to ask help from others?"

She continued with her complaint.

> "At least half of the urban locals have discriminated against migrant workers. They think we do not have a good sanitary situation or good etiquette, but what they don't consider is that we have made a lot of contributions to this city. Therefore, I don't have a good impression of local residents."

Lu told me that although her aunt can offer her a place to live, it is still a temporary one. In the long run, she must solve the housing problem. Her monthly wage is too small to rent a good room, which requires at least 700 yuan (about half of her income). But still, she felt the situation would get better in the future.

The guanxi from Friends: Friendship

Wang Neng, 23-year-old, is from a small village near the capital of Jiangxi province. His *hukou* is still rural and his family has more than 5 acres of farmland. He said his family must rely on the farmland to eat. His monthly salary is about 1000 yuan. He has three older sisters in his family, and two of them migrated to Wenzhou to work in a shoe factory. When I asked the reason why he migrated out, he told me a long story.

When he finished the entrance exam of the university in 2006, he felt so relaxed that he spent all day long hanging out. He thought he could pass the exam smoothly and enroll in

university but was surprised to find out when the results came out that he was not qualified to go to the university. He was disappointed. He did not want to go back to high school and prepare for the exam for the next year because he thought everything would be unclear for the future. At that time, he had a peer who was in the university already and told him that he could take the exam directly in the city. He found out later that this person had fooled him and it was impossible for him to take an exam in the city with a rural *hukou*. So, he went back home and took the entrance exam again, but the result was still not so good. His grade was just enough to go to a local collage. His parents pushed him to pursue further education, but he didn't want to go because the tuition fee was too expensive. So, he gave up and went out to work.

> "I had a friend who was opening a small restaurant here. I thought it would be okay work to help me settle down first. I came here with little money. So, I worked in the restaurant for a month and a half. It was so busy and I was too tired. I had no fixed time to relax. I needed to work from nine o'clock in the morning to eleven o'clock in the evening. In the beginning, I had three colleagues, but they each quit their jobs over time. After that, no one could help me with cleaning and delivery. So, I bore the entire burden by myself. I will get no payment once I leave. Although I knew the boss, he still took 300 yuan from me when I left. You should tell the boss half a month in advance. I did so. But my boss said he could not find workers then. It will cause a loss for his business."

> "I actually do not intend to stay in the restaurant. I was always wondering how to escape from this little restaurant. So, I also did job-hunting while I was working. I was responsible for the delivery of meals. I sometimes did meal delivery to office buildings, where very high-end people worked inside. I often had contact with them and I found that they were well cultured. We had a good relationship. They suggested that I learn some skills. Working in a restaurant will bring you no opportunities. One day, I was so lucky to meet this aunt (he calls the women "aunt" to show respects) in the building. She said, have you there are some workers in the building to operate the elevator for the guests? The aunt is in charge of one elevator and presses the number for you. She is from Sichuan, she is also kind to me ... but she had been here for more than a decade. We talked a lot every time. She asked about my situations. I told her that I was tired but the monthly wage is only 800 yuan...

> Well, her brother-in-law was then just recruiting people, so she suggested me. She gave me the phone and let me contact her brother-in-law. Then I get the job here...

> I feel that I was quite smart. I said to the boss of the restaurant and he let me quit the job. The next day I came to work. The new boss gave me a day off to buy daily use stuffs. I did not sign any contract with anyone.

The friend of Wang Neng who opens a restaurant offers him a chance to survive in the city. It is far worse than his expectation. But, in the end, he developed his own relationships to help him transfer to a better environment. Although he still relied on friendship to get a new job, it was totally different from the former one. It was his newly built *guanxi* after he moved to the city that afforded him more resources to adapt the urban life.

The guanxi from Village Peers: Fellowship

Like the Nepalese in India (Thieme, 2006), migrant workers from Henan province are mostly engaged in the construction industry in urban areas. For example, Bao Laoban, the Beijing construction site team leader introduced earlier in the chapter, said that his construction team is all comprised from his peers from the countryside. More than 80 percent of his team members are from Henan province.

> "They (the construction team) are all my relatives. Only relatives dare to migrate with you as a constructor. There are no other people that can go out with you, so you have to rely on relatives and peers. You can also own a little money from your relatives and peers. Why? It is not easy to deal with strangers. Debt is everywhere."

He also expressed his own responsibility and obligation for his construction team members because of the construction industry's risky reputation:

> "I need also to take on the responsibility of the safety of my team members. You bring people out, you should make sure they are safe, not to mention that they don't lack arms or legs. Losing a finger is not even okay. Safety is serious."

As we saw earlier in Chapter 3, young migrant workers mostly find work through their relatives who have already worked in cities. Similarly, their job-hunting is also limited to their rural circle and based on rural relationships. Results show that experienced pioneers of migrants have a positive and significant effect on subsequent migration of their rural

peers (Zhao, 2003).

4.Conclusion

With the aforementioned case studies, this chapter has explained the actual relationships used by migrant workers into their urban stay: relatives *guanxi*, peer *guanxi* and friend *guanxi*. Relatives *guanxi* comprise the most reliable social networks on the migrant workers' engagement in cities. Its validity relies heavily on the capability of the urban relatives. Just as "immigrant enclave" in international migration studies, *guanxi* of rural peers have played an important role in migrant workers' job-hunting and economic inclusion in cities. Friend guanxi is the weakest social guanxi, which offers few supports for the urban stay of migrant workers. The job founded is quite unstable, migrant workers then develop new social networks based on the lags between the reality and the expectations.

The first two parts of Chapter 4 mainly give the narratives of migrant workers with few explanations, answering why and how migrant workers migrated into urban areas. Though simple and poorly analyzed, it offers the background knowledge for next part, the core of Chapter four, the social inclusion of migrant workers in urban China.

Part 3 The Social Inclusion of Migrant Workers: A Mirror on Social Exclusion in A "Dual Society"

Folding Beijing, the science fiction novel that won the Hugo Award in 2016, creates a more extreme scenario of social exclusion in Beijing, in which the space of future Beijing is divided into three separated levels. People of different social classes live in different spaces that are isolated from each other. In the first space, lives a powerful ruler with five million people on one side of the earth. The other side of the earth is the second space with 25 million middle-class and white-collar workers, and the third space with 50 million workers is at the bottom of the social structure. Similarly, in this section, we discuss the "Dual Society"-the separation between the urban locals and rural migrant workers- inside urban China from the perspective of social inclusion.

1.Introduction

Goffman (1967) points out in his book *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* that stigma is a system of exclusion at a variety of specific interactions to a group with somewhat particular characteristics. Social structure, such as the existing social stratification, affords the background of social interaction, and prejudice and discrimination are the staple forms of stigma that produce and reproduce social relationships (Parker, 2012; Phelan, 2001). Migrant workers are often called "farmer workers", a stigmatized name for migrants who come from rural villages to cities for opportunities. As we've pointed out in Chapter 1, they are considered a socially disadvantaged group in urban society (Li, 2002; Shen,2005). This section will then examine four aspects of social inclusion/exclusion of migrant workers to give an overall description of the reality that migrant workers face in urban environment: economic exclusion, residential exclusion, hukou exclusion and psychological exclusion.

As for migrant workers, even in the face of various forms of social exclusion, they accept and form their own unique ways of shaping their inclusion into urban society. They have

taken part in low-end occupations and the secondary labor market. Living in the "rural village" within the city – dormitories and sheds on construction sites – helps them maintain rural social networks and contacts in an urban environment with the frame of mind of "dropping farming without dropping hometown". As noted prior, existing *hukou* systems cause the division of rural farmers and urban residents by granting them different identities and social welfares. It makes the urban migrants *de facto* "secondary citizens" in urban areas, replete with a low quality of living conditions and working environment, using a unique survival strategy based on kinship and rural social networks. These unique ways that migrant workers enact social inclusion are always deeply imprinted on the mark of social exclusion. Social exclusion is a concept used to characterize contemporary forms of social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of society. It refers to processes in which individuals or entire communities of people are systematically blocked from rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of society and which are key to social inclusion.

2.Literature Review

We've pointed out in Chapter 1, on contrary to social exclusion, social inclusion of migrant workers is defined as how they do "fully participate" into various aspects of urban life. Following the consensus reached by both international and internal scholars, it is a multi-dimensional concept. Thus, the thesis does analysis on four aspects of social exclusion between urban residents and migrant workers, namely, economical exclusion, residential exclusion, psychological exclusion and hukou exclusion.

Based on the Dual Labor Market Theory (Bulow & Summers, 1986; Dickens & Lang, 1985; Piore, 1970) which argues that institutional barriers create unequal opportunities, and then lead to wage inequality, Chinese scholars have pointed out that Chinese urban labor marker is divided into the primary sectors for local residents and the secondary sectors for migrant workers (Chen & Hamori, 2013; Meng *et al.*, 2015; Zhai, 2004). In general, policy makers have not largely welcomed low-paid migrants as a profitable and

necessary contribution to the domestic labor force, but they have been concerned about them due to the risks of labor market segmentation and the spread of precarious working conditions (Meng & Zhang, 2001;Lu & Song, 2006). Migrant workers oftentimes take part in the secondary sectors of urban labor market, mostly are "3D" jobs with low income, poor working conditions, which are discarded by urban locals (Fan, 2002). Based on these facts, this study aims to go further the employment inequality of migrant workers and explore the nuances of their urban economic situation such as their job contracts, employment stability, occupational safety and so on.

Residential exclusion is based on race, household registration, occupation, education, living habits, cultural level or wealth differences and other demographic characteristics of the population (Denton & Massey, 1988; Murong Guo & Wang, 2015). The same or similar groups are relatively concentrated in specific areas, as the populations in the living spaces are separated from each other (Huttman, 1991a; Jones *et al.*, 2015a; Wu *et al.*, 2014a). Scholars argue that residential exclusion is likely to lead to intercourse fragmentation, which in turn leads to distrust of each other, leading to social differences, or "poverty traps" (Massey, 1991; Massey & Denton, 1989). The lack of information and opportunities makes it difficult to have interaction with local residents and inclusion into urban areas. This living community is always seen as an area of poverty, crime and other social problems (Lichter et al, 2010).

Massey and Denton (1988) proposed five measurements on residential exclusion: evenness, exposure, concentration, centralization, and clustering. Among these measurements, a high degree of clustering implies a residential structure where minority areas are contiguous and closely packed, creating a single large ethnic or racial enclave (Massey & Denton, 1988). In Chinese cases, "urban villages"-a cluster of migrant workers in urban space- could be seen as similar to the ethnic or racial enclaves seen is most international migration studies (Liu *et al.*, 2015; Zhang *et al.*, 2014). Urban villages can be easily observed in Chinese cities where there is a large amount of rural migrant workers, which create a long-term urban and rural separation - a "Dual Society" between

the rural migrant workers and the urban residents (Xiang, 2005). Other than urban villages, the accommodations offered by employers or self-rented, temporary sheds on construction sites also provides informal living spaces for millions of migrant workers in urban areas. And this study thus offers a comprehensive exploration on all the possible choices for urban residence of migrant workers. Behind the scene of the slums surrounded by reinforced concrete jungles in cities, these living spaces can significantly show the existence of residential exclusion for migrant workers who are treated as the "outsiders".

Other than the economical and residential exclusion, psychological exclusion another dimension of social inclusion examined by current literatures on migrant workers (Cui, 2012; Xiao & Zhao, 2014; Zhou, 2009). Mostly, Chinese scholars use the sense of belonging and the wiliness of urban stay to stand for the psychological inclusion (Liu, 2010; Lu, 2007; Zhou, 2009). It reveals migrant workers have a low sense of belonging in urban society and few of them have a future plan due to various practical issues. Current literature argues about migrant workers' willingness to stay in urban areas from different perspectives, such as personal factors, family factors, employment factors, social factors, and psychological factors (Li & Long, 2009; Yang & Xiao, 2014; Lv & Yao, 2014; Meng et al., 2015b; Qian & Li, 2013). For example, Li and Long (2009) argue that individual factors such as gender, age, marital status and especially educational level have an important impact on the willingness of migrant workers to stay in urban areas. The migrant workers who have more skills have a stronger will to stay in the city. There are more women who tend to live in the city and not return home. However, few scholars see this from the relationship between migrant workers and urban locals especially the discriminations faced by migrant workers in the host society (Li, 2007). Thus, this study will explore how migrant workers "mirror themselves" in the daily interactions with urban locals thus give an understanding of their senses of belonging and future stay in urban society from the narratives of themselves.

Hukou, which refers to mainland China's household registration institution, is a record in

the system of household registration required by national law. As stated prior, it divides Chinese citizens into two different classes of agriculture hukou and non-agriculture hukou, basically according to their locations. The existence of Hukou institution is seen as an unequal institution, which directly relates to different capital and welfare distributions between urban citizens and rural farmers (Chan, 2009, p50; Young, 2013; Liu, 2005;Wang, 2005;Wang, 2001). The hukou system is perceived by current Chinese researchers as the root which has created this employment inequality (Young, 2013; Zhang & Treiman, 2013). The children of migrant workers are not allowed to have equal education as their urban counterparts (Wang, 2013). The children of migrant workers are not allowed to enroll in city schools, and they must live with their grandparents or other relatives to attend school in their hometowns. As described in detail in Chapter 2, they are commonly referred to as the children left behind. Hukou system have made migrant workers the "secondary citizens" in urban society compared with urban locals (Wang, 2009).This study thus aims to examine this inequality of migrant workers from the narratives of migrant workers to see how they perceived hukou to produce the difference between themselves and urban citizens.

3. Fours Aspects of Migrant Workers' Social In/Exclusion

3.1 Economical Inclusion: Rural-urban Dual Labor Market

In China, rural migrants in the cities are engaged in the secondary labor market, mainly in services such as, construction, retail, manufacturing, transportation and other labor-intensive, low-skilled industries, the reason is not only the personal characteristics of migrant workers (such as low education level), but also their rural hukou designation. It is an institutional exclusion of migrant workers. Migrant workers with rural *hukou* do not find it easy to enter the field of urban formal employment. According to the International Labor Office (ILO), informal employment [8] most often means poor employment conditions and is associated with increasing poverty. Some of the characteristic features

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[8]The website of ILO http://ilo.org/global/topics/employment-promotion/informal-economy/lang--en/index.htm

of informal employment are lack of protection in the event of non-payment of wages, compulsory overtime or extra shifts, lay-offs without notice or compensation, unsafe working conditions and the absence of social benefits such as pensions, sick pay and health insurance. Their jobs can only be temporary and they only do the dirty, tired, bitter, bad, dangerous and low-income jobs that urban people do not want to try. In the current labor market, migrant workers are not entitled to have rights; they are always vulnerable because the employer unilaterally decides everything (working conditions, working hours, etc.). Most migrant workers work in the labor-intensive enterprises, where employers try to hold down wages by reducing the needs to improve working conditions and achieve a low-cost investment to earn more profits. Limited input results in poor working conditions of migrant workers, plus high labor intensity, which in turn increase the pressure on workers.

China's urban employment institution has negative impact on the survival and development of rural migrants, which is mainly as follows: First, changes in occupations did not bring changes in social status, rural migrants find it difficult to achieve a stable upward social mobility (Li *et al.*, 2008b). Second, rural migrants face not only technical barriers but also institutional employment exclusion from the mainstream labor market in the city. Third, this non-normalized employment stops existing employment institutions from protecting the interests of rural migrants, thus weakening their social integration. Existing urban employment institutions are not fair enough to meet the requirements of an equal society for migrant workers. The informal employment of migrant workers has the following characteristics:

First, they are not under the protection of an employment institution. Employed in the informal sector, it is difficult for them to enter the protection of formal employment and human resources policies. The vast majority of rural migrant workers have not signed a labor contract upon receiving a job, and the variety of labor disputes they encounter cannot be effectively or legally resolved legally as a result, leading to the loss of many workers. Even if a worker does sign a contract, the implementation of the contract is not

always guaranteed. An Qing (a construction worker in Beijing from earlier) told me he and his team don't have a labor contract and they also don't want to have one.

> "We have never signed any contract. We came, and we work. They give us a daily salary, but we can receive it even after a few months sometimes. The boss does not have a contract. At the same time, no one wants to sign any contract with the boss. The contract is useless. Even if you signed it, it can bring you no benefits when you have problems with your job."

Another construction worker, Duan Xiong complained about the difficulties in asking for a salary and explains the pros and cons. Duan Xiong, a 34-year-old, married construction worker from Xinyang city (Henan province) on Bao Laoban's team, said,

> "It is particularly hard to get our salaries after finishing the job. In the beginning, the boss promised 30 yuan for you. But when we finish everything, he started to pick up problems. We can only take 20 yuan in the end…They usually pay us according to the number of square meters that we've done. When we finish, they will do the decoration and the quality check. Then they say, 'here is not okay; also, there is not okay'. They will make these issues part of the deduction. Our boss now comes from Jiangsu province. My fellow worked in this site, so he introduced me here…"

Despite there being no guarantee for the salary, he doesn't have a working contract.

> "We do not sign the contract. The boss does not want to sign, and we do not find him to sign. …Why? We work for money. If we send them to the labor bureau because they do not fulfill their duties in the contract, it is not even easy for us to get our money back. On the other hand, it is not easy for us to reach the requirement for civilization construction from the contract. We also have some unqualified places. The boss has not reached the requirement, and we cannot reach the requirement. The construction company has its labor contract with its employees. But we, the team of migrant workers, do not have such a thing. They give us the daily salary. We are in the name of the migrant workers team; and we only work to earn money. The company is responsible for the others."
>
> "It is also very difficult for us to sign if they do not want to sign with us. It is very troublesome. Everyone is afraid of loss. We use oral agreements between the boss and us."

The oral agreements between migrant workers and the employers here relies heavily on

their trusts rather than the labor contracts backed up by law. When it comes to the violation of the oral agreement, whether they can get the salaries or compensations depend on the contractors. Duan Xiong nodded his head when I asked if he believed this oral agreement.

> "Yes, if we cannot get our salary, they [contractors] will take some money from the company to give us. If we earn more, they will take a small part from our salary. This year, they stopped the construction in the middle, and then we didn't have jobs. So, they paid us compensation and exit fees."

Second, even with the long hours and labor-intensive work, their normal rest and statutory holidays cannot even be guaranteed. The Chinese Labor Law applies equally to the activities of rural migrants working in cities, but the law cannot protect their employment rights even if they have signed employment contracts with employers. In response, some labor supervision departments do not believe their oversight is absent in place, they argue instead that the "Labor Law" is too far removed from Chinese reality to be enforced. From their view, not only the employers but also the rural migrants themselves need long hours of work. They hold the attitude that the migrants have nothing to do but work in the city, so they are willing to work overtime to earn more. But the truth is not like what certain labor supervision departments have stated. An investigation by the legal aid center in Shenzhen showed that extended overtime hours (an average daily working time of up to 13-14 hours) without payment has caused some serious labor disputes. Bao Laoban, the team leader in a construction site from Henan province, told me about the rough conditions he faced on the construction site when he was young.

> "I needed to work all day long from morning to midnight. Usually, I got up at 5:30 in the summer and 6:00 in the winter. Around 6:30, I go to work after breakfast with no break even during lunchtime. We kept on working until it was dark. Whenever there was no light, we go back to get off work. We didn't need to work during the rainy days. So, I can go out of the construction site while it rains. We must earn job-points every day. (There are 10 points in total per day, you can get 5 points for the morning and another 5 points for the afternoon). If you work overtime, you can get one more point per hour. You can get 5 yuan for

each hour. If you work 10 hours more, you can get 50 yuan more. Now the salary is higher. Generally speaking, I can get 8 yuan per hour regardless of payments for meals. And I can work 10 hours during the day, sometimes even 14 or 16 hours per day. In summer, I can work for 16 hours per day. I can work even during the night. Later, I moved to Tianjin city, the port city near Beijing. It developed much faster than Shanxi province. I worked in Tianjin for a month. My living standard was higher at that time. I ate pancake or fried dough sticks for breakfast. Living conditions in Shanxi was slightly worse. After a few months, I could not stand the working conditions any more. It was summer time in Tianjin and the weather was hot. Our construction site was in the suburbs, near a stinking river with numerous mosquitoes. The mosquitoes are the most powerful insects in the world. We could not work overtime during the night. The iodine tungsten lamp attracted a large number of mosquitoes. We could not work overtime. Otherwise, the mosquitoes would bite you and leave a lot of red dots on the whole hand. It's useless even if we use the plastic paper to cover. It is not OK to do this. They just attack you. Can you imagine it? In the afternoon, we could not eat our meals outside. After the first of June, the hot days come. We needed to light the fire and use water to wash it off. Then the smoke came out to sweep away the mosquitoes. We could only eat surrounded the fire.

Duan Xiong, as we mentioned before, said that his physical strength is not very good now and he still needs to spend 11 or 12 hours working per day. The large part of his job is to take heavy stuffs into the construction site. He told me he had faced a lot of difficulties but he need raise money in the city. His parents and children are left at home. He also has two brothers and a younger sister, all of which are migrant workers in the city. His wife is generally at home, farming. His salary is about 3,000 yuan a month. It is a little higher than other workers. He says the salary is the same as a small white collar. The annual salary of general cadres in his hometown is around 60 or 70 thousand yuan. In the countryside, the rural living standard also improves, so two thousand or three thousand yuan per month is not enough to spend. He needs to earn money to support his wife and children left behind. They also need to pay for pesticides and fertilizers for the farmland.

Third, rural migrants also face employment instability and a lack of cumulative guaranteed employment experience. They do not know how long their jobs will last and they may be dismissed at any time. The National Sample Survey shows that rural migrants change their jobs more frequently compared with urban residents. Only 29.9%

of migrant workers had experienced no replacement in the job (urban residents 46.2%). For example, Han Dong, a 39-year-old married migrant worker from Henan Province with about a thousand-yuan monthly salary, told me in front of his simply constructed room on the construction site:

> "I have always worked on the construction sites. But I have changed among five or six construction companies. Most of the companies are based in the city of Xinyang. When they don't have enough business, I worked for other companies. … If I have nothing to do, I can find another job from other construction sites."

Finally, occupational safety is not guaranteed. The employment is not standardized enough, and the employers who have signed a contract with the workers do so on very demanding conditions. They write many of the terms only for their own interests, and there is no room for bargaining. When there is a problem, migrant workers often have no place to go to protect their rights. One interviewee, Wang, offered me a glimpse of this unequal contract, of which he had little knowledge:

> "Oh! I remember I signed once with them. It is not a formal labor contract. It says nothing good for us; just write some rules for our daily work."

3.2 Residential Inclusion: The Rural Clusters in Cities

There is an old Chinese saying "one who stays near vermilion gets stained red, and one who stays near ink gets stained black". It means that one's living environment plays a major role in shaping an individual through the mechanism of social interactions. The state of the neighbor will directly affect the skills, information and social opportunities of migrant workers through the "Peer Effect" (Cao, 2003). Therefore, in the following section, I will first examine the basic information and living conditions of migrant workers based on the interviews in an urban village in Fuzhou, and a construction site in Beijing, where typical clusters of migrant workers could be easily observed. I aim to give a description of residential exclusion between migrant workers and the local residents.

The urban villages: Scars of the city

Rows of shabby houses with garbage and sewage everywhere, was my first sight when I arrived in the urban village in the suburb of Fuzhou city. The government is not obliged to provide basic municipal infrastructure or public services for these communities. The main population of the area is migrant workers who serve as a low-skilled labor force in urban areas. Xinjian rents his house here. Look at the inhabitants, they are tired and quiet, lying on their bed with few words exchanged. This is a house with four flats. Xinjian rents the flat on the third floor. It contains two rooms. One is living room, with two beds occupying half of the space. There was no TV, just a simple cupboard made of plastic. Another one includes the kitchen and a simply built bathroom.

His new wife was pregnant and would give birth next month, so she stayed at home and waited for the right time to go to hospital. His older mother was taking care of the nephews and would come soon. When I arrived, I could also be a companion with her. Because of Xingjian's work, he has to stay with the clients some days, so he might not come back home. It's a lonely life here for the wife because no relatives or friends live nearby.

The produce market is located not far from their housing cluster, so the wife goes out early in the morning to buy fresh food for lunch. The market is open from 6-12 in the morning and reopens in the afternoon, so the residents around have a chance to buy fresh materials to cook for lunch and dinner every day. She is from another city of Fujian Province; her village is inside of Wuyi Mountain. So, she is familiar with the food here and knows how to cook it properly. As a 36-year-old woman who migrated out more than 10 years ago, she wanted to settle down it the city and never go back to her hometown. When she found Xinjian, she worked as a technician in a Spa shop. This job is not so easy, and she needed to attain several skills of massage after starting there. Furthermore, knowledge about Chinese traditional medicine and nutrition makes her a professional worker in this shop. Her salary was around 6000 thousand yuan per month, and this is much more than other female migrant workers. But since she got pregnant, she had no

choice but to give up working.

The I asked her about the maternity leave, quote, "Will they pay you money when you are at home?" Then She answered without any hesitate,

> "No. The shop owner will hire someone else definitely. And the boss will pay her salary. It is the most frequent case of the [woman] rural urban migrant. They are out of the labor insurance. And they are not covered by the urban labor policy."

It is rare for migrant workers to settle down and buy a house in the city where they inhabited. However, Xinjian and her new wife was the only one I've encountered to buy a house. Then the new wife talked about their motivation.

> "It's okay and we need to have our own house in this city. When my baby grows up, he will also need an urban hukou to go to school."

Then I talked about the housing price in the city and asked, "What do you think about the skyrocketing rise in the housing prices?" She gave me her rational considerations via buying one in suburban of the city.

> "It goes up super-fast. But our house is in the suburban of Fuzhou. So, it was not so high when we bought it, it was 7900 yuan per Meter Square. My husband has the "debts "from the bank, so we just paid part of the price of our house. The end of this year, we will get our new house."

She seems super proud about their choice. Although the house is only about 80 square meters, it is enough for this new family of three members. The new wife uses her savings from last job in spa shop.

> "Before we thought about buying this apartment, my husband thought I had no savings to support him. We do have a low basic salary in the spa shop, but I raised money from the promotion of our membership card. My boss will pay me 1% of the price of the membership card. Our clients are usually rich women or some rich girls who have a rich boyfriend. There is a young girl; she is a lover of a married man. The man is living in their hometown with the wife, leaving her and her son in Fuzhou. He bought her an apartment in this city and spends every weekend with them. The girl spends a lot in our spa shop. She spent 200,000 yuan to own a golden membership card. She can have any service from

our shop for a year. Situations like these usually happen in our shop, you never know how many rich people will show up in this city." …

"We paid 150,000 yuan for the first payment of our own apartment, and I gave Xinjian all my savings. When he saw it, he was shocked. I had 70000 yuan for him, and he felt better from the pressure of buying house. We didn't want to rent housing forever. We wanted our own house, and it will also save money if we don't pay rent anymore. As you can see, the conditions here are not so okay, but what could I do? No one can do whatever he wants. We had nothing when we first arrived here, then we worked hard and we live hard. We will escape from here sooner or later."

The migrant workers who live in the urban village can get more access to urban life compared with those who are "locked" in the construction site. The urban villagers also have a higher economic level than those migrant workers who cannot afford to rent and live inside the dormitories offered by their employees. The living conditions I saw in the construction sites were the most terrible that I experienced during the interviews. There were always temporary sheds with dozens of migrant workers living together in one room.

Temporary sheds on construction sites

Today, a Chinese city is more and more like a large construction site. With the rise of urban construction, more and more migrant workers migrate to urban areas and become an indispensable part of city, construction workers. Every corner is surrounded with blue synthetic plastic boards. There are busy construction workers wearing helmets amidst a dusty, noisy background, like millions of hard-working ants. The government is not obliged and is reluctant to provide basic municipal infrastructure and public services for the construction sites. The main character of the areas is thus the male low-skilled migrant worker. Zhao Di, a 29-year-old unmarried construction worker in Luo River in Henan Province, told me that his living conditions are even better than they were before.

"I have been in this place for more than three months. Before, I was living in a site tent and dormitory on the construction site. This is relatively good (He pointed to the shed behind him). This is better than the dormitory made of board. The board dormitory is made of 20 cm thick bars of concrete with screws to fix it in place. It is super cold in the winter. We have many people living inside. We

> get used to it. … This is a little better than the rooms before. The walls are cement, and the foam board is thicker (The shed is warmer in winter). We have hot water here, and the conditions are better."

When I asked the reason why he stays in construction site, "Do you not want to rent a house alone?" He reported his economic consideration.

> "No, because this is offered by the boss. We earn little money; it is not enough to rent alone outside."

His wage is around 1600 yuan per month now. But he can get reimbursement for telephone charges and daily meals. He lives in the dormitory in the construction site. In addition, it provides him a chance to save on living costs because the salary is too small for them to rent a house in the city. He does not have too many additional expenses. He spends his salary usually on cigarettes, drinks and other expenses, such as buying washing powder. He didn't sign a labor contract with his boss, either. But he thinks there is no need to have a labor contract since he has a good relationship with the boss. Living in the construction site, he usually spends his leisure time playing cards, chatting and hanging out after work. They don't watch TV because they don't have TV in this construction site. He doesn't have much contact with local residents around the site.

> "We do not have much contact with local residents. I have contact with a lot of people. Because people are not fixed on the site, and some people can even change several construction sites in one month. Generally, workers are from Jiangsu, Henan, Hebei, Sichuan, etc. We have workers from everywhere.
>
> …
>
> "We cannot say anything to urban locals. Urban people sometimes look down upon us migrants. Looking at our clothes, they think it's too dirty. It seems like a shame to talk with us. We have no initiative to communicate with them. They look down on us.
>
> …
>
> "We, migrant workers, are not at the same level with local residents. We do not have any common language. It seems that they cannot say a word to our migrant workers, right? Sometimes I cannot understand what they are talking about. But

the workers on the site are at the same level... (I like to have contact with people at the same level.) Generally, on the site [it's nice] we can chat together, isn't it?"

Zhao Di is part of a close circle with migrant workers in the construction site. He told me that when he encounters difficulties, he usually asks for help from his boss, friends or familiar peers, and relatives. From his view, urban citizens and migrant workers do not belong to the same group. He thinks that the biggest difference between them is the level of education. Urban people certainly can get high wages because they are well educated. On the contrary, migrant workers don't have so many knowledges. He reports that the urban locals' attitude towards migrant workers is a kind of discrimination. He even used the word "outsiders" to describe migrant workers.

"We have no contact [with urban residents] I feel ...They seem to look down, look down on outsiders. That is to say, for example, you wear dirtier clothes, stained with soil on the bus. They dodge you, they are afraid of us to touch him. My peers also told me this before. On their way back home, they took a big package. Urban people were dodging them. They keep a distance with us. They think we bring a giant mess on the bus. Unlike urban people, we migrant workers may take a bath every day. We are lucky to have a hot water supply on this site. It is also more convenient. There is no warm water on other sites. They cannot take a bath. Of course, they are smelly. …

"They [urban residents] do not give a shit about you. When the salesman sees us, they pretend to see nothing. When you buy things from the shop, they through to you when you are buying in the shop. When they see our dirty clothes, they just don't care about us… It is unfair. For example, if we want to buy things in the supermarket, you should treat us the same as others."

When I asked if he minded if he was called as a migrant worker or outsider, he replied,

"I am what I am. In fact, I am a migrant worker. It sounds very unpleasant and terrible, but even I cannot think of any better thing to call myself. We are rural people from the countryside, and nothing can change this reality. Urban people have higher academic qualifications and higher income. I don't want others to know that I come from the countryside. It is not as good as the city. We farmers are not so well educated."

When I ask about their difficulties in the cities. Few construction workers complained about the harsh living condition on the construction sites. Here is the quote of Zhao Di:

"Have you been living in a dormitory like this? Our room is full of people, but still there are some empty ones. They don't want to change the situation. If you have a good relationship with the boss, he will put you in good living conditions. Look, all my items are on the bed. It is spacious. If you have good relationships with the leader, you will not have housing difficulties."

Research shows that there is a significant negative effect of residential exclusion on the labor output and level of social welfare (Deng, 2017;Zhu, 2016;Wu et al., 2014). The housing in the construction sites can meet the simple living needs of migrant workers, but it is not conducive to their social interactions. It will inevitably lead to the alienation of rural migrants and urban residents, and it also increases social instability (higher crime rate, for example). But when I asked the migrant workers their opinion on this, most of them denied this connection, saying that there are few connections between the migrants and the rise of crime rates in the city. Duan Xiong expressed his opinion, saying it was a problem of policy and administration, quote,

"It could be, but it might due to the problems of the city governors."

3.3 Psychological Inclusion: The Outsiders with A Preference to Rural Life

As we've mentioned in the literature review, the sense of belonging and the willingness to stay, the two indicators of psychological inclusion of migrant workers, are going to be discussed here. But before we go further, the discriminations from urban locals offer us a background knowledge. Migrant workers suffer various aspects of discriminations in the city. They are in the marginalized urban society, living in the enclaves of migrant workers and working in a secondary labor market. The isolation of migrant workers also leads to the urban residents' rejection both in mind and action. Migrant workers are therefore subject to a certain degree of exclusion in terms of social interactions with urban locals.

As Zhao Di told me before, and other migrant workers in the construction sites told me, they usually deal with peers from the same background. For example, An Qing told me what he encountered there. He faced discriminations from every corner in the city, from the hospital to the supermarket.

"It is unfair. Do you see that we wear this uniform? It is generally not so clean as local people. They do not want to deal with us. A few of people do not want to say a word with us. We generally come back to our rooms after work. We have few opportunities to know each other. The local people can step on the lawn, but we cannot, we are not allowed to do this. No way! Otherwise they will fine you 200 yuan."

"… There are differences between us. We have encountered this situation frequently. Some places they do not let us go inside while other people can. Like the subway station, they will tell migrant workers to walk far away. They do not allow migrant workers to walk from the subway station. There was an international conference a few days ago, but we can only see it from far away. We generally will not be there, we are afraid to affect the image of China. We have no activity, if even a few of us go, someone will interfere with us for sure. There are differences between the rural and the urban." …

"… The hospital is not friendly with us. When the worker sees what we are wearing, he says to us that the price is particularly high to book an appointment with the doctor. Registration fees are also high, around 700 yuan."
"…The manager in the small supermarket stopped me when I tried to enter the shop. He asked me what I want to buy, and then I said I want to buy some food. He let me go. Can you imagine? We have not entered yet, they asked what do I want? I have not seen the stuff yet. He just sees what I am wearing and listens to my voice, then decides not to let me freely enter the supermarket. Some shops they ask you what you want in front of the door. We are not so welcomed by the shop owner. I prepare the money, and then they give it to me outside of the shop. He pushed us to go away right after we finish shopping."

Then I asked Zhao Di his feelings about the attitude of urban citizens, he said he can do nothing but it does make him uncomfortable sometimes. He said to me,

"If he wants to keep you at a far distance, I cannot walk beside him. If he doesn't want to talk with me, how can we communicate with each other? If you talk with me, and I have a good impression of you, we can talk. But if you always look at the sky and feel proud, I will not continue talking with you."

He seems to understand urban people's attitude towards migrant workers. And he thinks that the old urban locals can understand their hard life in the city while the younger ones have discriminated against them.

"You work for us and we give you money. The urban people might think there should not be fewer rural migrant workers. If the city is too crowded, it will

cause them inconvenience and it will influence their quality of life. We brought them benefits, though. We made buildings for them to live in. But we have dust on our clothes. We cannot take the same bus with them. They think we are not so clean. You'd better only work for them without eating their food or using their transportations. Some old (urban) people are okay. They can understand us. Life is not easy for us. We migrated from the countryside to the city and work with just a small salary. But the young people are not okay. They drive a BMW or Ferrari car and they do not care about us. They think we are too dirty and not at the same level as them. The do not give even a shit!" …

"Well. They do not hate us. We come to construct the buildings for the city. But we have different living conditions and identities. In general, some of local citizens do not want to speak even one word with us. Maybe the cultural level is different. The style of walking is not the same. They change their routine when they see me from far away. They do not want to go near you. It is very simple. When they see migrant workers, they want to escape. They even run to another side of the road. Can you believe this? It is true. He can run ten meters away. It happens everyday. Some people are polite, and they might smile at you. But others run fast."

When I asked if he had any conflicts with urban citizens, he said there is no chance to have any conflict with urban locals. They seldom deal with those urban people. When they have to deal with them, they just talk about the thing as it is. Nothing else. Then he said that some noise from the site might cause a nuisance. But it was the duty of the construction company not the workers. The company asked them to work at night, and the sound from the construction site made others sleepless. Local residents nearby usually go to negotiate with the company. They do not have direct conflicts with local people. So, he concluded to me that the urban citizens do not hate them because migrant workers come to construct the buildings for the city. But they have different living conditions and identities than urban locals.

When I asked him if he took part in activities organized by the local community. He said,

"Urban people are not willing to come inside the construction site. It is all closed. Did the security man ask you before you came here? Yes, you should ask before you come. I used to know the old security. I usually give him some cigarettes. I did not participate in any activities organized by the locality. I had no chance. No one let us participate, and we do not know where to participate. I

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> also want to participate in some activities. The leisure time in the site is very
> boring and annoying. We work here from dawn to dark, tired and bored."

Located in the edge of the urban society, migrant workers have a weak sense of belonging in the city. Many migrant workers express a strong sense of loneliness and psychological frustration. They work hard in the factory or construction sites with little humane care. Because of the traditional urban-rural dual structure, they need to face the conflicts between urban worker and countryman in the city. They are basically divorced from the mainstream culture of the city and can't have equal exchanges with the urban residents. Cai (2013) emphasizes that an important way to promote the process of urbanization is through making migrant workers citizens. But their sense of belonging in the city is a key influencing factor we should think about first. I asked them questions such as "Do you feel that you are a member of this city?" and "Do you have a home feeling in the city?", the answers show a low sense of belonging into the urban society. For example, Zhao Di, answered me like this:

> "Do you feel that you are a member of this city?"
>
> "The city is better than home, the traffic is good, it is convenient and I can find a job easily. But I don't want to work outside. It is not my home. I have a sense of security here; it is the same as my home. But I always feel very lonely. I have no wife, also a lot of pressure. I have a strong will to stay in the city. I prefer to find an urban girl to marry. But it is too difficult."… "I will only stay here for a while. I will go back later. Its development and changes have nothing to do with me. Basically, the change of this city is particularly large. I have no ability to keep up with the pace of urban life."…

Zhao Di expressed his loneliness and the difficulties in marriage in urban society which made him uneasy to participate fully in urban life. Since most migrant workers still think they are rural people, they do show more concern about their hometown even when they have migrated out. Duan Xiong always feels that he works outside and his home is still in the countryside. He reports a little home feeling in the city,

> "Do you have a home feeling in the city?"

"A little. 10 percent. This city is like a restaurant for us. We stay in a restaurant and take a rest, and we will leave in the end. We make money here, and we will leave sooner or later. You only stay for a while. It is only a temporary place for us to stay. But since we have been here for so long, we also have a feeling for this city."

For them, city is just a place where they work, it could not be called "home". Thus, they are not a "member" of the city which they are not familiar with. Duan Xiong still plans to continue his job in the city to because he thinks the wages are guaranteed. But his narratives demonstrate his preference to rural life which he called "home life".

Do you think you still care about these things in your hometown?

"Sure. I want to invest 500,000 yuan to build a better hometown. But I don't have money. There is no power. [I am] certainly concerned. Usually trivial things, such as how much can we harvest this year. I know who builds a house this year, and who becomes the village head. It is home affection. We care about what is happening in the village. I just ask when I call home. But I cannot donate money to my hometown because I don't have money. In my home the country road can be repaired, and the environment can be changed. After repairing, you can build a park and a nursing home for old people. It will bring interests to villagers for sure. Leaves fall to the soil and give nutrition back to the tree.

"Which kind of lifestyle do you prefer? Rural life or urban life?"

"Rural life. Home life. You spend ten yuan for a meal but you still feel hungry. But you can spend five or six yuan for a meal at home. You can also watch TV at home. The living conditions are also better. It is impossible to be so crowded in a living space. Making money is not particularly important, but you should always make something. There are some construction workers migrating out of China to work. They also make money and some make even more. But they cannot get used to the foreign countries. I am afraid that I cannot adapt to some conditions there. So, I don't want to even have a try. I am in my own country at least."

Besides the sense of belonging, the willingness to stay could also reveal their psychological inclusion in the city. "Leaves fall to the soil and give nutrition back to the tree" is a common mentality of them, which shows that they are like the leaves floating in the air for a short while and goes to the soil where he came from in the end. Duan Xiong

told me he would go back home to farming in the future. He will plant some fruits and vegetables in his field so that he can feed himself. Migrant workers are out to work since they are still young. When they are old, they must go back home.

> "I will grow old sooner or later. That is to say, I will go back home for sure. At home, we are familiar with the food and drinks. They are much better than what we have in the construction site. It is better than work meals. Housing conditions there are certainly better than the outside. How can a dozen of people squeeze inside a small house? We don't have TV but I have one at home. Who does not want their own home? Who does not want to see their brothers and sisters?"

3.4 Hukou Inclusion：Born to Be Different?

Hukou is not only an institutional division of Chinese people into rural and urban residents, but also contains a series of accessories such as differences in social welfare, opportunities for informal jobs, educational opportunities for children. Hukou, thus has produced two social groups who have different economic status, educational levels, and social welfares. This part will address migrant workers' perception of their identities as "rural farmers" and their realization of the differences to see how superficial institution by hukou designations deepen into various aspects of migrant workers' real life. From the narratives of migrant workers, we will see how urban citizens are linked with a group of more civilized people with a higher status than migrant workers. In addition, the fact that the hukou excludes migrant workers at an economic level, cultural level and social status, will be clearly shown in the following paragraphs. Although the interviewees had a clear awareness of this difference, most of them felt powerless to change the reality of their situations.

Duan Xiong pointed out the difference between rural and urban people to me at his construction site. He reported the differences between rural migrants and urban citizens included the educational level, income, social networks, and social status. He said the urban hukou can bring a lot of benefits.

> "The urban people are generally rich and have a better welfare…. Urban hukou

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has benefits, such as medical care and insurance, as well as better education for their children. …We have a lower educational level. We don't have so much money. Children from urban areas can study overseas, but it is impossible for our children. The tuition fee at those schools will be nearly 600 thousand yuan per year……We don't have good relationships (social networks). If you know some officials or a director of a school, it will be easy for your children to go to school. In the countryside, we don't have good education systems. When we work in a military area, they come and receive the daughter of a leader outside of the door when they hear she is going to join the army."

But when I asked him if he wants an urban hukou or to change his identity as a farmer, he said that he did want one, but the reality is that he doesn't have a good enough economic condition to get one. So, it is difficult for him to think about this.

"I want to change to have a good economic condition. But I cannot imagine it because I don't have any money now. If I have money, I will go to school and learn knowledge, then I can change my destiny. But I don't have money now, so I must feed myself first. I must do jobs like this and work hard." … "Your spiritual wealth is also important…. One is material wealth and another is spiritual wealth. Money is material wealth, and the knowledge is the spiritual one. The material wealth will go with your spiritual wealth. When you graduated from a good university, you can find a job with high salary, and then there will be no problem for houses and cars."

For him, the difference between migrant workers and urban citizens is almost insurmountable. Receiving education "spiritual wealth" is seen as a way to transfer their identity into an urban citizen. A saying goes like this," The carp has leaped through the dragon's gate and change into fish-dragons," means transformation from farmers into urban citizens is like a carp (farmer) successfully jumping rapids and change into a fish-dragon (urban citizen), which is not so easy task to achieve. Even with a good wish to become a citizen, it seems an impossible mission for him.

"Well, there is little chance for us, and we just work here. How can we have enough money, time and opportunities? We don't have enough time to study; we have no time in addition to work, eat and sleep."

Similarly, Wang Ge, 46, a security captain in the construction site, expressed the impossibility of changing their rural identities. He thinks there is difference in educational

level and social status between his fellow workers and urban citizens. It is clear for him that he is from the countryside. But he has always thought that rural people should be equal with urban people. When I asked him if he wants his daughter to marry an urban citizen, he also denied its likelihood:

> "I think it is impossible, because we are rural people. In some special circumstances, it might be. Generally, she has very few chances to marry an urban person. For example, an urban resident who has a formal job, generally will not marry the countryside (girl). I also do not want her to marry a citizen, because the identity status is not the same for us. We should never think about it."

From his point of view, a rural migrant should have a certain economic level to buy a house in the city. Furthermore, they should use civilized language and their behavior should go along with other citizens. He told me he saw changes after migration to show that the city is a more civilized place than his village. He gave an example of his boss to certify that the social network is an important factor to determine the difference of rural migrants and urban citizens:

> "At least there is one good thing for me. I am more civilized now. I know how to use civilized language. I have improved a lot. I have this feeling. People can become polite after staying in the city for a year or two. This aspect is the deepest for me. The greetings are more cordial, it can be reflected especially when you are on the bus. They always say "hello" to you before they inquire about things. In the countryside, there is no way to say this. We always say "hey". It is obvious. I have learned to be polite after I came here. I have no behavior difference with a local resident (Proud laughter). At least in the civilized language and actions [one] has to go with the urban locals. To become a citizen, you must have a house. The urban housing prices are high, so you must have money. How can you become a citizen without money? Why? If he is rich, he can buy a house no matter where he comes from. Like our boss, he doesn't have an urban hukou. His wife is from Anhui province and he is from Henan province. They have money to buy a house here.
>
> …But, I think he is still a rural person. The boss is from the same village as me. He still keeps in touch with the village. He took out all the village fellows, and he also counts on the fellows to make money for him. His construction team is almost full of our fellows. At least more than 90% is from his hometown. His business relies on his previous relationships in the village."

An Qing, one of the aforementioned construction workers, told me that he also wanted to change his identity as a migrant worker. But the possibility is too small because their income is low. He emphasized that a good income is the most important condition to become an urban person. He said to me,

> "There will be no money if there is no income. No money, no house. If there is no house in the city, how could I become an urban person? If I have a house here, I can become a citizen." He also thought that the urban citizens have high academic qualifications. They have good jobs with high salaries. They have their own houses here. I am still the original person in the countryside without any changes."

4. Conclusion and Policy Suggestion

It can be concluded from this chapter have discussed four dimensions of social inclusion/exclusion in urban areas: economical, residential, psychological and hukou inclusion/exclusion. They do the most tough and dirty jobs that belong to the secondary labor market, which local citizens avoid. Living in the cluster of urban villages and simple sheds on the construction sites, they exist in a "dual society" parallel to urban society. With differences in educational level, income, social networks and social status, migrant workers cannot share the same welfare as urban citizens. This unequal situation calls for a necessary wave of institutional innovation to bring equal benefits to migrant workers.

Initially, the urban employment must be reformed to promote migrant workers' access to stable job opportunities and a reasonable increase of salary. The key points in policy to include are: making migrants have a stable chance to find a job in the city, innovating and enforcing fair labor contracts for migrants and a guaranteed paid salary according to set terms, including reasonable salary increases, safety at work and solve the conflict in labor and payment.

Secondly, the social security institution must be innovated to help make migrants get security from the modern social security system. This can not only help migrant workers

develop an ability for fruitful economic behavior and benefits in the city but also control the dynamic of accumulation of the social cost to overcome institutional barriers for migrant workers. Specifically, the key points of policy are that the system should be based on the specific needs of migrants, which may be different from what is provided by the urban social security system and should be built according to a wide coverage area, low fees, and transformable injury, medical and pension insurance in the innovation of labor and employment policy. Compensation should be given to migrants to improve their social security level and then transform to a modern social security system.

Thirdly, the government should innovate the public service institution, which includes reforming the policy of public service supply and allowance from government public finance coffers. Specifically, the key policy point is to cooperate with employment institutions, innovate the policy to allow children of migrant workers to enjoy an equal level to urban residents, innovate the policy to let migrant workers enjoy public health, birth control, public culture and public transportation (without discrimination), etc. Realize the public service enjoyment of migrant workers and innovate the policy of indemnificatory housing as well as policy regarding the building of urban infrastructure.

Lastly, it is necessary to innovate the registered residence (*hukou*) institution. This process should focus on the breaking away of welfare from registered residence identity or ensure that there is no registered residence requirement to enjoy public services. Specifically, the key points of policy are to coordinate with the innovation of labor and employment institution and the social security institution, weaken the effects of registered residence on employment, social security and education, match up with the reforms on the social security institution and public service, and promote a one-element registered residence policy to share the properties of free living and unification between urban and rural areas. In this way, residents can finally share a unified identity and equal opportunities and rights.

Chapter Five   The Life Satisfaction of Rural-Urban Migrants

Based on A Survey of Migrant Workers in Beijing

Life satisfaction is defined as one indicator relating to social inclusion, what in the sense means that it describes how social inclusion contributes to subjective wellbeing of migrant workers (Yue & Li, 2015). On the topic of migrant workers' life satisfaction, scholars have generally examined the status and overall plight migrant workers facing as they attempt to integrate into city, and, by extension, what factors influence life satisfaction. Often designated as "the others" in urban life, what are their perceived differences between migrants and urban residents? Does this understanding of 'otherness' or difference inhibit or contribute to their life satisfaction in city? In the current study, we will evaluate and analyze the integration of migrant workers into cities from the perspective of life satisfaction in accordance with the aforementioned questions.

1.Introduction

Studies on rural-urban migration have increasingly shown that life satisfaction carries weight in migrant workers' social inclusion (Li & Li, 2012; Yue & Li, 2015). However, little is known about the actual parameters of migrant workers' life satisfaction. The progress of life satisfaction has been studied from many perspectives, and with attention to a variety of influence factors. In addition to immigration statistics (how many years in city) and the demographic characteristics of migrant workers (age, gender), research has also taken into account the progress of life satisfaction linked with economic factors (working hours, duration in urban areas), and social and psychological factors (social network, self-identity). The current study aims to investigate both objective demographic variables and subjective variables that predict life satisfaction in a group of 303 rural-urban migrant workers in Beijing. The research combines qualitative and quantitative research methods. In terms of findings, this chapter's quantitative results will show that migrant workers report a low level of satisfaction with their own economic and social

situations, including income, social status, and their relationship to urban residents. The life satisfaction of migrant workers is mainly related to the evaluation of economic status, social status and social interactions with urban locals. In terms of qualitative research, findings from interviews will show that there is a significant correlation between life satisfaction and subjective factors including the migrant workers' experience of discrimination from urban locals rather than objective factors (age, gender, *etc*.).

2.Literature Review

Life satisfaction is defined as "a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his/her chosen criteria", which includes a cognitive judgment (Shin & Johnson, 1978). According to Diener, life satisfaction is one of the three components of subjective wellbeing (Andrews & Withey, 2012; Diener *et al*., 1985). Various Indexes are used to describe the degree of life satisfaction, such as Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) in psychological research (Diener *et al*., 1985). Instead of considering general or overall life satisfaction, specifically domains of life satisfaction are also examined, for example, satisfaction with school life, with family/marital life, with economic life, with political life. Thus, scholars contend that life satisfaction could have both the unidimensional model and the multidimensional model. As to the multidimensional model, life satisfaction is divided in to specific domains. For example, The Multidimensional Students' Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS). The MSLSS is a 40-item self-report scale that examines the domain specificity of life satisfaction while retaining a general life satisfaction rating (Gilman & Ashby, 2003; Huebner & Gilman, 2002). Life satisfaction, will be defined as a multidimensional concept here, including the main aspects of migrant workers' daily life – economic life and social life.

Research on the life satisfaction of migrant workers is still in an embryonic stage in China. Most research exists on populations left behind in rural areas such as children and elderly villagers (Jacka, 2012; Zhu *et al*, 2012), nuanced studies on the life satisfaction of Chinese migrants in cities are few (Nielsen *et al*., 2010). Applying the Personal Wellbeing

Index (PWI) in China, Ingrid Nielsen *et al*. (2010) reveal that a moderate level of life satisfaction exists among migrant workers (PWI score = 62.6). They explained that these findings are affected by the circular nature of internal migration in China. When China's migrant workers find it too difficult to live in cities, most of them return to their hometown. On another side, John Knight *et al*. (2009) show that the rural-urban migrant households have a lower happiness score on average compared with rural households based on a 2002 national household survey in China which indicated that the individual characteristics of migrant workers contributed to their unhappiness. While this research demonstrated that migrant workers belong to an unhappy group, it did not illustrate which parts of their life produced the dissatisfaction.

Specifically, several researches also reveal just one dimension of migrant workers' life satisfaction, such as job satisfaction, residential satisfaction (Tao *et al*., 2014; Cheng *et al.*, 2014). However, life satisfaction is also an overall evaluation of quality of life (Amit, 2010). Either than job and residential, more are included. For example, Amit (2010) focuses on the assessment of overall life satisfaction as well as specific aspects of life such as social networks in origin country, religious motive and work satisfaction. Ying (1992) investigated variables that influence life satisfaction in a group of 142 San Francisco Chinese-Americans, and also focuses on their satisfaction with specific life domains (i.e., friendship satisfaction and biculturality satisfaction). To better understand this methodology choice, the research of Jong *et al*. (2002) on the specific aspects of life satisfaction of internal migrants in Thailand is a helpful guide. Jong *et al*. (2002) tested the increased or decreased post-move satisfaction with internal migrants' employment situation, living environment and community facilities in Thailand. Following its routine, this study has divided the life of migrant workers into economic life and social life. In the study at hand, we examine post-migration satisfaction in the background of rural-urban migration, focusing on the day-to-day world of migrant workers in Beijing according to eight dimensions of life satisfaction comprising including living environment, working condition, leisure time, income, social status, relationships with colleagues, family members and urban locals.

Current migration literature mostly tends to focus on objective parameters rather than subjective parameters. Plenty of research points out the impact of socioeconomic status on life satisfaction (Daraei & Mohajery, 2013; Bonini 2008). Deraei and Mohajery (2013), for example, used the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS[9]) from Diener *et al*. (1985) to measure life satisfaction of women domestic workers in India. Their findings revealed a positive correlation between socioeconomic status (mainly, occupation, education, and income) and life satisfaction. Similarly, Chinese literature have documented the social and economic determinants of migrant workers' life satisfaction. However, these studies have merely focused on the objective determinants of migrant workers' life satisfaction such as income and living conditions (Yang *et al*., 2014; Jiao, 2009). For example, Jiao (2009) shows that 37% of new-generation migrant workers are satisfied with their life, and their marital status, monthly average income, living conditions and health status have a significant impact on their overall satisfaction with life. To examine the life satisfaction of migrant workers, this study will also consider six objective demographic parameters, including gender, age, marital status, income, educational level and length of time in Beijing.

There are a few international migration studies that emphasize the importance of subjective parameters of life satisfaction. Ying (1992) hints at the importance of taking subjective parameters into consideration when examining life satisfaction. Some migration studies focus on the social aspects of life satisfaction by examining social networks. A study conducted among western immigrants in Israel found that the immigrants who lived in homogeneous neighborhoods reported being more satisfied with life in Israel than those who lived in heterogeneous neighborhoods (Amit 2014). Migrant workers are more likely to migrate into cities if they already have someone in their social

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[9]Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) measures the degree of general satisfaction of both domestic workers and employers. This scale was developed by Diener *et al*. (1985) for measuring life satisfaction as an overall judgment of life. SWLS is a five items inventory, an example of an item is: in most ways my life is close to my ideal, and I am satisfied with my life. The SWLS is measured on a rating scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree), the highest score reporting high satisfaction. There are different scales for evaluating life satisfaction, but they focus on a specific domain. SWLS is one of the components of subjective well-being and the highlight point of this scale is that it emphasizes a person's own judgment, not the criteria which are important to researchers (Diener 1985).

network who has migrated. Migrant workers consider a sense of belonging, feelings of security and a place to call 'home' in their destination city important factors in their decision-making process (An & Zhang, 2015).

The link between discrimination and life satisfaction is also studied amidst the backdrop of international migration (Safi, 2010; Verkuyten, 2008; Fozdar & Torezani, 2008). Fozdar and Torezani, for example, report a paradox of high level of satisfaction compared with high levels of discrimination experienced by humanitarian migrants (refugees) in the labor market and everyday life based on a study of 150 refugees in Australia from the former Yugoslavia, the Middle East, and Africa. It should be noted, however, that my study focuses only on immigrants with free choice to emigrate rather than on refugees. Safi (2010) found that the discrimination some migrant ethnic groups facing in their host society was the most consistent explanation for their lower life satisfaction levels. Safi's study also showed that immigrants' relative life dissatisfaction did not diminish with time and across generations. Similarly, Verkuyten (2010) points out that higher perceived structural discrimination was associated with lower general life satisfaction among Turkish immigrants in the country of settlement. Turkish-Dutch, as ethnic minority group members, expressed lower general life satisfaction than Dutch people in the Netherlands. Aside from factors such as lower income, lower education and poorer health, being an ethnic minority member carries additional factors that can lower the general life satisfaction of Turkish immigrants. However, there are still few studies on the correlation between migrant workers' experience of being discriminated against and subjective wellbeing especially life satisfaction in the context of Chinese internal rural-urban migration. Zhang *et al*. (2009) found that experiences of discrimination not only had a direct, significant negative effect on the quality of life among rural-urban migrant workers, but also had an indirect effect through expectation-reality discrepancy on their quality of life. The current case study in Beijing will also include experiences of discrimination as one of the parameters that influence the life satisfaction of migrant workers, and we propose that migrant's perceived experiences of discrimination will have a significant correlation with their life satisfaction. Other than discriminations, the social

interaction and language proficiency will also be examined here in current study.

3.Data and Methods

The current chapter examines the life satisfaction of migrant workers, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods is considered well-suited for an empirical study. The quantitative part, which is based on a representative survey of 303 migrant workers in Beijing, is aimed at giving a general description of the correlation between different aspects of life satisfaction using both objective and subjective parameters. The qualitative part will provide insights and give explanations for these findings. Data for the quantitative part comes from the Beijing survey on social Inclusion of rural-urban migrants, conducted by the Institute for Population and Social Studies from Renmin University in 2009. The survey respondents were rural-urban migrants aged over 15 without Beijing *hukou*. They all have their household registration in their rural hometown, although they work in Beijing. In this survey, individual demographic information, family conditions, and the working and living conditions in the city were collected. In total, there were 303 eligible questionnaires left after excluding the ineligible ones. The questionnaire focused on their family background, the motivation and progress of their migration in the beginning. The next part contained basic information about economic inclusion and social inclusion, including their employment, income, occupation mobility, social interactions, social networks, life satisfaction and self-identity. There were also questions related to their sense of belonging and tendency to stay or leave the city in the end (see Appendix 4).

In this study, six objective demographic variables are included to examine the life satisfaction of migrant workers. The variables have been tested by previous migrant worker literature (Gao & Russell, 2010; Yang et al., 2014; Li, 2009)

Age. The average age of migrant workers in this survey is 22. This shows that the migrant workers are a relatively young group, who are capable to maintaining jobs with heavy labor in city.

Gender. There are more male than female migrant workers (69.6% vs 28.7%). The majority of migrant workers are still male, but rural women, especially young rural women, have started to leave the countryside and migrate out to work in city (this data could also be used to interpret the rise in bride price in rural areas. [See Chapter 3]).

Educational level. More of migrant workers less than 30 years old went to college after high school, with 15.19% compared with those migrant workers older than 30 years old (6.2%). Fewer of migrant workers less than 30 years old have an educational level of primary school or below (only 3.8% of 145 samples). The majority of migrant workers have an educational level of junior- or senior-middle school.

4. Marital status. Unmarried migrant workers account for 45.2% of respondents and 52.8% were married. This breakdown is suitable for the age distribution of marriage.

5. Income. The average monthly salary is 1,556 yuan. This is much smaller than one of urban residents.

In addition to these demographic characteristics, the length of residence time in Beijing is also taken into account. 54% of respondents had been in Beijing for less than three years, showing the instability of their urban residency. 73% of migrant workers stayed in Beijing during most of the time, but occasionally went back home once or twice a year for a short visit. Only 15% did not go home during the whole year.

Table 12 Objective Demographic Characteristics of 303 Samples

Total Sample (303)	Freq.	Percent
Age(mean)	*31*	
19-22	210	69.31
23-25	86	28.38
26-30	7	2.31
Gender(5miss)		
Male	211	69.64%
Female	87	28.71%
Marital status (2 miss)		
Single	137	45.21%
Married	164	47.19%
Income(mean)	*1556*	
below 1000	9	2.97%
3001-4000	294	97.03%
Educational level (2 miss)		
Primary or below	21	6.93%
Junior high	184	60.73%
Senior high	63	20.79%
College and above	33	10.89%
Time in Beijing (2 miss)		
less than 1 year	74	24.42%
1-3 years	91	30.03%
3-5 years	56	18.48%
5-10 years 55	55	17.82%
10+ year	25	8.25%

Data source: Survey on 303 Migrant Workers in Beijing

In addition to the six demographic parameters, three subjective parameters will be chosen from the Survey on Migrant Workers in Beijing.

Language proficiency: 75% can use Mandarin when they communicate with urban residents. Mandarin is used to communicated with urban people or for professional occasions. If they still use dialect to communicate with urban locals, it means that they don't handle the language skills in city.

Whether facing difficulties while interacting with Beijing locals: 34% face difficulties in dealing with urban residents while 63% reported no difficulties dealing with urban locals.

The experiences of discrimination from Beijing natives: 41% of respondents occasionally

face discrimination from the urban locals and 17% reported never having experienced discrimination from urban citizens.

Table 13. Subjective Characteristics of 303 Samples

Total sample 303	Frequency	Percent
Which language you speak with urban locals (1 miss)		
Mandarin	229	75.83%
Dialect	72	23.84%
If have difficulties with dealing with urban (5 miss)		
Yes	104	34.78%
No	190	63.55%
face discrimination before (1 miss)		
Often	9	
Occasionally	124	41.33%
Almost no	115	38.33%
Never	51	17%

Data source: Survey on 303 Migrant Workers in Beijing

The survey included questions related to employment, occupation and income. In addition, the survey collected information about migrant workers' subjective evaluation of social life satisfaction- their social networks (including their satisfaction of their relationships with family members, colleagues and local residents), and social status. The life satisfaction was also evaluated by one question related to their response on a series of eight aspects of their life do to show the evaluations.

In former studies, life satisfaction was tested mostly with one single yes/no question from the respondent, or the option to choose among 5 scales of life satisfaction. For example, research from French and Lam (1988) on job satisfaction among Filipina female domestic servants in Hong Kong revealed that the most important affecting factors were salary, length of residence, the number of relatives in Hong Kong, the provision of a private room and the nationality of the employer. However, this study only divided the sample into dissatisfied and satisfied groups. To better describe the level of job satisfaction, my dissertation data examines four dimensions of job satisfaction, namely, living environment, working conditions, income and leisure time. Moreover, this study uses 100 scores of eight specific dimensions of life satisfaction to ask respondents to give scores

according to their levels of satisfaction. The question related to life satisfaction on the questionnaire can be seen below:

C37 Give scores to show your satisfaction of the following aspects. "1" shows that you are not satisfied at all while "100" shows that you are very satisfied.

Note: Economic Life Domains (1-4) and Social Life Domains (5-8)

1. Living environment (   )
2. Working condition (   )
3. Income (   )
4. Leisure time (   )
5. Social status (   )
6. Relationship with colleagues (   )
7. Relationship with family members ( )
8. Relationship with urban locals (   )

The quantitative method cannot alone address all the explicative factors. In order to give a vivid description of migrant workers' economic and social life satisfaction, we attempt to gain further understanding of the former findings and examine more additional explaining factors of migrant life satisfaction in the following part of qualitative analysis. For the qualitative part of this chapter, the target population consisted of 20 migrant workers in Beijing. The interviewees were randomly selected from construction sites and Zixin restaurant in Haidian District of Beijing. Most of the interviews were conducted in the respondents' work places, while several occurred in a café. These migrant workers were in Beijing for more than one year on average. The findings in this part are presented in the form of representative excerpts from the interviews. The names of the interviewees were changed in order to protect their privacy.

4. Research Findings: Economic and Social Life Satisfaction

Checking the mean scores among eight different domains of life satisfaction, we know that migrant workers give a lower than 60 grades (which, for the purposes of the study, is measured under 60) to their living environment (46.48), leisure time (39.27), working condition (51.43), income (46.92), social status (42.79) and the relationship with urban locals (45.45). The respondents give higher scores over 60 in reference to their

relationship with colleagues (80.89) and their relationship with family (73.00). For the surveyed migrant workers in Beijing, they are not satisfied with their income, living environment, working conditions or leisure time shown in the average scores they gave. Relative deprivation theory could explain these migrants' dissatisfaction with their economic life in Beijing. Relative deprivation refers to the psychological state in which an individual or a group produces an unsatisfied demand when compared with other groups with higher status and better living conditions (Cai *et al*., 2009; Wang, 2011).

Table 14 The Mean Scores for Eight Aspects of Life Satisfaction

	Total sample	
	N=303	
	Mean	SD
Economic Life		
Living environment	46.48	1.69
Leisure time	39.27	1.69
Working conditions	51.43	1.65
Income	46.92	1.58
Social Life		
Social status	42.79	1.62
Relationship (colleagues)	80.89	1.48
Relationship (family)	73.00	1.58
Relationship (urban locals)	45.45	1.78

Data source: Survey on 303 Migrant Workers in Beijing

4.1 Satisfaction with Economic Life

Job Satisfaction (Income, Leisure Time, Working Conditions)

We first examine information related to migrant workers' economic situation and labor market performance. Most of the migrant workers have an average monthly salary of around 3-4 thousand yuan. They are not so satisfied with their salary, and have no money left at the end of the month. For example, Mr. Yuan belongs to the group of "empty pockets"- meaning that he spends all his income and have no savings. Mr. Yuan, an employee in a private entertainment company with a monthly salary of 3,000 yuan, has been in Beijing for more than two years. He reported a low overall life satisfaction (at a

score of 50). He shared his situation in Beijing and complained about his low economic status and living environment:

> To be honest, it [his overall life satisfaction] can only be regarded as just so so. – because you want to stay in Beijing. If I want to live in Beijing afterwards, I would buy a house at least instead of buying both a house and the car. I do want to buy a big one, but a small one with fifty or sixty square meters should be okay for me to live. You know the place where I lived before, which was located outside the fifth ring road of Beijing, the housing price there has risen to 12,200 to 13,100 yuan per square meters [a high price for him]. That place is still far away and it takes me usually more than an hour to reach the center of the city. I mean you just take the subway without traffic jams. Thinking about the bus, it becomes even more slow. So, I will give 50 points to show my life satisfaction if you asked me to give the score.

The top three reasons given behind their decision to migrate were all related to financial need: to make money, farming is too hard to make fast money; their hometown is too poor and they should come out to make money since they have nothing to do in the countryside. These three main motivations of migration show that economic motivation is still a dominant factor influencing the migrant workers' consideration. On one hand, it shows that migrant workers belong to a rural surplus labor force, and on the other hand shows pushing factors of rural areas for farmers to migrate out. Although the recent wave of rural-urban migration has improved the economic situation of migrant workers, it doesn't mean that their life satisfaction is improved at the same time. When migrant workers compared their economic life in the city with those of urban locals, they felt a sense of unfairness. Under such a comparison, the low level of migrant workers' economic satisfaction could be understandable.

As Anqing, a construction worker in Beijing, is unsatisfied with his current job and complained on the long duration of working and hash living conditions. Furthermore, he told me his plan to find other jobs. He thought that they have different welfare and treatment with local citizens. He thought that urban people have higher education level, which make them certainly can get higher wages than him. But when I asked whether it was fair, or not. He gave me a negative reply after thinking for a long time.

> "I feel tired and have nothing to do but except working all day long. I need to spend more than ten hours a day on working. I am very tired, and I want to quit this job and engage other occupations. I hope I can run a small business in the future." …

> "I cannot bear the hot weather anymore. The duration of work is too long, generally ten hours a day. I have been thinking about changing jobs every day. I always wanted to run business. But other kinds of job cannot earn too much. I have no knowledge and no technology so that I cannot find other jobs."…

> "I am still young now. But I cannot work on the construction site after 55. Too tired! Like some of my team members who are engaged in some jobs need lots of manpower, they are not so okay after 45. The physical quality is not okay!"

Duan Xiong, a 34-year-old, married construction worker from Xinyang city (Henan province) in the team of boss Bao. The physical power of him is not okay now. And he needs to spend 11 or 12 hours on working daily. The large part of his job is to take heavy stuffs in the construction site. He told me he had faced a lot of difficulties here as follows:

> "It is particularly hard to get our salaries after finishing the job. In the beginning, the boss promised 30 yuan for you. But when we finish everything, he started to pick up problems. We can only take 20 yuan in the end…They usually pay us according to the number of square meters that we've done. When we finish, they will do the decoration and the quality check. Then they say here is not okay or there is not okay. They will make a part of the deduction."

From their narratives, the satisfaction of their job is mainly due to the high requirement for labor force as they refer as "too tired", "hard". Furthermore, the satisfaction of income is described as the difficulty to get their income back. The hash working condition is also been mentioned in Duan Xiong's quote as well as we discussed in Chapter 4.

Mr. Yuan's company belongs to the private sector. He told me about his working hours, holidays, salary levels and contractual situation. It is not hard to evaluate his job satisfaction. It is a temporary job without contract, which means he cannot get any legal protection. Working hours are not fixed. He pointed out that the low income is the hardest difficulty he encounters in his job.

> "How to describe my job satisfaction? This cannot be completely stated in a

unified way. I like my job, so I am satisfied with it from the point of my individual preference. But I have to say that it is far worse than my expectation, in all aspects of treatment (salary, holidays and leisure time)."

My working hours are not fixed. For example, my agenda of late is full. I am usually busy both at the beginning and the end of the year. I have to travel for business around the whole country during the beginning of the year since it is the launch period of the new product. At the end of the year, there is a variety of awards ceremonies. So, I have a little leisure time these days."

The same as the construction workers without working contracts discussed in Chapter 4, Mr. Yuan doesn't have any guarantee of his job because he doesn't have the contract neither.

"I have not really seen the contract [laughing] (meaning there is no contract for him). Temporary, everything is temporary. No, it was mainly because I did not plan to work for a long term. I also know that this job cannot be a permanent job for me. This is a coincidence, so I do this job for now. And I myself like to sing and dance. I like the entertainment industry [more]. The problem is that I cannot make a lot of money from my job."

The situation is the same as mine when I worked as a waitress in Zixin restaurant. There is just an oral contract with the boss from Sichuan province that confirms that I was offered a job as a waitress since I was recommended by his former manager Pingzi (see Chapter 2). When I checked with another waitress, Mei, who came to work as a waitress here in name of internship from his vocational training school in Mianyang city, Sichuan province. She was only 19 years old then, and she said the boss knows about the principal of her school, and there are also other classmates in Zixin restaurant such as Haixian, who was working as a chef here. She says to me that one of her classmate found a job and she resigns from here once she has found a job in another restaurant. Just after 2 weeks when I arrived, she left suddenly and rumors spread like that she argued with the boss before she left. But her vacancy was soon named by a girl from Gansu province with a good-looking face with the same 1,200 yuan salary as the boss promised. We usually called her "little Gansu" because it's rare to see migrant workers from Gansu province in this restaurant.

Most migrant workers I spoke to had little leisure time, which caused them to give low scores to their leisure and entertainment. But how do they spend the little leisure time they have? Xiao Bing told me about his leisure time and entertainment.

> "Our vacation time is not fixed. I always take turns with my colleagues. We also have a festival bonus which means we can get three times our salaries if we work during holiday. The hotel also bought insurance for us…. When I have time, I go to the school nearby for running or playing basketball. Sometimes I read books, newspapers and magazines, such as Business Week, Beijing Youth Daily, China Daily and Hotel Management, etc."

When I worked in the Zixin restaurant, I have no weekends, but only with four days free per month as long as I can have a good negotiation with other colleagues. They don't want all of the waitress to have the same holiday to keep the normal running of the restaurant. When I have holidays, I just stays in the accommodation killing my time except one day shopping with my restaurant colleagues in Xidan, the famous commercial area in Beijing. The boss offers the working meals and accommodation so that I can just work without considering other burdens if I can work and make myself as a migrant worker. I usually wake up around 7 o'clock in the morning and start to walk to the restaurant alone or with other colleagues with an empty stomach. Then we have our breakfast together in a small dining hall. Mei told me once it was the left over from the ordered of our patrons. I don't mind since there is no other choice for a hungry people at that time with only 1,200-yuan monthly salary. I would order food in this restaurant, but I will soon become a member of "empty pocket group". I could not just accept rather than to complain or reject the food offered. Xiao Bing, similarly, said he was not so content with the meals at work offered by the hotel,

> "There is nice food in the hotel. But it changed over time. The hotel offers employees three meals a day. It was okay in the beginning. But the cook prepares food for more than two hundred people at a time, so the taste of the food went up and down; sometimes light, like without any salt, sometimes too salty. I don't like it at all"

Living Conditions

As we find in the quantitative data, most of the migrant workers surveyed lives in accommodation afforded by their employer. I lived in a room roughly 15 square meters with 6 people in the basement rent by our boss when I worked as an actress in Zixin Restaurant, then the construction site is even worse, migrant workers lived in the temporarily built shelters in the construction site. There are also some young migrant workers who rent an apartment and live with housemates when there is no employer can offer them any accommodation. For many who cannot afford the high rent in the city center, suburban areas become a popular housing destination for migrant workers due to its low rent for a relatively private living space in the apartments. As an intern in an advertisement company at his 23, Luyi rent a room with three others in Hui Longguan, at the North Ring Road in Beijing, which is a famous cluster area of migrant workers. It takes him about one hour on the road. But the biggest difficulty is not the long commute duration, it's how could he squeezed himself into the subway in hordes of people at the peak time of transportation in the morning. He says he want to move out of Hui Longguan because he doesn't want to live with the crowd of outsiders and he wants to become a member of the up-class in Beijing. At least this inspiration can back him up in his migration. "I will become a Beijinger in my next life." But for Mr. Yuan, he feels even unfair when it comes to the comparison with Beijing local youngers. As a migrant worker, Yuan must rent a house in the suburban area and work hard to pay rent. But Beijing local people often have their own house and don't need to struggle for their living. The housing problem is the key issue for his staying in Beijing.

> "The problem is mainly my age [26 years old]. I also know some friends who have more income with no registered permanent residence (hukou). They have bought both a car and a house. Their subjective wellbeing must be relatively better. There is not so much anxiety for them. And I think their sense of belonging to Beijing will be stronger .... For example, I will buy an apartment once I become rich suddenly. I will even buy a smaller house in Beijing even if I do not have particularly good fortune. In that case, I may have a little stronger sense of belonging. Because I feel that there is still at least one space of my own in this city. That is why I think I still have many problems. I have to solve some

material problems, which I face right now [he laughs]."

From Mr. Yuan's narratives, we hear how bad he gives evaluations on his economic situation and living condition. He compared life in Beijing with his former life in his hometown and said that the loneliness he experienced made him feel depressed. Compared with peers of his same age in Beijing, he feels that his situation is worse. His material conditions (the car and the house) are not as good as his friends' in Beijing. As he told us, one apartment is the key of his sense of belonging in Beijing even without a Beijing *hukou*.

> Some people in Beijing ... who are relatively young, they are in their early thirties, and you think they should be hard working at this age. I often saw when I rented a house in a local Beijing community that they were playing mahjong all night long. They don't need to work during the day. In fact, this phenomenon is true. Beijing has a large part of young people who rely on their own houses for income. They bought a lot of houses for investment when the housing prices in Beijing were cheap. Now they can rent out these houses, which support them to do nothing. In this sense, they will not understand how hard you are working since they have no idea how to related to hard-working people. The local Beijing residents have their own house; at least they have a place to live. They don't need to worry about how to make a living. I will be kicked out of my house if I don't pay the rent, so I certainly need to worry about everything. I need to work to make money and find a place to live, but they [local residents] don't need to. Their home is here, even these people in their thirties are not working if they can live with parents.

What about the migrant workers who live in accommodations afforded by their employers? In this case, the location is always near their workplace and they don't need to pay any rents. Similar to Mr. Yuan, Xiao Bing, 28, reported a low level of satisfaction with his living conditions. He is a team leader in a five-star hotel who migrated from Shaanxi Province. He has been working in Beijing since 2005 and his monthly income is about 3,000 yuan. Xiao Bing came to Beijing with his classmates. He didn't buy his own house in Beijing, either. He was not alone here in Beijing and he mentioned his brother who also worked in the city. Besides his eldest brother, he knew just some of his classmates and colleagues. He usually interacts with these classmates and colleagues in his daily life.

"Most of my classmates and I have been working in this hotel. We never changed jobs."
He also complained about his accommodation in city. He lived in the dormitory offered
by the boss of the hotel. He explained that,

> "The dormitory is like the one in our school (there are usually 8 people in one
> room). Luckily, we have an air conditioner. The dorm is located in a local
> neighborhood or houses of urban locals as well as migrant workers. Some
> residents are local street venders."

When I did my field study in Zixin restaurant, live in the dormitory with other 5 migrant
workers in the restaurant, the situation is also like this. We don't have much privacy and it
recalls me my accommodation in the university. It gives you a chance to know about your
colleagues and even make a good friendship with some of them. But it's still not a
spacious room.

4.2 Satisfaction with Social Life

Satisfaction of Social Status

Migrant workers admitted that city natives enjoyed a higher status than farmers, and they
could clearly recognize the difference between themselves and urban residents. 83% of
respondents did not consider themselves as city residents although they live and work in
Beijing, but there are 2% consider themselves as city residents, which indicates that they
have a clear understanding of the distinction between themselves and urban residents.
Respondents offered inconsistent opinions, however, on their social identities as farmers.
According to the survey data, 58% of respondents think they are peasants while 2.9%
consider themselves as non-farmers. The main reason for their farmer identity is that their
own *hukou* and family relationships are still in rural areas. Furthermore, they are
accustomed to a lifestyle in the countryside. Most respondents expressed a pessimistic
and passive attitude towards the possibility to change their self-identity. They think it is
impossible to change or there is no need to think of the possibility of this change. As Mr.
Yuan, who worked in a private company in Beijing, said about his difference with urban
people. Mr. Yuan believes that the major difference between him and Beijing residents is

household registration, or what is called *hukou*, and he also analyzed the pros and cons of his non-Beijing identity. He accepted the identity of "the outsiders" because it was technically true. At the same time, he agreed that it was a bit discriminatory since he was living, working, and contributing to Beijing. He denied the unequal status between migrant workers and Beijing locals. He even had a sense of superiority when he compared himself with Beijing locals. The Beijing *hukou* is the key element that makes the difference between migrant workers and Beijing locals.

> "Our gap is just the matter of one Beijing household registration. Everything will be solved if I can get one household here. It is the fundamental problem. I'm more diligent than Beijing locals. They are lazy, absolutely lazy. I tell you. In particular, they are selfish.
>
> ……
>
> I think the children of Beijing locals may be less hardworking and serious than our [rural born] children. Their families have better material conditions than ours, so they are inert. They would like to say, 'Hey, anyway, I have a Beijing *hukou*. I do not have to study hard. Being jobless won't make me starve to death. My family can help me to find a similar job. I earn a little money a month, but I have my own house here. I can even rent it out to the outsiders to raise money."

When I asked Mr. Yuan that "do you feel that you have a lower status than Beijing residents?", he said "no". But he does mind that he is called the "outsiders". Then he gave his explanation on the gap between rural migrant workers and urban locals.

> "No, I never felt that. I never think that Beijing natives are above us. That is to say, I think all that they have is just a Beijing hukou. I envy this Beijing hukou. It brings convenience to life. For example, with it is more convenient to find a job. But it doesn't mean they have a stronger ability than me. I will never admit this."
>
> The mountain areas usually belonging to a close and less developed area, so lifestyles, especially hygiene, are more casual. Urban people still have some discrimination towards the outsiders, and it may cause some rural people to have a low degree of self-esteem."

Satisfaction of the Relationship with Urban Locals

Migrant workers often find themselves in a self-enclosed social circle due to their long working hours and little leisure time. From this view, there is no real integration into urban society for migrant workers. Compared with local colleagues from the city, Xiao Bing has a better relationship with other migrant workers. He told me that local urban employees have different welfare than migrant workers. Urban local employees, for example, have subsidies for meals and housing. Furthermore, their bonuses are generally higher than migrant workers'. All these comparisons made his feeling of deprivation stronger.

> Their (urban local's) exclusion on the migrant workers will be a little bit stronger. They will give you a little help, and they also won't care about these little things.

Many of Mr. Yuan's colleagues became his friends in the end, and he was also very satisfied with his relationships with them. All of his friends and colleagues are not Beijing natives. He described them as "North Drift", which means that their residence situation is not stable in Beijing. The social and sometimes physical segregation of migrant workers from urban locals influences their social life. Some stereotypes expressed by Mr. Yuan about Beijing natives are fairly universal from the perspective of migrants, who often characterize urbanites as lazy, stingy and good at cursing people. He said that migrant workers, especially the waitress who are in service industry, might suffer a lot of unfair treat. He said on incident,

> "This is often happening in the restaurant. People who don't want to wait for a long queue just blame it on the waiters. That is terrible. Beijing locals love to jump the queue, I told you this. They are unwilling to line up or bear someone in front of them. It is disgusting. But will you treat the waiter badly if he is your relative or child? It is not a big deal to jump the queue and you can solve it in another way. You tell the waiter, "I have something urgent, can you give me a table first?" We migrated thousands of miles to Beijing and worked very hard, while paid with just a small amount of money. How can you shout to us?"

For my waitress experience in Zixin Restaurant, I haven't encounter any customers who

bully me. But I do hear from my colleagues that there was one waitress who was poured the hot dish by one customer who angrily accused that there is a hair inside the dish. The poor denied and rejected to change the dish. In the end, the girl was sent to hospital and the boss paid the fee. The customer went away. For the boss, he doesn't want to extravagant this incident because he went to keep a good reputation of his restaurant. The girl is easier to deal with compared with the grumble customer. The girl quit her job and never show in the restaurant.

Additionally, Mr. Yuan feel isolated among Beijing natives. When I asked whether he thought that Beijing locals were exclusive, he responded in the affirmative. Yuan told me that he had the bad experience of arguing with a middle-aged Beijing woman in his daily life.

> I have encountered such a thing more than once in the bus or subway. They [urban residents] argued with people about small things. There is one favorite sentence of many local residents: "You come to Beijing to become niubi? [niubi means hot shit. niubi is difficult to translate: the characters niu and bi can be rendered into English with great precision by the words – and I beg your pardon – 'cow pussy', niu being the zoological reference, bi the anatomical. But though the denotation of niubi is embarrassingly plain, it's connotations are far from obvious. Niubi is a term of approbation, perhaps the greatest such term in colloquial Chinese. Niubi is an attitude, a lifestyle: a complete lack of concern over what other people think of you, and the resulting freedom to do whatever you please] This means that you are in the territory of a local Beijinger, and how dare you behave as such? Do you think a 40-year-old local resident has discrimination or prejudice against outsiders? if you count rates, there are more such people at the middle age.

> I, myself, have encountered discrimination once. I was particularly angry. It was on the bus in Beijing. There was a worker wearing a uniform, which seems she worked at the bus terminal. She was not working in that bus, so her attitude should be completely different from the ticket seller on board. You know? Such a bitch! She stood next to me when she got on the bus after me, but she felt I'd squeezed into her. She scolded me, and then she went to the front door of the bus to chat with the driver. I guess they may all know each other. Since I needed to get off soon, I habitually passed the crowd to stand in front of the back door. When I walked through the crowd, because my bag is relatively large, it touched her. She said I did it deliberately, that I deliberately passed the crowd to stand in front of her, that I deliberately touched her, etc. She began to scold me, and the

words she used were particularly rude. I tried to endure her in the beginning, but later, she offended my mother — you know, Beijing people are good at cursing and fighting. They like to scold you and use words related to mothers. I prefer that she curses me, 'bitch', rather than 'son of bitch'! My mother is the most important to me, and I absolutely cannot allow anyone to bear such an insult to her. I was very angry at that time, so I went back to argue with her. We fought in the end. She started ... saying, "Ah, you came to Beijing to make a niubi [to show off]?" (Laughing) Her curses included even my grandsons. But my talking skill is more powerful, and I made her so angry she came up and hit me……There is a scar on my hand that she gave me……I would calm down if she said anything else because I met several times that Pekingese behave in such a way. However, I could not stand it as soon as she said bad things about my mother. I planned to tell her boss about her impolite behavior in the bus terminal, but she did not wear a name tag because she was not on duty. When I got to the terminus, I met the driver on the bus by accident. The man told me, "Just forget it, you can figure out nothing with her. Just forget it, her personality is like this, unbearable." I went away. Anyway, we are guests on the field of local residents.

There were certainly a lot of Pekingese on the bus, I was angry at that time. I did not control my words so much. You are a native of Beijing, so what? You can open your mouth and curse; shake your hands to hit people? There are some people who helped me. One woman told me something that might not sound good (laughs). That woman pulled me over to the side and told me: 'Please do not care about this kind of person. She might have had a fight with her husband before coming out.'

But his experience of discrimination is rare cause they live in a segregated space with urban locals. Just as my isolated experience in Zixin restaurant having only deal with my colleagues and customers, the experience of construction workers who is locked in the construction site working, there is few chances for Mr. Yuan to deal with local people.

"The rest are less intense because I usually work and live with other migrant workers. My colleagues are also migrant workers. We have relatively few chances to deal with local residents. In fact, I am not very willing to contact with Pekingese (lower voice), so I will deliberately avoid those interactions."

Mr. Yuan also pointed out the different attitudes of Beijing locals towards immigrants versus locals. He was helpless but to accept the reality. But when he saw some brave people who could fight against the bad attitude of Beijing locals, he feels few happy from the bottom of his heart.

> After all, it is their hometown. We would like to bear their bad temper rather than fight against them. Even if we fight with them, they will not get any benefits. The local residents have been here in Beijing for their whole life. Another day, there was one guest who is local in Beijing who also argued with the ticket seller on the bus. You know, I was particularly impressed with one sentence from the middle-aged women. She said: "ah, what do you think about? You thought I was the outsider here!?" You can easily know the underlying meaning of her words, which is: You are shouting at me as if I was a migrant worker who was not born here, but I'm a native of Beijing, how dare you shout at me? (he laughs)

He gave me a negative answer when I asked if he had any intention to integrate into Beijing. He regarded the process of social inclusion as to flatter and fawn the Beijing locals. He also did not participate in activities organized by local people. He also pointed out that there were not so many local activities planned in his community.

> In fact, I did not specifically devote myself to Beijing. I have always been like this. If people treat me well, I will be even better to them. I do not shut them up deliberately.

Xiao Bing also encountered uncomfortable interactions with local citizens.

> "Sometimes you ask them for directions, and when they hear your accent, they literally point you anywhere. Once they said to me that I just needed to turn down this alley lane and then I would arrive, but I went the wrong way. Another time, I was on the bus when the driver braked suddenly. I accidentally stepped backward onto an urban people, then the local said to me with dirty words. I was very angry. …We have administrators to check the dormitory. One of the administrators generally came and checked around ten at night. It was after eleven o 'clock, when two local female dormitory administrators came to check. We all had already gone to bed. They just kicked the door open and yelled out. A roommate was angry, and said, "get out!" They said they were checking the dormitory. We had words with the female dormitory administrator. She dared to pressure and bully us because we had migrated from outside the city, saying, "If they had dealt with locals, they would not be like this."

The satisfaction of material life could be met more easily, but the divide between these two separate social groups in urban areas makes the social satisfaction of migrant workers more complicated to achieve.

4.3 Impact Factors of Life Satisfactions

Result 1 Impact factors of Economic Life Satisfaction

Table below shows that the four dimensions of economic life satisfaction (living environment, working condition, income and leisure time) were significantly correlated with the experiences of difficulties in communicating with locals, although the correlation is not strong. This means that if they face difficulties (unhappy experiences) in dealing with Beijing locals, they have less job satisfaction. Separately, gender, age and the experiences of discrimination are correlated with migrant workers' satisfaction with their living environment and working conditions. Migrant workers' income satisfaction is significantly correlated with subjective factors, such as discrimination experiences with urban residents and other difficulties in dealing with urban locals. Migrant workers' satisfaction with leisure time is significantly correlated with age and the difficulties in dealing with urban residents.

Table 15. Correlation with Economic Life Satisfaction

	Economic Satisfaction			
	Living environment	Working condition	Income	Leisure time
Gender	**0.1358***	**0.1779****	0.0405	0.0153
Age	**-0.1175***	**-0.1224***	0.0049	**-0.1386***
Marital status	-0.0718	-0.0208	0.0286	-0.0521
Education level	-0.0487	-0.0481	-0.0974	-0.0666
Length in Beijing	-0.0907	0.0139	-0.0048	0.0507
Monthly income	-0.0287	0.1047	0.063	0.1028
Language proficiency	-0.0508	-0.094	-0.0434	-0.0691
Difficulties with urban residents	**0.1705****	**0.1845****	**0.2234*****	**0.1800****
Face discriminations before	**0.1976*****	**0.1353***	**0.1533****	0.0701

For the satisfaction of living and working environment, although two objective factors, gender and age, are significantly correlated with the former two dimensions of life, it is not obvious. Other objective indicators have not found any correlation with the economic

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life satisfaction of migrant workers, which is inconsistent with the previous literature that inspects the objective factors of life satisfaction of migrant workers in China. Whether they have the difficulty of social interaction is significantly correlated with the four indicators of economic life satisfaction (p<0.01). The experience of discrimination has a clear correlation with the three dimensions of economic life satisfaction. This shows that among these subjective factors, the relationship with urban locals is greatly related to their satisfaction with economic life. Therefore, satisfaction with living environment and working conditions is mainly related to the degree of the citizen's social interaction and whether or not they are experiencing strong discrimination from urban locals. Mr. Yuan hints at this discrimination from his former landlord:

> Local residents in Beijing are stingier [laughing]. They asked us for a higher rent when it is already high. However, the landlord will not do anything when you propose your requirements. There is no other choice for us. Housing rentals follow the rule of supply and demand. Well, the demand is more than the supply, so you can do nothing if they charge you more.

Result 2   Impact factors of Social Life Satisfaction

Table below shows that the four dimensions of social satisfaction were also significantly correlated with the experience of difficulties with Beijing natives. This means that if they have difficulties in dealing with Beijing locals, they also reported having a low level of social satisfaction. Separately, migrant workers' satisfaction with social status is significantly correlated with subjective variables such as discrimination experience and their difficulties with urban residents. Migrant workers' satisfaction with family members, local residents and colleagues are significantly correlated with both objective and subjective factors. Monthly income has a significant correlation with the satisfaction of the relationship with family members, but it is not a strong significance. The length of time living in Beijing has a significant correlation to satisfactions with relationship of family members, colleagues and urban locals (the exception being social status), but it is not so strong, either. Furthermore, migrant workers' satisfaction with urban residents is significantly correlated with the experiences of discrimination and difficulties in city.

In addition, migrant workers are not satisfied with social life represented by their social status and their relationship with urban natives. In the same vein, there is a very significant correlation between the experience of discrimination that migrant workers encounter and whether they have difficulties in communicating with urban natives ($P<0.01$). Thus, unlike previous studies, this study finds that subjective factors occupy a more important position in migrant workers' life satisfaction than economic ones. In the study of social life satisfaction, there is a significant correlation between the time of settlement in Beijing and the satisfaction with family members, colleagues and residents, but which is not obvious ($P <0.05$). Among the four dimensions of social life satisfaction used, we cannot find a significant correlation with all the objective demographic factors listed. This is also different from previous migration studies. In summary, we can see that there is a significant correlation between subjective factors and life satisfaction. Therefore, we also pay more attention to the qualitative reports of discrimination experiences and the difficulty of social interactions with locals.

Table 16 Correlation with Social Life Satisfaction

	Social Satisfaction			
	Social status	Family members	Colleagues	Urban locals
Gender	0.021	0.105	0.0345	0.0655
Age	-0.0762	-0.0153	-0.0204	-0.0959
Marital status	-0.0214	0.0104	0.0239	0.0846
Education level	-0.0395	-0.0575	-0.0637	-0.0319
Length in Beijing	0.0773	**0.1222***	**0.1214***	**0.1542***
Monthly income	0.0178	0.1333*	0.1121	0.0999
Language proficiency	-0.0788	-0.0349	-0.0432	-0.1637
Difficulties with urban Residents	**0.2084***	**0.1577**	**0.1688***	**0.2975***
Face discriminations	**0.1912***	-0.0091	0.0556	**0.1521**

According to the quantitative research results, migrant workers have shown a lower level of satisfaction with the economic dimensions of the four dimensions (living environment, working condition, income, leisure time). Satisfaction with economic life has not been

significantly related to the improvement of income. This is consistent with former studies conducted by Knight (2010). Using urban local people as a reference group to compare with themselves, migrant workers report less satisfaction with their own lives. As this chapter has shown, compared with Beijing natives, migrant workers have many disadvantages in respect to wages, access to employment opportunities and social welfare, which gives rise to their relative sense of deprivation. Even though the economic level of migrant workers relative to that of their hometown has increased, this does not mean that their life satisfaction will also increase.

The qualitative research results present vivid descriptions on the economic life and social life satisfaction of migrant workers. They do have very low levels of life satisfaction. There are indeed many difficulties encountered due to experiences of discrimination and negative interactions with urban locals. This poses a challenge to building a harmonious society. On one hand, it shows that migrant workers as a group are being neglected and excluded group in city. In a long run, this may lead to conflict between the two groups. The key to creating harmony between the two groups is considered to be the household registration system, which also provides the basis for the unequal treatment to migrant workers in all kinds of urban life. This is consistent with international migration studies on ethnic groups who face discrimination from mainstream society. On the other hand, it also reflects migrant workers' possibility to pursue high living standards. It also provides more impetus to make a change if migrant workers are not satisfied with their current life. Of course, this will also require policy supports from the government.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The main aim of this study was to examine both the objective and subjective diameters on the internal migration results in lower levels of life satisfaction, as shown by the data on eight aspects of life satisfaction in both economic and social domains for migrant workers. The chapter further sought to evaluate how experiences of discrimination affect their life satisfaction. This study combines qualitative and quantitative research methods to study

the subjective wellbeing of migrant workers through the examination of specific aspects of life satisfaction. Drawing on De Jong *et al.* 's research (De Jong *et al.*, 2002) on internal migration in Thailand, we classified life satisfaction as a combination of satisfaction with economic life and satisfaction with social life. In contrast to the previous research, however, we also discussed the subjective and objective factors of life satisfaction. The research object is migrant workers in Beijing.

However, the current study has some shortcomings. First of all, this chapter only examines two specific categories of life satisfaction. Other aspects of life, such as the satisfaction with cultural life and political life, are not examined here. In this study, overall life satisfaction is not investigated, nor is the correlation between overall life satisfaction and various aspects of life satisfaction. Future studies may want to test whether this model of international immigration analysis can also be applicable for migrant workers in China. Second, this study argues for using the perspective of dimensions of life satisfaction to understand the urban stay of migrant workers in Beijing. Third, this article is limited to migrant workers in Beijing. Therefore, the study does not guarantee that the findings can be extended to other cities and regions because of Beijing's special status as a capital city. However, it provides a new perspective for research on social inclusion on migrant workers. Finally, although the importance of both subjective and objective factors has been noted in this chapter, there are other factors that are beyond the scope of this study. For example, many other studies emphasize the impact of social capital and social network on subjective wellbeing. These components will be left for later research.

The life satisfaction of migrant workers is still a relatively new area of migration studies. An agenda for future research will also be to link workers' pre-migration expectations and post-migration satisfaction following the research of Amit (2010) in the context of international migration to better understand life satisfaction in the dynamic progress of migration.

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Chapter Six   Methodological Note

It's not easy to write a methodology note relating to where and when I did my research. Prior to my fieldwork, I read a great deal about classical sociology. As such, in this first section, I refer to some of the available anthropological and sociological literature, such as *The life of Chinese Peasants* from Fei (1910-2005), which was his doctoral thesis under the guidance of Malinowski at the University of London. The Chinese edition was my first book on sociology when I went to university. In order to conduct research on Chinese rural-urban migration from multiple points of view, including the rural village, it was necessary to engage books on migration study. For example, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* by Florian Znaniecki and William I. Thomas (1996) on the study of Polish immigrants and their families based on life histories is one of the sociology canon's classics. Although my work is on internal migration and this literature deals with international migration, it served as an invaluable resource.

Another important resource has been *Global "Body Shopping" An Indian Labor System in the Information Technology Industry*. In this book, Xiang Biao did his research on Indian IT immigrants around the world. All these studies require me to write the survey like a compelling novel. But for me it is not a simple thing. I can write it out, but it does not mean that I can be nominated Nobel Prize for literature. It is good for me to have such a wild ambition to be an assertive young scholar.

In my dissertation, I decided to start from the root of migrant workers and then follow the routes of their rural-urban migration, which means that the trail of my field study is the same as the routes of migrant workers. This thesis becomes a multi-sited ethnography in the end. I chose to do micro-level research in one targeted rural village and other developed cities in China. I found the micro study to grow in size and depth like a snow ball, growing bigger as you turn it. I tried to do multi-sited research following the trails of migrants from Fuli village to various destinations, including metropolitan Beijing, the city center of Suzhou, Fuzhou (the capital of Fujian province), Hefei (the capital of Anhui

Province), Changsha (the Capital of Hunan province) and more developed cities, such as Wuxi and Cixi on the Southeast coastal line. My fieldwork is thus conducted in the form of interviews in these aforementioned locations, and also includes participation observation with both the rural population left behind in the village and migrant workers in cities.

The most difficult aspect of fieldwork was figuring out how to deal with my identity as a researcher and how to establish trust with my interlocutors. In the eyes of most of the participants, scholars and migrant workers are from different social statuses. For example, some told me they found it difficult to imagine that I would 'lower' myself to work and eat with a group of migrant workers. This made integration at the field sites sometimes challenging. To manage this task, and to counteract cognitive dissonance, I told myself that I needed to forget all that I had learned (e.g. manage my existing biases) before playing a new role as a participant and a researcher.

When I started my university life in 2005, I could only go home for winter holidays for our traditional Chinese New Year because of the long distance to my hometown. I still remember the long queue that all the passengers made outside the train station. It was impossible to buy a train ticket back home if you went to the train station in person. The university helped every student to buy tickets from the stain station in bulk. From that time onward, migrant workers appeared in my life. Our time to journey home as students was the same as that of the migrant workers who worked in cities. They became, in a sense, our counterparts and travel companions. On the way home, the train was extraordinarily crowded. There was only enough space to stand up straight which meant that most of the passengers could not buy tickets that promised a seat. Every time a conductor pushed a small cart selling food and snack, it takes a lot of effort to move the crowd. Despite these close quarters, some students still didn't acknowledge the huge group of rural-urban migrant in our midst.

At the same time, one survey in which I had participated during a master's course flashed in my mind. In 2009, I was admitted for a master's program in Renmin University of

China in Beijing. At that time, sociological research on migrant workers in China was an academic hot topic. Chinese scholars such as Li Qiang put forward various views. Accordingly, my tutor was doing a small-scale survey on migrant workers in Beijing (see Chapter 5). Since that time, I began to learn about and better understand this group. In the survey on migrant workers in Beijing, we collected 303 valid questionnaires. I was also involved in the interview with part of the migrant workers from the surrounding construction sites, hotels, restaurants and cafés. I checked and chose six construction workers for this thesis from the construction site near my university and another five with other careers. The construction site was segregated by fences from the university just in case of disturbing the normal activities of the students and faculty. The leader and the construction members were mostly from Henan province. I interviewed the safety guard Wang Ge. Then he suggested that I speak with the construction leader Bao Laoban (see Chapter 4), after which I chose a group of migrant workers to do interviews (The thesis only takes four of them).

The questions in the structured interview were made according to the questionnaire. When I went back to Renmin University again in the year 2015, the construction site had already become a new building, the migrant workers there had gone. The café had already changed its group of waiters. They did not know the former employees I mentioned to them. In this fast-paced metropolis, no one can remain in a certain static moment, but the interviews at the time did show us what was happening with the respondents' status in that period. In terms of the reliability of qualitative data, it is important to note that any narrative I collected from migrant workers, whether objectively 'true' or not, tells me something about their status and experience. The following are the details of the interview respondents at the time the interviews were conducted:

Bao Laoban, age 36, is the team leader in the construction site in Beijing nearby Renmin University of Beijing. His hometown is a mountainous village in Henan province. He tells me about the history of his rural-urban migration since the 1990s. Zhao Di, 29, a construction worker in the team of Bao Laoban from Henan province, has a relative who

is a building designer and has a close relationship with the construction site, where he recommended Zhao. He is still unmarried and comes from a very poor family in a remote village in the city of Luohe. Wang Ge, age 46, a security captain in the construction site, is from Anyang, Henan Province. He has two children; the older one is a boy, 21 years old, who might take part in the college entrance examination this year. His second child, a daughter, also works in the city. He initially quit his rural job and migrated to the construction site to join her. Since he is older and cannot do hard labor, but he works as a security captain on this site with a monthly salary of 2000 yuan.

An Qing, a 29-year-old construction worker from Anyang city, Henan province, is on the team of Bao Laoban. An Qing gave more reasons for migrating out than just economic factors, including the pollution in his hometown, no land to farm, and few job opportunities there. An Qing told me what he encountered in Beijing and reported to me that he faced discrimination from every corner in the city, from the hospital to the supermarket. Duan Xiong, a 34-year-old, married construction worker from Xinyang city of Henan province is also on Bao Laoban's team. He expressed the difficulty of getting his salary back and explained to me the pros and cons for not signing a working contract. Duan Xiong told me he would go back home to farming in the future. He will plant some fruits and vegetables in his field so that he can feed himself. Migrant workers are out to work since they are still young. When they are old, they must go back to farm.

Han Dong, a 39-year-old married migrant worker from Henan Province with about a thousand-yuan monthly salary told me about his migration in front of his simply constructed room on the construction site. He has always worked at construction sites since migrating, although he has changed five or six construction companies. Xiao Bing, age 28, is a team leader in a five-star hotel who migrated from Shaanxi Province. He has been working in Beijing since 2005 and his monthly income is about 3000 yuan. He was not alone here in Beijing and he mentioned his brother who also worked in the city. Besides his eldest brother, he knew just some of his classmates and colleagues. He lives in the dormitory offered by the boss of the hotel. Mr. Yuan, age 26, is an employee in a

private entertainment company with a monthly salary of 3000 yuan, has been in Beijing for more than two years. He rented a house in the suburban Beijing and has no savings until now. He reported a low overall life satisfaction (at a score of 50). He complained about his low economic status, living environment, and discrimination from urban residents.

Cao Fei, aged 21, is a barista in a café located in a shopping mall nearby the University of Renmin University. His hometown is in Hebei Province. He is unmarried and has a rural hukou in his hometown. Like other migrants, he has a small salary of 1500 yuan per month. His family has four members: his parents, himself, and one older sister. His parents are farmers, but the family has only about two acres of farmland. He told me that the yearly income from the farmland is not more than his monthly salary. His sister was born in 1985 and works at a local insurance company after having received her bachelor's degree. Before coming here, Cao Fei also worked in a state-owned manufacturing factory. He decided to quit this relatively stable work to go out for new challenges. He told me that he believes that everything depends on personal ability. He felt that his initial work was too boring. He wants to change his lifestyle and enhance his ability.

Lu Yuting, aged 26, is a waitress in a hotel from Anhui province. Her father and older brother have a small business in her hometown. Her mother is a housewife. The yearly income of their family is about 60 thousand yuan. Her hukou is also in her hometown. After the introduction of a relative, she began to work here. Lu has three aunts. Their husbands all have stable jobs in this city. One has a small company, another is a stock manager and the third one is a chef. They all have been migrated out of the countryside for a long time, more than ten years. But they have no urban hukou and they rent their houses. Lu came out to the city 2006. A relative introduced her first to a job in an advertising agency. She resigned after a month there. She then found herself a job as a four-star hotel waiter through the Internet. The boss offers her daily meals, but he does not provide her with accommodation. She lives in her aunt's home. Her monthly income is only 1750 yuan, so it is impossible for her to rent a house or apartment. She only has

social contacts with her colleagues and relatives. She explains to me that she has different ways to deal with people. She is timid with her colleagues. But she is much more open with her relatives.

Wang Neng, 23, is from a small village near the capital of Jiangxi province. His hukou is still rural and his family has more than five acres of farmland. He said his family must rely on the farmland to eat. His monthly salary is about 1000 yuan. He has three older sisters in his family, and two of them migrated to Wenzhou to work in a shoe factory. When I asked the reason why he migrated, he told me a long story. When he finished the entrance exam of the university in 2006, he felt so relaxed that he spent all day long hanging out. He thought he could pass the exam smoothly and enroll in university but was surprised to find out when the results came out that he was not qualified to go to the university. He was disappointed. He did not want to go back to high school and prepare for the exam for the next year because he thought everything would be unclear for the future. At that time, he had a peer who was in the university already and told him that he could take the exam directly in the city. He found out later that that this person had misinformed him and it was impossible for him to take an exam in the city with a rural hukou. So, he went back home and took the entrance exam again, but the result was still not so good. His grade was good enough to go to a local collage. His parents pushed him to pursue further education, but he didn't want to go because the tuition fee was too expensive. He gave up and went out to work. The friend of Wang Neng who opens a restaurant offers him a chance to survive in the city. But, in the end, he developed his own relationships to help him transfer to a better environment and worked in the University as a guard.

Luyi, 23, who I met in 2010, had not graduated, and was working as an intern in a private advertising agency with a 900-yuan monthly salary for three months. Luyi rented an apartment with three other roommates in Hui Longguan, at the North Ring Road in Beijing, which is a famous cluster area of migrant workers. It takes him about one hour to commute to his internship. Luyi, was still young and beautiful, and knew how to make

this work to his advantage despite his being poor. He is gay and I soon realize it. His hometown in Ji County, Hebei Province is quite close to Beijing, but he does not go home often, because he says his father doesn't accept him as gay. When I went back to Beijing, we met again on the ground floor of his company, located in a high-end building with an upscale supermarket selling only imported food. There was also a nearby Starbucks, a Hollyland cake shop that only offers upscale desserts. It makes you feel like only the elite can work here, but Luyi soon denied this and says that the white-collar worker can work here with only 3000 yuan per month. It only offers a better office environment to meet your vanity.

Another interlocutor, Eric, also 23, comes from Hunan province, and works as an intern in a private company. He is one of the roommates of Luyi in Hui Longguan. He said that this city has his dream lifestyle. He paid 700 yuan per month for his rent. But he doesn't care because he said that everything should be better. Every morning and evening at rush hour, the train station is crowded with a long queue waiting for the subway. You have to make a lot of effort to squeeze into the train. A lot of youngsters who are working downtown choose to rent a house in the vicinity because the rent is cheaper relative to the city center, with a three-bedroom costing about 4,000 yuan. The house here in Hui Longguan is relatively new, but also near to the subway so relatively convenient. It takes about ten minutes to reach the subway station and then takes about forty minutes to reach the place of work.

"You have no choice," Mr. Yuan said, "We do not have enough money to rent a house in the city center, a single renewed old room without heating in winter in the Second Ring Road, will be 6,500 a month. The communities are newly built these years and it is also very convenient to reach the workplace. At least it is decent here, and we have our private rooms. When I have been in the basement for a few days. I feel too depressed. All the people live in a room, sharing a common bathroom. You must wait for a long time in the morning. When it's your turn, you do not have such a good mood."

Other than Luyi and Eric, Wangyu is another migrant worker who has a college degree in

Beijing, which gives them a relatively higher status than other interviewees. Her hometown is in Hengshui city, Hebei province. But she prefers to live in a rented bed in the downtown area rather than try to squeeze into the subway for the daily commute. I met Wangyu when I joined a survey on Beijing migrant workers in Renmin University of China. She was living in the basement rented by her employer in the Hang Tianqiao, Nothern Fourth Ring Road. She was a salesperson for outdoor devices in a Careerfour Supermarket not far away from her basement, and her daily job is to show the customers how to use a tent. We exchanged phone numbers at the time, and I contacted her again when I came back to Beijing in 2015. She was about to leave Beijing then. She told me that she had changed jobs almost every year since we met with the highest salary of 3500 yuan. After rent and daily expenses, she basically has nothing left each month. When she met her ex-boyfriend, her situation was slightly better. They had even planned to get married and to buy a house in their hometown. After three years, though, they broke up. Wangyu then got tired of her migrating life. She even says that her life is like "rafting on the water". Rather than staying, it's wise to escape from this tough life, trying to find a dependency and get married early to have a baby.

> "Beijing is very confusing and full of illusions. The life here looks bustling, flashy, and shining. In fact, these are not yours. You are only a small grain of sand among the crowd of people."

She told me that she moved out of the basement right after she quit the job in tent sales. People with various backgrounds live in the basement, sharing public toilets and laundry rooms. Someone unknown puts out cigarette butts in her room and this makes her feel unsafe and restless. She said that living with people in the basement was quite complicated. She then moved to a 30-story building nearby and she lives on the 17th floor where I came for a visit. In a three-room apartment with about 100 square meters, 16 girls' beds lay in every corner of the room. Wangyu lives in a room with 6 beds, unlikely this apartment is only rented to girls. Everyone here in her room is from another city.

Living here is like being a small ant in an anthill, which makes people feel the cheapness

of life. One song called "Ant Song" vividly reflects her situation. Yet her situation is not a personal problem, but rather a social phenomenon. China's mass media call migrants living like this the Wangyu group "Ant group" or "Ant clan".

Part of the song's lyrics goes like this:

> "Forgotten in the corner of the world. / It is not my fault. / Although never buried. / I live in a cave"

Finally, an important interlocutor with whom I needed to make contact with in Beijing was Xiao Lin, the husband of Pingzi. (see Chapter 2). He is from Guizhou province, working in a resort in suburban Beijing as a chef. Before going back to Fuli village, Pingzi was working is Zixin Restaurant as a sale manager in Beijing. She went back home when she was pregnant, leaving Xiao Lin alone working in Beijing. My aim was to use his help to get a job as a migrant worker in Beijing for a short term to conduct participate observation.

I arrived in Beijing two weeks after the traditional Chinese New Year, staying at Xiao Lin's place in Jin Zhan village, suburban Beijing. I took a bus to arrive the rented house of Xiao Lin to stay there for my first week in Beijing. When I got out of the bus stop, I saw this holiday resort at a glance. After crossing the street, there was a quiet, cement road leading to a village where they rented houses. Pingzi used to live in the basement rented out by the boss during working days and came to meet Xiao Lin only when she was on vacation. Jin Zhan village is located near the Sixth Ring Road in the northeast Beijing. This is a typical suburban village, and it usually takes one and a half hours to arrive here by bus. I remember that the name of the station was the name of the resort where Xiao Lin works as a chef in its food and beverage department. His older brother later joined Xiao Lin as a guard in this resort. His brother had also brought his two children here, and they were studying in the third grade in a primary school especially established for the children of migrant workers. The children cannot go to urban public schools due to the limitations of rural Hukou. When I first came to Jinzhan village, I

completely lost my way, and I felt like I was returning to Fuli village. The village appeared to me as if someone had magically moved Fuli village to the outskirts of Beijing, only changing the villagers into migrant workers. This is a typical village inhabited by migrant workers due to its relatively cheap rents compared with the rent in the downtown Beijing. They rented a bungalow that had a total of three rooms with a small living room for only 500 yuan per month. Compared to their wages, it is already a very affordable price and the lodgings were relatively decent and spacious. Xiao Lin and his brother have their own independent room. There are no big buildings in Jin zhan village, which has one story houses all over. One difference from Fuli village, is that it is very vibrant and vital especially in the afternoon when there are some street vendors selling snacks and food. Xiao Lin always brings back a lot of food from the resort to me and the two children so that we don't need to cook. The main problem of their rented house is that it did not have a bathroom. The bathroom was common in the yard. Getting out to go to the bathroom in the winter was a matter of perseverance.

I negotiated with Xiao Lin about my job hunting as a migrant worker. He said it is better not to work in the resort but he can recommend me to the old employee of Pingzi as a waitress. Xiao Lin was from the restaurant and he also keeps contact with the chef leader in Zixin restaurant. I then traveled from the suburbs to the city center, Haidian district, where Zixin restaurant was located. After a short conversation, I moved into the basement offered by our boss. My relationship with Pingzi is widely discussed with the boss, but it's better to let them know that I have a kind of social network. In the meantime, I changed my role from naïve young scholar to an illiterate migrant worker when I was in Zixin restaurant in Beijing for almost one month in Beijing. My eye glasses particularly stood out compared with other migrant workers, so I was sometimes called "Scholar" because it is rare for a migrant worker to wear a pair of glasses who doesn't put so much effort for studying during their early stages of life. I hid my name, my age check and my educational level from my colleagues. Everything was ready, and a migrant worker from Anhui was "born" in Beijing. Although I don't think I could have won an Oscar in the end, but I did try my best to understand their life as a migrant worker and pretend to be an

alien in Beijing.

The boss offered me a monthly salary of 1,300 yuan with only four days holiday per month. I will get a full attendance prize of 200 yuan if I was not late or took no leave during the month. Meals and accommodation were all provided by the boss. Our working hours lasted from 9 am to 2 pm during the day and from 5 pm to 9 pm in the evening. We were not allowed to leave, however, if the guests were still eating and drinking in the restaurant. Every morning, I got up, walking about 15 minutes from the basement to the restaurant, then I ate breakfast with other colleagues around 8 o'clock in the morning. I bought a container and a spoon to take the food from the common pot. Everybody can eat in a small canteen inside the restaurant.

The boss of this restaurant is a Sichuanese, this restaurant was used as a reception for the leaders of the Sichuan government before and it was later sold to the current boss. The Sichuan boss has a very wide social network, and he has recruited many teenagers from vocational school in Sichuan for whom he can offer a small salary for practical work experience. I had been a waitress for some time, but later I was deescalated into a food deliverer because I broke the electric door. This turn of events gave me a better chance to get to know more workers in the restaurant, from the kitchen to the hall, from Sichan Province to Ganshu Province.

I clearly remember that the dormitory had a very pretty girl, just 19, who was our new sales manager from Vocational school in Sichuan. Her performance was very good and she knew many ministers, leaders and officials who could bring the small restaurant a large profit. Her job was to contact new and returning customers especially from nearby administrative buildings. She had business cards with her name. When the customers had dinner in their privately booked VIP room, she went in to socialize with them and help them with ordering food. She seldom speaks and always keeps silent in front of us; it adds a lot of mystery to her identity. We have very little communication, but I remember that she rarely stays in the dormitory with us. I initially get familiar with the other three waitresses. However, everyone did not start on the best terms, and they talked with each

other cautiously. The guests of the restaurant are often the staff members in the Ministry of Water Resources, the United Front Department or the CCTV. As waitresses, we must look at the reservation book every day and remember the names of the Mr. or Mrs. who has booked the VIP room. When a guest arrives, the waitress should lead them to their booked VIP room to show their high status.

Huli, 19, is from Henan Province. She followed her brother to come to work in Beijing after junior high school. She tells me to always keep smiling at our guests. Then there is a rumor that one angry customer poured hot soup on a waitress (see Chapter 5). The poor girl had denied a request to change a dish. In the end, the girl was sent to hospital and the boss paid the fee. The customer went away. The boss, for his part, didn't want to talk freely about the incident in order to protect the good reputation of his restaurant. The girl is easier to deal with compared to the grumbling customer. The girl quit her job and never showed up in the restaurant again. Now and then, people still mention this girl, but Huli warns me to be careful because the life pressure in Beijing is so great that some people resent other people with lower social status rather than their boss.

Mei, also 19, was a student of the vocational school from Sichuan Province. We had a good relationship then and we even went shopping in Xidan, the famous commercial district together on one holiday. I followed her to Mingzhu Market instead of the shopping mall, which has cheap commodities and goods and where you can also bargain with the sellers. The shopping day ended with each of us buying two pairs of socks after a whole day's strolling. She wanted to be a tour guide in Beijing but she became a waitress in the restaurant. She sometimes complained to me about the arrangement for the restaurant 'internship' arranged by her school, and after several days, she left us suddenly without saying goodbye. After her departure, the rumor was that she found a job as a waitress in another restaurant nearby with 500 yuan more per month. I remembered then something she told me on break, that the "other restaurant has a bonus", which means you can get prize if you get your guests to order more food.

Little Gansu, 19, who came to work at the restaurant after Mei left had a good-looking

face but with the same monthly salary as the boss promised. We usually called her "little Gansu" because it's rare to see migrant workers from Gansu province in this restaurant. She had a good relationship with our mysterious manager and they always went to the tourist site nearby to pass out restaurant flyers. These tourists make up one of the main target customer groups for the restaurant, with fixed food fees at about 35 yuan per person (bringing a good profit to the boss). This also gets little Gansu more attention from the boss.

Hai Xian, also 19, is, like Mei, also a student of the vocational school in Sichuan province. I met him in the kitchen when I worked as a food deliverer. The kitchen is led by a chef, who, like most of the other employees is from the boss's hometown in Sichuan province. Hai Xian is one of the team members and he is in charge of buying and reserving fish and seafood. He is from a better family compared with other migrant workers who are from remote rural mountainous villages. He tells me that he just stays in this position temporarily because he fought with a guy and beat him seriously. So, he needs to hide out in Beijing for a while. He will go back home sooner or later, but even he doesn't know when that will be.

Shan Pao, 19, found his job at the restaurant as a food deliver after he failed the university entrance exam in his hometown in Hebei Province. When we are not busy with delivering food, he talks with me about his experience in high school. It seems that he is confused about his future. When I ask him what his plans are, he has no idea. His dad tries to use his guanxi to find Shan Pao a job as a train attendant. But he rejected the opportunity although it is a decent and formal job. When we talked about what kind of job might suit him better, he said it will not be a food deliverer in this restaurant. He says he will go to work in a factory in Shenzhen, a southern coastal city, to learn more technical skills. As a young migrant worker, he doesn't admit that he has a lower status than an urban citizen. When I see their working and living environment, I know that they are in a lower status. But when I see them also making funny jokes and playing naughty tricks on their colleagues, I really have no idea regarding which life should be considered "better". I

don't know where these young people will find themselves over time, but I try to understand and explain their situation as a participant observer witnessing this window into their lives.

Besides Beijing, I also went to Fuzhou, Wuxi, Cixi, Changsha, Hefei. Fuzhou, Hefei and Changsha, which are the capital cities of Fujian Province, Anhui province and Hunan Province, respectively. Wuxi and Cixi are two developed cities in the southeastern coastal areas of China. Below, however, I focus on Fuli village, where I did the bulk of my field study before visiting the above cities.

Field study in Fuli village

In 2010, I took part in the research project "One Hundred Village Survey" hosted by the Department of Sociology of Renmin University in China. Each of us students had an assignment to ensure that 13 questionnaires were filled out, including one by the village head. While other undergraduate students of the Department of Sociology were taking advantage of the winter break, I returned to my hometown in the city of Suzhou and chose a nearby village to conduct a survey. Fuli village comes into sight during this period, and now provides the basis for my dissertation. Though I did not know it at the time, this was the beginning of my journey toward a greater understanding of Chinese migrant workers. Simply using a half-day to find villagers who were willing to fill in the questionnaire despite being immersed in the atmosphere of the Spring Festival, I was not yet aware of the extensive changes happening in the village due to rural-urban migration. In 2015, however, I had the chance to fly from Italy back to China to conduct fieldwork there for my doctoral thesis, which provided me another chance to know the village more deeply and to thoroughly investigate how the progress of rural-urban migration brought changes. The difference was immediately striking; this time since I had arrived during a period in which almost all the villagers were out working in cities.

Unlike my last visit, where houses had been crowded during the New Year, the village was largely empty, with most of its newly built houses locked up. Due to an introduction

made through the help of my aunt, I lived in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Ma (see Chapter 2). The family of Mr. Ma became the central node of my field study. I got to know his family members and other villagers, and then followed them to find out more about left-behind groups in the village and migrant workers in cities. Next, I got in contact with Mr. Ma's youngest son in Fujian and his eldest son in Cixi city. My snowball sampling methods were working. Living with two elderly people in a 500 square meter place intermittently for six months, my world was comprised of two, 20-square-meter houses in front of our house with a yard and kitchen in the middle and a two-story building in the back. These structures were built only a few years ago for their youngest grandson. They told me that they might not be alive when the youngest grandson gets married and then there would be no one to prepare the house for him to get a wife, so they did everything in advance. When I was living with them, my daily life became quite simple. There is no wifi, no shopping mall, no café – no youngster like me comforts in this village. Instead, what I did was just follow the couple's life in step. During my stay, Mr. Ma was 76 years old and was able to grow plants in his field; he was also helping his fourth son Xinjian (see Chapter 2 & Chapter 4) build a three-story house for one of his grandsons, Tiantian. (see Chapter 2) who was working in the city of Suzhou. Tiantian, however, rejected the idea of coming back and living in the village. As a result, the building became a burden for the old couple and it was discarded for the young migrant workers. This is a very common plight. Many two-story or three-story houses are empty because the owners can rarely make a live in the countryside.

Mr. Ma most often did simple farming during my stay. The year before, he had fallen from the roof and broke a rib when he was helping his youngest son to build a house. Since then, Mr. Ma has reduced the amount of labor he does, and just plants several kinds of vegetables that require a little farming. My daily life in Mr. Ma's house is basically to get up and eat, and then stay in a daze until noon when the old couple came back home from farming. We prepare a simple lunch in the kitchen with rice and vegetables. The old couple has limited strength, so I do not have too many requirements for food. I find there that it is far more important to stave off hunger, than to worry about tasty meals. During

lunch, we sat around the TV watching their favorite TV show "Boys and Girls Rushed Forward". They comment on how the players pass the physical tests in the show and evaluate their gains and losses. When players pass all and win the game, they were happy and counted how many prizes had been won during the day's show. After lunch, they usually napped for more than an hour before watering their garden or strolling around their yard. I learned mahjong quickly as their first student. The three of us often played mahjong together at home to kill time (though usually the game requires four people). The country life was too lonely for me. Mr. Ma told me that his wife usually goes to the retailer shop to see other people playing Mahjong and sometimes she also plays. However, her reaction is too slow to keep the same pace as others, so it comes down to hurting her wallet in the end. So, they do not go as often as they used to. When we played Mahjong at home, it was also a good chance for me to know more about their stories.

Mr. Ma went for military service when he was sixteen years old in the 1960s. At that period, he was at able to get food coupons to feed his family because the military people had priority. When he came out from the army, he became a coal miner in another town 20 km away from Fuli village. He also has an elder brother who used to run a private mine and then expanded to open a hotel and a supermarket in the city center. The brother lived in the city center and died 10 years ago due to cancer. Mr. Ma's younger sister also lives in the city center. She still has contact with Mr. Ma but visits are limited to the traditional holidays since they all have their own families and children. When I was living there, I met his sister only once before the Mid-Autumn Festival. Mr. Ma and Mrs. Ma have five children in total with three of those children having migrated out. When I asked Mr. Ma why they did not go to live with their children since they were very old and had no convenient mobility, they said that it was difficult for them to adapt to urban life. Mr. Ma has a friend called Lao Zhang in this village. They used to spend time with him and his sheep in the village for two years. However, Zhang's son strongly urged him to follow them into the city. So, the house of Lao Zhang is now locked, and he rarely comes back to the countryside. After a period, Mr. Ma also sold his sheep. He says that raising sheep requires a lot of strength, which he doesn't have any more.

Mr. Ma told me of his expectations for the Chinese government to care about them as part of a vulnerable left behind group of elderly villagers, saying, "I hope the state will care more about us." In the interview, the elderly left behind thought that my research would affect the national policy and has a connection with a government project. Although I would also hope for that to one day be a reality, the fact is that academic research and national projects are two different dimensions. I cannot change the national policy, but I do hope that my companionship during my fieldwork offered some comfort and eased their loneliness.

As detailed in Chapter 2, the Mas are not the only elderly left behind individuals that I interviewed in Fuli village. Mrs. Ding, a neighbor of Mr. and Mrs. Ma, is a disabled elderly woman, and her son, Siji, has already settled down in the center of Suzhou city. His city apartment is on the top floor without an elevator and it is not so convenient for handicapped access. Mrs. Ding says that she is useless and she prefers to stay in the country.

Another neighbor, Mr. Xu, is in his 60s and raises sheep at home with the help of his son, Xu Lei, and daughter-in-law. Xu Lei had migrated out to work before, but he came back afterwards, saying that the urban living cost is too high, making him very restless and homeless. He found a job on a construction site in the city center with a salary of 3,000 yuan per month. At the same time, their family also raises sheep. In fact, the family income is not lower than the income of migrating out. The wife of Xu Lei used to work in the shoe factory, but she also quit her job later. She complained that the salary is too low, so she stays at home taking care of their two sons and helping her parents-in-law with sheep. Their son Qiqi is in his third grade of primary school. He has a lot of fun and just hangs out after he comes back from school. His childhood seems to be much easier than urban children who have a burden to learn English and other subjects after school. Sometimes we chat, and when I ask him if there are any children left behind in his school, he doesn't even know what I mean. But when I asked him if he knows any children whose parents are out in the cities to work, he lists several names to me. This connection

also provided information for my later investigation on rural children left behind. I soon find out, however, that it is difficult to ask questions to these children, so I instead use the oral history method to study young migrant workers who were left behind during their childhoods (see Chapter 2).

Mrs. Zhu is the earliest dog keeper in Fuli village, as she used to raise a female chowchow a decade ago. However, the dog died soon after it gave birth to one baby chowchow because Mr. Zhu didn't have prior experience raising dogs at that time. This chowchow was brought home by her second daughter Yanling (see Chapter 2) from Shenzhen where she migrated to work. They had gotten word that only good breed dogs can be sold at high prices to rich people in cities who only like purebred dogs. Since then, this family has raised different breeds of dogs. I saw a golden retriever which was called "Jinmao" who was pregnant that summer and after two months, they had four puppies in their home. I also went with Mrs. Zhu to the Pet Market, which is notoriously popular among "dog traffickers" in the center of Suzhou to see how she sells these puppies. At the same time, she bought a pug with 2800 yuan and she hugged the pug in her arms, visibly showing her pleasure about the investment. Other than rural farmers and the buyers, there are also some of dog dealers who are desperate to manipulate prices through buying from farmer owners and selling to private buyers. The dogs are traded as merchandise.

Mrs. Xiao, the neighbor of Mrs. Zhu raised a French bulldog bought with 8000 yuan, which is the most expensive dog in this village. Over the years, she has already earned the cost back. I always see her hanging around Mrs. Zhu's home, and they sometimes exchange stories about raising their dogs. Foreign breed dogs are more precious, so Mrs. Xiao rarely takes her bulldog out. She told me about the secrets of raising the bulldog and insisted that the dog has better living conditions than she does. Through our conversations, I also heard several legends about the rural elderly who have colorful stories about dog raiding: "They also had a bulldog, it gave birth to five little puppies once, which was booked by a rich boss in town; 30,000 for one puppy, and it was successful! More than the yearly income of a migrant worker." Raising dogs has become a way of making

money that is welcomed by the rural elderly in this village. But it is not suitable for the elderly of all ages. Rural elderly who are in poor health or old age who are reluctant to take care of the animals by themselves, not to mention to also look after breeds of which they are unfamiliar. The family of Mr. Ma also has a white dog, which is local dog breed just for guard their yard. For my part, the fieldwork had become funny. The small village had turned into a wonderland for my adventures.

I sometimes asked Mr. Ma to tell me about his migrant children in cities and the story of his family, through those stories I encountered his adult children who I was able to visit in their respective cities. I went to Fuzhou, where his youngest son worked in an import company and his youngest grandson worked in a shoe factory; Hefei, where his granddaughter Manman married an urban boy; Cixi, where the entire family of his oldest son had migrated, and there I met Dalong, another of Mr. and Mrs. Ma's grandsons. Additionally, I went to the city center of Suzhou, where Tiantian worked as a manager in a nightclub.

In the summer, Mr. Xu suddenly brought four golden retrievers back home, saying they are going to raise dogs for sale. The price of a puppy is relatively low in summer because the weather is so hot that it is not easy for puppies to survive in such a harsh condition in the countryside. They make it an investment scheme with the following projected calculations: One puppy costs 400 yuan in summer, one female golden retriever will give birth to 5 or 6 puppies at once, they will then sell the puppies at the price of 900 yuan each. They hope to make a good profit if they are lucky enough to sell the puppies across all four seasons. Mr. Xu says that it is more profitable than raising sheep. They changed a room into a kennel and put four dogs into iron cages. I visited these puppies and played with them with the permission of Qiqi. Then I discovered other dog businesses in this village.

The Zhu family (see Chapter 2) was also breeding dogs. This couple has three children, two daughters and one son. Their son went to the city of Lu'an to work for a decoration business, leaving them in the village of Fuli. However, they are lucky enough to have

their daughter-in-law, Pan (see Chapter 2) as a companion. Pan is one of the wives left behind in Fuli, in charge of child care and domestic work. Mr. Zhu also helps Pan to care for her grandchildren. I was able to interview 10 left-behind wives in Fuli village and also found their husbands in different cities (see Chapter 2). Their brief biographies are as follows:

1.Migrant Husband: Fanfan, 34, is a casual worker on the construction site. His wages are often in arrears. Sometimes he brings no money back home. His personal character is more introverted. He seems cowardly so anyone can bully him as they want. His marriage with Nianyi is the second marriage for him. His ex-wife disgraced the poor condition of his family and ran away after she gave birth to a daughter. He was outside the village taking small and informal jobs before his marriage in Hefei city, then he worked in a construction site in the center of Suzhou with few payments. He doesn't demand too much for his work. He has always been an informal worker after his first migration when he was only twenty years old.

Wife left behind (divorced): Nianyi, 24, with a two-year-old daughter at home. She stays with her mother-in-law. She always grumbled that her husband was too honest. Her complaints about his small salary caused unpleasantness and fights with her mother-in-law, who can be very harsh. She divorced Fanfan in the end because of this bad relationship. After the divorce, she took her daughter and lived in her parents' house in the village. She had three years of experience being 'left behind'. She plans to go out and work when the baby can go to kindergarten. She also had a migration experience in Fujian and Beijing after finishing junior high school, but she went back home after her marriage. She married Fanfan because her parents wanted her to, thinking that he was reliable and it was better for her to marry a boy of another province than those she had dated in the city.

2.Migrant Husband: Xiaolin, 38, is a chef in a resort in a Beijing suburban area with a monthly salary of 5500 yuan. His hometown is in Guizhou. He bought an apartment with Pingzi in the city center of Suzhou and paid for the first payment. He migrated out of the

poor village when he was 18 years old. He learned a craft and became a chef. He met Pingzi when they migrated in Beijing and he didn't know Pingzi had been married before. They still chose to marry each other after he knew about the truth. They have twin daughters now.

Wife left behind: Pingzi, 32, a left-behind wife, with one daughter from her first marriage and twins with Xiaolin. She sells beef soup at home. Because she feels so tired, she tries to look for relatives for help. After dropping out of school after the third year of junior high school, she married her classmate and gave birth to a daughter. They divorced one year later, and she went to Beijing. She has been at home for about four years after she returned home when the boss told her she needed to go back home. She did not want to go back to Guizhou alone. Her former job was sales manager at a restaurant when she resigned. Her husband was staying in Beijing to make money and support their family. Their twins are three years old now. So, she is also considering renting a shop and opening a small restaurant in the city center. She wants her husband to be back home. Their marriage will have a crisis if her husband is away for a long time. This kind of spousal separation often causes such crises. She worries that many of the waitresses are young and attractive girls and that her husband cannot resist this temptation.

3.Migrant Husband: Xuzhou, 28, son of Mrs. Zhu. He was a decorating laborer in Lu'an. He went there because there was more business with higher wages. Before he went out to work together with his wife, but they cannot afford the high living costs. So, his wife went home. He usually likes to play online games on mobile phones. The children are basically handed over to Mrs. Zhu by his wife. I saw him always playing games on the second floor of their house. He migrated out to several cities without finishing junior high school. He made his final choice to stay in Lu'an, a small city in Anhui province that allows the convenience for regular visits.

Wife left behind: Pan, 27, Mrs. Zhu's daughter-in-law, who lives together with her in a three-story building. She dropped out of primary school and has stayed at home since then. She has a mild nature and is always smiling. Pan has a four-year-old daughter and a

son who was born the year prior. Before staying at home, Pan was a salesperson in a bag store in the center of Suzhou. Then she resigned after she was pregnant. She took care of two children together with Mrs. Zhu at home after giving birth. She has been staying at home for five years. Her husband believes that she should depend on the man she married, so she stays at home and lets her husband make money outside the village. Her tasks at home are to bring her big daughter to kindergarten and feed the baby. All of these made her too busy to find a job outside. She was studying how to open a small business with a relative, but she gave up in the end. Caring for children and doing housework became her only job. There is also farmland in her family, but her parents-in-law do the farming because they think young people lack the experience of farming

4.Migrant Husband: Zhaogen, 46, has a temporary wife in Ningbo city. He worked as a driver on the construction site with a monthly salary of over 10,000 yuan. His income was relatively higher than normal migrant workers. His temporary wife is a local woman in Zhejiang. Then his daughter found out about his extramarital affair, she scolded him and the son even beat his father because of this. He promised to break up with the Zhejiang women to let his wife forgive him.

Wife left behind: Meng, 42, with one grandson and two granddaughters at home, is a Christian. She has a serious heart disease because of the hard work of caring for the grandchildren. She had a heart attack when she found out about the extramarital relationship of her husband, but she decided to give her husband a second chance. If he does not work, then she has no income. She must endure it. But she said it was only temporary, people will become old sooner or later. She will not take care of him if he can't make money for the family. She did not go to school, and her character was modest. She seldom quarreled with people. She had her own activities in the village and participated in Christian gatherings every weekend.

5.Migrant Husband: Maxinjian, 41, is Mr. Ma's youngest son. He went out to work in 2003 and is regarded as one the earlier migrant workers in this village. He divorced with his wife left behind, leaving two children: one to his wife, and the other to his parents.

Wife left behind (divorced): Guizhen, 38, had been at home in the village for 10 years, when her family broke down because of the long duration of spousal separation. The pressures of life and feelings of discord led to their continuous quarreling, and the two people eventually broke up. She remarried with a worker in Huaibei. However, from her husband's interview, we did not get any news about his left behind wife. The family ruptured and both of her children grew up from left-behind children to new-generation migrant workers. Their rural home is just an empty house now.

6.Migrant Husband: Liya, 42, had an extramarital affair in Xinjiang when he went there to work. They had an illegitimate child and he later divorced with his wife left behind.

Wife left behind (divorced): Yunzi, 41, often played mahjong in the house of Mrs. Zhu. She is quite short but dressed fairly trendy with pure gold rings, necklaces, and bracelets. This is the symbol of the rich in the rural villages because it highlights the husband's favor toward his wife and his strong financial resources. She is a relatively decent person and knows how to invest in herself. She has a total of seven years of experience being left behind. Her son has been out to work now, so she can receive his remittances occasionally, which made her always proud.

7.Migrant Husband: I met Xujin, 27, in Wuxi when he drove a Japanese-made car. He told me to watch a popular TV show called "the marriage war" to learn more about the relationship between men and women. He thinks that I am such a nerd that I cannot understand the substance of a marriage. He used to do second-hand housing business for eight or nine years when he dropped out of primary school. His car was won from others when gambling. In fact, he cannot rely on his own income to buy one. I saw there is a photo of his small baby inside the car.

Wife left behind: Shufen, 24, has their two-year-old child at home. She lives with her parents-in-law. She is more honest and shy with very few words to share. She does not like to dress up and she does not have enough money to dress up. After graduating from junior high school, she worked as a waitress in a foreign restaurant in Shanghai. She

married Xujin after she was introduced through her relative. After her marriage, her husband went back to work and left her to live alone with his parents, on whom she must rely. When they had a baby girl, her parents-in-law said they didn't like girls, so she had to take care of the baby herself. When I asked why she did not go out to work as well, she replied that her children are small and her husband does not allow her to follow him. Sometimes her husband did not send back the money he made. So, she must work as a part-time laborer in a small leather workshop in the village to subsidize her family. She seldom asked her husband for money because he would not give it to her even if he had it.

8.Migrant Husband: Gangzi, 35, a car technician in the car 4S shop, with a higher wage than other migrant workers. After returning from the military, he worked in a state-owned factory. Later, the factory was not profitable and he lost his job. Then he went out to rely on his own skills in a 4S shop as a technician with a monthly income of 6,000 yuan. He sent 3,000 yuan every month to his wife and children. He thinks children in the family need money for going to school, and his daughter has to go to dance classes every weekend, so the cost is relatively high.

Wife left behind: Yanzi, 35, has one daughter and one son. Her daughter is a first-year student in junior high school and the son goes to primary school. After the third year of junior high school Yanzi had a few months of work experience in Beijing, but she went back home because she could not adapt to the harsh working condition. Later, she opened a children's clothing store in the city center, but she closed her shop five years ago to allow for the full-time supervision of her two children, who she hopes will have a good future.

9.Migrant Husband: Dongdong, 28, is the classmate of Dalong, and works in a private iron factory. He did not learn a technic, so he can only do some physical work. However, he is so hardworking that his wages are not low, about 4,000 yuan a month.

Wife left behind: Zhengzheng, 25, has a one year and eight months old child at home. She came back home to register the Hukou for her baby and quit her job to look after her child,

but she thinks it will just be for the short term. The house is empty. Her parents-in-law and husband are all migrated out to work. She must stay with his grandparents who are reluctant to help. Although the old people are physically unable to care the baby, they still can help with cooking. The pressure is not too high now, but she still hopes to take her baby to the city and join her husband.

10.Migrant Husband: Zhaojun, 37, Zhaogen's younger brother, lives in Ningbo with his second wife. His current wife is a local woman who is also 10 years younger than him. He came out early around 2000 to work at a plastics business, so he is relatively more affluent than other migrants. He bought two cold storage units recently, which will bring him more than one hundred thousand yuan per year.

Wife left behind (divorced): Hui, 37, has stayed with her daughter in the countryside since 2000. Her daughter is good at studying and she hopes that she could join the high school in the center, which means they could leave the countryside and rent a house together in the city center. Because tuition and living expenses are paid by her ex-husband, Hui has no pressures in life. She usually just spends her time doing farm work and housework.

Field in Hefei

I met Manman, at the Hefei train station. She came with her boyfriend to take me in on a Saturday afternoon. I lived with her for five days and took a plane from the airport to Fuzhou to meet her father Xinjian. She doesn't even ask a single word about her father. She told me about her life since migrating to the city from Fuli village. After she graduated from junior high school at the age of fifteen, she was introduced to Hefei Vocational school to study tourism and hotel management through the brother of Mr. Ma. Mr. Ma wanted her to come back to Suzhou and work in the hotel opened by his elderly brother who was still alive then. But, as they say in China, good wishes often become bubbles in the end. She studied for more than two years, but eventually dropped of school to work in Hefei. "After all, it's a capital city." She lit a cigarette and then smoked, telling

me about her working experience. Smoking was still a rebellious act for a young woman. She learned this while skipping school with friends. Smoking is generally forbidden by parents, but many young people treat it as a kind of social capital among peers to show off. Manman first went to Fujian province to join her father who found her a job in a private factory. She did not however have a good relationship with her father's new girlfriend (her parents divorced after his migration, see Chapter 2). Fed up, she returned to Suzhou. She rented a small single room with the help of her mother in downtown Suzhou with 500 yuan per month. Her living conditions were very simple. Her apartment had no windows and was very cold in the winter. She worked as a cashier at an Internet bar with a monthly1100 yuan income. In less than a year, she went back alone to Hefei, but she stayed with a schoolmate who knew her and again worked as a cashier in a cybercafé with a monthly salary of 1900 yuan. Later, she met a local boyfriend who she called "little fat man", while showing me photos of them together. She told me that this man is not her cup of tea, but she could live in his home to save money. After breaking up with him, she soon met a wealthy businessman who opened a factory in Hefei. The man is married, and, at more than 40 years old, relatively older than Manman. They soon lived together, renting a two-bedroom apartment in a high-end community. The rich boyfriend would come back one or two times a week. The relationship lasted for two years before they broke up soon after Manman proposed that they buy a small apartment in Hefei. She was jobless when she met her current boyfriend. When I met her she had been staying with him and his family. Then, in October 2015 they decided to get married, which brought troubles into her relationship with her grandfather, Mr. Ma, who had raised her (see chapter 3). The Hefei fiancé did not have his own house and car, nor would he give Manman any bride price. In the eyes of Mr. Ma, he could not understand that their other grandson had to spend more than 100,000 to marry a woman while his granddaughter's fiancé did not offer even a single coin. Despite this, Manman insisted on marrying him and cut connections with the whole family.

Fieldwork in Suzhou city

Tiantian is the only interlocutor of mine who went to prison for illegal drug deals while I conducted my fieldwork in the countryside. He dropped out of school at the age of 12, and then worked in a hotpot restaurant for several months. He migrated out to Fujian province to find his father and followed him into a shoe factory in the suburbs of Fuzhou. His father had divorced his mother and had a new girlfriend at the time, who Tiantian called "the fat women". He felt tortured while living with the couple, since he said the fat women always tried to kick him out of their house. So, he went back to his hometown again. With the help of his relatives, he got a job in the biggest hotel in the city center, but it only lasted for half a year. He then found a girlfriend, with whom he lived, and stayed home without a job. He soon found a job in a nightclub and got a position as the so-called "manager". For a time, he lived at his aunt's house in the city center, and then rented an apartment near the nightclub. Good looking and outgoing, Tiantian met friends in the nightclub and became popular among a group of teenagers who hated school and studying. He found that there were always a lot of girls willing to spend money on him, so life was not so hard for him even when funds were low. He seems to change girlfriends as frequently as one changes clothes.

Despite his income of 6000-8000 yuan per month, he cannot afford his lifestyle, because he spends a lot while hanging out with his friends. His clothes are always cheap but his cellphone is the newly issued Apple 6 Plus. He told me he already lost three iPhones because he always got drunk through his job at the nightclub. At work he sells alcohol to the guests who want to have an entertaining night. He told me he enjoyed working in this kind of flashy place. Although it seemed dangerous sometimes, the job suited his personality better. He could get more income with fewer efforts. He also got a lot of tattoos to make him look more intimidating for certain crowds, believing that young guys with tattoos were often seen as gangsters of some crime organizations.

When we first met, I added Tiantian's WeChat contact details, which he also used for

daily marketing style posts to attract prosperous clients to come and spend in his nightclub. His WeChat account included a nick name and phone number. "Your customers can buy a lot of wine and you can get a lot of commissions; otherwise you can't live at all on the basic salary," he told me. He invited me to the nightclub as well, but I declined because I could not handle such a noisy environment and I knew he just wanted to lure me in to spend money there. In July and August, news slowly returned from Hefei, saying that Tiantian had been arrested. Tiantian contacted me to ask if I knew any policeman there because he knew I had been an intern at the Suzhou police station for a month. That night, we went to the Nanguan police station and met several of Tiantian's young colleagues and friends at the entrance. They said that the police had known that they had already had this transaction. They were familiar with several spots of the drug trade. The next day, after recording all the transcripts, Tiantian and his friends were sent to a correctional facility.

Later, I didn't get in touch with Tiantian, but I still followed him on Wechat to know about his situation. Then I met Xinjian, his father, before the New Year in Suzhou, who was again negotiating his marriage with Fangfang, a rural girl from another town who got pregnant. The marriage is a tough issue for his family. Tiantian's own words showed his unwillingness to marry under the circumstances.

> "Marriage because of pregnancy is not even a tomb, it could be depicted as a hell. She told my father that she wants to marry me because of the baby, so you could imagine what will happen after our marriage? I would never force myself to get married, and I told her I will pay for her if she does the abortion."

Tiantian returned to the nightclub and continued his playboy's life. He says he is too young to get married and afford a family now. So, he tries to escape from the traps of marriage and chooses to play for fun. There is nothing for him now in the city of Suzhou. One thing he told me stuck with me: "There is nothing wrong with a poor person, but the poor of one family is very depressed." Although it seemed that he avoided marriage because he didn't want to give his unborn baby a difficult environment in which to grow up, I preferred to take it as an excuse, or an interpretation for his helplessness. An old

saying goes, "The dragon gives birth to the dragon while the rat gives birth to the ones that dig holes". It could be a secular explanation of Pareto's theory on the intergenerational transmission of mobility. But it is a truth here, the son of a migrant worker is a younger generation of a migrant worker. Tiantian is not only the young migrant workers who have left their childhood behind in Fuli village, I chose 10 young migrant workers who used to be rural children left behind while their parents migrated into cities (see Chapter 2). I also met six more children left behind who are still at school, but I chose not to use their information due to the issues I mentioned earlier.

In the center of Suzhou, I also visit Huzi who worked in a medicine company in his apartment Building (see Chapter 2). He narrated his migration story to me from this Suzhou city apartment and described his early years left behind in rural areas as being boring and lonely. His parents migrated to Zhejiang province when he was in primary school, leaving him in the village. Then he migrated to join his family after quitting school. But after such a long trial, he settled down in the center of Suzhou with his wife and two children. Besides him, I also met other young migrant workers in Fuzhou, Wuyi and Cixi.

Fieldwork in Wuxi

I met Miaomiao, a Fuli girl with three prior marriages in her rented apartment in Wuxi. Her story was an amazing one according to the norms at the time (see Chapter 3). I first met her in a small restaurant near Wuxi Train Station. She then led me to the apartment she shared with a couple and a middle-aged woman. The apartment is simply decorated and I chose to leave when I found out that her room was rented for her by her lover. During my stay in Wuxi, I also went out with Miao Miao, two of her friends, Xu Jin and Xiang, to a Wholesale Market in Wuxi. Her friend, Xu Jin, drove a car to take us there. I even learn a lesson from Xu Jin about how to escape from being a nerd.

At the age of 25, rural girl Miao Miao has already been married three times. For the first marriage, her father received 160,000 yuan from her groom although the new couple

divorced only half a year later when she caught him sleeping with another woman. With this money, her father bought a car and her younger brother got married soon after, along with a first payment for a small second-hand apartment in Suzhou city. She later married a man from the city who had a daughter just four months after meeting. Her second husband was poor and they lived together with his parents. Unfortunately, the mother-in-law was not a friendly woman, which caused friction with Miao Miao. After giving birth to a daughter, she divorced her second husband, leaving her two-year-old baby with her mother. After a particularly bad fight with her mother-in-law, she had left the man's house with nothing, not even her golden necklace. It is not easy for a Chinese woman who has a child and is twice divorced to find a new husband again in this small city. So, she decided to marry a guy from a village in another town who she considered ugly and poor but was willing to pay her 30,000 yuan in cash as a marriage gift. Soon after marrying, however, she decided she wanted to migrant to Wuxi in Jiangsu province and work there in a factory. The poor guy migrated as well to a construction site in a nearby city in order to be close to her. This led to the hastened end of her third marriage. Every time her husband would phone her, she would turn off her cell phone, and they get divorced within five months of marriage. She told me, "He is too ugly to be with, you cannot bear to see him for a while". Then she showed me photos on her WeChat with an embarrassed face.

Fieldwork in Changsha

I was received by Zhu's second daughter Yanling in Changsha. I followed her to her one-bedroom apartment by the riverside of Xiangjiang River. The apartment is 60 square meters and the decoration is quite modern, equipped with a washing machine, television, refrigerator and everything you might see in an urban family apartment. The situation of Yanling is unlike that of other migrant workers. You might think that she is an urban girl if you didn't know that she is from Fuli village. Here, Yanling told me the story of her migrating life.

She dropped out of school when she was still in the first year of junior high school, and

then she became an apprentice for weaving cloth. Later, she gave up because she said it was too hard for a girl. Her good friend Meili suggested she go to Hefei to work with her as a waitress, which she did. However, she went to Shenzhen after three months. At the age of 17, she met a rich young boy who liked her a lot but his parents opposed their relationship. Yanling went to Beijing to learn makeup skills and she worked in a studio for a few months before coming to work in Changsha. Here, she met her husband, Laokang, a rich man running his family business. He took good care of her and she could stay at home jobless. She studied to get a driver's license and received a Buick car as a gift. She told me that she wouldn't marry Laokang if she was not pregnant. The suggestion from a doctor that she was not suitable to have an abortion gave her a fake marriage in the end. She was a Buddhist, but not a strict one, and she went to temple every first and fifteenth day to burn incense there. She told me that she asked the monk if it's proper for her to get married, then she married her older, urban husband after the monk gave her an affirmative answer.

She took me out to meet her friends the night that I arrived. After dinner, we went to the tea bar with one of her friends who worked in Xiangya Hospital. Compared with the boring life in Fuli village, I preferred to stay with her and enjoy the prosperous city life. When I am in Fuli village, it is tranquil during the night except for several barking dogs. But the real nightlife had just begun in the city at 8 o'clock at night.

Fieldwork in Cixi

In the city of Cixi, I met Xinfeng and his whole migrant family, including his wife, daughter, son, daughter-in law and his granddaughter. Their house in Fuli village is locked up nearly the entire year. They rent a bungalow in the suburbs Cixi city, not far away from the subway station.

The village in which they rent, however, will soon be demolished because of the expansion of Chinese fast-growing urbanization. On the way, there is a trail of destruction. We see the ruins all around except for some sporadic houses that are still standing and had

put up the red national flags. "The house can't be torn down because the red flag can't fall," Xinfeng explains to me. It's a strategy for the house owner to ask for more compensation from the community developers and the government. This type of home owner is called the "Nail household" because they stand still like a nail embedded deeply in the ground while other surrounding houses are devastated one by one. He makes fun of these house owners. In his narrative, the combination of government and real estate developer wealth and power is undefeatable in contrast to these civilians' small acts of rebellion for their own interests. It's not so convenient to stay with such a big migrant family, so I rented a small bungalow nearby at 260 yuan per month in order to visit with them.

The wife of Xinjian worked as a cleaner here. and I didn't see her oftentimes when I woke up in the morning. She is warmhearted and invites me to eat with them. During my stay, I have a good relationship with the children of Xinfeng, Dalong and Longmei. One weekend, they take me to a small park by the riverside and point out the musical fountain to me, noting that their village doesn't have such a thing. We went to climb the nearby mountain and even shopped together over the weekend.

I follow Dalong to the iron mold factory where he works as a technician. We pass through a narrow trail to arrive at his workplace. The red gate of the factory was five meters wide. He showed me the machines that he usually operates and introduces me to his colleagues who are migrant workers from other provinces. They are like Dalong, taking the jobs that were discarded by urban residents. Holding a cigarette, Dalong begins his daily work. When I left Cixi, I followed Dalong's WeChat to keep in touch. I later met his family again when they came back to Fuli for the Spring Festival and the marriage ceremony of Longmei.

Fieldwork in Fuzhou

Xinjian, Mr. Ma's youngest son received me at the airport when I took a flight from Hefei where his daughter was located. He drove a Nissan car, and came with his nephew Zi

Xiang, the grandson of Mr. Ma. We had a good lunch together in a restaurant in a shopping mall on our way to Xinjian's rented house where I met his new wife who was pregnant at the time. The suburban village where they lived was surrounded by several 4s car shops and these shops are symbol of an area which marks the urban-rural junction of the city. His son was about to be born soon, and his wife resigned from her job to be at home. I slept on the bed that was reserved for Xinjian's mother-in-law to help with caring for the baby. Their youngest son was born just two weeks after he arrived. Xinjian asked my advice about the baby. He predicted his son's five elements (gold, wood, water, fire, earth) on the Internet. He said that one of five elements ("earth") for his baby was missing. Therefore, the name must have an "earth" to complete the five elements. In China, the child's gender is usually known only at the time of birth, so many parents will name the child after the child is born. The specific time of his birth (generally recorded accurate to the hour) is used to predict the five elements of the child's "gold, wood, water, fire and earth." If one of the five elements are missing, they will add what they lack in the child's name.

I went to the hospital to see him when his wife was lying in bed, the new born baby could only drink milk powder; he even spent money to buy imported milk powder because the local milk powder was considered as unreliable and unsafe by Chinese parents. Xinjian showed me an electronic red envelope on WeChat, saying that his good friend (a boss in a private shoe factory) had given the child a red envelope of 3,000 yuan as a gift upon his birth. His position in the import and export company is responsible for taking orders and placing orders to shoe factories. Therefore, many private shoe factory owners have a good relationship with him privately for the retention of good business. For the bosses of these small factories, he is a "slot machine" to bet for money. The smallest order he can offer is more than 1,000,000 yuan, which is profitable for the bosses. So, there were many boss friends sending red envelopes to him after his son was born.

I offered to help and reduce the family's burden after the birth, so he taught me to make fish soup for his wife. He would drive back to take the soup to the hospital whenever it

was ready. Everything goes smoothly during these days, busy and happy.

I moved out of their house after the baby was born because there was no place to stay. Then I moved to the factory to stay with Zixiang who worked as a team leader. Zixiang was 17 at the time, and he told me his life story in this shoe factory in Fuzhou city where he migrated and used to work for five years. I stayed in the factory with him for three days. Every time I went there, I smelled something horrible, which I was told was the rubber for the shoes. They also had some semi-finished products in the corner, which are from other factories. The factory has three floors. The first floor is used as a warehouse where boxes of shoes are prepared for shipping abroad. The second floor is the production workshop. Different groups of workers are separated in several areas. Some workers concentrate on cutting the edge of newly produced shoes. Some work on decorating, while some others are producing shoes. The day I visited, Zixiang was leading a Vietnamese group working on a new order of shoes. His colleagues don't call his name. He is the only one who wears nearsighted glasses, which is rare among migrant workers. They believed that a young boy like him would only wear a pair of glasses if he was a well-educated student. This pair of nearsighted glasses became his trademark. Zixiang told me that if I asked for him, his coworkers would know who I was looking for if I mentioned glasses.

The black labor (illegal labor) of Vietnamese migrant workers led by Zixiang is mediated by a translator who can speak both Chinese and Vietnamese. I asked Zixiang about this group. The monthly salary of a Vietnamese worker is 1000 yuan per month, which is half of a Chinese migrant worker. But this salary is considered high for Vietnamese working standards. "800 yuan per month should make them rich in Vietnam," Zixiang told me. "It is a win-win game for the Vietnamese and our boss." The factory can get more profits from reducing the costs of the labor force while the Vietnamese raise more money here than in Vietnam. But this kind of group must always hide from the monitoring of the labor Bureau. They were organized and not allowed to leave the factory because their identity here is illegal. They got paid for the job but the salary was not directly sent to

them personally. Instead, their Vietnamese group leader takes charge of all the payments.

Although I didn't have direct communication with these workers due to the language barrier, the research on international immigration that addresses income lags such as these offers opportunities for further study.

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Appendix 1 The Traditional 24 Solar Terms in China and

Important Agricultural Activities in Rural China (Case of Fuli)

Name of 24 Solar Terms	Beginning	Agricultural activities[10]
The Beginning of Spring (1st solar term)	Feb.3, 4, or 5	
Rain Water (2nd solar term)	Feb.18, 19 or 20	The spring festival
The Waking of Insects (3rd solar term)	Mar.5, 6, or 7	
The Spring Equinox (4th solar term)	Mar.20, 21 or 22	
Pure Brightness (5th solar term)	Apr.4, 5 or 6	
Grain Rain (6th solar term)	Apr.19, 20 or 21	
The Beginning of Summer (7th solar term)	May 5,6 or 7	
Lesser Fullness of Grain (8th solar term)	May 20,21 or 22	
Grain in Beard (9th solar term)	Jun.5, 6 or 7	**Harvest wheat, grow corns and yellow beans.**
The Summer Solstice (10th solar term)	Jun.21 or 22	
Lesser Heat (11th solar term)	Jul.6, 7 or 8	Halloween in July[11]
Greater Heat (12th solar term)	Jul.22, 23 or 24	
The Beginning of Autumn (13th solar term)	Aug.7, 8 or 9	
The End of Heat (14th solar term)	Aug.22, 23 or 24	
White Dew (15th solar term)	Sep.7, 8 or 9	
The Autumn Equinox (16th solar term)	Sep.22, 23 or 24	
Cold Dew (17th solar term)	Oct.8 or 9	Middle Autumn Day
Frost's Descent (18th solar term)	Oct.23 or 24	**Harvest yellow beans, corns and grow wheat**
The Beginning of Winter (19th solar term)	Nov.7 or 8	
Lesser Snow (20th solar term)	Nov.22 or 23	
Greater Snow (21th solar term)	Dec.6, 7 or 8	
The Winter Solstice (22th solar term)	Dec.21, 22 or 23	Next year: waiting for spring festival
Lesser Cold (23th solar term)	Jan.5, 6 or 7	
Greater Cold (24th solar term)	Jan.20 or 2	

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[10] Social activities depend on the lunar calendar.
[11] In Chinese tradition, the fifteenth day of the seventh month in the lunar calendar is called Ghost Day and the seventh month in general is regarded as the Ghost Month, in which ghosts and spirits, including those of the deceased ancestors, come out from the lower realm.

Appendix 2 Tables and Lists of Rural Field Study

a.Ten New Generation of Migrant Workers Who Have Experience of Left Behind And Six Children Left

Behind

Name	Age	Gender	Married or not	Married where	Educational level	Who migrated	Caring arrangement
Dalong	28	Male	Yes	R	Yes	Both	grandpa
Longmei	26	Female	Yes	R	No	Both	/
Manman	25	Female	Yes	U	No	Both	grandpa
Tiantian	23	Male	No	/	/	Both	Mother /no
Zixiang	17	Male	No	/	/	Mother	Aunt
Lian	29	Female	Yes	U	/	Sibling	Mother
Xiang	26	Male	No	/	/	Both	grandpa
Miaomiao	27	Female	Yes	R/U/R	Yes	Both	/
Yuhu	25	Male	Yes	U	Yes	Both	Aunt
Dan	19	Male	No	/	/	Father	Mother
Nuonuo	4	Female	/	/	Kindergarten	Mother	grandma
Xinxin	3	Female	/	/	Kindergarten	Mother	grandma
Kexin	3	Female	/	/	Kindergarten	Father	grandma
Zhaoqi	9	Male	/	/	Elementary school	Father	Mother
Chengrui	14	Male	/	/	Junior school	Both	grandma
Anan	7	Female	/	/	Elementary school	Father	Grandma

b. Basic Information of The Elderly left behind

1.   Mr. Ma

76 years old, a father of five children and three of them have migrant out to become farmer workers in the urban area, one youngest son died 15 years ago by traffic accident who left a 3-year old boy.

2.   Mr. Yuan

(He used to be the head of this village and works in the village commission now) 67, he also raises pigs at home with his partner Mrs. Yuan.

3.   Lao Hua

No age, never get married and with a scar on his face, still living in a house simply build by mud and hay.

4.   Mr. Meng

Ducks and chicken raiser on the river side build a house

5.   Mr. Zhu

63 years old, husband of Mrs. Zhu, farmer, good at playing majhong and open a kind of "casino" in the village. He does a part time job in Suzhou city sometimes. His house is popular here and always attracts lots of villagers to come to play cards or mahjong.

6.   Mrs. Xu

Sheep and dog raiser, his daughter went out as a migrant worker and married another migrant worker in Sichuan. His son stays at home and find a job in the city nearby

7.   Mrs. Ma

73 years old, wife of Mr. Ma, sometimes go to Suzhou city to sell some vegetables in the market by No.12 bus. Trained to play mahjong with them but 3 persons

8.   Mrs. Ding

The neighbor of Mr. Ma, disable, her son named Siji and has moved to Suzhou city and buy a house there, leaving her lonely in the countryside

9.   Mrs. Zhu

61 years old, raiser of several kinds of good breed dogs including one female golden retriever and two female Poodles. A professional in raising dogs and get money from selling the babies of these dogs on the pets' market which will be held every weekend on the southeast part of the city. She is searching for a female pug now. Her daughter migrates out to Hunan province and seldom come back home after marriage. Her son is also out to make money leaving his wife and little 2 years old daughter home raised by Mrs. Zhu.

10.   Mrs. Zhai

An old elderly with *dibao*. She has serious kidney disease. She has one daughter and one son and both migrated out of the village.

11.   Mrs. Cheng

64, with good health. She is looking after her grandson in the countryside.

c. Basic Information of Interviewees for Rural Marriages

Name	Age	Gender	Married or not	Married where	If have kids	How many	The age	Location		Job
Dalong	28	Male	Yes	R	Yes	1	3	Zhejiang province	U	Mechanical Factory
Longmei	26	Female	Yes	R	No	0	/	Zhejiang province	U	Textile factory
Manman	25	Female	Yes	U	No	/	/	Hefei city	U	No job
Tiantian	23	Male	No	/	/	/	/	Suzhou city	U	Nightclub/selling wines
Zixiang	17	Male	No	/	/	/	/	Fuzhou city	U	Shoe factory
Lian	29	Female	Yes	U	/	/	/	Suzhou city	U	High school teacher
Xiang	26	Male	No	/	/	/	/	Changzhou city	U	Accountant
Miaomiao	27	Female	Yes	R/U/R	Yes	1	3.5	Wuxi city	U	Factory
Yuhu	25	Male	Yes	U	Yes	2	5 and 1	Suzhou city	U	Salesperson and taxi driver
Yanli	34	Female	Yes	R	Yes	2	12 and 6	Suzhou city	U	Shop owner and selling car-components
Yanling	27	Female	Yes	U	Yes	1	3	Changsha city	U	Work in a spa shop
Xuzhou	26	Male	Yes	R	Yes	1	2.5	Liuan city	R	House decoration
Meili	27	Female	Yes	R	Yes	2	6 and 1	Huaibei city	R	Housewife and farmer
Yangyang	23	Male	No	/	No	/	/	Suzhou city	R	Policeman
Pan	27	Female	Yes	R	Yes	1	2.5	Suzhou city	R	Selling shoes in a shopping mall
Dinglei	29	Male	Yes	R	Yes	1	9	Suzhou city	R	Raising sheep and dogs
Qiqi	28	Female	Yes	R	Yes	1	9	Suzhou city	R	Housewife and farmer
Huihui	32	Female	Yes	R	Yes	2	7 and 3	Suzhou city	R	Housewife and farmer
Manli	23	Female	Yes	R	Yes	1	1.5	Suzhou city	R	Housewife and farmer
Dandan	34	Female	Yes	R	Yes	3	10,9, 7	Suzhou city	R	Housewife and farmer

d. Migrant workers in Beijing

Name	Age	Gender	Married or not	Educational level	Job	Hometown	Location
Bao Laoban	36	Male	Yes	Junior high school	Team leader	Henan province	Construction site in Beijing
Zhao Di	29	Male	No	Junior high school	Construction worker	Henan province	Construction site
Cao Fei	21	Male	No	Vocational school	Barista	Hebei province	Café in a University
Lu Yuting	26	Female	No	Vocational school	Waitress	Anhui province	A five-star hotel
Wang Neng	23	Male	No	Senior high school	Security guard	Jiangxi province	Mailing room in a University
Wang Ge	46	Male	Yes	Primary school	Security leader	Henan province	Construction site
An Qing	29	Male	No	Junior high school	Construction worker	Henan province	Construction site
Duan Xiong	34	Male	Yes	Junior high school	Construction worker	Henan province	Construction site
Han Dong	39	Male	Yes	Junior high school	Construction worker	Henan province	Construction site
Mr. Yuan	26	Male	No	Vocational school	Company employee	Inter Mogoria	Café Manan
Xiao Bing	28	Male	No	Vocational school	waiter	Shanxi province	Hotel Beijing
Xiaolin	38	Male	Yes	Primary school	Chef	Guizhou province	Resort in suburban Beijing
Little gansu	19	Female	No	Junior high school	Waitress	Gansu province	Zixin restaurant
Shanpao	20	Male	No	Junior high school	Waiter	Hebei province	Zixin restaurant
Huli	19	Female	No	Junior high school	Waiter	Henan province	Zixin restaurant in Beijing
Mei	19	Female	No	Vocational school	Waitress	Sichuan province	Zixin restaurant in Beijing
Hai Xian	19	Male	No	Vocational school	Chef	Sichuan province	Zixin restaurant in Beijing
Eric	23	Male	No	Collage	Intern	Hunan province	a private company in Beijing
Wang Yu	25	Female	No	Collage	Sale	Hebei province	Darunfa supermarket
Lu Yi	23	Male	No	Collage	Intern	Hebei province	a private company in Beijing

Appendix 3   Details of Payments for Marriage since 1970s

Time	Menu	Price
70s 600 in total	"3 big stuff": Bicycle, Sewing machine, Watch	420
	"36 legs": Clothes closet; Cabinet; bed…	100
	The wedding banquet	180
	Clothes	-100
	Cash taken from relatives	
	No house and the new couple lives with the boy's parents	
80s 3000 in total	"3 big stuffs":	1900
	Washing machine; Television; Fridge	1000
	Furniture (Home-made or buy)	
	Clothes and bedclothes	
	Car -renting fee (2 at least)	110
	The wedding banquet (10 tables)	600
	Cash taken from relatives	-100
	No house and the new couple lives with the boy's parents	
90s 33000 in total	Furniture & Electronica machines	15000
	Clothes & Jewelries	2000
	Cash taken from relatives	-7000
	Newly built house and the decoration fee	15000
Now 426200 in total	Furniture Electronica machines	40000
	Clothes & Jewelries	4000
	Car renting fee (6 cars at least)	20000
	Marriage photos	4200
	Travel in honey moon	9000
	First payment for a new house in urban or well-built house with 2 floors in the village	350000

Appendix 4 Questionnaire for Migrant workers in Beijing

PART A ：Basic Personal Information And Family Background

A1：Your gender ： 1、Male   2、Female

A2：Which year you were born：_____

A3：Which province are you from：_____

A4：Your marital status？

    1、Single   2、Married   3、Divorced and still single

    4、Divorced and married again   5、Widowed and still single   6、Widowed and married again

A5：Your education level：

    1、Primary school and below 2、Junior high school 3、Senior middle school

    4、Vocational high school, technical school 5、College and above

A6_1：The **average** monthly wage **over the past three months**? __ __ __ __(yuan)

A6_2：The **annual income** of your **whole family** last year? __ __ __ __ __(yuan)

A6_3：How much you **send to your hometown** last year? ___(yuan)

A7：How many people in your family: _____ people
    How many rural labors? _____ people
    How many people work in the city more than half a year? _____ people

A8：Do you have children?

  1、YES（How many? _____ , How many work or study in Beijing? _____ ）

    2、NO

A9：You are alone in Beijing or with your whole family?

    1、Alone   2、With some family members   3、With the whole family

A10：Your living form in Beijing？

    1、Dormitory provided for free 2、Rental house from the employer   3、Rent a house alone

    4、Rent a house with others   5、Live in the place belongs to a relative or a friend

    6、Buy the house   7、Others_____

A11：The economic state of your family **compared with other families in the hometown**?

    1、Much better than the average family   2、Better than the average family

    3、almost the same as others   4、Worse than the average family

    5、Much worse than the average family

A12：Does your social status improved a lot in Beijing **compared with the status at your hometown**：

    1、improve a lot   2、improve a little   3、no changes   4、decrease a little

    5、decrease a lot   6、I don't know

A13：Your **Hukou**：   1、Agricultural (Rural) hukou   2、Urban hukou 3、others_____

A14：Does your family still have contracted land?

  1、YES，how many _____mu (1mu=666.6667 m^2)

   2、NO

PART B ： Information about The Employment

B1：**How long** have you been in Beijing? _____Year(s)_____Month(s)

B2：How long do you stay in Beijing every year?

    1、the whole year and never go back home   2、most of the time in Beijing

    3、the same time as staying in hometown   4、less time than staying at home

B3：**Have you worked in other cities before** you come here?

    1、YES For how long? _____Year(s)_____Month(s)

    2、NO

B4：The **most important reasons** you work in Beijing?

    （Choose three and **order them according to the importance**）

        First：_____Second：_____ Third: _____

    1、farming raise little and really hard work 2、nothing to do at home

    3、too poor, want to change the situation   4、longing for the city life

    5、don't know how to farm 6、the whole family is out of hometown

    7、accustomed to living and working out

    8、earn money for the other family member to go to school

    9、earn money to build a house 10、Others migrant to go out to work

    11、it is a typical successful signal to work out

    12、others _____

B5：What is your current job?

    1、architecture   2、manufacturing   3、work in the hotel or restaurant

    4、wholesale, retail 5、housekeeper

    6、transportation   7、security, property management

    8、Education   9、others_____

B6：According to the time, which type of work do you do?

    1、full-time work   2、part-time work (work only a few hours a day)

    3、temporary work (non-stability work)

    4、others_____

B7：How did you find the current job?

    1、find by myself   2、through my friend or relative

    3、come out with private labor leader

    4、employers go to rural part to hire workers 5、through local government

    6、through local labor agency 7、others_____

B8：What is the main difficulties you encounter in your work and life here?

    （Choose three and **order them according to the importance**）

        First：_____Second：_____ Third: _____

    1、low income 2、poor living conditions 3、high levels of consumption

4、hard to find a job   5、difficult to send our children to school   6、difficult to maintain equity

7、life is monotonous here   8、difficult to be accustomed to urban lifestyles

9、exclusion, discrimination   10、difficult to go to the hospital

11、others_____

<div style="border:1px solid #000; background:#bbb; text-align:center; font-weight:bold;">PART C：Questions about Social Inclusion</div>

C1：Do you think you are a Beijinger?
   1、YES 2、Half a Beijinger   3、NO

C2：What do you think is the most important condition to be a "Beijinger"?
   1、have a Beijing Hukou   2、have my own house   3、have a stable job
   4、high salary   5、can speak Beijing dialect   6、have many Beijing local friends
   7、others_____

   C3：Do you consider the long-term migrant workers working in Beijing as a urban people?
   1、YES   2、Half a Beijinger   3、NO   4、I don't know

C4：Do you think it is possible for migrant workers to become the city people?
   1、very possible   2、somewhat possible   3、not possible   4、not possible at all

C5：Which do you think is your identity?
   1、peasant
   2、half city people（**jump directly to question C9**）
   3、city people   （**jump directly to question C9**）
   4、I don't know（**jump directly to question C9**）
C6：Why do you think you are still a peasant?
   1、I still have the rural Huko   2、roots in the countryside
   3、family members and relatives still in the countryside
   4、be accustomed to rural lifestyles   5、the urban people think so
   6、government has such provisions   7、others_____

C7：Do you want to change your identity as a peasant?
   1、YES（**jump directly to question C9**）   2、NO   3、I don't know

C8：Why you don't want to change your identity as a peasant?
   1、impossible, no need to think about it   2、roots in the countryside
   3、be accustomed to rural lifestyles   4、don't like the city
   5、it is not important to be a peasant or not   6、others_____

C9：Do you usually care about what happened in Beijing?
    1、usually 2、not so usual   3、ordinary   4、usual   5、very usual

C10：How do you think **your relationship with the development of this city**?
    1、be related a lot 2、be related   3、not related   4、not related at all 5、I don't know

C11：How do you think **your relationship with the image of this city?**
    1、be related a lot 2、be related   3、not related   4、not related at all 5、I don't know

C12：How do you spend your leisure time in general?

（Choose three items and order it according to the frequency of the items）

First：_____ Second：_____ Third: _____

1、playing cards   2、watching TV   3、listening to Radio

4、Surfing online   5、doing housework   6、sleeping

7、talking with others   8、shopping   9、reading (books, newspapers)

10、sporting   11、participating in entertainment activities

12、others_____

C13：How often do you engage in the following activity in your daily life?（write √ for your choice）

	Everyday	N times a week	Once a week	Once a month	N times a year	Never
Watching TV	1	2	3	4	5	6
Reading	1	2	3	4	5	6
Surfing online	1	2	3	4	5	6

C14：How often do you engage in the following activity ?（write √ for your choice）

	N times a week	Once a week	Once a month	N times a year	Never
Gym/Sports	1	2	3	4	5
Entertainment	1	2	3	4	5
Family activities	1	2	3	4	5
Activities to improve personal skills	1	2	3	4	5

C15：Do you take part in the activities(sports) organized by the labor union?

    1、NO   2、YES

C16：Do you take part in the activities organized by the community?

    1、NO   2、YES（**Directly to C18**）

C17：Why don't you take part in the activities?

    1、not eligible to participate

    2、they are local activities, have nothing to do with us

    3、no time   4、never notice the activities

    5、want to participate, but I do not know how

    6、not interested   7、never think about it   8、other_____

C18：Talking with people not from your hometown, you use the dialect or mandarin?

    1、Mandarin   2、My dialect

C19：Do you have local friend/relative？

    1、YES，How many?_____   2、NO

C20：Have you have been a guest of a rural resident during the last three months?

    1、NO   2、YES，How many times?_

C21：How often do you contact with the rural residents?

    1、Always 2、Sometimes 3、almost never 4、Never

C22：Do you have difficulty in contacting with Beijing residents?

    1、YES   2、NO（**Directly to C24**）

C23：What is the most difficult thing when you interact with the local residents?

（choose the most difficult things and order it according to the importance）

First：_____Second：_____

1、language problems   2、different

3、different living habits   4、large differences in social status

5、discrimination   6、there is no opportunity for interaction

7、others_____

C24：Are you **familiar** with the rural residents nearby?

　　　1、not familiar at all 2、not familiar 3、just so so 4、familiar   5、Very familiar

C25：Do you think rural residents are willing to contact you?

　　　1、Rather will

　　　2、will

　　　3、not so will

　　　4、will not at all

　　　5、I don't know

C26：Do you **feel uncomfortable** when you get along with rural residents?

　　　1、Always   2、Sometimes 3、Almost never 4、Never   5、I don't know

C27：Do you think rural residents are friendly to you?

　　　1、Very friendly

　　　2、Rather friendly

　　　3、Just so so

　　　4、Not friendly

　　　5、Not friendly at all

C28：Do you always suffer discrimination from local residents?

　　　1、always   2、occasionally   3、basically no   4、never

C29：How do you think urban residents will evaluate migrant workers(like you)?

（choose the most difficult things and order it according to the importance）

First：_____Second：_____

 1、not well educated   2、uncivilized

3、uncultivated   4、tender-hearted 5、hard-working

 6、kind   7、good

8、honest   9、other_____

C30：How do you evaluate urban residents?

（choose the most difficult things and order it according to the importance）

First：_____Second：_____

　1、arrogant   2、look down upon rural people

　3、indifferent   4、passionate

　5、kindhearted   6、friendly 7、other _____

C31：Which statement shows your attitude to the **rural residents**? Do you want to do it?

	YES	NO	I DON'T KNOW

				C32 : Which state ment shows
Want to live in the same community as the rural residents	1	2	3	
Want the rural residents to live next to themselves	1	2	3	
Want to work with the rural residents	1	2	3	
Want to invite the rural residents at home for dinner	1	2	3	
Would like their relatives to marry the rural residents	1	2	3	

the attitude of the rural residents to you? Do you think **rural residents are willing to do** it?

	YES	NO	I DON'T KNOW
Want to live in the same community as the rural migrants	1	2	3
Want to the rural migrants live next to themselves	1	2	3
Want to work with rural migrants	1	2	3
Want to invite rural migrants at home for dinner	1	2	3
Would like their relatives to marry rural migrants	1	2	3

C33 : Can you feel the difference between you and the urban residents in the following areas?

	Big difference	A few differences	No difference	Not different at all
Social status	1	2	3	4
Income	1	2	3	4
The way you treat people	1	2	3	4
Lifestyle	1	2	3	4

C34 : Do you agree to the following statement?

	YES	NO	I DON'T KNOW
Government administration overcharges the outsiders	1	2	3
Government administration treats outsiders bad	1	2	3
Government administration helps outsiders	2	1	3
Government administration treats outsiders equally	2	1	3

C35 : Do you agree to the following statement?

	Agree	Rather agree	normal	Not agree	Not agree at all
Urban residents are not so warm hearted	1	2	3	4	5
City life is always busy	1	2	3	4	5
The city has a lot of management systems, life is not freedom	1	2	3	4	5
Urban people are more polite	5	4	3	2	1
Urban life has many styles	5	4	3	2	1

C36 : whether the following phenomenon is similar to your situation?
                    YES   NO   I DON'T KNOW

C36_1:I can realize the difference between rural

    and urban areas   1   2   3

C36_2: I can realize the difference between rural

   and urban people   1   2   3

C36_3: I am willing to let others know

    that I come from the countryside   1   2   3

C36_4: I am proud of being a rural people   1   2   3
C36_5: My destiny is linked with others
    also from the countryside   1   2   3

C36_6: I am willing to participate in activities

organized by rural people and institutions   1   2   3

C36_7: I love to work with rural people   1   2   3

C36_8: Emotionally speaking, I still miss

                         the rural life   1   2   3

C36_9: I am very concerned about

         what happened in my hometown   1   2   3

C36_10: I can adapt the rural

        unclean environment   1   2   3

C36_11: I can adapt less entertainment

              in the rural part   1   2   3

C36_12: I care about the trends in the city   1   2   3

C36_13: I like to try new things and new products 1   2   3

C36_14: I pay attention to fashion while shopping 1   2   3

C36_15: I pay attention to honor while shopping   1   2   3

C37：Give scores to the following aspects from 1 to 100(100 is most)

    living conditions（   ）   Leisure time（   ）
    working environment（   ） income（   ）
   social status（   ）   relationships with family members（   ）
    relationships with colleagues（   ）   relationships with rural residents（   ）

C38：When you return to your hometown, do you have a "home" feeling?
     1、YES   2、NO   3、I don't know

C39：When you leave your hometown, do you have a reluctant feeling?
     1、YES   2、NO   3、I don't know

C40： Do you think your hometown gives you a sense of security ?
     1、YES   2、NO   3、I don't know

C41：When you are in Beijing, do you feel you are a member of this city?
     1、YES   2、NO   3、I don't know

C42：When you leave Beijing, will you miss Beijing?
     1、Miss a lot 2、Rather miss 3、Miss   4、Not miss   5、Not at all

C43：Do you think Beijing gives you a sense of security while you are in this city ?
1、more security 2、much security 3、Ordinary 4、no security 5、less security

C44：Do you have a feeling of home in Beijing?
     1、NO   2、YES（**Directly to C46**）

C45：Why do you have no feeling of home in Beijing?
   （Choose three items and order it according to the importance of the items）

         First：_____Second：_____ Third:_____

    1、No Beijing *hukou*   2、No security
    3、No steady job   4、Not as the same treatment as citizens of Beijing
    5、do not own a house in Beijing   6、Have no dealings with Beijing residents

7、No relatives, friends in Beijing   8、Other_____

C46：What is your state of mind now?

 1、Very good   2、rather good   3、good   4、not good   5、not good at all

C47：Among these following words, which best suits your present state of mind?
     （Choose three items and order it according to the importance of the items）

          First：_____Second：_____ Third: _____

     1、Happy sometimes 2、Optimistic, cheerful   3、Tired

     4、Often feel pressure 5、Positive   6、lonely and hopeless

     7、Mild   8、Desperate   9、Confident

     10、Anxiety and sorrow   11、Contented   12、Oppressive

     13、Have nothing to do   14、Sensitive   15、Muddle along

     16、Want to suicide sometimes 17、other _____

C48：If conditions permit, are you are willing to stay in here?
      1、rather will   2、will   3、I don't know   4、will not
      5、will not at all   6、Never think about it

C49：What's your plan for the next step?
        1、I hope live here for a long time（**Directly to C50**）
        2、Get the rural hukou and become a citizen people（**Directly to C50**）
        3、Go back home while getting enough money （**Directly to C51**）
        4、Go back home as soon as possible （**Directly to C51**）
        5、It depends
        6、Never think about it
        7、Other_____

C50：**Why do** you **want to stay here**？
     （Choose three items and order it according to the importance of the items）

          First：_____Second：_____ Third: _____

      1、Life here is Convenient
      2、This city is prosperous
      3、This city is the economy developed
      4、Owning a house in this city
      5、Have a stable job
      6、my family members are in Beijing
      7、more opportunities here
      8、has a very rich cultural atmosphere
      9、It is easier to make money
      10、feel free here
      11、have the honor of living in the city
      12、other ___

C51、**Why** you **don't** want to stay here?

（Choose three items and order it according to the importance of the items）

First： _____ **Second：** _____ **Third:** _____

1、do not have a rural hukou   2、do not own a house in this city

3、Have a unstable job

4、no relative/family members here

5、given the fierce competition, I feel stressful in the daily life

6、goods price is high

7、the climate here is too bad

8、traffic jams

9、face the discriminations

10、roots are in rural part

11、interpersonal relation is cold and indifferent in the city

12、no freedom in the city

13、living condition here is not so good as my hometown

14、other ___

Note:

The original questionnaire is in Chinese, and I just translate the part I've used in this study.

A group of migrant workers are chatting during the spare time, the construction site where the dowelled in cities are the sheds which are simply constitutes with panels

This project is immense to be finished. The newly built multi-layer apartments will be sell to the people who can afford far beyond the monetary capability of migrant workers. Upon a heap of rubble, a female migrant worker is searching for some wood or steel which could be used or sold.

The single room rented to migant workers in Jinzhan Village, suburban Beijing with one hour and half by bus to downtown.

The simple built toilet out of the house rented in the yard. There is a lot of courage needed in winter to go outside.

Outside the construction site, a group of construction workers with yellow security hats on are buying street food.


A glance of the urban village in Fuzhou, you will feel like in Fuli village if it is not located in Fuzhou.

An elderly left being in Fuli village is doing chores at home alone.

A left behind wife is just receiving her baby from school by bike, the back basket with the bag pack of her child. Another house, you can also see the clothes hanging in the yard shows that this house also has little children at home.

Hand drawing of the administrative districts of Fuli village